

1403

My Maker – let me be
Enamored most of thee –
But nearer this
I more should miss –

c. 1877

1915

1404

March is the Month of Expectation.
The things we do not know –
The Persons of prognostication
Are coming now –
We try to show becoming firmness –
But pompous Joy
Betrays us, as his first Betrothal
Betrays a Boy.

c. 1877

1914

1405

Bees are Black, with Gilt Surcings –
Buccaneers of Buzz.
Ride abroad in ostentation
And subsist on Fuzz.

Fuzz ordained – not Fuzz contingent –
Marrows of the Hill.
Jugs – a Universe's fracture
Could not jar or spill.

c. 1877

1945

1406

No Passenger was known to flee –
That lodged a night in memory –
That wily – subterranean Inn
Contrives that none go out again –

c. 1877

1945

1407

A Field of Stubble, lying sere
Beneath the second Sun –
Its Toils to Brindled People thrust –
Its Triumphs – to the Bin –
Accosted by a timid Bird
Irresolute of Alms –
Is often seen – but seldom felt,
On our New England Farms –

c. 1877

1932

1408

The Fact that Earth is Heaven –
Whether Heaven is Heaven or not
If not an Affidavit
Of that specific Spot
Not only must confirm us
That it is not for us
But that it would affront us
To dwell in such a place –

c. 1877

1945

1409

Could mortal lip divine
The undeveloped Freight
Of a delivered syllable
'Twould crumble with the weight.

c. 1877

1894

1410

I shall not murmur if at last
The ones I loved below
Permission have to understand
For what I shunned them so –
Divulging it would rest my Heart
But it would ravage theirs –

Why, Katie, Treason has a Voice –
But mine – dispels – in Tears.

c. 1877

1945

1411

Of Paradise' existence
All we know
Is the uncertain certainty –
But its vicinity infer,
By its Bisecting
Messenger –

c. 1877

1945

1412

Shame is the shawl of Pink
In which we wrap the Soul
To keep it from infesting Eyes –
The elemental Veil
Which helpless Nature drops
When pushed upon a scene
Repugnant to her probity –
Shame is the tint divine.

c. 1877

1945

1413

Sweet Skepticism of the Heart –
That knows – and does not know –
And tosses like a Fleet of Balm –
Affronted by the snow –
Invites and then retards the Truth
Lest Certainty be sere
Compared with the delicious throes
Of transport thrilled with Fear –

c. 1877

1945

1414

Unworthy of her Breast
Though by that scathing test
What Soul survive?
By her exacting light
How counterfeit the white
We chiefly have!

c. 1877

1945

1415

A wild Blue sky abreast of Winds
That threatened it – did run
And crouched behind his Yellow Door
Was the defiant sun –
Some conflict with those upper friends
So genial in the main
That we deplore peculiarly
Their arrogant campaign –

c. 1877

1945

1416

Crisis is sweet and yet the Heart
Upon the hither side
Has Dowers of Prospective
To Denizens denied

Inquire of the closing Rose
Which rapture she preferred
And she will point you sighing
To her rescinded Bud.

c. 1877

1914

1417

How Human Nature dotes
On what it can't detect.

The moment that a Plot is plumbed
Prospective is extinct –

Prospective is the friend
Reserved for us to know
When Constancy is clarified
Of Curiosity –

Of subjects that resist
Redoubtablest is this
Where go we –
Go we anywhere
Creation after this?

c. 1877

1945

1418

How lonesome the Wind must feel Nights –
When people have put out the Lights
And everything that has an Inn
Closes the shutter and goes in –

How pompous the Wind must feel Noons
Stepping to incorporeal Tunes
Correcting errors of the sky
And clarifying scenery

How mighty the Wind must feel Morns
Encamping on a thousand dawns
Espousing each and spurning all
Then soaring to his Temple Tall –

c. 1877

1945

1419

It was a quiet seeming Day –
There was no harm in earth or sky –
Till with the closing sun
There strayed an accidental Red
A Strolling Hue, one would have said
To westward of the Town –

But when the Earth began to jar
And Houses vanished with a roar
And Human Nature hid
We comprehended by the Awe
As those that Dissolution saw
The Poppy in the Cloud

c. 1877

1945

1420

One Joy of so much anguish
Sweet nature has for me
I shun it as I do Despair
Or dear iniquity –
Why Birds, a Summer morning
Before the Quick of Day
Should stab my ravished spirit
With Dirks of Melody
Is part of an inquiry
That will receive reply
When Flesh and Spirit sunder
In Death's Immediately –

c. 1877

1945

1421

Such are the inlets of the mind –
His outlets – would you see
Ascend with me the eminence
Of immortality –

c. 1877

1945

1422

Summer has two Beginnings –
Beginning once in June –
Beginning in October
Affectingly again –

Without, perhaps, the Riot
But graphicker for Grace –
As finer is a going
Than a remaining Face –

Departing then – forever –
Forever – until May –
Forever is deciduous –
Except to those who die –

c. 1877

1945

1423

The fairest Home I ever knew
Was founded in an Hour
By Parties also that I knew
A spider and a Flower –
A manse of mechlin and of Floss –

c. 1877

1945

1424

The Gentian has a parched Corolla –
Like azure dried
'Tis Nature's buoyant juices
Beatified –
Without a vaunt or sheen
As casual as Rain
And as benign –

When most is past – it comes –
Nor isolate it seems
Its Bond its Friend –
To fill its Fringed career
And aid an aged Year
Abundant end –

Its lot – were it forgot –
This Truth endear –

Fidelity is gain
Creation o'er –

c. 1877

1945

1425

The inundation of the Spring
Enlarges every soul –
It sweeps the tenement away
But leaves the Water whole –

In which the soul at first estranged –
Seeks faintly for its shore
But acclimated – pines no more
For that Peninsula –

c. 1877

1914

1426

The pretty Rain from those sweet Eaves
Her unintending Eyes –
Took her own Heart, including ours,
By innocent Surprise –

The wrestle in her simple Throat
To hold the feeling down
That vanquished her – defeated Feat –
Was Fervor's sudden Crown –

c. 1877

1945

1427

To earn it by disdaining it
Is Fame's consummate Fee –
He loves what spurns him –
Look behind – He is pursuing thee.

So let us gather – every Day –
The Aggregate of

Life's Bouquet
Be Honor and not shame -

c. 1877

1945

1428

Water makes many Beds
For those averse to sleep -
Its awful chamber open stands -
Its Curtains blandly sweep -
Abhorrent is the Rest
In undulating Rooms
Whose Amplitude no end invades -
Whose Axis never comes.

c. 1877

1945

1429

We shun because we prize her Face
Lest sight's ineffable disgrace
Our Adoration stain

c. 1877

1945

1430

Who never wanted - maddest Joy
Remains to him unknown -
The Banquet of Abstemiousness
Defaces that of Wine -

Within its reach, though yet ungrasped
Desire's perfect Goal -
No nearer - lest the Actual -
Should disenthral thy soul -

c. 1877

1896

1431

With Pinions of Disdain
The soul can farther fly

Than any feather specified
in Ornithology –
It wafts this sordid Flesh
Beyond its dull – control
And during its electric gale –
The body is a soul –
instructing by the same –
How little work it be –
To put off filaments like this
for immortality

c. 1877

1945

1432

Spurn the temerity –
Rashness of Calvary –
Gay were Gethsemane
Knew we of Thee –

c. 1878

1927

1433

How brittle are the Piers
On which our Faith doth tread –
No Bridge below doth totter so –
Yet none hath such a Crowd.

It is as old as God –
Indeed – 'twas built by him –
He sent his Son to test the Plank,
And he pronounced it firm.

c. 1878

1894

1434

Go not too near a House of Rose –
The depredation of a Breeze
Or inundation of a Dew
Alarms its walls away –

Nor try to tie the Butterfly,
Nor climb the Bars of Ecstasy,
In insecurity to lie
Is Joy's insuring quality.

c. 1878

1894

1435

Not that he goes – we love him more
Who led us while he stayed.
Beyond earth's trafficking frontier,
For what he moved, he made.

c. 1878

1894

1436

Than Heaven more remote,
For Heaven is the root,
But these the flitted seed,
More flown indeed
Than ones that never were,
Or those that hide, and are.

What madness, by their side,
A vision to provide
Of future days
They cannot praise.

My soul, to find them, come,
They cannot call, they're dumb,
Nor prove, nor woo,
But that they have abode
Is absolute as God,
And instant, too.

1878?

1894

1437

A Dew sufficed itself –
And satisfied a Leaf

And felt "how vast a destiny" –
"How trivial is Life!"

The Sun went out to work –
The Day went out to play
And not again that Dew be seen
By Physiognomy

Whether by Day Abducted
Or emptied by the Sun
Into the Sea in passing
Eternally unknown

Attested to this Day
That awful Tragedy
By Transport's instability
And Doom's celerity.

c. 1878

1896

1438

Behold this little Bane –
The Boon of all alive –
As common as it is unknown
The name of it is Love –

To lack of it is Woe –
To own of it is Wound –
Not elsewhere – if in Paradise
Its Tantamount be found –

c. 1878

1945

1439

How ruthless are the gentle –
How cruel are the kind –
God broke his contract to his Lamb
To qualify the Wind –

c. 1878

1945

1440

The healed Heart shows its shallow scar
With confidential moan –
Not mended by Mortality
Are Fabrics truly torn –
To go its convalescent way
So shameless is to see
More genuine were Perfidy
Than such Fidelity.

c. 1878

1914

1441

These Fevered Days – to take them to the Forest
Where Waters cool around the mosses crawl –
And shade is all that devastates the stillness
Seems it sometimes this would be all –

c. 1878

1945

1442

To mend each tattered Faith
There is a needle fair
Though no appearance indicate –
"Tis threaded in the Air –

And though it do not wear
As if it never Tore
"Tis very comfortable indeed
And spacious as before –

c. 1878

1945

1443

A chilly Peace infests the Grass
The Sun respectful lies –
Not any Trance of industry
These shadows scrutinize –

Whose Allies go no more astray
For service or for Glee –
But all mankind deliver here
From whatsoever sea –

c. 1878

1945

1444

A little Snow was here and there
Disseminated in her Hair –
Since she and I had met and played
Decade had gathered to Decade –

But Time had added not obtained
Impregnable the Rose
For summer too indelible
Too obdurate for Snows –

c. 1878

1945

1445

Death is the supple Suitor
That wins at last –
It is a stealthy Wooing
Conducted first
By pallid innuendoes
And dim approach
But brave at last with Bugles
And a bisected Coach
It bears away in triumph
To Troth unknown
And Kindred as responsive
As Porcelain.

c. 1878

1945

1446

His Mind like Fabrics of the East
Displayed to the despair

Of everyone but here and there
An humble Purchaser –
For though his price was not of Gold –
More arduous there is –
That one should comprehend the worth
Was all the price there was –

c. 1878

1945

1447
How good his Lava Bed,
To this laborious Boy –
Who must be up to call the World
And dress the sleepy Day –

c. 1878

1945

1448
How soft a Caterpillar steps –
I find one on my Hand
From such a velvet world it comes
Such pluses at command
Its soundless travels just arrest
My slow – terrestrial eye
Intent upon its own career
What use has it for me –

c. 1878

1945

1449
I thought the Train would never come –
How slow the whistle sang –
I don't believe a peevish Bird
So whimpered for the Spring –
I taught my Heart a hundred times
Precisely what to say –
Provoking Lover, when you came
Its Treatise flew away

To hide my strategy too late
To wiser be too soon –
For miseries so halcyon
The happiness atone –

c. 1878

1945

1450

The Road was lit with Moon and star –
The Trees were bright and still –
Descried I – by the distant Light
A Traveller on a Hill –
To magic Perpendiculares
Ascending, though Terrene –
Unknown his shimmering ultimate –
But he indorsed the sheen –

c. 1878

1945

1451

Whoever disenchants
A single Human soul
By failure of irreverence
Is guilty of the whole.

As guileless as a Bird
As graphic as a star
Till the suggestion sinister
Things are not what they are –

c. 1878

1945

1452

Your thoughts don't have words every day
They come a single time
Like signal esoteric sips
Of the communion Wine
Which while you taste so native seems
So easy so to be
You cannot comprehend its price
Nor its infrequency

c. 1878

1945

1453

A Counterfeit – a Plated Person –
I would not be –
Whatever strata of Iniquity
My Nature underlie –
Truth is good Health – and Safety, and the Sky.
How meagre, what an Exile – is a Lie,
And Vocal – when we die –

c. 1879

1924

1454

Those not live yet
Who doubt to live again –
“Again” is of a twice
But this – is one –
The Ship beneath the Draw
Aground – is he?
Death – so – the Hyphen of the Sea –
Deep is the Schedule
Of the Disk to be –
Costumeless Consciousness –
That is he –

c. 1879

1932

1455

Opinion is a flitting thing,
But Truth, outlasts the Sun –
If then we cannot own them both –
Possess the oldest one –

c. 1879

1924

1456

So gay a Flower
Bereaves the Mind
As if it were a Woe –

Is Beauty an Affliction – then?
Tradition ought to know –

c. 1879

1914

1457

It stole along so stealthy
Suspicion it was done
Was dim as to the wealthy
Beginning not to own –

c. 1879

1915

1458

Time's wily Chargers will not wait
At any Gate but Woe's –
But there – so gloat to hesitate
They will not stir for blows –

c. 1879

1932

1459

Belshazzar had a Letter –
He never had but one –
Belshazzar's Correspondent
Concluded and begun
In that immortal Copy
The Conscience of us all
Can read without its Glasses
On Revelation's Wall –

c. 1879

1890

1460

His Cheek is his Biographer –
As long as he can blush
Perdition is Opprobrium –
Past that, he sins in peace –

c. 1879

1914

1461

"Heavenly Father" – take to thee
The supreme iniquity
Fashioned by thy candid Hand
In a moment contraband –
Though to trust us – seem to us
More respectful – "We are Dust" –
We apologize to thee
For thine own Duplicity –

c. 1879

1914

1462

We knew not that we were to live –
Nor when – we are to die –
Our ignorance – our cuirass is –
We wear Mortality
As lightly as an Option Gown
Till asked to take it off –
By his intrusion, God is known –
It is the same with Life –

c. 1879

1894

1463

A Route of Evanescence
With a revolving Wheel –
A Resonance of Emerald –
A Rush of Cochineal –
And every Blossom on the Bush
Adjusts its tumbled Head –
The mail from Tunis, probably,
An easy Morning's Ride –

c. 1879

1891

1464

One thing of it we borrow
And promise to return –

The Booty and the Sorrow
Its Sweetness to have known –
One thing of it we covet –
The power to forget –
The Anguish of the Avarice
Defrays the Dross of it –

c. 1879

1894

1465

Before you thought of Spring
Except as a Surmise
You see – God bless his suddenness –
A Fellow in the Skies
Of independent Hues
A little weather worn
Inspiriting habiliments
Of Indigo and Brown –
With specimens of Song
As if for you to choose –
Discretion in the interval
With gay delays he goes
To some superior Tree
Without a single Leaf
And shouts for joy to Nobody
But his seraphic self –

c. 1871

1891

1466

One of the ones that Midas touched
Who failed to touch us all
Was that confiding Prodigal
The reeling Oriole –

So drunk he disavows it
With badinage divine –
So dazzling we mistake him
For an alighting Mine –

A Pleader – a Dissembler –
An Epicure – a Thief –
Betimes an Oratorio –
An Ecstasy in chief –

The Jesuit of Orchards
He cheats as he enchant's
Of an entire Attar
For his decamping wants –

The splendor of a Burmah
The Meteor of Birds,
Departing like a Pageant
Of Ballads and of Bards –

I never thought that Jason sought
For any Golden Fleece
But then I am a rural man
With thoughts that make for Peace –

But if there were a Jason,
Tradition bear with me
Behold his lost Aggrandizement
Upon the Apple Tree –

c. 1879

1891

1467

A little overflowing word
That any, hearing, had inferred
For Ardor or for Tears,
Though Generations pass away,
Traditions ripen and decay,
As eloquent appears –

c. 1879

1924

1468

A winged spark doth soar about –
I never met it near

For Lightning it is oft mistook
When nights are hot and sere –

Its twinkling Travels it pursues
Above the Haunts of men –
A speck of Rapture – first perceived
By feeling it is gone –
Rekindled by some action quaint

c. 1879

1945

1469

If wrecked upon the Shoal of Thought
How is it with the Sea?
The only Vessel that is shunned
Is safe – Simplicity –

c. 1879

1945

1470

The Sweets of Pillage, can be known
To no one but the Thief –
Compassion for Integrity
Is his divinest Grief –

c. 1879

1914

1471

Their Barricade against the Sky
The martial Trees withdraw
And with a Flag at every turn
Their Armies are no more.

What Russet Halts in Nature's March
They indicate or cause
An inference of Mexico
Effaces the Surmise –

Recurrent to the After Mind
That Massacre of Air –

The Wound that was not Wound nor Scar
But Holidays of War –

c. 1879

1945

1472

To see the Summer Sky
Is Poetry, though never in a Book it lie –
True Poems flee –

c. 1879

1945

1473

We talked with each other about each other
Though neither of us spoke –
We were listening to the seconds' Races
And the Hoofs of the Clock –
Pausing in Front of our Palsied Faces
Time compassion took –
Arks of Reprieve he offered to us –
Ararats – we took –

c. 1879

1945

1474

Estranged from Beauty – none can be –
For Beauty is Infinity –
And power to be finite ceased
Before Identity was leased.

c. 1879

1945

1475

Fame is the one that does not stay –
Its occupant must die
Or out of sight of estimate
Ascend incessantly –
Or be that most insolvent thing
A Lightning in the Germ –

Electrical the embryo
But we demand the Flame

c. 1879

1945

1476

His voice decrepit was with Joy –
Her words did totter so
How old the News of Love must be
To make Lips elderly
That purled a moment since with Glee --
Is it Delight or Woe –
Or Terror – that do decorate
This livid interview –

c. 1879

1945

1477

How destitute is he
Whose Gold is firm
Who finds it every time
The small stale Sum –
When Love with but a Pence
Will so display
As is a disrespect
To India.

c. 1879

1914

1478

Look back on Time, with kindly eyes –
He doubtless did his best –
How softly sinks that trembling sun
In Human Nature's West –

c. 1879

1890

1479

The Devil – had he fidelity
Would be the best friend –

Because he has ability –
But Devils cannot mend –
Perfidy is the virtue
That would but he resign
The Devil – without question
Were thoroughly divine

c. 1879

1914

1480

The fascinating chill that music leaves
Is Earth's corroboration
Of Ecstasy's impediment –
'Tis Rapture's germination
In timid and tumultuous soil
A fine – estranging creature –
To something upper wooing us
But not to our Creator –

c. 1879

1945

1481

The way Hope builds his House
It is not with a sill –
Nor Rafter – has that Edifice
But only Pinnacle –

Abode in as supreme
This superficies
As if it were of Ledges smit
Or mortised with the Laws –

c. 1879

1945

1482

'Tis whiter than an Indian Pipe –
'Tis dimmer than a Lace –
No stature has it, like a Fog
When you approach the place –

Not any voice imply it here
Or intimate it there
A spirit – how doth it accost –
What function hath the Air?
This limitless Hyperbole
Each one of us shall be –
'Tis Drama – if Hypothesis
It be not Tragedy –

c. 1879

1896

1483

The Robin is a Gabriel
In humble circumstances –
His Dress denotes him socially,
Of Transport's Working Classes –
He has the punctuality
Of the New England Farmer –
The same oblique integrity,
A Vista vastly warmer –

A small but sturdy Residence,
A self denying Household,
The Guests of Perspicacity
Are all that cross his Threshold –
As covert as a Fugitive,
Cajoling Consternation
By Ditties to the Enemy
And Sylvan Punctuation –

c. 1880

1894

1484

We shall find the Cube of the Rainbow.
Of that, there is no doubt.
But the Arc of a Lover's conjecture
Eludes the finding out.

c. 1880

1894

1485

Love is done when Love's begun,
Sages say,
But have Sages known?
Truth adjourn your Boon
Without Day.

c. 1880

1894

1486

Her spirit rose to such a height
Her countenance it did inflate
Like one that fed on awe.
More prudent to assault the dawn
Than merit the ethereal scorn
That effervesced from her.

c. 1880

1932

1487

The Savior must have been
A docile Gentleman –
To come so far so cold a Day
For little Fellowmen –

The Road to Bethlehem
Since He and I were Boys
Was leveled, but for that 'twould be
A rugged billion Miles –

c. 1880

1915

1488

Birthday of but a single pang
That there are less to come –
Afflictive is the Adjective
But affluent the doom –

c. 1880

1915

1489

A Dimple in the Tomb
Makes that ferocious Room
A Home—

c. 1880

1931

1490

The Face in evanescence lain
Is more distinct than ours —
And ours surrendered for its sake
As Capsules are for Flower's —
Or is it the confiding sheen
Dissenting to be won
Descending to enamor us
Of Detriment divine?

c. 1880

1931

1491

The Road to Paradise is plain,
And holds scarce one.
Not that it is not firm
But we presume
A Dimpled Road
Is more preferred.
The Belles of Paradise are few —
Not me — nor you —
But unsuspected things —
Mines have no Wings.

c. 1880

1945

1492

"And with what body do they come?" —
Then they *do* come — Rejoice!
What Door — What Hour — Run — run — My Soul!
Illuminate the House!

"Body!" Then real – a Face and Eyes –
To know that it is them! –
Paul knew the Man that knew the News –
He passed through Bethlehem –

c. 1880

1894

1493

Could that sweet Darkness where they dwell
Be once disclosed to us
The clamor for their loveliness
Would burst the Loneliness –

1894

1494

The competitions of the sky
Corrodeless ply.

1880?

1931

1495

The Thrill came slowly like a Boon for
Centuries delayed
Its fitness growing like the Flood
In sumptuous solitude –
The desolation only missed
While Rapture changed its Dress
And stood amazed before the Change
In ravished Holiness –

c. 1880

1945

1496

All that I do
Is in review
To his enamored mind
I know his eye
Where e'er I ply
Is pushing close behind

Not any Port
Nor any flight
But he doth there preside
What omnipresence lies in wait
For her to be a Bride

c. 1880

1945

1497

Facts by our side are never sudden
Until they look around
And then they scare us like a spectre
Protruding from the Ground –

The height of our portentous Neighbor
We never know –
Till summoned to his recognition
By an Adieu –

Adieu for whence
The sage cannot conjecture
The bravest die
As ignorant of their resumption
As you or I –

c. 1880

1945

1498

Glass was the Street – in tinsel Peril
Tree and Traveller stood –
Filled was the Air with merry venture
Hearty with Boys the Road –

Shot the lithe Sleds like shod vibrations
Emphasized and gone
It is the Past's supreme italic
Makes this Present mean –

c. 1880

1945

1499

How firm Eternity must look
To crumbling men like me
The only Adamant Estate
In all Identity –

How mighty to the insecure
Thy Physiognomy
To whom not any Face cohere –
Unless concealed in thee

c. 1880

1945

1500

It came his turn to beg –
The begging for the life
Is different from another Alms
'Tis Penury in Chief –

I scanned his narrow realm
I gave him leave to live
Lest Gratitude revive the snake
Though smuggled his reprieve

c. 1880

1945

1501

Its little Ether Hood
Doth sit upon its Head –
The millinery supple
Of the sagacious God –

Till when it slip away
A nothing at a time –
And Dandelion's Drama
Expires in a stem.

c. 1880

1945

1502

I saw the wind within her
I knew it blew for me –
But she must buy my shelter
I asked Humility

c. 1880

1955

1503

More than the Grave is closed to me –
The Grave and that Eternity
To which the Grave adheres –
I cling to nowhere till I fall –
The Crash of nothing, yet of all –
How similar appears –

c. 1880

1945

1504

Of whom so dear
The name to hear
Illumines with a Glow
As intimate – as fugitive
As Sunset on the snow –

c. 1880

1945

1505

She could not live upon the Past
The Present did not know her
And so she sought this sweet at last
And nature gently owned her
The mother that has not a knell
for either Duke or Robin

c. 1880

1945

1506

Summer is shorter than any one --
Life is shorter than Summer --
Seventy Years is spent as quick
As an only Dollar --

Sorrow -- now -- is polite -- and stays --
See how well we spurn him --
Equally to abhor Delight --
Equally retain him --

c. 1880

1945

1507

The Pile of Years is not so high
As when you came before
But it is rising every Day
From recollection's Floor
And while by standing on my Heart
I still can reach the top
Efface the mountain with your face
And catch me ere I drop

c. 1880

1945

1508

You cannot make Remembrance grow
When it has lost its Root --
The tightening the Soil around
And setting it upright
Deceives perhaps the Universe
But not retrieves the Plant --
Real Memory, like Cedar Feet
Is shod with Adamant --
Nor can you cut Remembrance down
When it shall once have grown --
Its Iron Buds will sprout anew
However overthrown --

c. 1880

1945

1509

Mine Enemy is growing old –
I have at last Revenge –
The Palate of the Hate departs –
If any would avenge

Let him be quick – the Viand flits –
It is a faded Meat –
Anger as soon as fed is dead –
'Tis starving makes it fat –

c. 1881

1891

1510

How happy is the little Stone
That rambles in the Road alone,
And doesn't care about Careers
And Exigencies never fears –
Whose Coat of elemental Brown
A passing Universe put on,
And independent as the Sun
Associates or glows alone,
Fulfilling absolute Decree
In casual simplicity –

c. 1881

1891

1511

My country need not change her gown,
Her triple suit as sweet
As when 'twas cut at Lexington,
And first pronounced "a fit."

Great Britain disapproves, "the stars";
Disparagement discreet, –
There's something in their attitude
That taunts her bayonet.

c. 1881

1891

1512

All things swept sole away
This – is immensity –

c. 1881

1931

1513

"Go traveling with us!"
Her travels daily be
By routes of ecstasy
To Evening's Sea –

c. 1881

1931

1514

An Antiquated Tree
Is cherished of the Crow
Because that Junior Foliage is disrespectful now
To venerable Birds
Whose Corporation Coat
Would decorate Oblivion's
Remotest Consulate.

c. 1881

1945

1515

The Things that never can come back, are several –
Childhood – some forms of Hope – the Dead –
Though Joys – like Men – may sometimes make a Journey –
And still abide –
We do not mourn for Traveler, or Sailor,
Their Routes are fair –
But think enlarged of all that they will tell us
Returning here –
"Here!" There are typic "Heres" –
Foretold Locations –
The Spirit does not stand –

Himself – at whatsoever Fathom
His Native Land –

c. 1881

1945

1516

No Autumn's intercepting Chill
Appalls this Tropic Breast –
But African Exuberance
And Asiatic rest.

c. 1881

1914

1517

How much of Source escapes with thee –
How chief thy sessions be –
For thou hast borne a universe
Entirely away.

1881

1894

1518

Not seeing, still we know –
Not knowing, guess –
Not guessing, smile and hide
And half caress –

And quake – and turn away,
Seraphic fear –
Is Eden's innuendo
"If you dare"?

c. 1881

1894

1519

The Dandelion's pallid tube
Astonishes the Grass,
And Winter instantly becomes
An infinite Alas –

The tube uplifts a signal Bud
And then a shouting Flower, –
The Proclamation of the Suns
That sepulture is o'er.

c. 1881

1894

1520

The stem of a departed Flower
Has still a silent rank.
The Bearer from an Emerald Court
Of a Despatch of Pink.

c. 1881

1894

1521

The Butterfly upon the Sky,
That doesn't know its Name
And hasn't any tax to pay
And hasn't any Home
Is just as high as you and I,
And higher, I believe,
So soar away and never sigh
And that's the way to grieve –

c. 1881

1894

1522

His little Hearse like Figure
Unto itself a Dirge
To a delusive Lilac
The vanity divulge
Of Industry and Morals
And every righteous thing
For the divine Perdition
Of Idleness and Spring –

c. 1881

1915

1523

We never know we go when we are going –
We jest and shut the Door –
Fate – following – behind us bolts it –
And we accost no more –

c. 1881

1894

1524

A faded Boy – in sallow Clothes
Who drove a lonesome Cow
To pastures of Oblivion –
A statesman's Embryo –

The Boys that whistled are extinct –
The Cows that fed and thanked
Remanded to a Ballad's Barn
Or Clover's Retrospect –

c. 1881

1945

1525*

He lived the Life of Ambush
And went the way of Dusk
And now against his subtle name
There stands an Asterisk
As confident of him as we –
Impregnable we are –
The whole of Immortality intrenched
Within a star –

2. 1881

1945

1526

His oriental heresies
Exhilarate the Bee,
And filling all the Earth and Air
With gay apostasy

* See poem 1616.

Fatigued at last, a Clover plain
Allures his jaded eye
That lowly Breast where Butterflies
Have felt it meet to die –

c. 1881

1945

1527

Oh give it Motion – deck it sweet
With Artery and Vein –
Upon its fastened Lips lay words –
Affiance it again
To that Pink stranger we call Dust –
Acquainted more with that
Than with this horizontal one
That will not lift its Hat –

c. 1881

1945

1528

The Moon upon her fluent Route
Defiant of a Road –
The Star's Etruscan Argument
Substantiate a God –

If Aims impel these Astral Ones
The ones allowed to know
Know that which makes them as forgot
As Dawn forgets them – now –

c. 1881

1914

1529

'Tis Seasons since the Dimpled War
In which we each were Conqueror
And each of us were slain
And Centuries 'twill be and more
Another Massacre before
So modest and so vain –

Without a Formula we fought
Each was to each the Pink Redoubt -

c. 1881

1945

1530

A Pang is more conspicuous in Spring
In contrast with the things that sing
Not Birds entirely - but Minds -
Minute Effulgencies and Winds -
When what they sung for is undone
Who cares about a Blue Bird's Tune -
Why, Resurrection had to wait
Till they had moved a Stone -

c. 1881

1945

1531

Above Oblivion's Tide there is a Pier
And an effaceless "Few" are lifted there -
Nay - lift themselves - Fame has no Arms -
And but one smile - that meagres Balms -

c. 1881

1945

1532

From all the Jails the Boys and Girls
Ecstatically leap -
Beloved only Afternoon
That Prison doesn't keep

They storm the Earth and stun the Air,
A Mob of solid Bliss -
Alas - that Frowns should lie in wait
For such a Foe as this -

c. 1881

1892

1533

On that specific Pillow
Our projects flit away –
The Night's tremendous Morrow
And whether sleep will stay
Or usher us – a stranger –
To situations new
The effort to comprise it
Is all the soul can do.

c. 1881

1945

1534

Society for me my misery
Since Gift of Thee –

c. 1881

1945

1535

The Life that tied too tight escapes
Will ever after run
With a prudential look behind
And spectres of the Rein –
The Horse that scents the living Grass
And sees the Pastures smile
Will be retaken with a shot
If he is caught at all –

c. 1881

1945

1536

There comes a warning like a spy
A shorter breath of Day
A stealing that is not a stealth
And Summers are away –

c. 1881

1945

1537

Candor – my tepid friend –
Come not to play with me –
The Myrrhs, and Mochas, of the Mind
Are its iniquity –

c. 1881

1914

1538

Follow wise Orion
Till you waste your Eye –
Dazzlingly decamping
He is just as high –

c. 1882

1914

1539

Now I lay thee down to Sleep –
I pray the Lord thy Dust to keep –
And if thou live before thou wake –
I pray the Lord thy Soul to make –

c. 1882

1924

1540

As imperceptibly as Grief
The Summer lapsed away –
Too imperceptible at last
To seem like Perfidy –
A Quietness distilled
As Twilight long begun,
Or Nature spending with herself
Sequestered Afternoon –
The Dusk drew earlier in –
The Morning foreign shone –
A courteous, yet harrowing Grace,
As Guest, that would be gone –

And thus, without a Wing
Or service of a Keel
Our Summer made her light escape
Into the Beautiful.

c. 1865

1891

1541

No matter where the Saints abide,
They make their Circuit fair
Behold how great a Firmament
Accompanies a Star.

1882?

1914

1542

Come show thy Durham Breast
To her who loves thee best,
Delicious Robin –
And if it be not me
At least within my Tree
Do the avowing –
Thy Nuptial so minute
Perhaps is more astute
Than vaster suing –
For so to soar away
Is our propensity
The Day ensuing –

c. 1882

1947

1543

Obtaining but our own Extent
In whatsoever Realm –
'Twas Christ's own personal Expanse
That bore him from the Tomb –

c. 1882

1894

1544

Who has not found the Heaven – below –
Will fail of it above –
For Angels rent the House next ours,
Wherever we remove –

c. 1883

1896

1545

The Bible is an antique Volume –
Written by faded Men
At the suggestion of Holy Spectres –
Subjects – Bethlehem –
Eden – the ancient Homestead –
Satan – the Brigadier –
Judas – the Great Defaulter –
David – the Troubadour –
Sin – a distinguished Precipice
Others must resist –
Boys that “believe” are very lonesome –
Other Boys are “lost” –
Had but the Tale a warbling Teller –
All the Boys would come –
Orpheus’ Sermon captivated –
It did not condemn –

c. 1882

1924

1546

Sweet Pirate of the heart,
Not Pirate of the Sea,
What wrecketh thee?
Some spice’s Mutiny –
Some Attar’s perfidy?
Confide in me.

c. 1882

1894

1547

Hope is a subtle Glutton –
He feeds upon the Fair –
And yet – inspected closely
What Abstinence is there –

His is the Halcyon Table –
That never seats but One –
And whatsoever is consumed
The same amount remain –

c. 1882

1896

1548

Meeting by Accident,
We hovered by design –
As often as a Century
An error so divine
Is ratified by Destiny,
But Destiny is old
And economical of Bliss
As Midas is of Gold –

c. 1882

1945

1549

My Wars are laid away in Books –
I have one Battle more –
A Foe whom I have never seen
But oft has scanned me o'er –
And hesitated me between
And others at my side,
But chose the best – Neglecting me – till
All the rest, have died –
How sweet if I am not forgot
By Chums that passed away –
Since Playmates at threescore and ten
Are such a scarcity –

c. 1882

1945

1550

The pattern of the sun
Can fit but him alone
For sheen must have a Disk
To be a sun -

c. 1882

1945

1551

Those - dying then,
Knew where they went -
They went to God's Right Hand -
That Hand is amputated now
And God cannot be found -

The abdication of Belief
Makes the Behavior small -
Better an ignis fatuus
Than no illume at all -

c. 1882

1945

1552

Within thy Grave!
Oh no, but on some other flight -
Thou only camest to mankind
To rend it with Good night -

c. 1882

1945

1553

Bliss is the plaything of the child --
The secret of the man
The sacred stealth of Boy and Girl
Rebuke it if we can

c. 1882

1945

1554

"Go tell it" – What a Message –
To whom – is specified –
Not murmur – not endearment –
But simply – we – obeyed –
Obeyed – a Lure – a Longing?
Oh Nature – none of this –
To Law – said sweet Thermopylae
I give my dying Kiss –

c. 1882

1945

1555

I groped for him before I knew
With solemn nameless need
All other bounty sudden chaff
For this foreshadowed Food
Which others taste and spurn and sneer –
Though I within suppose
That consecrated it could be
The only Food that grows

c. 1882

1945

1556

Image of Light, Adieu –
Thanks for the interview –
So long – so short –
Preceptor of the whole –
Coeval Cardinal –
Impart – Depart –

c. 1882

1945

1557

Lives he in any other world
My faith cannot reply

Before it was imperative
'Twas all distinct to me -

c. 1882

1945

1558

Of Death I try to think like this -
The Well in which they lay us
Is but the Likeness of the Brook
That menaced not to slay us,
But to invite by that Dismay
Which is the Zest of sweetness
To the same Flower Hesperian,
Decoying but to greet us -

I do remember when a Child
With bolder Playmates straying
To where a Brook that seemed a Sea
Withheld us by its roaring
From just a Purple Flower beyond
Until constrained to clutch it
If Doom itself were the result,
The boldest leaped, and clutched it -

c. 1882

1945

1559

Tried always and Condemned by thee
Permit me this reprieve
That dying I may earn the look
For which I cease to live -

c. 1882

1945

1560

To be forgot by thee
Surpasses Memory
Of other minds

The Heart cannot forget
Unless it contemplate
What it declines
I was regarded then
Raised from oblivion
A single time
To be remembered what –
Worthy to be forgot
Is my renown

c. 1883

1945

1561

No Brigadier throughout the Year
So civic as the Jay –
A Neighbor and a Warrior too
With shrill felicity
Pursuing Winds that censure us
A February Day,
The Brother of the Universe
Was never blown away –
The Snow and he are intimate –
I've often seen them play
When Heaven looked upon us all
With such severity
I felt apology were due
To an insulted sky
Whose pompous frown was Nutriment
To their Temerity –
The Pillow of this daring Head
Is pungent Evergreens –
His Larder – terse and Militant –
Unknown – refreshing things –
His Character – a Tonic –
His Future – a Dispute –
Unfair an Immortality
That leaves this Neighbor out –

c. 1883

1891

1562

Her Losses make our Gains ashamed --
She bore Life's empty Pack
As gallantly as if the East
Were swinging at her Back.
Life's empty Pack is heaviest,
As every Porter knows --
In vain to punish Honey --
It only sweeter grows.

c. 1883

1894

1563

By homely gift and hindered Words
The human heart is told
Of Nothing --
"Nothing" is the force
That renovates the World --

c. 1883

1955

1564

Pass to thy Rendezvous of Light,
Pangless except for us --
Who slowly ford the Mystery
Which thou hast leaped across!

c. 1883

1924

1565

Some Arrows slay but whom they strike --
But this slew all *but* him --
Who so appareled his Escape --
Too trackless for a Tomb --

c. 1883

1932

1566

Climbing to reach the costly Hearts
To which he gave the worth,
He broke them, fearing punishment
He ran away from Earth –

c. 1883

1931

1567

The Heart has many Doors –
I can but knock –
For any sweet “Come in”
Impelled to hark –
Not saddened by repulse,
Repast to me
That somewhere, there exists,
Supremacy –

c. 1883

1955

1568

To see her is a Picture –
To hear her is a Tune –
To know her an Intemperance
As innocent as June –
To know her not – Affliction –
To own her for a Friend
A warmth as near as if the Sun
Were shining in your Hand.

c. 1883

1945

1569

The Clock strikes one that just struck two –
Some schism in the Sum –
A Vagabond for Genesis
Has wrecked the Pendulum –

c. 1883

1894

1570

Forever honored be the Tree
Whose Apple Winterworn
Enticed to Breakfast from the Sky
Two Gabrieles Yestermorn.

They registered in Nature's Book
As Robins - Sire and Son -
But Angels have that modest way
To screen them from Renown.

c. 1883

1914

1571

How slow the Wind -
how slow the sea -
how late their Feathers be!

c. 1883

1894

1572

We wear our sober Dresses when we die,
But Summer, frilled as for a Holiday
Adjourns her sigh -

c. 1883

1894

1573

To the bright east she flies,
Brothers of Paradise
Remit her home,
Without a change of wings,
Or Love's convenient things,
Enticed to come.

Fashioning what she is,
Fathoming what she was,
We deem we dream -

And that dissolves the days
Through which existence strays
Homeless at home.

c. 1883

1894

1574

No ladder needs the bird but skies
To situate its wings,
Nor any leader's grim baton
Arraigns it as it sings.
The implements of bliss are few –
As Jesus says of *Him*,
“Come unto me” the moiety
That wafts the cherubim.

1883?

1894

1575

The Bat is dun, with wrinkled Wings –
Like fallow Article –
And not a song pervade his Lips –
Or none perceptible.

His small Umbrella quaintly halved
Describing in the Air
An Arc alike inscrutable
Elate Philosopher.

Deputed from what Firmament –
Of what Astute Abode –
Empowered with what Malignity
Auspiciously withheld –

To his adroit Creator
Ascribe no less the praise –
Beneficent, believe me,
His Eccentricities –

c. 1876

1896

1576

The Spirit lasts – but in what mode –
Below, the Body speaks,
But as the Spirit furnishes –
Apart, it never talks –
The Music in the Violin
Does not emerge alone
But Arm in Arm with Touch, yet Touch
Alone – is not a Tune –
The Spirit lurks within the Flesh
Like Tides within the Sea
That make the Water live, estranged
What would the Either be?
Does that know – now – or does it cease –
That which to this is done,
Resuming at a mutual date
With every future one?
Instinct pursues the Adamant,
Exacting this Reply –
Adversity if it may be, or
Wild Prosperity,
The Rumor's Gate was shut so tight
Before my Mind was sown,
Not even a Prognostic's Push
Could make a Dent thereon –

c. 1883

1894

1577

Morning is due to all –
To some – the Night –
To an imperial few –
The Auroral light.

c. 1883

1931

1578

Blossoms will run away,
Cakes reign but a Day,

But Memory like Melody
Is pink Eternally.

c. 1883

1939

1579

It would not know if it were spurned,
This gallant little flower –
How therefore safe to be a flower
If one would tamper there.

To enter, it would not aspire –
But may it not despair
That it is not a Cavalier,
To dare and perish there?

c. 1882

1945

1580

We shun it ere it comes,
Afraid of Joy,
Then sue it to delay
And lest it fly,
Beguile it more and more –
May not this be
Old Suitor Heaven,
Like our dismay at thee?

c. 1882

1894

1581

The farthest Thunder that I heard
Was nearer than the Sky
And rumbles still, though torrid Noons
Have lain their missiles by –
The Lightning that preceded it
Struck no one but myself –
But I would not exchange the Bolt
For all the rest of Life –

Indebtedness to Oxygen
The Happy may repay,
But not the obligation
To Electricity –
It founds the Homes and decks the Days
And every clamor bright
Is but the gleam concomitant
Of that waylaying Light –
The Thought is quiet as a Flake –
A Crash without a Sound,
How Life's reverberation
Its Explanation found –

c. 1883

1932

1582

Where Roses would not dare to go,
What Heart would risk the way –
And so I send my Crimson Scouts
To sound the Enemy –

c. 1883

1945

1583

Witchcraft was hung, in History,
But History and I
Find all the Witchcraft that we need
Around us, every Day –

c. 1883

1945

1584

Expanse cannot be lost –
Not Joy, but a Decree
Is Deity –
His Scene, Infinity –
Whose rumor's Gate was shut so tight
Before my Beam was sown,

Not even a Prognostic's push
Could make a Dent thereon --

The World that thou hast opened
Shuts for thee,
But not alone,
We all have followed thee --
Escape more slowly
To thy Tracts of Sheen --
The Tent is listening,
But the Troops are gone!

c. 1883

1955

1585

The Bird her punctual music brings
And lays it in its place --
Its place is in the Human Heart
And in the Heavenly Grace --
What respite from her thrilling toil
Did Beauty ever take --
But Work might be electric Rest
To those that Magic make --

c. 1883

1955

1586

To her derided Home
A Weed of Summer came --
She did not know her station low
Nor Ignominy's Name --
Bestowed a summer long
Upon a fameless flower --
Then swept as lightly from disdain
As Lady from her Bower --

Of Bliss the Codes are few --
As Jesus cites of Him --

"Come unto me" the moiety
That wafts the Seraphim -

c. 1883

1945

1587

He ate and drank the precious Words --
His Spirit grew robust -
He knew no more that he was poor,
Nor that his frame was Dust -

He danced along the dingy Days
And this Bequest of Wings
Was but a Book - What Liberty
A loosened spirit brings -

c. 1883

1890

1588

This Me - that walks and works - must die,
Some fair or stormy Day,
Adversity if it may be
Or wild prosperity
The Rumor's Gate was shut so tight
Before my mind was born
Not even a Prognostic's push
Can make a Dent thereon -

c. 1883

1945

1589

Cosmopolites without a plea
Alight in every Land
The compliments of Paradise
From those within my Hand

Their dappled Journey to themselves
A compensation fair

Knock and it shall be opened
Is their Theology

c. 1883

1945

1590

Not at Home to Callers
Says the Naked Tree –
Bonnet due in April –
Wishing you Good Day –

c. 1883

1924

1591

The Bobolink is gone –
The Rowdy of the Meadow –
And no one swaggers now but me –
The Presbyterian Birds
Can now resume the Meeting
He boldly interrupted that overflowing Day
When supplicating mercy
In a portentous way
He swung upon the Decalogue
And shouted let us pray –

c. 1883

1945

1592

The Lassitudes of Contemplation
Beget a force
They are the spirit's still vacation
That him refresh –
The Dreams consolidate in action –
What mettle fair

c. 1883

1945

1593

There came a Wind like a Bugle –
It quivered through the Grass

And a Green Chill upon the Heat
So ominous did pass
We barred the Windows and the Doors
As from an Emerald Ghost –
The Doom's electric Moccasin
That very instant passed –
On a strange Mob of panting Trees
And Fences fled away
And Rivers where the Houses ran
Those looked that lived – that Day –
The Bell within the steeple wild
The flying tidings told –
How much can come
And much can go,
And yet abide the World!

c. 1883

1891

1594

Immured in Heaven!
What a Cell!
Let every Bondage be,
Thou sweetest of the Universe,
Like that which ravished thee!

c. 1883

1914

1595

Declaiming Waters none may dread –
But Waters that are still
Are so for that most fatal cause
In Nature – they are full –

c. 1884

1932

1596

Few, yet enough,
Enough is One –
To that ethereal throng

Have not each one of us the right
To stealthily belong?

c. 1884

1896

1597

'Tis not the swaying frame we miss,
It is the steadfast Heart,
That had it beat a thousand years,
With Love alone had bent,
Its fervor the electric Oar,
That bore it through the Tomb,
Ourselves, denied the privilege,
Consolelessly presume —

c. 1884

1932

1598

Who is it seeks my Pillow Nights —
With plain inspecting face —
“Did you” or “Did you not,” to ask —
'Tis “Conscience” — Childhood's Nurse —

With Martial Hand she strokes the Hair
Upon my wincing Head —
“All” Rogues “shall have their part in” what —
The Phosphorus of God —

c. 1884

1914

1599

Though the great Waters sleep,
That they are still the Deep,
We cannot doubt —
No vacillating God
Ignited this Abode
To put it out —

c. 1884

1894

1600

Upon his Saddle sprung a Bird
And crossed a thousand Trees
Before a Fence without a Fare
His Fantasy did please
And then he lifted up his Throat
And squandered such a Note
A Universe that overheard
Is stricken by it yet –

c. 1884

1947

1601

Of God we ask one favor,
That we may be forgiven –
For what, he is presumed to know –
The Crime, from us, is hidden –
Immured the whole of Life
Within a magic Prison
We reprimand the Happiness
That too competes with Heaven.

c. 1884

1894

1602

Pursuing you in your transitions,
In other Motes –
Of other Myths
Your requisition be.
The Prism never held the Hues,
It only heard them play –

c. 1884

1931

1603

The going from a world we know
To one a wonder still
Is like the child's adversity
Whose vista is a hill,

Behind the hill is sorcery
And everything unknown,
But will the secret compensate
For climbing it alone?

c. 1884

1894

1604

We send the Wave to find the Wave –
An Errand so divine,
The Messenger enamored too,
Forgetting to return,
We make the wise distinction still,
Soever made in vain,
The sagest time to dam the sea is when the sea is gone –

c. 1884

1894

1605

Each that we lose takes part of us;
A crescent still abides,
Which like the moon, some turbid night,
Is summoned by the tides.

c. 1884

1894

1606

Quite empty, quite at rest,
The Robin locks her Nest, and tries her Wings.
She does not know a Route
But puts her Craft about
For *rumored* Springs –
She does not ask for Noon –
She does not ask for Boon,
Crumbless and homeless, of but one request –
The Birds she lost –

c. 1884

1951

1607

Within that little Hive
Such Hints of Honey lay
As made Reality a Dream
And Dreams, Reality –

c. 1884

1951

1608

The ecstasy to guess
Were a receipted bliss
If grace could talk.

1884?

1894

1609

Sunset that screens, reveals –
Enhancing what we see
By menaces of Amethyst
And Moats of Mystery.

c. 1884

1945

1610

Morning that comes but once,
Considers coming twice –
Two Dawns upon a single Morn,
Make Life a sudden price.

c. 1884

1945

1611

Their dappled opportunity
Disparage or dismiss –
The Obloquies of Etiquette
Are obsolete to Bliss –

c. 1884

1945

1612

The Auctioneer of Parting
His "Going, going, gone"
Shouts even from the Crucifix,
And brings his Hammer down –
He only sells the Wilderness,
The prices of Despair
Range from a single human Heart
To Two – not any more –

c. 1884

1945

1613

Not Sickness stains the Brave,
Nor any Dart,
Nor Doubt of Scene to come,
But an adjourning Heart –

c. 1884

1894

1614

Parting with Thee reluctantly,
That we have never met,
A Heart sometimes a Foreigner,
Remembers it forgot –

c. 1884

1931

1615

Oh what a Grace is this,
What Majesties of Peace,
That having breathed
The fine – ensuing Right
Without Diminuet Proceed!

c. 1884

1931

1616*

Who abdicated Ambush
And went the way of Dusk,
And now against his subtle Name
There stands an Asterisk
As confident of him as we –
Impregnable we are –
The whole of Immortality
Secreted in a Star.

c. 1884

1894

1617

To try to speak, and miss the way
And ask it of the Tears,
Is Gratitude's sweet poverty,
The Tatters that he wears –

A better Coat if he possessed
Would help him to conceal,
Not subjugate, the Mutineer
Whose title is "the Soul."

c. 1884

1894

1618

There are two Mays
And then a Must
And after that a Shall.
How infinite the compromise
That indicates I will!

c. 1884

1955

1619

Not knowing when the Dawn will come,
I open every Door,

* See poem 1525.

Or has it Feathers, like a Bird,
Or Billows, like a Shore –

c. 1884

1896

1620

Circumference thou Bride of Awe
Possessing thou shalt be
Possessed by every hallowed Knight
That dares to covet thee

c. 1884

1932

1621

A Flower will not trouble her, it has so small a Foot,
And yet if you compare the Lasts,
Hers is the smallest Boot –

c. 1884

1955

1622

A Sloop of Amber slips away
Upon an Ether Sea,
And wrecks in Peace a Purple Tar,
The Son of Ecstasy –

c. 1884

1896

1623

A World made penniless by that departure
Of minor fabrics begs
But sustenance is of the spirit
The Gods but Dregs

c. 1885

1945

1624

Apparently with no surprise
To any happy Flower

The Frost beheads it at its play—
In accidental power—
The blonde Assassin passes on—
The Sun proceeds unmoved
To measure off another Day
For an Approving God.

c. 1884

1890

1625

Back from the cordial Grave I drag thee
He shall not take thy Hand
Nor put his spacious arm around thee
That none can understand

c. 1884

1945

1626

No Life can pomplex pass away—
The lowliest career
To the same Pageant wends its way
As that exalted here—

How cordial is the mystery!
The hospitable Pall
A “this way” beckons spaciously—
A Miracle for all!

c. 1884

1891

1627

The pedigree of Honey
Does not concern the Bee,
Nor lineage of Ecstasy
Delay the Butterfly
On spangled journeys to the peak
Of some perceiveless thing—

The right of way to Tripoli
A more essential thing.

version I
c. 1884

1945

The Pedigree of Honey
Does not concern the Bee –
A Clover, any time, to him,
Is Aristocracy –

version II
c. 1884

1890

1628

A Drunkard cannot meet a Cork
Without a Reverie –
And so encountering a Fly
This January Day
Jamaicas of Remembrance stir
That send me reeling in –
The moderate drinker of Delight
Does not deserve the spring –
Of juleps, part are in the Jug
And more are in the joy –
Your connoisseur in Liquors
Consults the Bumble Bee –

c. 1884

1945

1629

Arrows enamored of his Heart –
Forgot to rankle there
And Venoms he mistook for Balms
disdained to rankle there –

c. 1884

1945

1630

As from the earth the light Balloon
Asks nothing but release –

Ascension that for which it was,
Its soaring Residence.
The spirit looks upon the Dust
That fastened it so long
With indignation,
As a Bird
Defrauded of its song.

c. 1884

1945

1631

Oh Future! thou secreted peace
Or subterranean woe –
Is there no wandering route of grace
That leads away from thee –
No circuit sage of all the course
Described by cunning Men
To balk thee of thy sacred Prey –
Advancing to thy Den –

c. 1884

1945

1632

So give me back to Death –
The Death I never feared
Except that it deprived of thee –
And now, by Life deprived,
In my own Grave I breathe
And estimate its size –
Its size is all that Hell can guess –
And all that Heaven was –

c. 1884

1945

1633

Still own thee – still thou art
What surgeons call alive –
Though slipping – slipping I perceive
To thy reportless Grave –

Which question shall I clutch –
What answer wrest from thee
Before thou dost exude away
In the recallless sea?

c. 1884

1945

1634

Talk not to me of Summer Trees
The foliage of the mind
A Tabernacle is for Birds
Of no corporeal kind
And winds do go that way at noon
To their Ethereal Homes
Whose Bugles call the least of us
To undepicted Realms

c. 1884

1945

1635

The Jay his Castanet has struck
Put on your muff for Winter
The Tippet that ignores his voice
Is impudent to nature

Of Swarthy Days he is the close
His Lotus is a chestnut
The Cricket drops a sable line
No more from yours at present

c. 1884

1945

1636

The Sun in reining to the West
Makes not as much of sound
As Cart of man in road below
Adroitly turning round
That Whiffletree of Amethyst

c. 1884

1945

1637

Is it too late to touch you, Dear?
We this moment knew –
Love Marine and Love terrene –
Love celestial too –

c. 1885

1894

1638

Go thy great way!
The Stars thou meetst
Are even as Thyself –
For what are Stars but Asterisks
To point a human Life?

c. 1885

1894

1639

A Letter is a joy of Earth –
It is denied the Gods –

c. 1885

1931

1640

Take all away from me, but leave me Ecstasy,
And I am richer then than all my Fellow Men –
Ill it becometh me to dwell so wealthily
When at my very Door are those possessing more,
In abject poverty –

c. 1885

1931

1641

Betrothed to Righteousness might be
An Ecstasy discreet
But Nature relishes the Pinks
Which she was taught to eat –

c. 1885

1945

1642

"Red Sea," indeed! Talk not to me
 Of purple Pharaoh –
 I have a Navy in the West
 Would pierce his Columns thro' –
 Guileless, yet of such Glory fine
 That all along the Line
 Is it, or is it not, Marine –
 Is it, or not, divine –
 The Eye inquires with a sigh
 That Earth sh'd be so big –
 What Exultation in the Woe –
 What Wine in the fatigue!

c. 1885

1945

1643

Extol thee – could I? Then I will
 By saying nothing new –
 But just the truest truth
 That thou art heavenly.

Perceiving thee is evidence
 That we are of the sky
 Partaking thee a guaranty
 Of immortality

c. 1885

1945

1644

Some one prepared this mighty show
 To which without a Ticket go
 The nations and the Days –

Displayed before the simplest Door
 That all may witness it and more,
 The pomp of summer Days.

1885

1945

1645

The Ditch is dear to the Drunken man
 For is it not his Bed –
 His Advocate – his Edifice?
 How safe his fallen Head
 In her disheveled Sanctity –
 Above him is the sky –
 Oblivion bending over him
 And Honor leagues away.

c. 1885

1945

1646

Why should we hurry – why indeed?
 When every way we fly
 We are molested equally
 By immortality.
 No respite from the inference
 That this which is begun,
 Though where its labors lie
 A bland uncertainty
 Besets the sight
 This mighty night –

c. 1885

1945

1647

Of Glory not a Beam is left
 But her Eternal House –
 The Asterisk is for the Dead,
 The Living, for the Stars –

c. 1886

1931

1648

The immortality she gave
 We borrowed at her Grave –

For just one Plaudit famishing,
The Might of Human love –

c. 1886

1931

1649

A Cap of Lead across the sky
Was tight and surly drawn
We could not find the mighty Face
The Figure was withdrawn –

A Chill came up as from a shaft
Our noon became a well
A Thunder storm combines the charms
Of Winter and of Hell.

?

1914

1650

A lane of Yellow led the eye
Unto a Purple Wood
Whose soft inhabitants to be
Surpasses solitude
If Bird the silence contradict
Or flower presume to show
In that low summer of the West
Impossible to know –

?

1955

1651

A Word made Flesh is seldom
And tremblingly partook
Nor then perhaps reported
But have I not mistook
Each one of us has tasted
With ecstasies of stealth
The very food debated
To our specific strength –

A Word that breathes distinctly
Has not the power to die
Cohesive as the Spirit
It may expire if He –
“Made Flesh and dwelt among us”
Could condescension be
Like this consent of Language
This loved Philology.

?

1955

1652

Advance is Life’s condition
The Grave but a Relay
Supposed to be a terminus
That makes it hated so –

The Tunnel is not lighted
Existence with a wall
Is better we consider
Than not exist at all –

?

1955

1653

As we pass Houses musing slow
If they be occupied
So minds pass minds
If they be occupied

?

1955

1654

Beauty crowds me till I die
Beauty mercy have on me
But if I expire today
Let it be in sight of thee –

?

1914

1655

Conferring with myself
My stranger disappeared
Though first upon a berry fat
Miraculously fared
How paltry looked my cares
My practise how absurd
Superfluous my whole career
Beside this travelling Bird

?

1955

1656

Down Time's quaint stream
Without an oar
We are enforced to sail
Our Port a secret
Our Perchance a Gale
What Skipper would
Incur the Risk
What Buccaneer would ride
Without a surety from the Wind
Or schedule of the Tide –

?

1955

1657

Eden is that old-fashioned House
We dwell in every day
Without suspecting our abode
Until we drive away.

How fair on looking back, the Day
We sauntered from the Door –
Unconscious our returning,
But discover it no more.

?

1914

1658

Endanger it, and the Demand
Of tickets for a sigh
Amazes the Humility
Of Credibility –

Recover it to Nature
And that dejected Fleet
Find Consternation's Carnival
Divested of its Meat.

?

1955

1659

Fame is a fickle food
Upon a shifting plate
Whose table once a
Guest but not
The second time is set.

Whose crumbs the crows inspect
And with ironic caw
Flap past it to the
Farmer's Corn –
Men eat of it and die.

?

1914

1660

Glory is that bright tragic thing
That for an instant
Means Dominion –
Warms some poor name
That never felt the Sun,
Gently replacing
In oblivion –

?

1914

1661

Guest am I to have
Light my northern room
Why to cordiality so averse to come
Other friends adjourn
Other bonds decay
Why avoid so narrowly
My fidelity –

?

1955

1662

He went by sleep that drowsy route
To the surmising Inn –
At day break to begin his race
Or ever to remain –

?

1955

1663

His mind of man, a secret makes
I meet him with a start
He carries a circumference
In which I have no part –

Or even if I deem I do
He otherwise may know
Impregnable to inquest
However neighborly –

?

1914

1664

I did not reach Thee
But my feet slip nearer every day
Three Rivers and a Hill to cross
One Desert and a Sea
I shall not count the journey one
When I am telling thee.

Two deserts, but the Year is cold
So that will help the sand
One desert crossed –
The second one
Will feel as cool as land
Sahara is too little price
To pay for thy Right hand.

The Sea comes last – Step merry, feet,
So short we have to go –
To play together we are prone,
But we must labor now,
The last shall be the lightest load
That we have had to draw.

The Sun goes crooked –
That is Night
Before he makes the bend.
We must have passed the Middle Sea –
Almost we wish the End
Were further off –
Too great it seems
So near the Whole to stand.

We step like Plush,
We stand like snow,
The waters murmur new.
Three rivers and the Hill are passed –
Two deserts and the sea!
Now Death usurps my Premium
And gets the look at Thee.

?

1914

1665

I know of people in the Grave
Who would be very glad
To know the news I know tonight
If they the chance had had.

?
'Tis this expands the least event
And swells the scantest deed –
My right to walk upon the Earth
If they this moment had.

1955

1666

I see thee clearer for the Grave
That took thy face between
No Mirror could illumine thee
Like that impassive stone –

I know thee better for the Act
That made thee first unknown
The stature of the empty nest
Attests the Bird that's gone.

?
1955

1667

I watched her face to see which way
She took the awful news –
Whether she died before she heard
Or in protracted bruise
Remained a few slow years with us –
Each heavier than the last –
A further afternoon to fail,
As Flower at fall of Frost.

?
1914

1668

If I could tell how glad I was
I should not be so glad –
But when I cannot make the Force,
Nor mould it into Word,
I know it is a sign
That new Dilemma be

From mathematics further off
Than from Eternity.

?

1914

1669

In snow thou comest –
Thou shalt go with the resuming ground,
The sweet derision of the crow,
And Glee's advancing sound.

In fear thou comest –
Thou shalt go at such a gait of joy
That man anew embark to live
Upon the depth of thee.

?

1955

1670

In Winter in my Room
I came upon a Worm –
Pink, lank and warm –
But as he was a worm
And worms presume
Not quite with him at home –
Secured him by a string
To something neighboring
And went along.

A Trifle afterward
A thing occurred
I'd not believe it if I heard
But state with creeping blood –
A snake with mottles rare
Surveyed my chamber floor
In feature as the worm before
But ringed with power –

The very string with which
I tied him – too
When he was mean and new
That string was there –

I shrank – “How fair you are”!
Propitiation’s claw –
“Afraid,” he hissed
“Of me”?
“No cordiality” –
He fathomed me –
Then to a Rhythm *Slim*
Secreted in his Form
As Patterns swim
Projected him.

That time I flew
Both eyes his way
Lest he pursue
Nor ever ceased to run
Till in a distant Town
Towns on from mine
I set me down
This was a dream.

?

1914

1671

Judgment is justest
When the Judged,
His action laid away,
Divested is of every Disk
But his sincerity.

Honor is then the safest hue
In a posthumous Sun –
Not any color will endure
That scrutiny can burn.

?

1955

1672

Lightly stepped a yellow star
To its lofty place –
Loosed the Moon her silver hat
From her lustral Face –
All of Evening softly lit
As an Astral Hall –
Father, I observed to Heaven,
You are punctual.

?

1914

1673

Nature can do no more
She has fulfilled her Dyes
Whatever Flower fail to come
Of other Summer days
Her crescent reimburse
If other Summers be
Nature's imposing negative
Nulls opportunity –

?

1955

1674

Not any sunny tone
From any fervent zone
Find entrance there –
Better a grave of Balm
Toward human nature's home –
And Robins near –
Than a stupendous Tomb
Proclaiming to the Gloom
How dead we are –

?

1914

1675

Of this is Day composed
A morning and a noon
A Revelry unspeakable
And then a gay unknown
Whose Pomps allure and spurn
And dower and deprive
And penury for Glory
Remedilessly leave.

?

1914

1676

Of Yellow was the outer Sky
In Yellower Yellow hewn
Till Saffron in Vermilion slid
Whose seam could not be shewn.

?

1955

1677

On my volcano grows the Grass
A meditative spot –
An acre for a Bird to choose
Would be the General thought –

How red the Fire rocks below –
How insecure the sod
Did I disclose
Would populate with awe my solitude.

?

1914

1678

Peril as a Possession
'Tis Good to bear
Danger disintegrates Satiety
There's Basis there –
Begets an awe

That searches Human Nature's creases
As clean as Fire.

?

1914

1679

Rather arid delight
If Contentment accrue
Make an abstemious Ecstasy
Not so good as joy –

But Rapture's Expense
Must not be incurred
With a tomorrow knocking
And the Rent unpaid –

?

1955

1680

Sometimes with the Heart
Seldom with the Soul
Scarcer once with the Might
Few – love at all.

?

1915

1681

Speech is one symptom of Affection
And Silence one –
The perfectest communication
Is heard of none –

Exists and its indorsement
Is had within –
Behold, said the Apostle,
Yet had not seen!

?

1914

Summer begins to have the look
 Peruser of enchanting Book
 Reluctantly but sure perceives
 A gain upon the backward leaves -

Autumn begins to be inferred
 By millinery of the cloud
 Or deeper color in the shawl
 That wraps the everlasting hill.

The eye begins its avarice
 A meditation chastens speech
 Some Dyer of a distant tree
 Resumes his gaudy industry.

Conclusion is the course of All
 At *most* to be perennial
 And then elude stability
 Recalls to immortality.

?

1914

That she forgot me was the least
 I felt it second pain
 That I was worthy to forget
 Was most I thought upon.

Faithful was all that I could boast
 But Constancy became
 To her, by her innominate,
 A something like a shame.

?

1914

The Blunder is in estimate.
 Eternity is there
 We say, as of a Station -
 Meanwhile he is so near

He joins me in my Ramble –
Divides abode with me –
No Friend have I that so persists
As this Eternity.

?

1914

1685

The butterfly obtains
But little sympathy
Though favorably mentioned
In Entomology –

Because he travels freely
And wears a proper coat
The circumspect are certain
That he is dissolute –

Had he the homely scutcheon
Of modest Industry
'Twere fitter certifying
For Immortality –

?

1914

1686

The event was directly behind Him
Yet He did not guess
Fitted itself to Himself like a Robe
Relished His ignorance.
Motioned itself to drill
Loaded and Levelled
And let His Flesh
Centuries from His soul.

?

1955

1687

The gleam of an heroic Act
Such strange illumination

The Possible's slow fuse is lit
By the Imagination.

?

1914

1688

The Hills erect their Purple Heads
The Rivers lean to see
Yet Man has not of all the Throng
A Curiosity.

?

1914

1689

The look of thee, what is it like
Hast thou a hand or Foot
Or Mansion of Identity
And what is thy Pursuit?

Thy fellows are they realms or Themes
Hast thou Delight or Fear
Or Longing – and is that for us
Or values more severe?

Let change transfuse all other Traits
Enact all other Blame
But deign this least certificate –
That thou shalt be the same.

?

1914

1690

The ones that disappeared are back
The Phoebe and the Crow
Precisely as in March is heard
The curtness of the Jay –
Be this an Autumn or a Spring
My wisdom loses way

One side of me the nuts are ripe
The other side is May.

?

1914

1691

The overtakelessness of those
Who have accomplished Death
Majestic is to me beyond
The majesties of Earth.

The soul her "Not at Home"
Inscribes upon the flesh –
And takes her fair aerial gait
Beyond the hope of touch.

?

1914

1692

The right to perish might be thought
An undisputed right –
Attempt it, and the Universe
Upon the opposite
Will concentrate its officers –
You cannot even die
But nature and mankind must pause
To pay you scrutiny.

?

1914

1693

The Sun retired to a cloud
A Woman's shawl as big –
And then he sulked in mercury
Upon a scarlet log –
The drops on Nature's forehead stood
Home flew the loaded bees –
The South unrolled a purple fan
And handed to the trees.

?

1955

1694

The wind drew off
Like hungry dogs
Defeated of a bone –
Through fissures in
Volcanic cloud
The yellow lightning shone –
The trees held up
Their mangled limbs
Like animals in pain –
When Nature falls upon herself
Beware an Austrian.

?

1914

1695

There is a solitude of space
A solitude of sea
A solitude of death, but these
Society shall be
Compared with that profounder site
That polar privacy
A soul admitted to itself –
Finite infinity.

?

1914

1696

These are the days that Reindeer love
And pranks the Northern star –
This is the Sun's objective,
And Finland of the Year.

?

1914

1697

They talk as slow as Legends grow
No mushroom is their mind
But foliage of sterility
Too stolid for the wind –

They laugh as wise as Plots of Wit
Predestined to unfold
The point with bland prevision
Portentously untold.

?

1955

1698

"Tis easier to pity those when dead
That which pity previous
Would have saved –
A Tragedy enacted
Secures Applause
That Tragedy enacting
Too seldom does.

?

1955

1699

To do a magnanimous thing
And take oneself by surprise
If oneself is not in the habit of him
Is precisely the finest of Joys –

Not to do a magnanimous thing
Notwithstanding it never be known
Notwithstanding it cost us existence once
Is Rapture herself spurn –

?

1955

1700

To tell the Beauty would decrease
To state the Spell demean –
There is a syllable-less Sea
Of which it is the sign –
My will endeavors for its word
And fails, but entertains

A Rapture as of Legacies –
Of introspective Mines –

?

1914

1701

To their apartment deep
No ribaldry may creep
Untumbled this abode
By any man but God –

?

1914

1702

Today or this noon
She dwelt so close
I almost touched her –
Tonight she lies
Past neighborhood
And bough and steeple,
Now past surmise.

?

1914

1703

'Twas comfort in her Dying Room
To hear the living Clock –
A short relief to have the wind
Walk boldly up and knock –
Diversion from the Dying Theme
To hear the children play –
But wrong the more
That these could live
And this of ours must *die*.

?

1914

1704

Unto a broken heart
No other one may go

Without the high prerogative
Itself hath suffered too.

?

1955

1705

Volcanoes be in Sicily
And South America
I judge from my Geography –
Volcanos nearer here
A Lava step at any time
Am I inclined to climb –
A Crater I may contemplate
Vesuvius at Home.

?

1914

1706

When we have ceased to care
The Gift is given
For which we gave the Earth
And mortgaged Heaven
But so declined in worth
'Tis ignominy now
To look upon –

?

1915

1707

Winter under cultivation
Is as arable as Spring.

?

1955

1708

Witchcraft has not a Pedigree
'Tis early as our Breath
And mourners meet it going out
The moment of our death –

?

1914

1709

With sweetness unabated
Informed the hour had come
With no remiss of triumph
The autumn started home

Her home to be with Nature
As competition done
By influential kinsmen
Invited to return –

In supplements of Purple
An adequate repast
In heavenly reviewing
Her residue be past –

?

1955

1710

A curious Cloud surprised the Sky,
'Twas like a sheet with Horns;
The sheet was Blue –
The Antlers Gray –
It almost touched the Lawns.

So low it leaned – then statelier drew –
And trailed like robes away,
A Queen adown a satin aisle
Had not the majesty.

?

1945

1711

A face devoid of love or grace,
A hateful, hard, successful face,
A face with which a stone
Would feel as thoroughly at ease
As were they old acquaintances –
First time together thrown.

?

1896

1712

A Pit – but Heaven over it –
And Heaven beside, and Heaven abroad,
And yet a Pit –
With Heaven over it.

To stir would be to slip –
To look would be to drop –
To dream – to sap the Prop
That holds my chances up.
Ah! Pit! With Heaven over it!

The depth is all my thought –
I dare not ask my feet –
'Twould start us where we sit
So straight you'd scarce suspect
It was a Pit – with fathoms under it –
Its Circuit just the same.
Seed – summer – tomb –
Whose Doom to whom?

?

1945

1713

As subtle as tomorrow
That never came,
A warrant, a conviction,
Yet but a name.

?

1945

1714

By a departing light
We see acuter, quite,
Than by a wick that stays.
There's something in the flight
That clarifies the sight
And decks the rays.

?

1945

1715

Consulting summer's clock,
But half the hours remain.
I ascertain it with a shock –
I shall not look again.
The second half of joy
Is shorter than the first.
The truth I do not dare to know
I muffle with a jest.

?

1945

1716

Death is like the insect
Menacing the tree,
Competent to kill it,
But decoyed may be.

Bait it with the balsam,
Seek it with the saw,
Baffle, if it cost you
Everything you are.

Then, if it have burrowed
Out of reach of skill –
Wring the tree and leave it,
'Tis the vermin's will.

?

1896

1717

Did life's penurious length
Italicize its sweetness,
The men that daily live
Would stand so deep in joy
That it would clog the cogs
Of that revolving reason
Whose esoteric belt
Protects our sanity.

?

1945

1718

Drowning is not so pitiful
As the attempt to rise.
Three times, 'tis said, a sinking man
Comes up to face the skies,
And then declines forever
To that abhorred abode,
Where hope and he part company –
For he is grasped of God.
The Maker's cordial visage,
However good to see,
Is shunned, we must admit it,
Like an adversity.

?

1896

1719

God is indeed a jealous God –
He cannot bear to see
That we had rather not with Him
But with each other play.

?

1945

1720

Had I known that the first was the last
I should have kept it longer.
Had I known that the last was the first
I should have drunk it stronger.
Cup, it was your fault,
Lip was not the liar.
No, lip, it was yours,
Bliss was most to blame.

?

1945

1721

He was my host – he was my guest,
I never to this day

If I invited him could tell,
Or he invited me.

So infinite our intercourse
So intimate, indeed,
Analysis as capsule seemed
To keeper of the seed.

?

1945

1722

Her face was in a bed of hair,
Like flowers in a plot –
Her hand was whiter than the sperm
That feeds the sacred light.
Her tongue more tender than the tune
That totters in the leaves –
Who hears may be incredulous,
Who witnesses, believes.

?

1945

1723

High from the earth I heard a bird,
He trod upon the trees
As he esteemed them trifles,
And then he spied a breeze,
And situated softly
Upon a pile of wind
Which in a perturbation
Nature had left behind.
A joyous going fellow
I gathered from his talk
Which both of benediction
And badinage partook.
Without apparent burden
I subsequently learned
He was the faithful father
Of a dependent brood.

And this untoward transport
His remedy for care.
A contrast to our respites.
How different we are!

?

1896

1724

How dare the robins sing,
When men and women hear
Who since they went to their account
Have settled with the year! -
Paid all that life had earned
In one consummate bill,
And now, what life or death can do
Is immaterial.
Insulting is the sun
To him whose mortal light
Beguiled of immortality
Bequeaths him to the night.
Extinct be every hum
In deference to him
Whose garden wrestles with the dew,
At daybreak overcome!

?

1896

1725

I took one Draught of Life -
I'll tell you what I paid -
Precisely an existence -
The market price, they said.

They weighed me, Dust by Dust -
They balanced Film with Film,
Then handed me my Being's worth --
A single Dram of Heaven!

?

1929

1726

If all the griefs I am to have
Would only come today,
I am so happy I believe
They'd laugh and run away.

If all the joys I am to have
Would only come today,
They could not be so big as this
That happens to me now.

?

1945

1727

If ever the lid gets off my head
And lets the brain away
The fellow will go where he belonged –
Without a hint from me,

And the world – if the world be looking on –
Will see how far from home
It is possible for sense to live
The soul there – all the time.

?

1945

1728

Is Immortality a bane
That men are so oppressed?

?

1945

1729

I've got an arrow here.
Loving the hand that sent it
I the dart revere.

Fell, they will say, in "skirmish"!
Vanquished, my soul will know

By but a simple arrow
Sped by an archer's bow.

?

1896

1730

"Lethe" in my flower,
Of which they who drink
In the fadeless orchards
Hear the bobolink!

Merely flake or petal
As the Eye beholds
Jupiter! my father!
I perceive the rose!

?

1945

1731

Love can do all but raise the Dead
I doubt if even that
From such a giant were withheld
Were flesh equivalent

But love is tired and must sleep,
And hungry and must graze
And so abets the shining Fleet
Till it is out of gaze.

?

1945

1732

My life closed twice before its close --
It yet remains to see
If Immortality unveil
A third event to me

So huge, so hopeless to conceive
As these that twice befell.

Parting is all we know of heaven,
And all we need of hell.

?

1896

1733

No man saw awe, nor to his house
Admitted he a man
Though by his awful residence
Has human nature been.

Not deeming of his dread abode
Till laboring to flee
A grasp on comprehension laid
Detained vitality.

Returning is a different route
The Spirit could not show
For breathing is the only work
To be enacted now.

"Am not consumed," old Moses wrote,
"Yet saw him face to face" –
That very physiognomy
I am convinced was this.

?

1945

1734

Oh, honey of an hour,
I never knew thy power,
Prohibit me
Till my minutest dower,
My unfrequented flower,
Deserving be.

?

1945

1735

One crown that no one seeks
And yet the highest head

Its isolation coveted
Its stigma deified

While Pontius Pilate lives
In whatsoever hell
That coronation pierces him
He recollects it well.

?

1945

1736

Proud of my broken heart, since thou didst break it,
Proud of the pain I did not feel till thee,

Proud of my night, since thou with moons dost slake it,
Not to partake thy passion, my humility.

Thou can'st not boast, like Jesus, drunken without companion
Was the strong cup of anguish brewed for the Nazarene

Thou can'st not pierce tradition with the peerless puncture,
See! I usurped *thy* crucifix to honor mine!

?

1947

1737

Rearrange a "Wife's" affection!
When they dislocate my Brain!
Amputate my freckled Bosom!
Make me bearded like a man!

Blush, my spirit, in thy Fastness –
Blush, my unacknowledged clay –
Seven years of troth have taught thee
More than Wifehood ever may!

Love that never leaped its socket –
Trust entrenched in narrow pain –
Constancy thro' fire – awarded –
Anguish – bare of anodyne!

Burden – borne so far triumphant –
None suspect me of the crown,

For I wear the "Thorns" till *Sunset* –
Then – my Diadem put on.

Big my Secret but it's *bandaged* –
It will never get away
Till the Day its Weary Keeper
Leads it through the Grave to thee.

?

1945

1738

Softened by Time's consummate plush,
How sleek the woe appears
That threatened childhood's citadel
And undermined the years.

Bisected now, by bleaker griefs,
We envy the despair
That devastated childhood's realm,
So easy to repair.

?

1896

1739

Some say goodnight – at night –
I say goodnight by day –
Good-bye – the Going utter me –
Goodnight, I still reply –

For parting, that is night,
And presence, simply dawn –
Itself, the purple on the height
Denominated morn.

?

1929

1740

Sweet is the swamp with its secrets,
Until we meet a snake;
'Tis then we sigh for houses,
And our departure take

At that entralling gallop
That only childhood knows.
A snake is summer's treason,
And guile is where it goes.

?

1896

1741

That it will never come again
Is what makes life so sweet.
Believing what we don't believe
Does not exhilarate.

That if it be, it be at best
An ablative estate –
This instigates an appetite
Precisely opposite.

?

1945

1742

The distance that the dead have gone
Does not at first appear –
Their coming back seems possible
For many an ardent year.

And then, that we have followed them,
We more than half suspect,
So intimate have we become
With their dear retrospect.

?

1896

1743

The grave my little cottage is,
Where "Keeping house" for thee
I make my parlor orderly
And lay the marble tea.

For two divided, briefly,
A cycle, it may be,

Till everlasting life unite
In strong society.

?

1896

1744

The joy that has no stem nor core,
Nor seed that we can sow,
Is edible to longing,
But ablative to show.

By fundamental palates
Those products are preferred
Impregnable to transit
And patented by pod.

?

1945

1745

The mob within the heart
Police cannot suppress
The riot given at the first
Is authorized as peace

Uncertified of scene
Or signified of sound
But growing like a hurricane
In a congenial ground.

?

1945

1746

The most important population
Unnoticed dwell,
They have a heaven each instant
Not any hell.

Their names, unless you know them,
'Twere useless tell.

Of bumble-bees and other nations
The grass is full.

?

1945

1747

The parasol is the umbrella's daughter,
And associates with a fan
While her father abuts the tempest
And abridges the rain.

The former assists a siren
In her serene display;
But her father is borne and honored,
And borrowed to this day.

?

1945

1748

The reticent volcano keeps
His never slumbering plan –
Confided are his projects pink
To no precarious man.

If nature will not tell the tale
Jehovah told to her
Can human nature not survive
Without a listener?

Admonished by her buckled lips
Let every babbler be
The only secret people keep
Is Immortality.

?

1896

1749

The waters chased him as he fled,
Not daring look behind –
A billow whispered in his Ear,
"Come home with me, my friend –

My parlor is of shiven glass,
My pantry has a fish
For every palate in the Year" -
To this revolting bliss
The object floating at his side
Made no distinct reply.

?

1945

1750

The words the happy say
Are paltry melody
But those the silent feel
Are beautiful -

?

1945

1751

There comes an hour when begging stops,
When the long interceding lips
Perceive their prayer is vain.
"Thou shalt not" is a kinder sword
Than from a disappointing God
"Disciple, call again."

?

1945

1752

This docile one inter
While we who dare to live
Arraign the sunny brevity
That sparkled to the Grave

On her departing span
No wilderness remain
As dauntless in the House of Death
As if it were her own -

?

1945

1753

Through those old Grounds of memory,
The sauntering alone
Is a divine intemperance
A prudent man would shun.
Of liquors that are vended
'Tis easy to beware
But statutes do not meddle
With the internal bar.
Pernicious as the sunset
Permitting to pursue
But impotent to gather,
The tranquil perfidy
Alloys our firmer moments
With that severest gold
Convenient to the longing
But otherwise withheld.

?

1945

1754

To lose thee — sweeter than to gain
All other hearts I knew.
'Tis true the drought is destitute,
But then, I had the dew!

The Caspian has its realms of sand,
Its other realm of sea.
Without the sterile perquisite,
No Caspian could be.

?

1896

1755

To make a prairie it takes a clover and one bee,
One clover, and a bee,
And revery.
The revery alone will do,
If bees are few.

?

1896

1756

"Twas here my summer paused
What ripeness after then
To other scene or other soul
My sentence had begun.

To winter to remove
With winter to abide
Go manacle your icicle
Against your Tropic Bride.

?

1945

1757

Upon the gallows hung a wretch,
Too sullied for the hell
To which the law entitled him.
As nature's curtain fell
The one who bore him tottered in, —
For this was woman's son.
" "Twas all I had," she stricken gasped —
Oh, what a livid boon!

?

1896

1758

Where every bird is bold to go
And bees abashless play,
The foreigner before he knocks
Must thrust the tears away.

?

1896

1759

Which misses most,
The hand that tends,
Or heart so gently borne,
'Tis twice as heavy as it was
Because the hand is gone?

Which blesses most,
The lip that can,
Or that that went to sleep
With "if I could" endeavoring
Without the strength to shape?

?

1945

1760

Elysium is as far as to
The very nearest Room
If in that Room a Friend await
Felicity or Doom -

What fortitude the Soul contains,
That it can so endure
The accent of a coming Foot -
The opening of a Door -

c. 1882

1890

1761

A train went through a burial gate,
A bird broke forth and sang,
And trilled, and quivered, and shook his throat
Till all the churchyard rang;

And then adjusted his little notes,
And bowed and sang again.
Doubtless, he thought it meet of him
To say good-by to men.

?

1890

1762

Wore nature mortal lady
Who had so little time
To pack her trunk and order
The great exchange of clime -

How rapid, how momentous –
What exigencies were –
But nature will be ready
And have an hour to spare.

To make some trifle fairer
That was too fair before –
Enchanting by remaining,
And by departure more.

?

1898

1763

Fame is a bee.
It has a song –
It has a sting –
Ah, too, it has a wing.

?

1898

1764

The saddest noise, the sweetest noise,
The maddest noise that grows, –
The birds, they make it in the spring,
At night's delicious close.

Between the March and April line –
That magical frontier
Beyond which summer hesitates,
Almost too heavenly near.

It makes us think of all the dead
That sauntered with us here,
By separation's sorcery
Made cruelly more dear.

It makes us think of what we had,
And what we now deplore.
We almost wish those siren throats
Would go and sing no more.

An ear can break a human heart
As quickly as a spear,

We wish the ear had not a heart
So dangerously near.

?

1898

1765

That Love is all there is,
Is all we know of Love;
It is enough, the freight should be
Proportioned to the groove.

?

1914

1766

Those final Creatures, — who they are —
That, faithful to the close,
Administer her ecstasy,
But just the Summer knows.

?

1914

1767

Sweet hours have perished here;
This is a mighty room;
Within its precincts hopes have played, —
Now shadows in the tomb.

?

1924

1768

Lad of Athens, faithful be
To Thyself,
And Mystery —
All the rest is Perjury —

c. 1883

1931

1769

The longest day that God appoints
Will finish with the sun.

Anguish can travel to its stake,
And then it must return.

?

1894

1770

Experiment escorts us last –
His pungent company
Will not allow an Axiom
An Opportunity

c. 1870

1945

1771

How fleet – how indiscreet an one –
How always wrong is Love –
The joyful little Deity
We are not scourged to serve –

c. 1881

1945

1772

Let me not thirst with this Hock at my Lip,
Nor beg, with Domains in my Pocket –

c. 1881

1945

1773

The Summer that we did not prize,
Her treasures were so easy
Instructs us by departing now
And recognition lazy –

Bestirs itself – puts on its Coat,
And scans with fatal promptness
For Trains that moment out of sight,
Unconscious of his smartness.

c. 1883

1945

1774

Too happy Time dissolves itself
And leaves no remnant by –
'Tis Anguish not a Feather hath
Or too much weight to fly –

c. 1870

1945

1775

The earth has many keys.
Where melody is not
Is the unknown peninsula.
Beauty is nature's fact.

But witness for her land,
And witness for her sea,
The cricket is her utmost
Of elegy to me.

?

1945

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Thomas H. Johnson

Lawrenceville, New Jersey
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Previous Collections

The present edition derives from *The Poems of Emily Dickinson*, edited by Thomas H. Johnson (3 vols. Cambridge: the Belknap Press, Harvard University Press, 1955). Most of the poems here included appeared originally in the volumes named below. A few had their first publication in magazines and journals.

Ancestors' Brocades. By Millicent Todd Bingham. New York: Harper, 1945.

Bolts of Melody. Edited by Mabel Loomis Todd and Millicent Todd Bingham. New York: Harper, 1945.

The Complete Poems of Emily Dickinson. Edited by Martha Dickinson Bianchi and Alfred Leete Hampson. Boston: Little, Brown, 1924.

The Poems of Emily Dickinson. Edited by Martha Dickinson Bianchi and Alfred Leete Hampson. Boston: Little, Brown, 1930.

Emily Dickinson Face to Face: Unpublished Letters with Notes and Reminiscences. By Martha Dickinson Bianchi. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1932.

Emily Dickinson's Letters to Dr. and Mrs. Josiah Gilbert Holland. Edited by Theodora Van Wagenen Ward. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1951.

Further Poems of Emily Dickinson. Edited by Martha Dickinson Bianchi and Alfred Leete Hampson. Boston: Little, Brown, 1929.

Letters of Emily Dickinson. Edited by Mabel Loomis Todd. 2 vols. Boston: Roberts Brothers, 1894.

Letters of Emily Dickinson. New and enlarged edition. Edited by Mabel Loomis Todd. New York: Harper, 1931.

The Life and Letters of Emily Dickinson. By Martha Dickinson Bianchi. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1924.

Poems by Emily Dickinson. Edited by Mabel Loomis Todd and T. W. Higginson. Boston: Roberts Brothers, 1890.

- Poems by Emily Dickinson*, Second Series. Edited by T. W. Higginson and Mabel Loomis Todd. Boston: Roberts Brothers, 1891.
- Poems by Emily Dickinson*, Third Series. Edited by Mabel Loomis Todd. Boston: Roberts Brothers, 1896.
- Poems by Emily Dickinson*. Edited by Martha Dickinson Bianchi and Alfred Leete Hampson. Boston: Little, Brown, 1937.
- The Single Hound*. Edited by Martha Dickinson Bianchi. Boston: Little, Brown, 1914.
- Unpublished Poems of Emily Dickinson*. Edited by Martha Dickinson Bianchi and Alfred Leete Hampson. Boston: Little, Brown, 1935.

Indexes

Subject Index

The principal purpose of this index is to aid the reader in finding a desired poem. Since there are no titles, and the arrangement is chronological, the index of first lines alone does not provide adequate means of recognition. The subject index is not intended to fill the place of a concordance, nor should it be regarded as an attempt at interpretation of the poems. It is a classification based principally on key words in the poems themselves. In instances in which the whole content is stated in terms of imagery, the image itself, rather than the meaning, is used as a heading. An example of this is seen in the list of poems under the heading *Crown*.

It will be noted that certain large groups, such as those headed *Life*, *Love*, and *Death*, contain the bulk of the poems. In some instances, however, a poem listed under one of these headings will have also an entry under one or more categories. For example, "Death is a dialogue between/The spirit and the Dust" is entered under *Death*, *Spirit*, and *Dust*.

Under each main heading will be found first the numbers of the poems whose entire content is clearly on the subject given. These include poems of definition and description, and they are entered in numerical order, without subheadings. Following these, under separate subheadings, are the poems that represent special aspects of the main subject and those in which only a part of the content can be so classified. The order of the subheadings is governed by the numerical order of the poems they refer to, each new subheading being followed by the least number in its group, and the numerical sequence is followed also within the groups. When not more than five or six poems appear under a main subject, the subheadings have been for the most

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part eliminated, though sometimes a qualifying subheading has seemed desirable for the sake of clarity.

Another means of identification is offered under the headings *Names mentioned in the poems* and *Places mentioned in the poems*. Although names and places seldom represent the subjects of the poems, the author's use of such names as Cato and Carlo, Brazil and Himmaleh is often striking enough to linger in the memory. The heading *Names* rather than *Persons* was chosen since the list includes fictional and mythological as well as historical characters. The heading *Persons* has been used elsewhere with a more direct significance for a group of character sketches and verses dealing directly with personalities.

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