Select Poems of Sidney Lanier

Lanier, Sidney, 1842-1881

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[Sidney Lanier: American (Georgia) Poet, Musician, etc.; 1842-1881.]
Edited by Morgan Callaway [American (Southern U.S.) Scholar; 1862-1936.]

[Note on text: Italicized words are capitalised. Lines longer than 78 characters are broken and the continuation is indented two spaces. Some obvious errors may have been corrected. The "Notes" section has been abolished, and the notes themselves appear with the poems, instead of in a separate section.]

Select Poems of Sidney Lanier

Edited With an Introduction, Notes, and Bibliography
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Formerly Fellow of the Johns Hopkins University;
Author of "The Absolute Participle in Anglo-Saxon"

[Amended to include "The Marshes of Glynn"]

To My Father

Preface

This edition of the `Select Poems of Sidney Lanier' is issued in the hope of making his poetry known to wider circles than hitherto, especially among the students of our high-schools and colleges. To these as to older people, the poems will, it is believed, prove an inspiration from the stand-point both of literature and of life.

The biographical section of the Introduction rests in the main upon Dr. Ward's admirable `Memorial' prefixed to the `Poems of Sidney Lanier' edited by his wife, though a few additional facts have been gleaned here and there. For most* of the Bibliography down to 1888 I am indebted to my Hopkins comrade, Dr. Richard E. Burton, now of Hartford, Conn., who compiled one for the `Memorial of Sidney Lanier', published by President Gilman, of the Johns Hopkins University, in 1888. Obligations to other publications about Lanier are in every instance acknowledged in the appropriate place.

— * I say `most of the Bibliography down to 1888', because Dr. Burton's different purpose led him to exclude items that could not be omitted in a Bibliography that, like mine, tries to be complete. —

As to the selections made, I wished to include `The Marshes of Glynn' and yet not to exclude `Sunrise'. But both could not be put in, and I finally gave the preference to `Sunrise', chiefly on the ground of its being Lanier's latest complete poem.* I believe all will admit that the poems selected fairly exemplify the genius of the poet. The poems are arranged, not as in the complete edition, but in their chronological order, the only proper one, I think, for a text-book. Of course, they are all given complete.

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* Later opinion generally agrees that "The Marshes of Glynn"
is Lanier's greatest poem, and as this edition has no limitations of space,
it would be inappropriate to exclude it. Therefore it has been inserted
more or less in chronological order (in accordance with Callaway's plan),
with some comments. — Alan Light, 1998.
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In the Notes I have made rather copious quotations from poems familiar to English scholars, because I hope that this book will go into the hands of many to whom they are not familiar, and to whom the original texts are not easily

accessible. And yet, if they at all attain their end, the Notes must lead one to wish to know more of English poetry, of which Lanier's is but a part.

Among the friends that have helped me by counsel or otherwise I gratefully name Mr. Clifford Lanier, brother of the poet; Professor Wm. Hand Browne, of the Johns Hopkins University; Dr. Charles H. Ross, of the Alabama Polytechnic Institute; and my colleagues in the School of English in the University of Texas, Mr. L. R. Hamberlin and Professor Leslie Waggener. Chief-justice Logan E. Bleckley, of Georgia, a man of letters as well as of law, very kindly put at my use his correspondence with the poet, the original draft of `Corn', and his criticisms upon the same. My chief indebtedness, however, is to Mrs. Sidney Lanier, who has been most generous with her time and her husband's papers.

Morgan Callaway, Jr.

University of Texas, October 1, 1894.

Contents

Introduction

I. A Brief Sketch of Lanier's Life

(1842-1881)

Sidney Lanier has so recently passed from us that it seems desirable briefly to recount the chief incidents of his life. This task is much lightened by Dr. Wm. Hayes Ward's `Memorial',* upon which, as stated in the Preface, is based this section of my essay. Born at Macon, Ga., February 3, 1842, Sidney Lanier came of a family noted for their love and cultivation of the fine arts. From the time of Queen Elizabeth to the Restoration, several of his paternal ancestors were connected with the English court as musical composers and as painters. The father of the poet, however, Robert S. Lanier, was a most industrious lawyer, who, after a lingering illness of three years, recently** answered `Adsum' to the summons of the supreme tribunal. The poet's mother, Mary Anderson, a Virginian of Scotch descent, likewise sprang

from a family distinguished for their love of oratory, music, and poetry.

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* For the full title of works cited see `Bibliography'.
** October 20, 1893, at Macon, Ga.
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With such an ancestry we are not surprised to learn that Sidney's earliest passion was for music, and that in boyhood he could, although untutored, play on almost every kind of instrument. He preferred the violin, in playing which he sometimes sank into a deep trance, but in deference to his father's view gave it up for the flute, his power over which we shall hear of farther on. At first, strange to say, he considered music unworthy of one's sole attention, but later he came to rank it as his fullest expression of worship.

At fourteen Sidney entered the Sophomore Class of Oglethorpe College, near Macon, Ga., and, with a year's intermission, graduated with first honor in 1860, when just eighteen. To Professor James Woodrow, of Oglethorpe, now President of South Carolina College, Lanier declared that he owed "the strongest and most valuable stimulus of his youth." On graduating he was given a tutorship in his Alma Mater, a position that he held until the outbreak of the Civil War.

The lecture-room was now exchanged for the battle-field; in April, 1861, Lanier entered the Confederate Army as a private in the Macon Volunteers of the Second Georgia Battalion, an organization among the first to reach Norfolk and that still keeps up its corporate existence. In the spring of 1862 Lanier was joined by his young brother, Clifford; and throughout the war each seemed to vie with the other in brotherly love; for, while both were offered promotion, neither would accept it, since to do so would have entailed separation from the other. The leisure time of his first year's service Sidney spent in the study of music and the modern languages. He was engaged in several battles in Virginia, but afterward was transferred, with Clifford, to the Signal Service, with head-quarters at Petersburg. Here he had access to a small library, of which he made sedulous use. In 1863 his company was mounted, and served in Virginia and North Carolina. In the spring of 1864 both brothers were transferred to Wilmington, the head-quarters of the Marine Signal Service, in which they remained to the end of the war. Finally the two brothers were separated, each becoming signal officer* of a blockade-runner. Sidney's vessel was captured, and for five months he was a prisoner at Point Lookout, Md., with nothing but his flute to solace him. It was the exposure of prison-life, no doubt, that first led to decline of health by developing the seeds of consumption, a disease that was to carry off his mother and that he was to struggle with the last fifteen years of his life. Released from prison in February, 1865, he returned to Georgia, for the most part afoot, and reached home March 15th. An account of his war-life is given in his novel, `Tiger-lilies', treated below.

— * It is sometimes erroneously stated that each was put in charge of a blockade-runner. —

During the succeeding nine years (1865-73) his life was checkered indeed. Seriously ill for six weeks, he arose from his bed to see his mother carried off by consumption and to find himself suffering with congestion of the lungs. Slightly relieved, Lanier turned his hand to various projects for making a living: clerking in a hotel in Montgomery, Ala., for two years; writing* and publishing his novel, `Tiger-lilies'; teaching at Prattville, Ala., one year, during which time** he married Miss Mary Day, of Macon, Ga.; studying and then practising law with his father at Macon, Ga., for five years; now, in the winter of 1872-73, trying to recuperate at San Antonio, Texas, for hemorrhages had begun in 1868, and a cough had set in two years later; and, finally, settling in Baltimore, December, 1873, to devote himself to music and literature.

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* April, 1867.
** December 19, 1867.
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Against the son's devotion of his life to music and literature the father protested, chiefly on business grounds, and begged him to rejoin himself in the practice of the law. Thanking his father for his thoughtfulness, Lanier justified his own course in these earnest words: "My dear father, think how, for twenty years, through poverty, through pain, through weariness, through sickness, through the uncongenial atmosphere of a farcical college and of a bare army and then of an exacting business life, through all the discouragement of being wholly unacquainted with literary people and literary ways — I say, think how, in spite of all these depressing circumstances and of a thousand more which I could enumerate, these two figures of music and poetry have steadily kept in my heart so that I could not banish them. Does it not seem to you as to me, that I begin to have the right to enroll myself among the devotees of these two sublime arts, after having followed them so long and so humbly, and through so much bitterness?"*1* Of course, the father yielded

and did all that his slender means would allow toward keeping up his son, who henceforth devoted every energy to music and literature. Despite continued ill-health, which now and again necessitated visits of months' duration to Florida, North Carolina, and Virginia, Lanier did a vast amount of work. He was engaged as first flute for the Peabody Symphony Concerts, a position that he filled with rare distinction for six years. As to his literary work, this began with the publication of his novel, `Tiger-lilies', in 1867, and in the same year, of occasional poems in `The Round Table' of New York. `Corn', published in `Lippincott's Magazine' (Philadelphia) for February, 1875, is the first of his poems that attracted general notice, and the one that gained him the friendship of Bayard Taylor. To Taylor he owed his selection to write the `Centennial Cantata', which gave him still greater notoriety, though, to be sure, some of it was not very grateful to him. In 1876 the Lippincotts published his `Florida', and in 1877 his first volume of `Poems', which contained ninety-four pages and consisted chiefly of pieces*2* previously published in the magazines. Soon after settling in Baltimore, Lanier made a careful study of Old and Middle English, the fruits of which he partially embodied in courses of lectures given to his private class and to the public, the latter at the Peabody Institute, in 1879. During these years, too, he had been steadily turning out poems of high order. On his birthday, February 3, in 1879, he received notice of his appointment as Lecturer on English Literature at the Johns Hopkins University of Baltimore for the ensuing scholastic year, with a fixed salary, the first since his marriage. In the summer of 1879 he wrote his `Science of English Verse', which constituted the basis of his first course of lectures at the Johns Hopkins University. Notwithstanding serious illness, this same winter, 1879-80, he lectured at three private schools and kept up his musical engagement at the Peabody Concerts. The next winter, 1880-81, he came near dying, but still kept writing (`Sunrise' was written with a fever temperature of 104 Degrees) and went through his twelve lectures at the Hopkins, afterwards embodied in `The English Novel'. How trying this must have been to him can be gathered from the following words of Mr. Ward: "A few of the earlier lectures he penned himself; the rest he was obliged to dictate to his wife. With the utmost care of himself, going in a closed carriage and sitting during his lecture, his strength was so exhausted that the struggle for breath in the carriage on his return seemed each time to threaten the end. Those who heard him listened in a sort of fascinated terror, as in doubt whether the hoarded breath would suffice to the end of the hour."*3* After this a trip was made to New York to arrange for issuing some books for boys, and four were issued, two posthumously: `Boy's Froissart' (1878), `Boy's King Arthur' (1880), `Boy's Mabinogion' (1881), and `Boy's Percy' (1882). Another work, an account of North Carolina similar to that of Florida, was contracted for and was definitely planned, but, owing to aggravating infirmities, could not be completed.

— *1* Ward's `Memorial', p. xx. f. *2* They are named in the `Bibliography'. *3* Ward's `Memorial', p. xxviii. —

For the end was near at hand. Desperate illness had made it necessary to seek relief near Asheville, N.C., where he was joined by Mrs. Lanier and by his father and step-mother. Growing no better, he was moved to Lynn, Polk County, N.C. Of the rest we shall hear in the words of his wife: "We are left alone (it is August 29, 1881) with one another. On the last night of the summer comes a change. His love and immortal will hold off the destroyer of our summer yet one more week, until the forenoon of September 7th, and then falls the frost, and that unfaltering will renders its supreme submission to the will of God."* Unusually checkered his life had been, and yet for Lanier as for Timrod poetry (and music) had "turned life's tasteless waters into wine, and flushed them through and through with purple tints."** The body was taken to Mr. Lanier's home in Baltimore, thence to the Church of St. Michael and All Angels, where services were conducted by the rector, the Rev. Dr. William Kirkus. It was then buried in Greenmount Cemetery, in the lot of Mr. and Mrs. Lawrence Turnbull, two of the dearest friends that Mr. and Mrs. Lanier had in Baltimore.

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* Ward's `Memorial', p. xxx.
** Timrod's `A Vision of Poesy', stanza xliv.
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Mr. Lanier left a family consisting of his wife and four sons. Mrs. Lanier, who lives at Tryon, N.C., was the inspiration not only of those glorious tributes, `Laus Mariae' and `My Springs', but also of the poet's whole life. The eldest son, Mr. Charles Day Lanier, was born at Macon, Ga., September 12, 1868, and was graduated A.B. at the Johns Hopkins University in 1888. At one time he was Assistant Editor of `The Cosmopolitan Magazine', a position that he gave up only to become Business Manager of `The Review of Reviews', with which he has been connected from its beginning. He is the author of several graceful sketches in the magazines. The second son, Sidney, is passionately fond of music, and would have devoted himself thereto but for life-long ill-health. After teaching three years in West Virginia, he has started a fruit farm at Tryon, N.C., where he hopes to build up his health. The third son, Henry Wysham, was prevented from entering the Johns Hopkins by a partial failure of sight, and for three years has devoted himself to railroad engineering in Baltimore and in Jamaica. The youngest, Robert Sampson, only fourteen, is at Tryon, N.C., with his mother.

That interest in Lanier's life and work did not cease with his death, there is abundant evidence. On October 22, 1881, a

memorial meeting was held by the Faculty and students of the Johns Hopkins University, at which addresses*1* were made by President Gilman and Professor Wm. Hand Browne, of the University, and by the Rev. Dr. William Kirkus, of Baltimore, and a letter*1* was read from the poet-critic, Edmund C. Stedman, of New York. In 1883 `The English Novel' was published, and in 1884 the `Poems', edited by his wife, with the excellent `Memorial' by Dr. Wm. Hayes Ward, who declared that he thought Lanier would "take his final rank with the first princes of American song."*2* Numerous reviews of his life and works were published, notably those by Mr. Wm. R. Thayer, Dr. Merrill E. Gates, Professor Charles W. Kent, and by the London `Spectator'. On February 3, 1888, the Johns Hopkins University held another memorial meeting in Baltimore, attended by many from other cities. "A bust of the poet, in bronze (modelled by Ephraim Keyser, sculptor, in the last period of Lanier's life, at the suggestion of Mr. J. R. Tait), was presented to the University by his kinsman, Charles Lanier, Esq., of New York. It was also announced that a citizen of Baltimore had offered a pedestal, to be cut in Georgia marble from a design by Mr. J. B. N. Wyatt. On a temporary pedestal hung the flute of Lanier, which had so often been his solace, and a roll of his manuscript music. The bust was crowned with a wreath of laurel; the words of Lanier, `The Time needs Heart', were woven into the strings of a floral lyre; and other flowers, likewise brought by personal friends, were grouped around the pedestal. As a memento a card, designed by Mrs. Henry Whitman, of Boston, was given to those who were present. Upon its face was a wreath, with Lanier's name and the date, and the motto — `Aspiro dum Exspiro'; upon the reverse appeared the closing lines of the Hymn of the Sun, taken from the poet's `Hymns of the Marshes' — and beneath, a flute with ivy twined about it."*3* The exercises, which were interspersed with music, were as follows: addresses by President Gilman of the Hopkins and President Gates of Rutgers (now of Amherst); selections from Lanier's poetry, read by Miss Susan Hayes Ward, of Newark, N.J.; a paper on Lanier's `Science of English Verse', by Professor A. H. Tolman, of Ripon College, Wis. (now of the University of Chicago); poetic tributes by Mrs. Lawrence Turnbull, Miss Edith M. Thomas, and Messrs. James Cummings, Richard E. Burton, and John B. Tabb; and letters from Messrs. Richard W. Gilder, Edmund C. Stedman, and James Russell Lowell — all of which may be found in President Gilman's dainty `Memorial of Sidney Lanier'. Again, a replica of the above-mentioned bust, the gift also of Mr. Charles Lanier, was unveiled at the poet's birthplace, Macon, Ga., on October 17, 1890; on which occasion tender tributes*4* were again poured forth in prose and verse, by Messrs. W. B. Hill, Hugh V. Washington, Charles Lanier, Clifford Lanier, Wm. Hand Browne, Charles G. D. Roberts, John B. Tabb, H. S. Edwards, Wm. H. Hayne, Charles W. Hubner, Joel Chandler Harris, Charles Dudley Warner, and Daniel C. Gilman. But more significant than these demonstrations, perhaps, is the steadily growing study devoted to Lanier's works. Mr. Higginson*5* tells us, for instance, that, when he wrote his tribute in 1887, Lanier's `Science of English Verse' had been put upon the list of Harvard books to be kept only a fortnight, and that, according to the librarian, it was out "literally all the time." Moreover, it would not be difficult to cite various poems that have been more or less modeled upon Lanier's; it is sufficient, perhaps, to point out that the marsh, a theme almost unknown to poetry before Lanier immortalized it, is not infrequently the subject of poetic treatment now, as in the works of Charles G. D. Roberts,*6* Clinton Scollard,*7* and Maurice Thompson.*8* It is noteworthy, too, that many of the younger poets of the day, both in Canada and the United States, have sung Lanier's praise. A complete list is given in the `Bibliography'. Still further, a devoted admirer, Mrs. Lawrence Turnbull, of Baltimore, in `The Catholic Man', has in the person of Paul, the poet, given us an imaginative study of the character of Mr. Lanier. Finally, only a few months ago the Chautauquans of the class of 1898 determined to call themselves "The Laniers", in honor of the poet and his brother.

— *1* See the `Bibliography'. *2* `Memorial', p. xi. *3* Gilman's `A Memorial of Sidney Lanier', pp. 5-6. *4* Published in `The Atlanta (Ga.) Constitution' of October 19, 1890. *5* See `The Chautauquan', as cited in the `Bibliography'. *6* See recent files of `The Independent' (New York). *7* See his `Pictures in Song' (New York, 1884), pp. 45-49. *8* See his `Songs of Fair Weather' (Boston, 1883), pp. 27-28. —

II. Lanier's Prose Works

With this brief sketch of his life, let us turn to Lanier's works, and first to those in prose. At the head of the list comes `Tiger-lilies', a novel written within three weeks and published immediately thereafter, in 1867. Under the figure of "a strange, enormous, terrible flower," the seed of which he hopes may perish beyond resurrection, the author pictures the horror of war in general and of the Civil War in particular. An entertaining love-story runs through the book, the plot of which space does not allow me to detail. In execution the novel has grave defects: it lacks unity; the characters talk as learnedly as Lanier afterward wrote of music; and at times, as in the oft-quoted picture of the war,*1* the style is grandiloquent; owing to which blemishes the author wisely discouraged its republication. But, in spite of these defects, the book has one very strongly put scene,*2* the interview between Smallin and his deserter brother, and several beautiful passages*3* that distinctly proclaim the high-souled poet.

— *1* `Tiger-lilies', p. 115 ff. *2* `Tiger-lilies', p. 149 ff. *3* That on "love" (p. 26) is quoted later. —

Lanier's next publication, `Florida: Its Scenery, Climate, and History', was written by commission of the Atlantic Coast Line, and appeared in 1876. To use the author's own epithet, `Florida' is "a spiritualized guide-book".

Exclusive of the 1877 volume of `Poems', Lanier's next original work was `The Science of English Verse', which in lecture-form was delivered to the students of the Johns Hopkins in the winter of 1879 and was published in 1880. According to competent critics, the book gives as searching an investigation of the science of verse on its formal side as is to be had in any language. Since the treatise is so evidently an epoch-making one, I regret that the technicality of the subject forbids my attempting in this connection even a brief exposition* of its principles. I can say only that Lanier treats verse in the terms of music; that, according to the promise of the preface, he gives "an account of the true relations of music and verse"; and that in so doing he has given us the best working theory for English verse from Caedmon to Tennyson. This is a high estimate, but it is by no means so high as that of the lamented poet-professor, Edmund Rowland Sill, who said of `The Science of English Verse', "It is the only work that has ever made any approach to a rational view of the subject. Nor are the standard ones overlooked in making this assertion."**

— * This may be found in Professor Tolman's article, cited in the `Bibliography'. ** Quoted by Tolman. —

Lanier's second course of lectures at the Johns Hopkins University, delivered in the winter and spring of 1881, was published in 1883 under the title, `The English Novel and the Principles of Its Development'.* According to the author's statement, the purpose of the book is "first, to inquire what is the special relation of the novel to the modern man, by virtue of which it has become a paramount literary form; and, secondly, to illustrate this abstract inquiry, when completed, by some concrete readings in the greatest of modern English novelists" (p. 4). Addressing himself to the former, Lanier attempts to prove (1) that our time, when compared with that of Aeschylus, shows an "enormous growth in the personality of man" (p. 5); (2) that what we moderns call Physical Science, Music, and the Novel, all had their origin at practically the same time, about the middle of the seventeenth century (p. 9); and (3) "that the increase of personalities thus going on has brought about such complexities of relation that the older forms of expression were inadequate to them; and that the resulting necessity has developed the wonderfully free and elastic form of the modern novel out of the more rigid Greek drama, through the transition form of the Elizabethan drama" (p. 10). In fulfilment of his second purpose, the author gives a detailed study of several of the novels of George Eliot, whom he takes to be the greatest modern English novelist. Even this brief synopsis of the book must indicate its broad and stimulating character, in which respect it is a worthy successor of `The Science of English Verse'. Despite the limitations induced by failing life, which necessitated the cutting down of the course of lectures from twenty to twelve,** I know of few more life-giving books; and I venture to assert that it cannot safely be overlooked by any careful student of the subject.

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* Mrs. Lanier informs me that `The English Novel' will soon
be issued in an amended form and with a new sub-title,
`Studies in the Development of Personality', which indicates precisely
what Mr. Lanier intended to attempt, and relieves the book
of its seeming incompleteness as to scope.
** `Spann'.
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Among other prose works I may mention Lanier's early extravaganza, `Three Waterfalls'; `Bob', a happy account of a pet mocking-bird, worthy of being placed beside Dr. Brown's `Rab and his Friends'; his books for boys: `Froissart', `King Arthur', `Mabinogion', and `Percy', which have had, as they deserve, a large sale; and his posthumous `From Bacon to Beethoven', a highly instructive essay on music.

III. Lanier's Poetry: Its Themes

But it is chiefly as a poet that we wish to consider Lanier, and I turn to the posthumous edition of his `Poems' gotten out by his wife. At the outset let us ask, How did the poet look at the world? what problems engaged his attention and how were they solved? A careful investigation will show, I believe, that, despite the brevity of his life and its consuming cares, Lanier studied the chief questions of our age, and that in his poems he has offered us noteworthy solutions.

What, for instance, is more characteristic of our age than its tendency to agnosticism? I pass by the manifestations of this spirit in the world of religion, of which so much has been heard, and give an illustration or two from the field of history and politics. Picturesque Pocahontas, we are told, is no more to be believed in; moreover, the Pilgrim Fathers did not land at Plymouth Rock, nor did Jefferson write the Declaration of Independence. Which way we turn there is a big interrogation-point, often not for information but for negation. Of the good resulting from the inquisitive spirit, we all know; of the baneful influence of inquisitiveness that has become a mere intellectual pastime or amateurish agnosticism, we likewise have some knowledge; but the evil side of this tendency has seldom been put more forcibly, I think, than in this stanza from Lanier's `Acknowledgment':

"O Age that half believ'st thou half believ'st,
Half doubt'st the substance of thine own half doubt,
And, half perceiving that thou half perceiv'st,
Stand'st at thy temple door, heart in, head out!
Lo! while thy heart's within, helping the choir,
Without, thine eyes range up and down the time,
Blinking at o'er-bright Science, smit with desire
To see and not to see. Hence, crime on crime.
Yea, if the Christ (called thine) now paced yon street,
Thy halfness hot with his rebuke would swell;
Legions of scribes would rise and run and beat
His fair intolerable Wholeness twice to hell."*

— * `Acknowledgment', ll. 1-12. —

More hurtful than agnosticism, because affecting larger masses of people, is the rapid growth of the mercantile spirit during the present century, especially in America. This evil the poet saw most clearly and felt most keenly, as every one may learn by reading `The Symphony', his great poem in which the speakers are the various musical instruments. The violins begin:

"O Trade! O Trade! would thou wert dead!
The Time needs heart — 'tis tired of head."*

Then all the stringed instruments join with the violins in giving the wail of the poor, who "stand wedged by the pressing of Trade's hand":

"`We weave in the mills and heave in the kilns,
We sieve mine-meshes under the hills,
And thieve much gold from the Devil's bank tills,
To relieve, O God, what manner of ills? —
The beasts, they hunger, and eat, and die;
And so do we, and the world's a sty;
Hush, fellow-swine: why nuzzle and cry?
"Swinehood hath no remedy"
Say many men, and hasten by,
Clamping the nose and blinking the eye.
But who said once, in the lordly tone,
"Man shall not live by bread alone
But all that cometh from the throne"?
Hath God said so?
But Trade saith "No":
And the kilns and the curt-tongued mills say "Go:
There's plenty that can, if you can't: we know.
Move out, if you think you're underpaid.
The poor are prolific; we're not afraid;
Trade is Trade."'

"Thereat this passionate protesting
Meekly changed, and softened till
It sank to sad requesting
And suggesting sadder still:
`And oh, if men might some time see
How piteous-false the poor decree
That trade no more than trade must be!
Does business mean, "Die, you — live, I"?
Then "Trade is trade" but sings a lie:
'Tis only war grown miserly.
If business is battle, name it so.'"**

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* `The Symphony', ll. 1-2.
** `The Symphony', ll. 31-61.
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Of even wider sweep than mercantilism is the spirit of intolerance; for, while the diffusion of knowledge and of grace has in a measure repressed this spirit, it lacks much of being subdued. I do not wonder that Lanier "fled in tears from men's ungodly quarrel about God," and that, in his poem entitled `Remonstrance', he denounces intolerance with all the vehemence of a prophet of old.

But Lanier had an eye for life's beauties as well as its ills. To him music was one of earth's chief blessings. Of his early passion for the violin and his substitution of the flute therefor, we have already learned. According to competent critics he was possibly the greatest flute-player*1* in the world, a fact all the more interesting when we remember that, as he himself tells us,*2* he never had a teacher. With such a talent for music the poet has naturally strewn his pages with fine tributes thereto. In `Tiger-lilies', for instance, he tells us that, while explorers say that they have found some nations that had no god, he knows of none that had no music, and then sums up the matter in this sentence: "Music means harmony; harmony means love; and love means — God!"*3* Even more explicit is this declaration in a letter of May, 1873, to Hayne: "I don't know that I've told you that whatever turn I may have for art is purely MUSICAL; poetry being with me A MERE TANGENT INTO WHICH I SHOOT SOMETIMES. I could play passably on several instruments before I could write legibly, and SINCE then the very deepest of my life has been filled with music, which I have studied and cultivated far more than poetry."*4* We have already seen incidentally that in his `Symphony' the speakers are musical instruments; and it is in this poem that occurs his felicitous definition,

"Music is love in search of a word."*5*

In `To Beethoven' he describes the effect of music upon himself:

"I know not how, I care not why,
Thy music brings this broil at ease,
And melts my passion's mortal cry
In satisfying symphonies.

"Yea, it forgives me all my sins,
Fits life to love like rhyme to rhyme,
And tunes the task each day begins
By the last trumpet-note of Time."*6*

It was this profound knowledge of music, of course, that enabled Lanier to write his work on `The Science of English Verse', and gave him a technical skill in versification akin to that of Tennyson.

— *1* See Ward's `Memorial', pp. xx, xxxi. *2* Hayne's (P. H.) `A Poet's Letters to a Friend'. *3* `Tiger-lilies', p. 32. *4* Hayne's `A Poet's Letters to a Friend'. After settling in Baltimore Lanier devoted more time to poetry than to music, as we may see from this sentence to Judge Bleckley, in his letter of March 20, 1876: "As for me, life has resolved simply into a time during which I must get upon paper as many as possible of the poems with which my heart is stuffed like a schoolboy's pocket." *5* `The Symphony', l. 368. *6* `To Beethoven', ll. 61-68. —

Like most great poets of modern times, Lanier was a sincere lover of nature. And it seems to me that with him this love was as all-embracing as with Wordsworth. Lanier found beauty in the waving corn*1* and the clover;*2* in the mocking-bird,*3* the robin,*4* and the dove;*5* in the hickory,*6* the dogwood,*6* and the live-oak;*7* in the murmuring leaves*8* and the chattering streams;*9* in the old red hills*10* and the sea;*11* in the clouds,*12* sunrise,*13* and sunset;*14* and even in the marshes,*15* which "burst into bloom" for this worshiper. Again, Lanier's love of nature was no less insistent than Wordsworth's. We all remember the latter's oft-quoted lines:

"To me the meanest flower that blows can give
Thoughts that do often lie too deep for tears;"*16*

and beside them one may put this line of Lanier's,

"The little green leaves would not let me alone in my sleep,"*17*

because, as the context shows, he was

"Shaken with happiness:
The gates of sleep stood wide."*18*

And how naive and tender was this nature-worship! He speaks of the clover*19* and the clouds*20* as cousins, and of the leaves*21* as sisters, and in so doing reminds us of the earliest Italian poetry, especially of `The Canticle of the Sun', by St. Francis of Assisi, who brothers the wind, the fire, and the sun, and sisters the water, the stars, and the moon. Notice the tenderness in these lines of `Corn':

"The leaves that wave against my cheek caress
Like women's hands; the embracing boughs express
A subtlety of mighty tenderness;
The copse-depths into little noises start,
That sound anon like beatings of a heart,
Anon like talk 'twixt lips not far apart;"*22*

to which we find a beautiful parallel in a poem by Paul Hamilton Hayne, himself a reverent nature-worshiper:

"Ah! Nature seems
Through something sweeter than all dreams
To woo me; yea, she seems to speak
How closely, kindly, her fond cheek
Rested on mine, her mystic blood
Pulsing in tender neighborhood,
And soft as any mortal maid,
Half veiled in the twilight shade,
Who leans above her love to tell
Secrets almost ineffable!"*23*

Moreover, this worship is restful:

"Oh, what is abroad in the marsh and the terminal sea?
Somehow my soul seems suddenly free
From the weighing of fate and the sad discussion of sin,
By the length and the breadth and the sweep of the marshes of Glynn.

. . . . .

"By so many roots as the marsh-grass sends in the sod
I will heartily lay me a-hold on the greatness of God:
Oh, like to the greatness of God is the greatness within
The range of the marshes, the liberal marshes of Glynn."*24*

But to Lanier the ministration of nature was by no means passive; and we find him calling upon the leaves actively to minister to his need and even to intercede for him to their Maker:

"Ye lispers, whisperers, singers in storms,
Ye consciences murmuring faiths under forms,
Ye ministers meet for each passion that grieves,
Friendly, sisterly, sweetheart leaves,
Oh, rain me down from your darks that contain me
Wisdoms ye winnow from winds that pain me, —
Sift down tremors of sweet-within-sweet
That advise me of more than they bring, — repeat
Me the woods-smell that swiftly but now brought breath
From the heaven-side bank of the river of death, —
Teach me the terms of silence, — preach me
The passion of patience, — sift me, — impeach me, —
And there, oh there
As ye hang with your myriad palms upturned in the air,
Pray me a myriad prayer."*25*

In this earnest ascription of spirituality to the leaves
Lanier recalls Ruskin.*26*

— *1* See `The Waving of the Corn' and `Corn'. *2* See `Clover'. *3* See `The Mocking-Bird' and `To Our Mocking-Bird'. *4* See `Tampa Robins'. *5* See `The Dove'. *6* See `From the Flats', last stanza. *7* See `Sunrise'. *8* See `Sunrise' and `Corn'. *9* See `The Song of the Chattahoochee' and `Sunrise'. *10* See `Corn'. *11* See `Sunrise' and `At Sunset'. *12* See `Individuality'. *13* See `Sunrise', etc. *14* See `At Sunset'. *15* See `The Marshes of Glynn', and read Barbe's tribute to Lanier, cited in the `Bibliography'. *16* `Intimations of Immortality', ll. 202-203. *17* `The Symphony', l. 3. *18* `The Symphony', ll. 13-14. *19* `Clover', l. 57. *20* `Individuality', l. 1. *21* `Sunrise', l. 42. *22* `Corn', ll. 4-9. Compare `The Symphony', ll. 183-190. *23* Hayne's `In the Gray of Evening': Autumn, ll. 37-46, in `Poems' (Boston, 1882), p. 250. *24* `The Marshes of Glynn', ll. 61-64, 75-78. *25* `Sunrise', ll. 39-53. *26* See his `Modern Painters', vol. v., part vi., chapter iv., and Scudder's note to the same in her `Introduction to Ruskin' (Chicago, 1892), p. 249. —

To take up his next theme, Lanier, like every true Teuton, from Tacitus to the present, saw "something of the divine" in woman. It was this feeling that led him so severely to condemn a vice that is said to be growing, the marriage for convenience. I quote from `The Symphony', and the "melting Clarionet" is speaking:

> "So hath Trade withered up Love's sinewy prime,
> Men love not women as in olden time.
> Ah, not in these cold merchantable days
> Deem men their life an opal gray, where plays
> The one red sweet of gracious ladies'-praise.
> Now, comes a suitor with sharp prying eye —
> Says, `Here, you lady, if you'll sell, I'll buy:
> Come, heart for heart — a trade? What! weeping? why?'
> Shame on such wooer's dapper-mercery!'"*1*

And then follows a wooing that, to my mind, should be irresistible, and that, at any rate, is quite as high-souled as Browning's `One Way of Love', which I have long considered the high-water-mark of the chivalrous in love. The Lady Clarionet is still speaking:

> "I would my lover kneeling at my feet
> In humble manliness should cry, `O Sweet!
> I know not if thy heart my heart will greet:
> I ask not if thy love my love can meet:
> Whate'er thy worshipful soft tongue shall say,
> I'll kiss thine answer, be it yea or nay:
> I do but know I love thee, and I pray
> To be thy knight until my dying day.'"*2*

I imagine, too, that any wife that ever lived would be satisfied with his glorious tribute to Mrs. Lanier in `My Springs', which closes thus:

> "Dear eyes, dear eyes, and rare complete —
> Being heavenly-sweet and earthly-sweet —
> I marvel that God made you mine,
> For when he frowns, 'tis then ye shine."*3*

Almost equally felicitous are these lines of `Acknowledgment':

> "Somehow by thee, dear Love, I win content:
> Thy Perfect stops th' Imperfect's argument."*4*

But the cleverest thing that Lanier has written of woman occurs in his `Laus Mariae':

> "But thou within thyself, dear manifold heart,
> Dost bind all epochs in one dainty fact.
> Oh, Sweet, my pretty sum of history,
> I leapt the breadth of time in loving thee!"*5*

— a scrap worthy to be placed beside Steele's "To love her is a liberal education," which has often been declared the happiest thing on the subject in the English language.

— *1* `The Symphony', ll. 232-240. *2* `The Symphony', ll. 241-248. *3* `My Springs', ll. 53-56. *4* `Acknowledgment', ll. 41-42. *5* `Laus Mariae', ll. 11-14. —

To Lanier there was but one thing that made life worth living, and that was love. Even the superficial reader must be struck with the frequent use of the term in the poet's works, while all must be uplifted by his conception of its purpose and power. The ills of agnosticism, mercantilism, and intolerance all find their solution here and here only, as is admirably set forth in `The Symphony', of which the opening strain is, "We are all for love," and the closing, "Love alone can do." The matter is no less happily put in `Tiger-lilies': "For I am quite confident that love is the only rope thrown out by Heaven to us who have fallen overboard into life. Love for man, love for woman, love for God, — these three chime like bells in a steeple and call us to worship, which is to work. . . . Inasmuch as we love, in so much do we conquer death and flesh; by as much as we love, by so much are we gods. For God is love; and could we love as He does, we could be as He is."*1* To the same effect is his statement in `The English Novel': "A republic is the government of the spirit."*2* The same thought recurs later: "In love, and love only, can great work that not only pulls down, but builds, be done; it is love, and love only, that is truly constructive in art."*3* In the poem entitled `How Love Looked for Hell', Mind and Sense at Love's request go to seek Hell; but ever as they point it out to Love, whether in the material or the immaterial world, it vanishes; for where Love is there can be no Hell, since, in the words of Tolstoi's story, "Where Love is there is God." But in one of his poems Lanier sums up the whole matter in a line:

"When life's all love, 'tis life: aught else, 'tis naught."*4*

— *1* `Tiger-lilies', p. 26. *2* `The English Novel', p. 55. *3* `The English Novel', p. 204. *4* `In Absence', l. 42. —

It is but a short way from love to its source, — God. And, as Lanier was continually in the atmosphere of the one, so, I believe, he was ever in the presence of the other; for the poet's "Love means God" is but another phrasing of the evangelist's "God is love".*1* Of Lanier's grief over church broils and of his longing for freedom to worship God according to one's own intuition, we have already learned from his `Remonstrance'. What he thought of the Christ we learn from `The Crystal', which closes with this invocation:

> "But Thee, but Thee, O sovereign Seer of time,
> But Thee, O poets' Poet, Wisdom's Tongue,
> But Thee, O man's best Man, O love's best Love,
> O perfect life in perfect labor writ,
> O all men's Comrade, Servant, King, or Priest, —
> What IF or YET, what mole, what flaw, what lapse,
> What least defect or shadow of defect,
> What rumor, tattled by an enemy,
> Of inference loose, what lack of grace
> Even in torture's grasp, or sleep's, or death's —
> Oh, what amiss may I forgive in Thee,
> Jesus, good Paragon, Thou Crystal Christ?"*2*

How tenderly Lanier was touched by the life of our Lord may be seen in his `Ballad of Trees and the Master', a dramatic presentation of the scene in Gethsemane and on Calvary. How implicit was his trust in the Christ may be gathered from this paragraph in a letter to the elder Hayne: "I have a boy whose eyes are blue as your `Aethra's'. Every day when my work is done I take him in my strong arms, and lift him up, and pore in his face. The intense repose, penetrated somehow with a thrilling mystery of `potential activity', which dwells in his large, open eye, teaches me new things. I say to myself, Where are the strong arms in which I, too, might lay me and repose, and yet be full of the fire of life? And always through the twilight come answers from the other world, `Master! Master! there is one — Christ — in His arms we rest!'"*3* Perhaps, however, Lanier's notion of God, whom he declared*4* all his roads reached, is most clearly expressed in a scrap quoted by Ward, apparently the outline for a poem: "I fled in tears from the men's ungodly quarrel about God. I fled in tears to the woods, and laid me down on the earth. Then somewhat like the beating of many hearts came up to me out of the ground; and I looked and my cheek lay close to a violet. Then my heart took courage, and I said: `I know that thou art the word of my God, dear Violet. And oh, the ladder is not long that to my heaven leads. Measure what space a violet stands above the ground. 'Tis no further climbing that my soul and angels have to do than that.'"*5* In this high spirituality Lanier is in line with the greatest poets of our race, from

> "Caedmon, in the morn

A-calling angels with the cow-herd's call
That late brought up the cattle,"*6*

to him

"Who never turned his back, but marched breast forward,
Never doubted clouds would break,
Never dreamed, though right were worsted, wrong would triumph,
Held we fall to rise, are baffled to fight better,
Sleep to wake."*7*

— *1* 1 John 4:16. *2* `The Crystal', ll. 100-111. *3* Hayne's `A Poet's Letters to a Friend'. *4* In `A Florida Sunday', l. 85. *5* Ward's `Memorial', p. xxxix. *6* Lanier's `The Crystal', ll. 90-93. *7* Browning's `Asolando': Epilogue, ll. 11-15. —

Perhaps I may append here a paragraph upon Lanier's criticisms of other writers, for they seem to me acute in the extreme. Despite the elaborate essays in defence of Whitman's poetry by Dowden,*1* Symonds,*2* and Whitman himself, I believe Lanier is right in declaring that "Whitman is poetry's butcher. Huge raw collops slashed from the rump of poetry and never mind gristle — is what Whitman feeds our souls with. As near as I can make it out, Whitman's argument seems to be, that, because a prairie is wide, therefore debauchery is admirable, and because the Mississippi is long, therefore every American is God."*3* Notice, again, how well the defect of `Paradise Lost' is pointed out:

"And I forgive
Thee, Milton, those thy comic-dreadful wars
Where, armed with gross and inconclusive steel,
Immortals smite immortals mortalwise
And fill all heaven with folly."*4*

Few better things have been said of Langland than this, —

"That with but a touch
Of art hadst sung Piers Plowman to the top
Of English songs, whereof 'tis dearest, now
And most adorable;"*5*

or of Emerson than this, —

"Most wise, that yet, in finding Wisdom, lost
Thy Self, sometimes;"*6*

or of Tennyson than this, —

"Largest voice
Since Milton, yet some register of wit
Wanting."*7*

`The Crystal' abounds in such happy characterizations.

— *1* See Dowden's `Studies in Literature', pp. 468-523. *2* See Symonds's `Walt Whitman: A Study'. London, 1893. *3* Ward's `Memorial', p. xxxviii. *4* `The Crystal', ll. 66-70. *5* Ibid., ll. 87-90. *6* Ibid., ll. 93-94. *7* Ibid., ll. 95-97. —

IV. Lanier's Poetry: Its Style

So much for the poet's thoughts; what shall we say of their expression? In other words, is Lanier the literary artist equal to Lanier the seer? In order the better to answer this question, let us begin at the beginning, with the elements of style, some of which, however, I pass by as not calling for special comment.

Of Lanier's felicitous choice of words we have already had incidental illustration; but it is desirable, perhaps, to group here a few of his happiest phrases, to show that, as Lowell*1* said, he is "a man of genius with a rare gift for the happy

word." Notice this speech about the brook:

"And down the hollow from a ferny nook
`Lull' sings a little brook!"*2*

and this of the well-bucket:

"The rattling bucket plumps
Souse down the well;"*3*

and this of the outburst of a bird:

"Dumb woods, have ye uttered a bird?"*4*

and the description of a mocking-bird as

"Yon trim Shakspere on the tree;"*5*

and of midnight as

"Death's and truth's unlocking time."*6*

Moreover, it should be observed that Lanier frequently uses significant compounds, — a habit acquired, no doubt, from his study of Old English, in which, as in German, such compounds abound.

— *1* See `Lowell' in `Bibliography'. *2* `From the Flats', ll. 23-24; cited by Gates. [Line 24 was changed (to "Bright leaps a living brook!") in later editions. — A. L., 1998.] *3* `Clover', ll. 29-30. *4* `Sunrise', l. 57; cited by Gates. *5* `The Mocking-Bird', l. 14. *6* `The Crystal', l. 1. Other illustrations may be found in the paragraph on figures of speech. —

While in the main Lanier's sentence-construction is good, occasionally his sentences are too long, as in `My Springs', `To Bayard Taylor', and `Sunrise', in which we have sentences longer than the opening one in `Paradise Lost', and, what is of more moment, not so well balanced, and hence affording fewer breathing spaces. That this detracts from clearness and euphony both, every reader will admit.

To come to the figures of speech, one must be struck at once with the delicacy and the vigor of Lanier's imagination. The poet's fancy personifies what at first blush seems to us incapable of personification. Thus at one time*1* he likens men to clover-leaves and the Course-of-things to the browsing ox, which makes way with the clover-heads; while at another he addresses an old red hill of Georgia as

"Thou gashed and hairy Lear
Whom the divine Cordelia of the year,
E'en pitying Spring, will vainly strive to cheer."*2*

Like other Southern poets,*3* Lanier sometimes fails to check his imagination, and in consequence leaves his readers "bramble-tangled in a brilliant maze," as in his description of the stars in `June Dreams'*4* and in the `Psalm of the West'.*5* While I do not like a maze, brilliant though it be and sweet, I must say that I prefer the embarrassment of riches to the embarrassment of poverty. On the whole, however, Lanier's figures strike me as singularly fresh and happy. In `Sunrise', for example, the poet speaks of the marsh as follows:

"The tide's at full: the marsh with flooded streams
Glimmers a limpid labyrinth of dreams;"*6*

and of the heavens reflected in the marsh waters:

"Each winding creek in grave entrancement lies
A rhapsody of morning-stars. The skies
Shine scant with one forked galaxy, —
The marsh brags ten: looped on his breast they lie."*7*

Later, as the ebb-tide flows from marsh to sea, we are parenthetically treated to these two lines:

"Run home, little streams,
With your lapfuls of stars and dreams."*8*

Finally, the heaven itself is thus pictured:

"Now in each pettiest personal sphere of dew
The summ'd morn shines complete as in the blue
Big dew-drop of all heaven;"*9*

beside which must be hung this exquisite picture:

"The dew-drop morn may fall from off the petal of the sky."*10*

— *1* In `Clover'. *2* `Corn', ll. 185-187. *3* See on this point the remarks of Professor Trent in his admirable life of `Simms' (Boston, 1892), p. 149. *4* `June Dreams', l. 21 ff. *5* `Psalm of the West', l. 183 ff. *6* `Sunrise', ll. 80-81. *7* Ibid., ll. 82-85. *8* Ibid., ll. 114-115. *9* Ibid., ll. 134-136. *10* `The Ship of Earth', l. 5. —

As to versification, Lanier uses almost all the types of verse — iambic, trochaic, blank, the sonnet, etc. — and with about equal skill. Three features, however, specially characterize his verse: the careful distribution of vowel-colors and the frequent use of alliteration and of phonetic syzygy,*1* by which last is meant a combination or succession of identical or similar consonants, whether initially, medially, or finally, as for instance the succession of M's in Tennyson's

"The moan of doves in immemorial elms
And murmuring of innumerable bees."

All of these phenomena are illustrated in Lanier's `Song of the Chattahoochee', which has often been compared to Tennyson's `The Brook', and which alone proves the author a master in versification. To be sure, Lanier occasionally gives us an improper rhyme, as `thwart: heart',*2* etc., but so does every poet. No doubt, too, his love of music sometimes led him, not "to strain for form effects", but to indulge too much therein, or, in the words of Mr. Stedman, "to essay in language feats that only the gamut can render possible."*3* But, as Professor Kent admirably puts it, "Lanier was a poet as well as an artist, and if at times his artistic temperament seemed to eclipse his poetic thought, grant that to the poet mind the very manner of expression may indicate the thought that lies beneath, while to the duller ear the thought must come in completed form."*4* Moreover, as we shall see later, this extraordinary musical endowment gave Lanier a unique position among English poets.

— *1* See `The Science of English Verse', p. 306 ff. *2* `In the Foam', ll. 6, 8. See, too, Kent's `Study of Lanier's Poems', which gives an exhaustive treatment of Lanier's versification. *3* Stedman's `Poets of America', p. 449. *4* `Kent', p. 60. —

After what has been said the qualities of style may be briefly handled. As we have already seen, Lanier sometimes fails in clearness, or, more precisely, in simplicity. This comes partly from infelicitous sentence-construction, partly, perhaps, from Lanier's extraordinary musical endowment, but chiefly, I think, from over-luxuriance of imagination. But this occasional defect has been unduly exaggerated. Thus Mr. Gosse*1* declares that Lanier is "never simple, never easy, never in one single lyric natural and spontaneous for more than one stanza," — a statement so clearly hyperbolic as hardly to call for notice. As a matter of fact, Lanier has written numerous poems that offer little or no difficulty to the reader of average intelligence, as `Life and Song', `My Springs', `The Symphony', `The Mocking-Bird', `The Song of the Chattahoochee', `The Waving of the Corn', `The Revenge of Hamish', `Remonstrance', `A Ballad of Trees and the Master', etc. More than this, Lanier at times manifests the simplicity that is granted only to genius of the highest order: thus an English critic,*2* who by the way declares that Lanier's volume has more of genius than all the poems of Poe, or Longfellow, or Lowell (the humorous poems excepted), and who considers Lanier the most original of all American poets, and more original than any England has produced for the last thirty years, says that "nothing can be more perfect than —

`The whole sweet round
Of littles that large life compound,'"*3*

lines in `My Springs', and that "the touch of wonder in the last two lines,

`I marvel that God made you mine,
For when he frowns, 'tis then ye shine,'*4*

is as simple and exquisite as any touch of tenderness in our literature." I frankly admit that several of Lanier's best poems, as `Corn', `The Marshes of Glynn', and `Sunrise', are not simple; but the same thing is true of Milton's `Paradise Lost' and of Browning's `The Ring and the Book', and yet this fact does not exclude these two works from the list of great poems. Mr. Gosse, however, declares that `Corn', `Sunrise', and `The Marshes of Glynn' "simulate poetic expression with extraordinary skill. But of the real thing, of the genuine traditional article, not a trace"! What do these poems show, then? Mr. Gosse answers: "I find a painful effort, a strain and rage, the most prominent qualities in everything he wrote;" which strikes me as the reverse of the facts. In one of his letters*5* to Judge Bleckley, Lanier wrote this sentence: "My head and my heart are both so full of poems which the dreadful struggle for bread does not give me time to put on paper, that I am often driven to headache and heartache, purely for want of an hour or two to hold a pen." If, then, he committed an error (and I am far from considering him faultless), it was not that he beat and spurred on Pegasus, but that he failed to rein him in. Still, I repeat that I prefer the embarrassment of riches to the embarrassment of poverty. Finally, just as Milton tells us that the music of the spheres is not to be heard by the gross, unpurged ear, so I believe that many intelligent ears and eyes are at first too gross to hear and see what Lanier puts before them, whereas a bit of patient listening and looking reveals delights hitherto undreamed of.

— *1* See `Bibliography'. *2* `The Spectator' (London); see `Bibliography'. *3* `My Springs', ll. 49-50. *4* `My Springs', ll. 55-56. *5* It is to be hoped that these letters may yet be published. I quote from one dated November 15, 1874. —

If not always simple, Lanier is often forcible in the extreme, as in `The Symphony', `The Revenge of Hamish', `Remonstrance', and `Sunrise'. Of course, it is open to any one to see in these poems the "rage" attributed to Lanier by Mr. Gosse, but I prefer to consider it divine wrath in all but the last, and in it wonder unutterable, which yet is so uttered that ears become eyes. I allude to the stanzas* describing the break of dawn and the rising of the sun.

— * `Sunrise', ll. 86-152. —

Of the poet's marvelous euphony, `The Song of the Chattahoochee' speaks clearly enough. As we have seen in our treatment of versification, it is here a question not of too little but of too much. But, despite an occasional too great yielding to his passion for music, his extraordinary endowment in this direction gave Lanier a unique position among English poets. I quote again from Professor Kent:* "But if his sense of beauty made him a peer of our great poets, it was the heavenly gift of music that distinguished him from them. Milton, it is true, whom he most resembles in this respect, had a knowledge of music, but not the same passion for it. Milton's music was more a recreation, an accompaniment of reverie; Lanier's was a fiery zeal; a yearning love, a chosen and adequate form of expression of his soul's deepest feeling. Combined with this passion for music was his technical knowledge of the art, and these combined formed at once the foundation and the framework of his poetry. He seems literally to have sung his poems; they are essentially musical, tuneful, and melodious. Surcharged with music, he overflows in mellifluous numbers. Here, then, Lanier stands out differentiated in the choir of poets, and here we find that distinctive quality which is the very flavor of his writing."

— * P. 62. —

While most of Lanier's poems are in a serious strain, several disclose no mean sense of humor. I refer to his dialect poems, such as `Jones's Private Argyment', `Uncle Jim's Baptist Revival Hymn', and `The Power of Prayer', especially the last, written in conjunction with his brother, Mr. Clifford Lanier.

There are passages in the poems no less pathetic than the poet's life. In discussing his love of nature we have seen that he was a pantheist in the best sense of the term. So delicate was his sensibility that we do not wonder when we hear him declaring,

> "And I am one with all the kinsmen things
> That e'er my Father fathered,"*

a saying as felicitous as the Roman's "I am a man, and, therefore, nothing human is stranger to me." The tenderness of the `Ballad of Trees and the Master' must touch all readers. Few passages are more pathetic, I think, than that, in `June Dreams in January', telling of the poet's struggle for bread and fame, while "his worshipful sweet wife sat still, afar, within the village whence she sent him forth, waiting all confident and proud and calm." And, if there occurs therein a plaintive tone, let us remember that it is the only time that he complained of his lot, and that here really he has more in mind his dearer self, his wife, and that calm succeeded to unrest just as it does in this passage:

> "`Why can we poets dream us beauty, so,

But cannot dream us bread? Why, now, can I
Make, aye, create this fervid throbbing June
Out of the chill, chill matter of my soul,
Yet cannot make a poorest penny-loaf
Out of this same chill matter, no, not one
For Mary, though she starved upon my breast?'
And then he fell upon his couch, and sobbed,
And, late, just when his heart leaned o'er
The very edge of breaking, fain to fall,
God sent him sleep."**

—
* `A Florida Sunday', ll. 102-103.
** `June Dreams in January', ll. 68-78.
—

V. Lanier's Theory of Poetry

It is now time to say a word about Lanier's theory of art, especially the art of poetry. His views upon the formal side of poetry have already been noticed in the consideration of his `Science of English Verse', and hence receive no further comment here.

That Lanier keenly appreciated the responsibility resting upon the artist, appears from `Individuality', where he tells us,

"Awful is art because 'tis free,"*1*

and,

"Each artist — gift of terror! — owns his will."*2*

But he accepts the responsibility reverently and confidently:

"I work in freedom wild,
But work, as plays a little child,
Sure of the Father, Self, and Love, alone."*3*

— *1* `Individuality', l. 62. *2* `Individuality', l. 76. *3* `Individuality', ll. 89-91. —

Again, the province of poetry is pointed out, as in `Clover':

"The artist's market is the heart of man;
The artist's price, some little good of man;"*1*

and in `The Bee':

"Wilt ask, `What profit e'er a poet brings?'
He beareth starry stuff about his wings
To pollen thee and sting thee fertile."*2*

In `Corn',*3* too, the "tall corn-captain" "types the poet-soul sublime."

— *1* `Clover', ll. 126-127. *2* `The Bee', ll. 40-42. *3* `Corn', l. 52 ff. —

But it is in his prose works that Lanier has treated the matter most at length, and to these I turn. In the first place, he insists that to be an artist one must know a great deal, a statement that would appear superfluous but for its frequent overlooking by would-be artists. Hence he is right in warning young writers: "You need not dream of winning the attention of sober people with your poetry unless that poetry and your soul behind it are informed and saturated with at least the largest final conceptions of current science."* That Lanier strove to follow this precept, we have abundant evidence in his life and in his works; and I think that, if we remember his environments, we must wonder at the vastness, the accuracy, and the variety of his knowledge. As additionally illustrative of the last, I may add that Lanier invented some improvements for the flute, and made a discovery in the physics of music that the Professor of Physics in

the University of Virginia thought considerable.**

—
* `Gates', p. 29.
** See `West', p. 23.
—

In the second place, Lanier thinks that a poet's knowledge of his art should be scientific. It was this that led him to write `The Science of English Verse', the motto of which is, "But the best conceptions cannot be, save where science and genius are." In `The English Novel' he declares that "not a single verse was ever written by instinct alone since the world began,"* and fortifies his statement by Ben Jonson's tribute to Shakespeare, —

"For a good poet's made as well as born,
And such wert thou."

But Lanier clearly saw that no formal laws and no amount of scientific knowledge could alone make a poet, as appears from the motto above quoted, from the closing chapter of `The Science of English Verse', which tells us that the educated love of beauty is the artist's only law, and from this other motto, from Sir Philip Sidney: "A Poet, no industrie can make, if his owne Genius bee not carried unto it."

— * `The English Novel', p. 33. —

In the third place, Lanier holds that a moral intention on the part of an artist does not interfere with the naturalness or intrinsic beauty of his work; that in art the controlling consideration is rather moral than artistic beauty; but that moral beauty and artistic beauty, so far from being distinct or opposed, are convergent and mutually helpful. This thesis he upholds in the following eloquent and cogent passage: "Permit me to recall to you in the first place that the requirement has been from time immemorial that wherever there is contest as between artistic and moral beauty, unless the moral side prevail, all is lost. Let any sculptor hew us out the most ravishing combination of tender curves and spheric softness that ever stood for woman; yet if the lip have a certain fulness that hints of the flesh, if the brow be insincere, if in the minutest particular the physical beauty suggest a moral ugliness, that sculptor — unless he be portraying a moral ugliness for a moral purpose — may as well give over his marble for paving-stones. Time, whose judgments are inexorably moral, will not accept his work. For indeed we may say that he who has not yet perceived how artistic beauty and moral beauty are convergent lines which run back into a common ideal origin, and who therefore is not afire with moral beauty just as with artistic beauty — that he, in short, who has not come to that stage of quiet and eternal frenzy in which the beauty of holiness and the holiness of beauty mean one thing, burn as one fire, shine as one light, within him; he is not yet the great artist."* By copious quotations Lanier then shows that "many fine and beautiful souls appear after a while to lose all sense of distinction between these terms, Beauty, Truth, Love, Wisdom, Goodness, and the like," and concludes thus: "And if this be true, cannot one say with authority to the young artist, — whether working in stone, in color, in tones, or in character-forms of the novel: so far from dreading that your moral purpose will interfere with your beautiful creation, go forward in the clear conviction that unless you are suffused — soul and body, one might say — with that moral purpose which finds its largest expression in love — that is, the love of all things in their proper relation — unless you are suffused with this love, do not dare to meddle with beauty; unless you are suffused with beauty, do not meddle with love; unless you are suffused with truth, do not dare to meddle with goodness; — in a word, unless you are suffused with beauty, truth, wisdom, goodness, AND love, abandon the hope that the ages will accept you as an artist."**

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* `The English Novel', p. 272 f.
** `The English Novel', p. 280. Of the numerous discussions of this thesis,
the student should consult at least those by Matthew Arnold
(`Preface' to his edition of `Wordsworth's Poems'),
John Ruskin (`Stones of Venice', vol. iii., chap. iv.),
and Victor Hugo (`William Shakespeare', Book VI.).
—

VI. Conclusion

Milton has somewhere said that in order to be a great poet one must himself be a true poem, a dictum none the less trustworthy because of its inapplicability to its author along with several other great poets. Now of all English poets, I know of none that came nearer being a true poem than did Lanier. He was as spotless as "the Lady of Christ's", and

infinitely more lovable. Indeed, he seems to me to have realized the ideal of his own knightly Horn, who hopes that some day men will be "maids in purity".* I will not recall his gentle yet heroic life amid drawbacks almost unparalleled; for it is even sadder than it is beautiful. It is my deliberate judgment that, while, as the poet says in his `Life and Song', no singer has ever wholly lived his minstrelsy, Lanier came so near it that we may fairly say, in the closing lines of the poem,

"His song was only living aloud,
His work, a singing with his hand."

And, for my part, I am as grateful for his noble private life as for his distinguished public work.

— * `The Symphony', l. 302. —

And yet I will not close with this picture of the man; for my purpose is rather to present the poet. Hampered though he was by fewness of years, by feebleness of body, by shortness of bread, and, most of all perhaps, by over-luxuriance of imagination, Lanier was yet, to my mind, indisputably a great poet. For in technique he was akin to Tennyson;* in the love of beauty and in lyric sweetness, to Keats and Shelley; in the love of nature, to Wordsworth; and in spirituality, to Ruskin, the gist of whose teaching is that we are souls temporarily having bodies; to Milton, "God-gifted organ-voice of England"; and to Browning, "subtlest assertor of the soul in song". To be sure, Lanier's genius is not equal to that of any one of the poets mentioned, but I venture to believe that it is of the same order, and, therefore, deserving of lasting remembrance.

—
* Mr. Thayer puts it stronger: "As a master of melodious metre
only Tennyson, and he not often, has equalled Lanier." Mr. F. F. Browne,
Editor of `The Dial' (Chicago), compares the two poets in another aspect:
"`The Symphony' of Lanier may recall some parts of `Maud';
but the younger poet's treatment is as much his own
as the elder's is his own. The comparison of Lanier with Tennyson will,
indeed, only deepen the impression of his originality,
which is his most striking quality. It may be doubted
if any English poet of our time, except Tennyson, has cast his work
in an ampler mould, or wrought with more of freedom, or stamped his product
with the impress of a stronger personality. His thought, his stand-point,
his expression, his form, his treatment, are his alone; and through them all
he justifies his right to the title of poet."
—

Poems

Life and Song

If life were caught by a clarionet, [1]
And a wild heart, throbbing in the reed,
Should thrill its joy and trill its fret,
And utter its heart in every deed,

Then would this breathing clarionet
Type what the poet fain would be;
For none o' the singers ever yet
Has wholly lived his minstrelsy,

Or clearly sung his true, true thought,
Or utterly bodied forth his life,
Or out of life and song has wrought [11]
The perfect one of man and wife;

Or lived and sung, that Life and Song
Might each express the other's all,
Careless if life or art were long
Since both were one, to stand or fall:

So that the wonder struck the crowd,
Who shouted it about the land:
`His song was only living aloud,
His work, a singing with his hand!'

____ 1868.

Notes: Life and Song

`Life and Song' is the fifth of a series of seven poems published under the general heading of `Street-cries', with the two stanzas following as an introduction:

"Oft seems the Time a market-town
Where many merchant-spirits meet
Who up and down and up and down
Cry out along the street

"Their needs, as wares; one THUS, one SO:
Till all the ways are full of sound:
— But still come rain, and sun, and snow,
And still the world goes round."

The remaining numbers of the series are: 1. `Remonstrance', given in this volume; 2. `The Ship of Earth'; 3. `How Love Looked for Hell'; 4. `Tyranny'; 6. `To Richard Wagner'; 7. `A Song of Love'.

I can think of no more helpful comment on the subject of our poem than this sentence from Milton's `Apology for Smectymnuus', already alluded to in the `Introduction' (p. liv [Part VI]): "And long it was not after, when I was confirmed in this opinion, that he who would not be frustrate of his hope to write well hereafter in laudable things, ought himself to be a true poem; that is, a composition and pattern of the best and honorablest things; not presuming to sing high praises of heroic men or famous cities, unless he have in himself the experience and the practice of all that which is praiseworthy."

Lines 19-20. I have been pleased to discover that the application I have made of this poem, especially of these lines (see `Introduction', p. liv [Part VI]), is likewise made by most students of Lanier's life, and that Mrs. Lanier has chosen these two lines for inscription on the monument to be erected to his memory. On the reverse side of the stone, I may add, are to be put these words: "He that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God" (I John iv. 16).

Jones's Private Argyment

That air same Jones, which lived in Jones, [1]
  He had this pint about him:
He'd swear with a hundred sighs and groans,
That farmers MUST stop gittin' loans,
  And git along without 'em:

That bankers, warehousemen, and sich
  Was fatt'nin' on the planter,
And Tennessy was rotten-rich
A-raisin' meat and corn, all which
  Draw'd money to Atlanta:

And the only thing (says Jones) to do [11]
  Is, eat no meat that's boughten:
BUT TEAR UP EVERY I, O, U,
AND PLANT ALL CORN AND SWEAR FOR TRUE
  TO QUIT A-RAISIN' COTTON!

Thus spouted Jones (whar folks could hear,
  — At Court and other gatherin's),
And thus kep' spoutin' many a year,
Proclaimin' loudly far and near

Sich fiddlesticks and blatherin's.

But, one all-fired sweatin' day,
It happened I was hoein'
My lower corn-field, which it lay
'Longside the road that runs my way
Whar I can see what's goin'.

And a'ter twelve o'clock had come
I felt a kinder faggin',
And laid myself un'neath a plum
To let my dinner settle sum,
When 'long come Jones's waggin,

And Jones was settin' in it, SO:
A-readin' of a paper.
His mules was goin' powerful slow,
Fur he had tied the lines onto
The staple of the scraper.

The mules they stopped about a rod
From me, and went to feedin'
'Longside the road, upon the sod,
But Jones (which he had tuck a tod)
Not knowin', kept a-readin'.

And presently says he: "Hit's true;
That Clisby's head is level.
Thar's one thing farmers all must do,
To keep themselves from goin' tew
Bankruptcy and the devil!

"More corn! more corn! MUST plant less ground,
And MUSTN'T eat what's boughten!
Next year they'll do it: reasonin's sound:
(And, cotton will fetch 'bout a dollar a pound),
THARFORE, I'LL plant ALL cotton!"

____ Macon, Ga., 1870.

Notes: Jones's Private Argyment

The themes of this poem, the relative claims of corn and cotton upon the attention of the farmer and the disastrous results of speculation, are treated indirectly in `Thar's More in the Man Than Thar Is in the Land', and directly and with consummate art in `Corn'.

1. "That air same Jones" appears in `Thar's More', etc., written in 1869, in which we are told:

> "And he lived pretty much by gittin' of loans,
> And his mules was nuthin' but skin and bones,
> And his hogs was flat as his corn-bread pones,
> And he had 'bout a thousand acres o' land."

He sells his farm to Brown at a dollar and fifty cents an acre and goes to Texas. Brown improves the farm, and, after five years, is sitting down to a big dinner when Jones is discovered standing out by the fence, without wagon or mules, "fur he had left Texas afoot and cum to Georgy to see if he couldn't git some employment." Brown invites Jones in to dinner, but cannot refrain from the inference-drawing that names the poem. — "Which lived in Jones," "which Jones is a county of red hills and stones" (`Thar's More', etc.) in central Georgia.

13. Readers of `David Copperfield' will recall Micawber's frequent use of `I-O-U-'s'.

47. "Clisby's head" refers to Mr. Joseph Clisby, then editor of the Macon (Ga.) `Telegraph and Messenger', who had written editorials favoring the planting of more corn.

Corn

To-day the woods are trembling through and through [1]
With shimmering forms, that flash before my view,
Then melt in green as dawn-stars melt in blue.
 The leaves that wave against my cheek caress
 Like women's hands; the embracing boughs express
    A subtlety of mighty tenderness;
 The copse-depths into little noises start,
 That sound anon like beatings of a heart,
 Anon like talk 'twixt lips not far apart.
 The beech dreams balm, as a dreamer hums a song;
 Through that vague wafture, expirations strong [11]
 Throb from young hickories breathing deep and long
With stress and urgence bold of prisoned spring
    And ecstasy of burgeoning.
 Now, since the dew-plashed road of morn is dry,
 Forth venture odors of more quality
 And heavenlier giving. Like Jove's locks awry,
       Long muscadines
Rich-wreathe the spacious foreheads of great pines,
And breathe ambrosial passion from their vines.
 I pray with mosses, ferns, and flowers shy [21]
 That hide like gentle nuns from human eye
 To lift adoring perfumes to the sky.
I hear faint bridal-sighs of brown and green
Dying to silent hints of kisses keen
As far lights fringe into a pleasant sheen.
 I start at fragmentary whispers, blown
 From undertalks of leafy souls unknown,
 Vague purports sweet, of inarticulate tone.
Dreaming of gods, men, nuns, and brides, between
Old companies of oaks that inward lean [31]
To join their radiant amplitudes of green
 I slowly move, with ranging looks that pass
 Up from the matted miracles of grass
Into yon veined complex of space
Where sky and leafage interlace
 So close, the heaven of blue is seen
 Inwoven with a heaven of green.

I wander to the zigzag-cornered fence
Where sassafras, intrenched in brambles dense,
Contests with stolid vehemence [41]
 The march of culture, setting limb and thorn
 As pikes against the army of the corn.

There, while I pause, my fieldward-faring eyes
Take harvests, where the stately corn-ranks rise,
    Of inward dignities
And large benignities and insights wise,
    Graces and modest majesties.
Thus, without theft, I reap another's field;
Thus, without tilth, I house a wondrous yield,
And heap my heart with quintuple crops concealed. [51]

Look, out of line one tall corn-captain stands

Advanced beyond the foremost of his bands,
And waves his blades upon the very edge
And hottest thicket of the battling hedge.
Thou lustrous stalk, that ne'er mayst walk nor talk,
Still shalt thou type the poet-soul sublime
That leads the vanward of his timid time
And sings up cowards with commanding rhyme —
Soul calm, like thee, yet fain, like thee, to grow
By double increment, above, below; [61]
Soul homely, as thou art, yet rich in grace like thee,
Teaching the yeomen selfless chivalry
That moves in gentle curves of courtesy;
Soul filled like thy long veins with sweetness tense,
By every godlike sense
Transmuted from the four wild elements.
Drawn to high plans,
Thou lift'st more stature than a mortal man's,
Yet ever piercest downward in the mould
And keepest hold [71]
Upon the reverend and steadfast earth
That gave thee birth;
Yea, standest smiling in thy future grave,
Serene and brave,
With unremitting breath
Inhaling life from death,
Thine epitaph writ fair in fruitage eloquent,
Thyself thy monument.

As poets should,
Thou hast built up thy hardihood [81]
With universal food,
Drawn in select proportion fair
From honest mould and vagabond air;
From darkness of the dreadful night,
And joyful light;
From antique ashes, whose departed flame
In thee has finer life and longer fame;
From wounds and balms,
From storms and calms,
From potsherds and dry bones [91]
And ruin-stones.
Into thy vigorous substance thou hast wrought
Whate'er the hand of Circumstance hath brought;
Yea, into cool solacing green hast spun
White radiance hot from out the sun.
So thou dost mutually leaven
Strength of earth with grace of heaven;
So thou dost marry new and old
Into a one of higher mould;
So thou dost reconcile the hot and cold, [101]
The dark and bright,
And many a heart-perplexing opposite,
And so,
Akin by blood to high and low,
Fitly thou playest out thy poet's part,
Richly expending thy much-bruised heart
In equal care to nourish lord in hall
Or beast in stall:
Thou took'st from all that thou mightst give to all.

O steadfast dweller on the selfsame spot [111]
Where thou wast born, that still repinest not —
Type of the home-fond heart, the happy lot! —
 Deeply thy mild content rebukes the land
 Whose flimsy homes, built on the shifting sand
Of trade, for ever rise and fall
With alternation whimsical,
 Enduring scarce a day,
 Then swept away
By swift engulfments of incalculable tides
Whereon capricious Commerce rides. [121]
Look, thou substantial spirit of content!
Across this little vale, thy continent,
 To where, beyond the mouldering mill,
 Yon old deserted Georgian hill
Bares to the sun his piteous aged crest
    And seamy breast,
 By restless-hearted children left to lie
 Untended there beneath the heedless sky,
 As barbarous folk expose their old to die.
Upon that generous-rounding side, [131]
    With gullies scarified
 Where keen Neglect his lash hath plied,
Dwelt one I knew of old, who played at toil,
And gave to coquette Cotton soul and soil.
 Scorning the slow reward of patient grain,
 He sowed his heart with hopes of swifter gain,
 Then sat him down and waited for the rain.
He sailed in borrowed ships of usury —
A foolish Jason on a treacherous sea,
Seeking the Fleece and finding misery. [141]
 Lulled by smooth-rippling loans, in idle trance
 He lay, content that unthrift Circumstance
 Should plough for him the stony field of Chance.
Yea, gathering crops whose worth no man might tell,
He staked his life on games of Buy-and-Sell,
And turned each field into a gambler's hell.
 Aye, as each year began,
 My farmer to the neighboring city ran;
Passed with a mournful anxious face
Into the banker's inner place; [151]
Parleyed, excused, pleaded for longer grace;
 Railed at the drought, the worm, the rust, the grass;
 Protested ne'er again 'twould come to pass;
 With many an `oh' and `if' and `but alas'
Parried or swallowed searching questions rude,
And kissed the dust to soften Dives's mood.
At last, small loans by pledges great renewed,
 He issues smiling from the fatal door,
 And buys with lavish hand his yearly store
 Till his small borrowings will yield no more. [161]
Aye, as each year declined,
With bitter heart and ever-brooding mind
He mourned his fate unkind.
 In dust, in rain, with might and main,
 He nursed his cotton, cursed his grain,
 Fretted for news that made him fret again,
Snatched at each telegram of Future Sale,
And thrilled with Bulls' or Bears' alternate wail —

In hope or fear alike for ever pale.
And thus from year to year, through hope and fear,
With many a curse and many a secret tear,
Striving in vain his cloud of debt to clear,
At last
He woke to find his foolish dreaming past,
And all his best-of-life the easy prey
Of squandering scamps and quacks that lined his way
With vile array,
From rascal statesman down to petty knave;
Himself, at best, for all his bragging brave,
A gamester's catspaw and a banker's slave.
Then, worn and gray, and sick with deep unrest,
He fled away into the oblivious West,
Unmourned, unblest.

Old hill! old hill! thou gashed and hairy Lear
Whom the divine Cordelia of the year,
E'en pitying Spring, will vainly strive to cheer —
King, that no subject man nor beast may own,
Discrowned, undaughtered and alone —
Yet shall the great God turn thy fate,
And bring thee back into thy monarch state
And majesty immaculate.
Lo, through hot waverings of the August morn,
Thou givest from thy vasty sides forlorn
Visions of golden treasuries of corn —
Ripe largesse lingering for some bolder heart
That manfully shall take thy part,
And tend thee,
And defend thee,
With antique sinew and with modern art.

____ Sunnyside, Ga., August, 1874.

Notes: Corn

As stated elsewhere (`Introduction', p. xvii [Part I]), `Corn' was the first of Lanier's poems to attract general attention; for this reason as well as for its absolute merit the poem deserves careful study.

In the first of his letters to the Hon. Logan E. Bleckley, Chief-justice of Georgia, dated October 9, 1874, Lanier tells us how he came to write `Corn': "I enclose MS. of a poem in which I have endeavored to carry some very prosaic matters up to a loftier plane. I have been struck with alarm in seeing the numbers of deserted old homesteads and gullied hills in the older counties of Georgia: and, though they are dreadfully commonplace, I have thought they are surely mournful enough to be poetic."

In the introductory note to `Jones's Private Argyment' I have incidentally stated the theme of `Corn'. Instead of adding a more detailed statement of my own here, I give Judge Bleckley's analysis of the poem, which occurs in his reply to the above-mentioned letter. After giving various minute criticism (for Lanier had requested his unreserved judgment), Judge Bleckley continues: "Now, for the general impression which your Ode has made upon me. It presents four pictures; three of them landscapes and one a portrait. You paint the woods, a corn-field, and a worn-out hill. These are your landscapes. And your portrait is the likeness of an anxious, unthrifty cotton-planter who always spends his crop before he has made it, borrows on heavy interest to carry himself over from year to year, wears out his land, meets at last with utter ruin, and migrates to the West. Your second landscape is turned into a vegetable person, and you give its portrait with many touches of marvel and mystery in vegetable life. Your third landscape takes for an instant the form and tragic state of King Lear; you thus make it seize on our sympathies as if it were a real person, and you then restore it to the inanimate, and contemplate its possible beneficence in the distant future."

A comparison of the first draft of `Corn', as sent Judge Bleckley, with the final form shows that Lanier made many minute changes in the poem, especially in the earlier part. Still this earlier draft agrees substantially with the later, and

was so fine in conception and execution as to call forth this commendation of Judge Bleckley, which, despite the shortcomings of `Corn', may with greater justice be applied to the poem in its present form: "As an artist you seem to be Italian in the first two pictures, and Dutch or Flemish in the latter two. In your Italian vein you paint with the utmost delicacy and finish. The drawing is scrupulously correct and the color soft and harmonious. When you paint in Dutch or Flemish you are clear and strong, but sometimes hard. There is less idealization and more of the realistic element — your SOLIDS predominate over your fluids."

As already stated, Lanier has two other poems that indirectly treat the theme of `Corn', namely, `Thar's More in the Man' and `Jones's Private Argyment'. Moreover, he has `The Waving of the Corn', which, though charming, is neither so elaborate nor artistic as `Corn'.

Among poems on corn by other writers may be mentioned the following:

1. Whittier's `The Corn-song' (before 1872), a poem of praise and thanksgiving at the end of `The Huskers', which tells of the gathering of the corn and of the "corn-husking", known in the South as the "corn-shucking".

2. Woolson's (Constance F.) `Corn Fields', a description of Ohio fields, in `Harper's Monthly', 45, 444, Aug., 1872.

3. Thompson's (Maurice) `Dropping Corn' (1877), a dainty love lyric, in `Poems' (Boston, 1892), p. 78.

4. Cromwell's (S. C.) `Corn-shucking Song', a dialect poem, in `Harper', 69, 807, Oct., 1884.

5. Coleman's (C. W.) `Corn', in `The Atlantic Monthly', 70, 228, Aug., 1892, which, since it consists of but four lines and is more like Lanier's poem than are the others, may be quoted:

"Drawn up in serried ranks across the fields
That, as we gaze, seem ever to increase,
With tasseled flags and sun-emblazoned shields,
The glorious army of earth's perfect peace."

6. Hayne's (W. H.) `Amid the Corn', a charming account of the denizens of the corn-fields, in his `Sylvan Lyrics' (New York, 1893), p. 12.

7. Dumas's (W. T.) `Corn-shucking' and `The Last Ear of Corn', both life-like pictures of plantation life, in his `The Golden Day and Miscellaneous Poems' (Phila., 1893).

Other interesting articles are: `Mondamin, or the Origin of Indian Corn', in `The Southern Literary Messenger' (Richmond, Va.), 29, 12-13, July, 1859; `A Georgia Corn-shucking', by D. C. Barrow, Jr., in `The Century Magazine' (New York), 2, 873-878, Oct., 1882; and `Old American Customs: A Corn-party', an account of a corn-husking in New York, in `The Saturday Review' (London), 66, 237-238, Aug. 25, 1888.

4-9. See `Introduction', p. xxxii [Part III], and compare `The Symphony', ll. 183-190.

18. Paul Hamilton Hayne, whose love of nature rivals Lanier's, has an interesting poem entitled `Muscadines' (`Poems', Boston, 1882, pp. 222-224).

21. Compare `The Symphony', l. 117 ff.

57. See `Introduction', p. l [Part V].

125. In her introductory note to `Corn' Mrs. Lanier thus localizes the poem: "His `fieldward-faring eyes took harvest' `among the stately corn-ranks,' in a portion of middle Georgia sixty miles to the north of Macon. It is a high tract of country from which one looks across the lower reaches to the distant Blue Ridge Mountains, whose wholesome breath, all unobstructed, here blends with the woods-odors of the beech, the hickory, and the muscadine: a part of a range recalled elsewhere by Mr. Lanier as `that ample stretch of generous soil, where the Appalachian ruggednesses calm themselves into pleasant hills before dying quite away into the sea-board levels' — where `a man can find such temperances of heaven and earth — enough of struggle with nature to draw out manhood, with enough of bounty to sanction the struggle — that a more exquisite co-adaptation of all blessed circumstances for man's life need not be sought.'"

140. See `Jason' in any Dictionary of Mythology.*

— * Gayley's `The Classic Myths in English Literature' (Boston, Ginn & Co.) is an excellent book. —

157. `Dives': See Appendix to Webster's `International Dictionary'.

168. `Future Sale' — sale for future delivery.

185-6. See Shakespeare's `King Lear'.

My Springs

In the heart of the Hills of Life, I know [1]
Two springs that with unbroken flow
Forever pour their lucent streams
Into my soul's far Lake of Dreams.

Not larger than two eyes, they lie
Beneath the many-changing sky
And mirror all of life and time,
— Serene and dainty pantomime.

Shot through with lights of stars and dawns,
And shadowed sweet by ferns and fawns,
— Thus heaven and earth together vie [11]
Their shining depths to sanctify.

Always when the large Form of Love
Is hid by storms that rage above,
I gaze in my two springs and see
Love in his very verity.

Always when Faith with stifling stress
Of grief hath died in bitterness,
I gaze in my two springs and see
A Faith that smiles immortally.

Always when Charity and Hope, [21]
In darkness bounden, feebly grope,
I gaze in my two springs and see
A Light that sets my captives free.

Always, when Art on perverse wing
Flies where I cannot hear him sing,
I gaze in my two springs and see
A charm that brings him back to me.

When Labor faints, and Glory fails,
And coy Reward in sighs exhales,
I gaze in my two springs and see [31]
Attainment full and heavenly.

O Love, O Wife, thine eyes are they,
— My springs from out whose shining gray
Issue the sweet celestial streams
That feed my life's bright Lake of Dreams.

Oval and large and passion-pure
And gray and wise and honor-sure;
Soft as a dying violet-breath
Yet calmly unafraid of death;

Thronged, like two dove-cotes of gray doves, [41]

With wife's and mother's and poor-folk's loves,
And home-loves and high glory-loves
And science-loves and story-loves,

And loves for all that God and man
In art and nature make or plan,
And lady-loves for spidery lace
And broideries and supple grace

And diamonds and the whole sweet round
Of littles that large life compound,
And loves for God and God's bare truth, [51]
And loves for Magdalen and Ruth,

Dear eyes, dear eyes and rare complete —
Being heavenly-sweet and earthly-sweet,
— I marvel that God made you mine,
For when He frowns, 'tis then ye shine!

____ Baltimore, 1874.

Notes: My Springs

For my appreciation of this tribute to the poet's wife see `Introduction', p. xxxv [Part III]. Mr. Lanier's estimate is given in a letter of March, 1874, quoted in Mrs. Lanier's introductory note: "Of course, since I have written it to print I cannot make it such as *I* desire in artistic design: for the forms of to-day require a certain trim smugness and clean-shaven propriety in the face and dress of a poem, and I must win a hearing by conforming in some degree to these tyrannies, with a view to overturning them in the future. Written so, it is not nearly so beautiful as I would have it; and I therefore have another still in my heart, which I will some day write for myself."

Other tributes to his wife are: `In Absence', `Acknowledgment', `Laus Mariae', `Special Pleading', `Evening Song', `Thou and I', `One in Two', and `Two in One'; while she is referred to in `The Hard Times in Elfland' and `June Dreams in January'.

It will be interesting to compare `My Springs' with other poems on the eyes. Among the most noteworthy* may be cited Shakespeare's

> "And those eyes, the break of day,
> Lights that do mislead the morn;"

Lodge's

> "Her eyes are sapphires set in snow,
> Resembling heaven by every wink;
> The Gods do fear whenas they glow,
> And I do tremble when I think,
> Heigh ho, would she were mine!"

Jonson's

> "Drink to me only with thine eyes
> And I will pledge with mine," etc.;

Herrick's

> "Sweet, be not proud of those two eyes
> Which starlike sparkle in their skies;"

Thomas Stanley's

"Oh turn away those cruel eyes,
The stars of my undoing;
Or death in such a bright disguise
May tempt a second wooing;"

Byron's

"She walks in beauty, like the night,
Of cloudless climes and starry skies;
And all that's best of dark and bright
Meet in her aspect and her eyes;
Thus mellowed to that tender light
Which heaven to gaudy day denies;"

H. Coleridge's

"She is not fair to outward view,
As many maidens be;
Her loveliness I never knew
Until she smiled on me.
O then I saw her eye was bright,
A well of love, a spring of light.

"But now her looks are coy and cold,
To mine they ne'er reply,
And yet I cease not to behold
The love-light in her eye:
Her very frowns are fairer far
Than smiles of other maidens are;"

and Wordsworth's

"Her eyes are stars of twilight fair."

—
* These may be found either in Gosse's `English Lyrics' (D. Appleton & Co., New York) or in Palgrave's `Golden Treasury of Songs and Lyrics' (Macmillan & Co., New York).
—

49-50. See `Introduction', p. xlv [Part IV].

52. There is in early English literature a most interesting play entitled `Mary Magdalene': see Pollard's `English Miracle Plays' (New York), where extracts are given.

55-56. See `Introduction', p. xlvi [Part IV].

The Symphony

"O Trade! O Trade! would thou wert dead! [1]
The Time needs heart — 'tis tired of head:
We're all for love," the violins said.
"Of what avail the rigorous tale
Of bill for coin and box for bale?
Grant thee, O Trade! thine uttermost hope:
Level red gold with blue sky-slope,
And base it deep as devils grope:
When all's done, what hast thou won
Of the only sweet that's under the sun?
Ay, canst thou buy a single sigh [11]
Of true love's least, least ecstasy?"

Then, with a bridegroom's heart-beats trembling,
All the mightier strings assembling
Ranged them on the violins' side
As when the bridegroom leads the bride,
And, heart in voice, together cried:
"Yea, what avail the endless tale
Of gain by cunning and plus by sale?
Look up the land, look down the land,
The poor, the poor, the poor, they stand [21]
Wedged by the pressing of Trade's hand
Against an inward-opening door
That pressure tightens evermore:
They sigh a monstrous foul-air sigh
For the outside leagues of liberty,
Where Art, sweet lark, translates the sky
Into a heavenly melody.
`Each day, all day' (these poor folks say),
`In the same old year-long, drear-long way,
We weave in the mills and heave in the kilns, [31]
We sieve mine-meshes under the hills,
And thieve much gold from the Devil's bank tills,
To relieve, O God, what manner of ills? —
The beasts, they hunger, and eat, and die;
And so do we, and the world's a sty;
Hush, fellow-swine: why nuzzle and cry?
"Swinehood hath no remedy"
Say many men, and hasten by,
Clamping the nose and blinking the eye.
But who said once, in the lordly tone, [41]
"Man shall not live by bread alone
But all that cometh from the Throne?"
  Hath God said so?
  But Trade saith "No":
And the kilns and the curt-tongued mills say "Go:
There's plenty that can, if you can't: we know.
Move out, if you think you're underpaid.
The poor are prolific; we're not afraid;
  Trade is trade."'"
Thereat this passionate protesting [51]
Meekly changed, and softened till
It sank to sad requesting
And suggesting sadder still:
"And oh, if men might some time see
How piteous-false the poor decree
That trade no more than trade must be!
Does business mean, "Die, you — live, I"?
Then `Trade is trade' but sings a lie:
'Tis only war grown miserly.
If business is battle, name it so: [61]
War-crimes less will shame it so,
And widows less will blame it so.
Alas, for the poor to have some part
In yon sweet living lands of Art,
Makes problem not for head, but heart.
Vainly might Plato's brain revolve it:
Plainly the heart of a child could solve it."

And then, as when from words that seem but rude
We pass to silent pain that sits abrood

Back in our heart's great dark and solitude,
So sank the strings to gentle throbbing
Of long chords change-marked with sobbing —
Motherly sobbing, not distinctlier heard
Than half wing-openings of the sleeping bird,
Some dream of danger to her young hath stirred.
Then stirring and demurring ceased, and lo!
Every least ripple of the strings' song-flow
Died to a level with each level bow
And made a great chord tranquil-surfaced so,
As a brook beneath his curving bank doth go
To linger in the sacred dark and green
Where many boughs the still pool overlean
And many leaves make shadow with their sheen.
But presently
A velvet flute-note fell down pleasantly
Upon the bosom of that harmony,
And sailed and sailed incessantly,
As if a petal from a wild-rose blown
Had fluttered down upon that pool of tone
And boatwise dropped o' the convex side
And floated down the glassy tide
And clarified and glorified
The solemn spaces where the shadows bide.
From the warm concave of that fluted note
Somewhat, half song, half odor, forth did float,
As if a rose might somehow be a throat:
"When Nature from her far-off glen
Flutes her soft messages to men,
The flute can say them o'er again;
Yea, Nature, singing sweet and lone,
Breathes through life's strident polyphone
The flute-voice in the world of tone.
Sweet friends,
Man's love ascends
To finer and diviner ends
Than man's mere thought e'er comprehends
For I, e'en I,
As here I lie,
A petal on a harmony,
Demand of Science whence and why
Man's tender pain, man's inward cry,
When he doth gaze on earth and sky?
I am not overbold:
I hold
Full powers from Nature manifold.
I speak for each no-tongued tree
That, spring by spring, doth nobler be,
And dumbly and most wistfully
His mighty prayerful arms outspreads
Above men's oft-unheeding heads,
And his big blessing downward sheds.
I speak for all-shaped blooms and leaves,
Lichens on stones and moss on eaves,
Grasses and grains in ranks and sheaves;
Broad-fronded ferns and keen-leaved canes,
And briery mazes bounding lanes,
And marsh-plants, thirsty-cupped for rains,
And milky stems and sugary veins;

For every long-armed woman-vine
That round a piteous tree doth twine; [131]
For passionate odors, and divine
Pistils, and petals crystalline;
All purities of shady springs,
All shynesses of film-winged things
That fly from tree-trunks and bark-rings;
All modesties of mountain-fawns
That leap to covert from wild lawns,
And tremble if the day but dawns;
All sparklings of small beady eyes
Of birds, and sidelong glances wise [141]
Wherewith the jay hints tragedies;
All piquancies of prickly burs,
And smoothnesses of downs and furs
Of eiders and of minevers;
All limpid honeys that do lie
At stamen-bases, nor deny
The humming-birds' fine roguery,
Bee-thighs, nor any butterfly;
All gracious curves of slender wings,
Bark-mottlings, fibre-spiralings, [151]
Fern-wavings and leaf-flickerings;
Each dial-marked leaf and flower-bell
Wherewith in every lonesome dell
Time to himself his hours doth tell;
All tree-sounds, rustlings of pine-cones,
Wind-sighings, doves' melodious moans,
And night's unearthly under-tones;
All placid lakes and waveless deeps,
All cool reposing mountain-steeps,
Vale-calms and tranquil lotos-sleeps; — [161]
Yea, all fair forms, and sounds, and lights,
And warmths, and mysteries, and mights,
Of Nature's utmost depths and heights,
— These doth my timid tongue present,
Their mouthpiece and leal instrument
And servant, all love-eloquent.
I heard, when `ALL FOR LOVE' the violins cried:
So, Nature calls through all her system wide,
`Give me thy love, O man, so long denied.'
Much time is run, and man hath changed his ways, [171]
Since Nature, in the antique fable-days,
Was hid from man's true love by proxy fays,
False fauns and rascal gods that stole her praise.
The nymphs, cold creatures of man's colder brain,
Chilled Nature's streams till man's warm heart was fain
Never to lave its love in them again.
Later, a sweet Voice `Love thy neighbor' said;
Then first the bounds of neighborhood outspread
Beyond all confines of old ethnic dread.
Vainly the Jew might wag his covenant head: [181]
`ALL MEN ARE NEIGHBORS,' so the sweet Voice said.
So, when man's arms had circled all man's race,
The liberal compass of his warm embrace
Stretched bigger yet in the dark bounds of space;
With hands a-grope he felt smooth Nature's grace,
Drew her to breast and kissed her sweetheart face:
Yea man found neighbors in great hills and trees

And streams and clouds and suns and birds and bees,
And throbbed with neighbor-loves in loving these.
But oh, the poor! the poor! the poor!
That stand by the inward-opening door
Trade's hand doth tighten ever more,
And sigh their monstrous foul-air sigh
For the outside hills of liberty,
Where Nature spreads her wild blue sky
For Art to make into melody!
Thou Trade! thou king of the modern days!
  Change thy ways,
  Change thy ways;
Let the sweaty laborers file
  A little while,
  A little while,
Where Art and Nature sing and smile.
Trade! is thy heart all dead, all dead?
And hast thou nothing but a head?
I'm all for heart," the flute-voice said,
And into sudden silence fled,
Like as a blush that while 'tis red
Dies to a still, still white instead.

Thereto a thrilling calm succeeds,
Till presently the silence breeds
A little breeze among the reeds
That seems to blow by sea-marsh weeds:
Then from the gentle stir and fret
Sings out the melting clarionet,
Like as a lady sings while yet
Her eyes with salty tears are wet.
"O Trade! O Trade!" the Lady said,
"I too will wish thee utterly dead
If all thy heart is in thy head.
For O my God! and O my God!
What shameful ways have women trod
At beckoning of Trade's golden rod!
Alas when sighs are traders' lies,
And heart's-ease eyes and violet eyes
  Are merchandise!
O purchased lips that kiss with pain!
O cheeks coin-spotted with smirch and stain!
O trafficked hearts that break in twain!
— And yet what wonder at my sisters' crime?
So hath Trade withered up Love's sinewy prime,
Men love not women as in olden time.
Ah, not in these cold merchantable days
Deem men their life an opal gray, where plays
The one red Sweet of gracious ladies'-praise.
Now, comes a suitor with sharp prying eye —
Says, `Here, you Lady, if you'll sell I'll buy:
Come, heart for heart — a trade? What! weeping? why?'
Shame on such wooers' dapper mercery!
I would my lover kneeling at my feet
In humble manliness should cry, `O sweet!
I know not if thy heart my heart will greet:
I ask not if thy love my love can meet:
Whate'er thy worshipful soft tongue shall say,
I'll kiss thine answer, be it yea or nay:

I do but know I love thee, and I pray
To be thy knight until my dying day.'
Woe him that cunning trades in hearts contrives!
Base love good women to base loving drives.
If men loved larger, larger were our lives; [251]
And wooed they nobler, won they nobler wives."

There thrust the bold straightforward horn
To battle for that lady lorn,
With heartsome voice of mellow scorn,
Like any knight in knighthood's morn.
"Now comfort thee," said he,
"Fair Lady.
For God shall right thy grievous wrong,
And man shall sing thee a true-love song,
Voiced in act his whole life long, [261]
Yea, all thy sweet life long,
Fair Lady.
Where's he that craftily hath said,
The day of chivalry is dead?
I'll prove that lie upon his head,
Or I will die instead,
Fair Lady.
Is Honor gone into his grave?
Hath Faith become a caitiff knave,
And Selfhood turned into a slave [271]
To work in Mammon's cave,
Fair Lady?
Will Truth's long blade ne'er gleam again?
Hath Giant Trade in dungeons slain
All great contempts of mean-got gain
And hates of inward stain,
Fair Lady?
For aye shall name and fame be sold,
And place be hugged for the sake of gold,
And smirch-robed Justice feebly scold [281]
At Crime all money-bold,
Fair Lady?
Shall self-wrapt husbands aye forget
Kiss-pardons for the daily fret
Wherewith sweet wifely eyes are wet —
Blind to lips kiss-wise set —
Fair Lady?
Shall lovers higgle, heart for heart,
Till wooing grows a trading mart
Where much for little, and all for part, [291]
Make love a cheapening art,
Fair Lady?
Shall woman scorch for a single sin
That her betrayer may revel in,
And she be burnt, and he but grin
When that the flames begin,
Fair Lady?
Shall ne'er prevail the woman's plea,
`We maids would far, far whiter be
If that our eyes might sometimes see [301]
Men maids in purity,'
Fair Lady?
Shall Trade aye salve his conscience-aches

With jibes at Chivalry's old mistakes —
The wars that o'erhot knighthood makes
For Christ's and ladies' sakes,
Fair Lady?
Now by each knight that e'er hath prayed
To fight like a man and love like a maid,
Since Pembroke's life, as Pembroke's blade, [311]
I' the scabbard, death, was laid,
Fair Lady,
I dare avouch my faith is bright
That God doth right and God hath might.
Nor time hath changed His hair to white,
Nor His dear love to spite,
Fair Lady.
I doubt no doubts: I strive, and shrive my clay,
And fight my fight in the patient modern way
For true love and for thee — ah me! and pray [321]
To be thy knight until my dying day,
Fair Lady."
Made end that knightly horn, and spurred away
Into the thick of the melodious fray.

And then the hautboy played and smiled,
And sang like any large-eyed child,
Cool-hearted and all undefiled.
"Huge Trade!" he said,
"Would thou wouldst lift me on thy head
And run where'er my finger led! [331]
Once said a Man — and wise was He —
`Never shalt thou the heavens see,
Save as a little child thou be.'"
Then o'er sea-lashings of commingling tunes
The ancient wise bassoons,
Like weird
Gray-beard
Old harpers sitting on the high sea-dunes,
Chanted runes:
"Bright-waved gain, gray-waved loss, [341]
The sea of all doth lash and toss,
One wave forward and one across:
But now 'twas trough, now 'tis crest,
And worst doth foam and flash to best,
And curst to blest.

"Life! Life! thou sea-fugue, writ from east to west,
Love, Love alone can pore
On thy dissolving score
Of harsh half-phrasings,
Blotted ere writ, [351]
And double erasings
Of chords most fit.
Yea, Love, sole music-master blest,
May read thy weltering palimpsest.
To follow Time's dying melodies through,
And never to lose the old in the new,
And ever to solve the discords true —
Love alone can do.
And ever Love hears the poor-folks' crying,
And ever Love hears the women's sighing, [361]

And ever sweet knighthood's death-defying,
And ever wise childhood's deep implying,
But never a trader's glozing and lying.

"And yet shall Love himself be heard,
Though long deferred, though long deferred:
O'er the modern waste a dove hath whirred:
Music is Love in search of a word."

____ Baltimore, 1875.

Notes: The Symphony

The `Introduction' (pp. xxviii f., xxxiii ff. [Part III], xlvii [Part IV]) gives, besides the plan of `The Symphony', a detailed statement of its two themes, — the evils of the trade-spirit in the commercial and social world and the need in each of the love-spirit. These questions preyed on the poet's mind and were to be treated at length in `The Jacquerie' also, which he expected to make his great work, but which he was unable to complete. This he tells us in a noble passage to Judge Bleckley, in his letter of November 15, 1874. After deploring the lack of time for literary labor (see quotation in `Introduction', p. xlvi [Part IV]), he continues: "I manage to get a little time tho' to work on what is to be my first `magnum opus', a long poem, founded on that strange uprising in the middle of the fourteenth century in France, called `The Jacquerie'. It was the first time that the big hungers of `the People' appear in our modern civilization; and it is full of significance. The peasants learned from the merchant potentates of Flanders that a man who could not be a lord by birth, might be one by wealth; and so Trade arose, and overthrew Chivalry. Trade has now had possession of the civilized world for four hundred years: it controls all things, it interprets the Bible, it guides our national and almost all our individual life with its maxims; and its oppressions upon the moral existence of man have come to be ten thousand times more grievous than the worst tyrannies of the Feudal System ever were. Thus in the reversals of time, it is NOW the GENTLEMAN who must rise and overthrow Trade. That chivalry which every man has, in some degree, in his heart; which does not depend upon birth, but which is a revelation from God of justice, of fair dealing, of scorn of mean advantages; which contemns the selling of stock which one KNOWS is going to fall, to a man who BELIEVES it is going to rise, as much as it would contemn any other form of rascality or of injustice or of meanness; — it is this which must in these latter days organize its insurrections and burn up every one of the cunning moral castles from which Trade sends out its forays upon the conscience of modern society. — This is about the plan which is to run through my book: though I conceal it under the form of a pure novel."

Mr. F. F. Browne is doubtless right in saying that `The Symphony' recalls parts of Tennyson's `Maud', but the closest congeners of `The Symphony' in English are, I think, Langland's `Piers The Plowman' in poetry and Ruskin's `Unto This Last' in prose. Widely as these two works differ from `The Symphony' in form, they are one with it in purpose and in spirit. All three voice the outcry of the poor against the hardness of their lot and their longing for a larger life; all three show that the only hope of relief lies in a broader and deeper love for humanity. Analogues to individual verses of `The Symphony' are cited below.

1-2. See `Introduction', p. xxviii [Part III].

31-61. See `Introduction', p. xxix [Part III].

42-43. See St. Matthew 4:4.

55-60. It is precisely this evil that Ruskin has in mind, I take it, when he condemns the commercial text, "Buy in the cheapest market and sell in the dearest," and when he declares that "Competition is the law of death" (`Unto This Last', pp. 40, 59).

117. Compare `Corn', l. 21 ff.

161. For `lotos-sleeps' see Tennyson's `The Lotos-eaters', which almost lulls one to sleep, and `The Odyssey' ix. 80-104.

178. See St. Matthew 19:19.

182. See St. Luke 10:29, ff.

183-190. Compare `Corn', ll. 4-9, and see `Introduction', p. xxxii [Part III].

232-248. See `Introduction', p. xxxiv f., and Peacock's `Lady Clarinda's Song' (Gosse's `English Lyrics').

294-298. See `Tiger-lilies', p. 49, and `Betrayal' in Lanier's complete `Poems', p. 213. These lines of `The Symphony' show clearly that Lanier did not believe that God made one law for man and another for woman, or that one very grievous sin should forever blight a woman's life. What Christ himself thought is clear from St. Luke 7:36-50, and St. John 8:1-11.

302. See `Introduction', p. liv [Part VI].

326. For a full account of the `hautboy' and other musical instruments mentioned in the poem see Lanier's `The Orchestra of To-day', cited in the `Bibliography'.

359. See `Introduction', p. xxxvi [Part III]. Compare 1 Corinthians 13; Drummond's `The Greatest Thing in the World'; William Morris's `Love Is Enough'; `Aurora Leigh', Book ix.:

"Art is much, but Love is more!
O Art, my Art, thou'rt much, but Love is more!
Art symbolizes Heaven, but Love is God
And makes Heaven;"

and Langland's `Piers the Plowman' (ed. by Skeat, i. 202-3):

"Love is leche of lyf and nexte oure Lorde selve,
And also the graith gate that goth into hevene."*

— * The two lines may be translated: "Love is the physician of life and next to our Lord himself; moreover, it is the way that goes straight to Heaven." —

368. See `Introduction', p. xxxii [Part III].

The Power of Prayer; or, The First Steamboat up the Alabama

By Sidney and Clifford Lanier

You, Dinah! Come and set me whar de ribber-roads does meet. [1]
De Lord, HE made dese black-jack roots to twis' into a seat.
Umph dar! De Lord have mussy on dis blin' old nigger's feet.

It 'pear to me dis mornin' I kin smell de fust o' June.
I 'clar', I b'lieve dat mockin'-bird could play de fiddle soon!
Dem yonder town-bells sounds like dey was ringin' in de moon.

Well, ef dis nigger IS been blind for fo'ty year or mo',
Dese ears, DEY sees de world, like, th'u' de cracks dat's in de do'.
For de Lord has built dis body wid de windows 'hind and 'fo'.

I know my front ones IS stopped up, and things is sort o' dim,
But den, th'u' DEM, temptation's rain won't leak in on ole Jim! [11]
De back ones show me earth enough, aldo' dey's mons'ous slim.

And as for Hebben, — bless de Lord, and praise His holy name —
DAT shines in all de co'ners of dis cabin jes' de same
As ef dat cabin hadn't nar' a plank upon de frame!

Who CALL me? Listen down de ribber, Dinah! Don't you hyar
Somebody holl'in' "HOO, JIM, HOO?" My Sarah died las' y'ar;
IS dat black angel done come back to call ole Jim f'om hyar?

My stars, dat cain't be Sarah, shuh! Jes' listen, Dinah, NOW!
What KIN be comin' up dat bend, a-makin' sich a row?
Fus' bellerin' like a pawin' bull, den squealin' like a sow? [21]

De Lord 'a' mussy sakes alive, jes' hear, — ker-woof, ker-woof —
De Debble's comin' round dat bend, he's comin' shuh enuff,
A-splashin' up de water wid his tail and wid his hoof!

I'se pow'ful skeered; but neversomeless I ain't gwine run away:
I'm gwine to stand stiff-legged for de Lord dis blessed day.
YOU screech, and swish de water, Satan! I'se a gwine to pray.

O hebbenly Marster, what thou willest, dat mus' be jes' so,
And ef Thou hast bespoke de word, some nigger's bound to go.
Den, Lord, please take ole Jim, and lef young Dinah hyar below!

'Scuse Dinah, 'scuse her, Marster; for she's sich a little chile, [31]
She hardly jes' begin to scramble up de homeyard stile,
But dis ole traveller's feet been tired dis many a many a mile.

I'se wufless as de rotten pole of las' year's fodder-stack.
De rheumatiz done bit my bones; you hear 'em crack and crack?
I cain'st sit down 'dout gruntin' like 'twas breakin' o' my back.

What use de wheel, when hub and spokes is warped and split, and rotten?
What use dis dried-up cotton-stalk, when Life done picked my cotton?
I'se like a word dat somebody said, and den done been forgotten.

But, Dinah! Shuh dat gal jes' like dis little hick'ry tree,
De sap's jes' risin' in her; she do grow owdaciouslee — [41]
Lord, ef you's clarin' de underbrush, don't cut her down, cut me!

I would not proud persume — but I'll boldly make reques';
Sence Jacob had dat wrastlin'-match, I, too, gwine do my bes';
When Jacob got all underholt, de Lord he answered Yes!

And what for waste de vittles, now, and th'ow away de bread,
Jes' for to strength dese idle hands to scratch dis ole bald head?
T'ink of de 'conomy, Marster, ef dis ole Jim was dead!

Stop; — ef I don't believe de Debble's gone on up de stream!
Jes' now he squealed down dar; — hush; dat's a mighty weakly scream!
Yas, sir, he's gone, he's gone; — he snort way off, like in a dream! [51]

O glory hallelujah to de Lord dat reigns on high!
De Debble's fai'ly skeered to def, he done gone flyin' by;
I know'd he couldn't stand dat pra'r, I felt my Marster nigh!

You, Dinah; ain't you 'shamed, now, dat you didn' trust to grace?
I heerd you thrashin' th'u' de bushes when he showed his face!
You fool, you think de Debble couldn't beat YOU in a race?

I tell you, Dinah, jes' as shuh as you is standin' dar,
When folks starts prayin', answer-angels drops down th'u' de a'r.
YAS, DINAH, WHAR 'OULD YOU BE NOW, JES' 'CEPTIN' FUR DAT PRA'R?

____ Baltimore, 1875.

Notes: The Power of Prayer; or, The First Steamboat up the Alabama

As the title-page shows, `The Power of Prayer' is the joint production of Sidney and Clifford Lanier. The latter gentleman informs me that once he read a newspaper scrap of about ten lines stating that a Negro on first seeing a steamboat coming down the river was greatly frightened. Mr. Lanier then wrote out in metrical form the plot of `The Power of Prayer', substantially as we now have it, and sent it to his brother Sidney, who polished it up and published it under their joint names. Mr. Clifford Lanier had not seen the piece mentioned in the next paragraph, nor had his brother;

but on being shown the piece, the former was of the opinion that his newspaper clipping must have been based on the work to which I turn, as it had already appeared and the incidents were so much alike.

In the third chapter of `The Gilded Age' (Hartford, Conn., 1873) by Mark Twain and Charles Dudley Warner, there is a piece, `Uncle Daniel's Apparition and Prayer', so similar to `The Power of Prayer' that I quote it almost entire. Uncle Dan'l (a Negro), his wife, his young mistress, and his two young masters were sitting on a log by the Mississippi River one moonlight night a-talking. "Suddenly Uncle Dan'l exclaimed: `Chil'en, dah's sumfin a comin'!'

"All crowded close together and every heart beat faster.
Uncle Dan'l pointed down the river with his bony finger.

"A deep coughing sound troubled the stillness, way toward a wooded cape that jutted into the stream a mile distant. All in an instant a fierce eye of fire shot out from behind the cape and sent a long brilliant pathway quivering athwart the dusky water. The coughing grew louder and louder, the glaring eye grew larger and still larger, glared wilder and still wilder. A huge shape developed itself out of the gloom, and from its tall duplicate horns dense volumes of smoke, starred and spangled with sparks, poured out and went tumbling away into the farther darkness. Nearer and nearer the thing came, till its long sides began to glow with spots of light which mirrored themselves in the river and attended the monster like a torch-light procession.

"`What is it? Oh! what is it, Uncle Dan'l?'

"With deep solemnity the answer came:

"`It's de Almighty! Git down on yo' knees!'

"It was not necessary to say it twice. They were all kneeling in a moment. And then while the mysterious coughing rose stronger and stronger and the threatening glare reached farther and wider, the negro's voice lifted up its supplications.

"`O Lord, we's ben mighty wicked, an' we knows dat we 'zerve to go to de bad place, but, good Lord, deah Lord, we ain't ready yit, we ain't ready — let dese po' chil'en hab one mo' chance, jes' one mo' chance. Take de ole niggah if you's got to hab somebody. — Good Lord, good deah Lord, we don't know whah you's a gwine to, we don't know who you's got yo' eye on, but we knows by de way you's a comin', we know by de way you's a tiltin' along in yo' charyot o' fiah dat some po' sinner's a gwine to ketch it. But, good Lord, dese chil'en don't 'blong heah, dey's f'm Obedstown whah dey don't know nuffin, an' you knows, yo' own sef, dat dey ain't 'sponsible. An' deah Lord, good Lord, it ain't like yo' mercy, it ain't like yo' pity, it ain't like yo' long-sufferin' lovin'-kindness for to take dis kind o' 'vantage o' sich little chil'en as dese is when dey's so many ornery grown folks chuck full o' cussedness dat wants roastin' down dah. O Lord, spah de little chil'en, don't tar de little chil'en away f'm dey frens, jes' let 'em off jes' dis once, and take it out'n de ole niggah. HEAH I IS, LORD, HEAH I IS! De ole niggah's ready, Lord, de ole ——'

"The flaming and churning steamer was right abreast the party, and not twenty steps away. The awful thunder of a mud-valve suddenly burst forth, drowning the prayer, and as suddenly Uncle Dan'l snatched a child under each arm and scoured into the woods with the rest of the pack at his heels. And then, ashamed of himself, he halted in the deep darkness and shouted (but rather feebly):

"`Heah I is, Lord, heah I is!'

"There was a moment of throbbing suspense, and then, to the surprise and comfort of the party, it was plain that the august presence had gone by, for its dreadful noises were receding. Uncle Dan'l headed a cautious reconnoissance in the direction of the log. Sure enough `The Lord' was just turning a point a short distance up the river, and while they looked, the lights winked out and the coughing diminished by degrees and presently ceased altogether.

"`H'wsh! Well now dey's some folks says dey ain't no 'ficiency in prah.
Dis chile would like to know whah we'd a ben now if it warn't fo' dat prah?
Dat's it. Dat's it!'"

There follows a discussion as to whether or not the prayer caused the apparition to go by, of which of course Uncle Dan'l has no doubt. The apparition reappears and Uncle Dan'l betakes himself to prayer again, this time a long way off.

I wrote the authors of `The Gilded Age' and asked the source of `Uncle Daniel's Apparition and Prayer'. Mr. Clemens kindly replied that he is the author of the piece, and that it is pure fiction without either history or tradition back of it.

A comparison of the two stories shows some differences. The scene in the one case is the Alabama River, in the other the Mississippi. Moreover, the PERSONNEL is different. The Negro man in Twain's story is about forty, in Lanier's he is old and has been blind for forty years. Another difference Mr. Sidney Lanier points out to his wife in his letter of October 1, 1874: "Cliff's and my `Power of Prayer' will come out in the Scribner's; probably in the `Etchings' at the end of the Magazine. I wrote thee what Dr. Holland said anent its resemblance to something of Mark Twain's in plot. Day before yesterday I called and asked Dr. Holland what work of Mark Twain's he referred to. `Well,' said he, `I know nothing about it myself: I read the poem to a friend, and he suggested that the plot was like something of Mark Twain's. But yesterday I read him your note, and he then recollected that in Twain's version it is God Almighty that is coming up the bend. In yours it is the Devil: — which certainly makes a little difference!' and here he broke into a great laugh. `Yes,' I rejoined, `a difference toto coelo,' whereat he laughed again, and told me he had already ordered a check to be sent me for the poem."

Mr. Clifford Lanier was born at Griffin, Ga., April 24, 1844, entered business in Montgomery, Ala., at fourteen, subsequently attended college for a year and a half, and in May, 1862, joined his brother in the Confederate Army. His soldier life has been detailed in connection with that of the poet. In October, 1864, Mr. Clifford Lanier was assigned as signal officer to the blockade-runner `Talisman', which, after two successful runs to the Bermuda Islands, was wrecked in December, 1864. He escaped, however, and surrendered to the Federal authorities at the end of April, 1865. He has been successively lawyer, hotel manager, and superintendent of schools in Montgomery, Ala. For several years past he has been a director of the Bank of Montgomery and other corporations. All the while, however, he has been deeply interested in literature and has written some graceful sketches and poems, among which may be mentioned the following: `Thorn-fruit' (1867), `Love and Loyalty at War' (1893), `Biding Tryst' (1894), prose; `Greatest of These is Love', `The American Philomel', `Keats and Fanny B——', `The Spirit of Art', `Antinous to Hadrian', `Time', `Tireless', `Tramp' (in Stedman and Hutchinson's `Library of American Literature'), `Love and Life', `Edgar Allan Poe', etc. As stated in the `Introduction', the Chautauquans of 1898 have named themselves "The Laniers" in honor of Messrs. Sidney and Clifford Lanier. The motto of the class is the first line of Mr. Clifford Lanier's `Transformation' (`Sunday-school Times', Phila., June 30, 1894):

"The humblest life that lives may be divine."

8. The complete `Poems' has `the' before `world', but Mrs. Lanier thinks the poet must have used `de' here as elsewhere.

Rose-morals

I. — Red

Would that my songs might be [1]
What roses make by day and night —
Distillments of my clod of misery
Into delight.

Soul, could'st thou bare thy breast
As yon red rose, and dare the day,
All clean, and large, and calm with velvet rest?
Say yea — say yea!

Ah, dear my Rose, good-bye;
The wind is up; so; drift away.
That songs from me as leaves from thee may fly, [11]
I strive, I pray.

II. — White

Soul, get thee to the heart
Of yonder tuberose: hide thee there —
There breathe the meditations of thine art
Suffused with prayer.

Of spirit grave yet light,
How fervent fragrances uprise
Pure-born from these most rich and yet most white
Virginities!

Mulched with unsavory death, [21]
Grow, Soul! unto such white estate,
That virginal-prayerful art shall be thy breath,
Thy work, thy fate.

____ Baltimore, 1875.

Notes: Rose-morals

Rose-morals in English literature probably begin with Sir John Mandeville in the fourteenth century. At any rate, in the eighteenth chapter of his `Voyage and Travels' he professes to tell us the origin of red and white roses. A fair maid had been unjustly accused of wrong-doing and doomed to die by fire. "And as the woode began to brenne (burn) about hir, she made hir prayer to our Lorde as she was not gyltie of that thing, that he would helpe hir that it might be knowne to all men. And whan (when) she had thus sayde, she entered the fyre and anone the fyre went out, and those braunches that were brenninge (burning) became red Roses and those braunches that were not kindled became white Rosiers (rose bushes) full of white roses, and those were the fyrst roses and rosyers that any man sawe, and so was the mayden saved through the grace of God."

Thomas Carew has several rose-moralities, as `The True Beauty', beginning "He that loves a rosy cheek," and his exquisite `Red and White Roses':

"Read in these roses the sad story
Of my hard fate and your own glory:
In the white you may discover
The paleness of a fainting lover;
In the red, the flames still feeding
On my heart with fresh wounds bleeding.
The white will tell you how I languish,
And the red express my anguish:
The white my innocence displaying,
The red my martyrdom betraying.
The frowns that on your brow resided
Have those roses thus divided;
Oh! let your smiles but clear the weather,
And then they both shall grow together."*

—
* See Saintsbury's `Elizabethan Literature' (Macmillan & Co., New York, 1887), p. 363.
—

Rollicking Robert Herrick, too, draws his morals, now advising the virgins to make much of time, as in his `Gather ye rose-buds while ye may', now preaching a rarely pathetic sermon, as in `To Blossoms':

"Fair pledges of a fruitful tree,
Why do ye fall so fast?
Your date is not so past,
But you may stay yet here awhile
To blush and gently smile,
And go at last.

"What, were ye born to be
An hour or half's delight,
And so to bid good-night?
'Twas pity Nature brought ye forth
Merely to show your worth,
And lose you quite.

"But you are lovely leaves, where we
May read how soon things have

Their end, though ne'er so brave:
And after they have shown their pride
Like you, awhile, they glide
Into the grave."*

— * `Palgrave', p. 89. —

Much like this last piece in import, and scarcely inferior to it in execution, is `My life is like the summer rose' of Richard Henry Wilde, which is familiar to every one.

Paul Hamilton Hayne's `The Red and the White Rose' (`Poems', pp. 231-232) is an interesting dialogue, which the author concludes by making the former an "earthly queen" and the latter a "heaven-bound votaress".

Mrs. Browning's `A Lay of the Early Rose' shows that we are not to strive "for the dole of praise."

To ——, with a Rose

I asked my heart to say [1]
Some word whose worth my love's devoir might pay
Upon my Lady's natal day.

Then said my heart to me:
`Learn from the rhyme that now shall come to thee
What fits thy Love most lovingly.'

This gift that learning shows;
For, as a rhyme unto its rhyme-twin goes,
I send a rose unto a Rose.

____ Philadelphia, 1876.

Notes: To ——, with a Rose

This poem was sent to Mrs. Gibson Peacock, of Philadelphia, who was one of Mr. Lanier's kindest and most appreciative friends. The poet's letters to Mr. and Mrs. Peacock have recently been published in `The Atlantic' (see `Thayer' in `Bibliography').

Of the numerous rose-compliments in English I can here specify but a few.
One of the prettiest is that by Henry Constable (`Saintsbury', p. 113):

"My Lady's presence makes the Roses red,
Because to see her lips they blush for shame."

Carew's compliment is hardly equal to his morals (`Gosse', p. 101):

"Ask me no more where Jove bestows,
When June is past, the fading rose;
For in your beauty's orient deep
These flowers, as in their causes, sleep."

Few better things have been written than this, the second stanza of Jonson's
`Drink to me only with thine eyes' (`Gosse', p. 80):

"I sent thee late a rosy wreath,
Not so much honouring thee
As giving it a hope that there
It could not withered be.
But thou thereon did'st only breathe,
And sent'st it back to me;
Since when it grows and smells, I swear,
Not of itself, but thee."*

Even more felicitous, perhaps, is Waller's `Go, lovely rose!' which is at once a compliment and a moral (`Gosse', p. 134):

"Go, lovely rose
Tell her that wastes her time and me,
That now she knows,
When I resemble her to thee,
How sweet and fair she seems to be.

"Tell her that's young,
And shuns to have her graces spied,
That hadst thou sprung
In deserts, where no men abide,
Thou must have uncommended died.

"Small is the worth
Of beauty from the light retired;
Bid her come forth,
Suffer herself to be desired,
And not blush so to be admired.

"Then die! that she
The common fate of all things rare
May read in thee;
How small a part of time they share
That are so wond'rous sweet and fair."

Browning's `Women and Roses' should also be mentioned, and Mrs. Browning's translation of Sappho's lovely `Song of the Rose'.

— * The fact that Jonson here translates a prose love-letter of Philostratus, the Greek sophist, may detract from the originality but not the beauty of his poem. —

Uncle Jim's Baptist Revival Hymn

By Sidney and Clifford Lanier

SOLO. — Sin's rooster's crowed, Ole Mahster's riz, [1]
De sleepin'-time is pas';
Wake up dem lazy Baptissis,
CHORUS. — Dey's mightily in de grass, grass,
Dey's mightily in de grass.

Ole Mahster's blowed de mornin' horn,
He's blowed a powerful blas';
O Baptis' come, come hoe de corn,
You's mightily in de grass, grass,
You's mightily in de grass.

De Meth'dis team's done hitched; O fool, [11]
De day's a-breakin' fas';
Gear up dat lean ole Baptis' mule,
Dey's mightily in de grass, grass,
Dey's mightily in de grass.

De workmen's few an' mons'rous slow,
De cotton's sheddin' fas';
Whoop, look, jes' look at de Baptis' row,
Hit's mightily in de grass, grass,
Hit's mightily in de grass.

De jay-bird squeal to de mockin'-bird: "Stop!
  Don' gimme none o' yo' sass;
Better sing one song for de Baptis' crop,
    Dey's mightily in de grass, grass,
    Dey's mightily in de grass."

And de ole crow croak: "Don' work, no, no;"
  But de fiel'-lark say, "Yaas, yaas,
An' I spec' you mighty glad, you debblish crow,
    Dat de Baptissis's in de grass, grass,
    Dat de Baptissis's in de grass!"

Lord, thunder us up to de plowin'-match,
  Lord, peerten de hoein' fas',
Yea, Lord, hab mussy on de Baptis' patch,
    Dey's mightily in de grass, grass,
    Dey's mightily in de grass.

____ 1876.

Notes: Uncle Jim's Baptist Revival Hymn

I think that the following note, prefixed by the authors to their poem, sufficiently explains what is to me one of their best humorous pieces:

"Not long ago a certain Georgia cotton-planter, driven to desperation by awaking each morning to find that the grass had quite outgrown the cotton overnight, and was likely to choke it, in defiance of his lazy freedmen's hoes and ploughs, set the whole State in a laugh by exclaiming to a group of fellow-sufferers: `It's all stuff about Cincinnatus leaving the plough to go into politics "for patriotism"; he was just a-runnin' from grass!'

"This state of things — when the delicate young rootlets of the cotton are struggling against the hardier multitudes of the grass-suckers — is universally described in plantation parlance by the phrase `in the grass'; and Uncle Jim appears to have found in it so much similarity to the condition of his own (`Baptis") church, overrun, as it was, by the cares of this world, that he has embodied it in the refrain of a revival hymn such as the colored improvisator of the South not infrequently constructs from his daily surroundings. He has drawn all the ideas of his stanzas from the early morning phenomena of those critical weeks when the loud plantation-horn is blown before daylight, in order to rouse all hands for a long day's fight against the common enemy of cotton-planting mankind.

"In addition to these exegetical commentaries the Northern reader probably needs to be informed that the phrase `peerten up' means substantially `to spur up', and is an active form of the adjective `peert' (probably a corruption of `pert'), which is so common in the South, and which has much the signification of `smart' in New England, as e.g., a `peert' horse, in antithesis to a `sorry' — i.e., poor, mean, lazy one."

The Mocking-bird

Superb and sole, upon a plumed spray
That o'er the general leafage boldly grew,
He summ'd the woods in song; or typic drew
The watch of hungry hawks, the lone dismay
Of languid doves when long their lovers stray,
And all birds' passion-plays that sprinkle dew
At morn in brake or bosky avenue.
What e'er birds did or dreamed, this bird could say.
Then down he shot, bounced airily along
The sward, twitched in a grasshopper, made song
Midflight, perched, prinked, and to his art again.
Sweet Science, this large riddle read me plain:
How may the death of that dull insect be
The life of yon trim Shakspere on the tree?

____ 1877.

Besides this sonnet Mr. Lanier wrote a longer `To Our Mocking-bird', consisting of three sonnets, and `Bob', a charming account, in prose, of the life and death of the bird apostrophized.

In his `Birds and Poets' (Boston, 1877), Mr. John Burroughs says
that he knows of only two noteworthy poetical tributes to the mocking-bird,
those by Whitman and by Wilde, both of which he quotes.
But since the appearance of his book many poems have been written
to the mocking-bird, several of which are of enduring worth.
Indeed, several noteworthy poems had been published
before the appearance of Mr. Burroughs's essay, as will appear
from the list below. In a search of two days I found
thirty-two different authors paying tribute to our marvelous singer:
Julia Bacon (see J. W. Davidson's `Living Writers of the South'.
New York: Carleton, 1869), St. L. L. Carter (ib.), Edna P. Clarke
(`Century', 24. 391, July, 1893), Fortunatus Crosby (`Davidson', l.c.),
J. R. Drake (Duyckinck's `Cyclopaedia of American Literature'.
New York, 1855), R. T. W. Duke, Jr. (`Southern Bivouac', 2. 631, March, 1887),
W. T. Dumas (`The Golden Day and Miscellaneous Poems', Philadelphia, 1893),
F. (`Southern Literary Messenger', Richmond, Va., 5. 523, August, 1839),
H. L. Flash (`Davidson', l.c.), Va. Gentleman (`Harper's Magazine',
15. 566, September, 1857), Caroline Gilman (May's `American Female Poets',
Philadelphia, 1865), Hannah F. Gould (`Davidson', l.c.),
Paul Granald (`So. Lit. Mes.', 8, 508, August, 1842),
P. H. Hayne (`Poems', Boston, 1882: two), W. H. Hayne (`Century', 24. 676,
September, 1893), C. W. Hubner (`Poems and Essays', New York, 1881),
C. Lanier (`Sunday-school Times', Phila., July 8, 1893),
S. Lanier (two, as above cited), Gen. Edwin G. Lee (`Southern Metropolis',
Baltimore, 1869), A. B. Meek (in his `Songs and Poems of the South',
New York, 1857), W. Mitchell (`Scribner's Magazine', 11. 171, December, 1875),
Nugator (`So. Lit. Mes.', 4. 356, June, 1838), C. J. O'Malley
(`So. Bivouac', 2. 698, April, 1887), Albert Pike (Stedman & Hutchinson's
`Amer. Lit.', New York, 1891, vol. 6), D. Robinson (`Century', 24. 480,
July, 1893), Clinton Scollard (`Pictures in Song', New York, 1884),
H. J. Stockard (`The Century', xlviii. 898, Oct., 1894),
T (`So. Lit. Mes.', 11. 117, February, 1845), Maurice Thompson
(`Poems', Boston, 1892: several; also `Lippincott's Magazine', 32. 624,
December, 1883), L. V. (`So. Lit. Mes.', 10. 414, July, 1844),
Walt Whitman (`Burroughs', l.c., also in Whitman's `Poems'), R. H. Wilde
(`Burroughs', l.c., and Stedman & Hutchinson's `Am. Lit.', vol. 5).

Roughly speaking, the poems may be divided into two classes — first those that, as in the Indian legend cited below, make out the mocking-bird only or chiefly a thief and thing of evil, and second those that find him, though a borrower, original and great. The former view, fortunately upheld by few, is strikingly set forth in Granald's `The Mock-bird and the Sparrow'. After describing minutely the various songs of the mocking-bird and emphasizing that they all come from other birds, the author gives the dialogue between the mock-bird and the sparrow. The former taunted the latter and insisted on his singing; and

> "The sparrow cock'd a knowing eye,
> And made him this most tart reply —
> `You steal from all and call it wit,
> But I prefer my simple "twit".'"

But the latter view is espoused by most of the writers mentioned, notably and nobly by Drake, the Haynes, the Laniers, Lee, Meek, and Thompson, the poet-laureate of the mocking-bird, whose poems should be read by every lover of nature and especially of the mocking-bird. As Thompson's tributes are all too long for quotation, I give here Meek's, in the hope that I may rescue it from the long oblivion of an out-of-print. My attention was called to it by my friend, Dr. C. H. Ross, to whom every reader will be indebted along with myself. It runs as follows:

"From the vale, what music ringing,
Fills the bosom of the night;
On the sense, entranced, flinging
Spells of witchery and delight!
O'er magnolia, lime and cedar,
From yon locust-top, it swells,
Like the chant of serenader,
Or the rhymes of silver bells!
Listen! dearest, listen to it!
Sweeter sounds were never heard!
'Tis the song of that wild poet —
Mime and minstrel — Mocking-bird.

"See him, swinging in his glory,
On yon topmost bending limb!
Carolling his amorous story,
Like some wild crusader's hymn!
Now it faints in tones delicious
As the first low vow of love!
Now it bursts in swells capricious,
All the moonlit vale above!
Listen! dearest, etc.

"Why is't thus, this sylvan Petrarch
Pours all night his serenade?
'Tis for some proud woodland Laura,
His sad sonnets all are made!
But he changes now his measure —
Gladness bubbling from his mouth —
Jest and gibe, and mimic pleasure —
Winged Anacreon of the South!
Listen! dearest, etc.

"Bird of music, wit and gladness,
Troubadour of sunny climes,
Disenchanter of all sadness, —
Would thine art were in my rhymes.
O'er the heart that's beating by me,
I would weave a spell divine;
Is there aught she could deny me,
Drinking in such strains as thine?
Listen! dearest, etc."

As is well known, the mocking-bird is often called the American nightingale. As to their relative merits as singers, here is the judgment of one that has heard both birds, Professor James A. Harrison (`The Critic', New York, 2. 284, December 13, 1884): "Well, it is my honest opinion that philomel will not compare with the singer of the South in sweetness, versatility, passion, or lyrical beauty. The mocking-bird — better the echo-bird, with a voice compounded of all sweet sounds, as the blossom of the Chinese olive is compounded of all sweet scents — is a pure lyrist; its throat is a lyre — Aeolian, capricious, many-stringed; as its name suggests, it is a polyglot mime, a bird linguist, a feathered Mezzofanti singing all the bird languages; yet over and above all this, with a something of its own that cannot be described." The mocking-bird speaks for himself in Thompson's `To an English Nightingale':

"What do you think of me?
Do I sing by rote?
Or by note?
Have I a parrot's echo-throat?
Oh no! I caught my strains
From Nature's freshest veins.

. . . . .

"He
A match for me!
No more than a wren or a chickadee!
Mine is the voice of the young and strong,
Mine the soul of the brave and free!"

This self-appreciation is confirmed by the greatest authority on birds, Audubon: "There is probably no bird in the world that possesses all the musical qualifications of this king of song, who has derived all from Nature's self. Yes, reader, all!"

It will be interesting and instructive to compare the tributes to the mocking-bird with Keats's `Ode to a Nightingale', Shelley's `To a Skylark', and Wordsworth's `To the Skylark'.

Aside from Audubon's `Birds of America' and Ridgway's
`Manual of North American Birds', the student may consult with profit
Burroughs's `Birds and Poets', Thompson's `In the Haunts of the Mocking-bird'
(`The Atlantic', 54. 620, November, 1884), various articles
by Olive Thorne Miller in `The Atlantic' (vol. 54 on), and Winterfield's
`The Mocking-bird, an Indian Legend' (`The American Whig Review',
New York, 1. 497, May, 1845).

14. Wilde compares the mocking-bird to Yorick and to Jacques; Meek, to Petrarch; Lanier, to Keats, in `To Our Mocking-bird', as does Wm. H. Hayne:

"Each golden note of music greets
The listening leaves divinely stirred,
As if the vanished soul of Keats
Had found its new birth in a bird."

Song of the Chattahoochee

Out of the hills of Habersham, [1]
Down the valleys of Hall,
I hurry amain to reach the plain,
Run the rapid and leap the fall,
Split at the rock and together again,
Accept my bed, or narrow or wide,
And flee from folly on every side
With a lover's pain to attain the plain
Far from the hills of Habersham,
Far from the valleys of Hall.

All down the hills of Habersham, [11]
All through the valleys of Hall,
The rushes cried `Abide, abide,'
The willful waterweeds held me thrall,
The laving laurel turned my tide,
The ferns and the fondling grass said `Stay,'
The dewberry dipped for to work delay,
And the little reeds sighed `Abide, abide,
Here in the hills of Habersham,
Here in the valleys of Hall.'

High o'er the hills of Habersham, [21]
Veiling the valleys of Hall,
The hickory told me manifold
Fair tales of shade, the poplar tall
Wrought me her shadowy self to hold,
The chestnut, the oak, the walnut, the pine,
Overleaning, with flickering meaning and sign,

Said, `Pass not, so cold, these manifold
  Deep shades of the hills of Habersham,
  These glades in the valleys of Hall.'

  And oft in the hills of Habersham, [31]
  And oft in the valleys of Hall,
The white quartz shone, and the smooth brook-stone
Did bar me of passage with friendly brawl,
And many a luminous jewel lone
— Crystals clear or a-cloud with mist,
Ruby, garnet, and amethyst —
Made lures with the lights of streaming stone
  In the clefts of the hills of Habersham,
  In the beds of the valleys of Hall.

  But oh, not the hills of Habersham, [41]
  And oh, not the valleys of Hall
Avail: I am fain for to water the plain.
Downward the voices of Duty call —
Downward, to toil and be mixed with the main,
The dry fields burn, and the mills are to turn,
And a myriad flowers mortally yearn,
And the lordly main from beyond the plain
  Calls o'er the hills of Habersham,
  Calls through the valleys of Hall.

____ 1877.

Notes: Song of the Chattahoochee

The Chattahoochee River rises in Habersham County, in northeast Georgia, and, intersecting Hall County, flows southwestward to West Point, then southward until it unites with the Flint River at the southwestern extremity of Georgia. The Chattahoochee is about five hundred miles long, and small steamboats can ascend it to Columbus, Ga. Hon. Henry R. Jackson, of Savannah, Ga., late Minister to Mexico, has an interesting poem `To the Chattahoochee River', in his `Tallulah and Other Poems' (Savannah, Ga., 1850); and Mr. M. V. Moore, in his poem, `Southern Rivers' (`Harper', 66. 464, February, 1883), has a paragraph on the rivers of Georgia, in which he speaks of "the sandy Chattahoochee".

In the `Introduction' (pp. xxxi [Part III], xliv, xlvii [Part IV]) I have spoken of this `Song' as Lanier's most finished nature poem, as the most musical of his productions. "The music of a song easily eludes all analysis and may be dissipated by a critic's breath, but let us try to catch the means by which the effect is in part produced. In five stanzas, of ten lines each, alliteration occurs in all save twelve lines. In eleven of these twelve lines internal rhyme occurs, sometimes joining the parts of a line, sometimes uniting successive lines. Syzygy is used for the same purpose. Of the letters occurring in the poem about one-fifth are liquids and about one-twelfth are sibilants. The effect of the whole is musical beyond description. It sings itself and yet nowhere sacrifices the thought" (Kent).

Another way to test the beauty of `The Song of the Chattahoochee' is to compare it with other kindred poems. There are many stream-songs in English, several of which are very pretty, but there is, I think, but one rival to our `Song', and that is Tennyson's `The Brook'. Even so careful a critic as Mr. Ward says that `The Song of the Chattahoochee' "strikes a higher key, and is scarcely less musical." It will be instructive, too, to compare Lanier's poem with Southey's `The Cataract of Lodore' (see `Gates', p. 25), which exhibits considerable talent, if not inspiration; with P. H. Hayne's `The Meadow Brook', which is simple and sweet; and with Wordsworth's `Brook! whose society the Poet seeks', which is grave and elevated. Professor Kent suggests as interesting analogues Poe's `Ulalume' and Buchanan Read's `Bay of Naples'; and, if the student cares to extend his list, he should read the stream-songs by Bryant, Mary Ainge De Vere (`Century', 21. 283, December, 1891), Longfellow, Weir Mitchell (`Atlantic', 65. 629, May, 1890), Clinton Scollard (`Lippincott', 50. 226, August, 1892), etc., etc.

The Revenge of Hamish

It was three slim does and a ten-tined buck in the bracken lay; [1]

And all of a sudden the sinister smell of a man,
Awaft on a wind-shift, wavered and ran
Down the hill-side and sifted along through the bracken and passed that way.

Then Nan got a-tremble at nostril; she was the daintiest doe;
In the print of her velvet flank on the velvet fern
She reared, and rounded her ears in turn.
Then the buck leapt up, and his head as a king's to a crown did go

Full high in the breeze, and he stood as if Death had the form of a deer;
And the two slim does long lazily stretching arose,
For their day-dream slowlier came to a close,
Till they woke and were still, breath-bound with waiting and wonder and fear.

Then Alan the huntsman sprang over the hillock, the hounds shot by,
The does and the ten-tined buck made a marvelous bound,
The hounds swept after with never a sound,
But Alan loud winded his horn in sign that the quarry was nigh.

For at dawn of that day proud Maclean of Lochbuy to the hunt had waxed wild,
And he cursed at old Alan till Alan fared off with the hounds
For to drive him the deer to the lower glen-grounds:
"I will kill a red deer," quoth Maclean, "in the sight of the wife
and the child."

So gayly he paced with the wife and the child to his chosen stand;
But he hurried tall Hamish the henchman ahead: "Go turn," —
Cried Maclean — "if the deer seek to cross to the burn,
Do thou turn them to me: nor fail, lest thy back be red as thy hand."

Now hard-fortuned Hamish, half blown of his breath with the height
of the hill,
Was white in the face when the ten-tined buck and the does
Drew leaping to burn-ward; huskily rose
His shouts, and his nether lip twitched, and his legs were o'er-weak
for his will.

So the deer darted lightly by Hamish and bounded away to the burn.
But Maclean never bating his watch tarried waiting below.
Still Hamish hung heavy with fear for to go
All the space of an hour; then he went, and his face was greenish and stern,

And his eye sat back in the socket, and shrunken the eyeballs shone,
As withdrawn from a vision of deeds it were shame to see.
"Now, now, grim henchman, what is't with thee?"
Brake Maclean, and his wrath rose red as a beacon the wind hath upblown.

"Three does and a ten-tined buck made out," spoke Hamish, full mild,
"And I ran for to turn, but my breath it was blown, and they passed;
I was weak, for ye called ere I broke me my fast."
Cried Maclean: "Now a ten-tined buck in the sight of the wife and the child

I had killed if the gluttonous kern had not wrought me
a snail's own wrong!"
Then he sounded, and down came kinsmen and clansmen all:
"Ten blows, for ten tine, on his back let fall,
And reckon no stroke if the blood follow not at the bite of thong!"

So Hamish made bare, and took him his strokes; at the last he smiled.
"Now I'll to the burn," quoth Maclean, "for it still may be,
If a slimmer-paunched henchman will hurry with me,

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

Then the clansmen departed, by this path and that; and over the hill
Sped Maclean with an outward wrath for an inward shame;
And that place of the lashing full quiet became; [51]
And the wife and the child stood sad; and bloody-backed Hamish sat still.

But look! red Hamish has risen; quick about and about turns he.
"There is none betwixt me and the crag-top!" he screams under breath.
Then, livid as Lazarus lately from death,
He snatches the child from the mother, and clambers the crag toward the sea.

Now the mother drops breath; she is dumb, and her heart goes dead for a space,
Till the motherhood, mistress of death, shrieks, shrieks through the glen,
And that place of the lashing is live with men,
And Maclean, and the gillie that told him, dash up in a desperate race.

Not a breath's time for asking; an eye-glance reveals
all the tale untold. [61]
They follow mad Hamish afar up the crag toward the sea,
And the lady cries: "Clansmen, run for a fee! —
Yon castle and lands to the two first hands that shall hook him and hold

Fast Hamish back from the brink!" — and ever she flies up the steep,
And the clansmen pant, and they sweat, and they jostle and strain.
But, mother, 'tis vain; but, father, 'tis vain;
Stern Hamish stands bold on the brink, and dangles the child o'er the deep.

Now a faintness falls on the men that run, and they all stand still.
And the wife prays Hamish as if he were God, on her knees,
Crying: "Hamish! O Hamish! but please, but please [71]
For to spare him!" and Hamish still dangles the child, with a wavering will.

On a sudden he turns; with a sea-hawk scream, and a gibe, and a song,
Cries: "So; I will spare ye the child if, in sight of ye all,
Ten blows on Maclean's bare back shall fall,
And ye reckon no stroke if the blood follow not at the bite of the thong!"

Then Maclean he set hardly his tooth to his lip that his tooth was red,
Breathed short for a space, said: "Nay, but it never shall be!
Let me hurl off the damnable hound in the sea!"
But the wife: "Can Hamish go fish us the child from the sea, if dead?

"Say yea! — Let them lash ME, Hamish?" — "Nay!" —
"Husband, the lashing will heal; [81]
But, oh, who will heal me the bonny sweet bairn in his grave?
Could ye cure me my heart with the death of a knave?
Quick! Love! I will bare thee — so — kneel!" Then Maclean 'gan slowly
to kneel

With never a word, till presently downward he jerked to the earth.
Then the henchman — he that smote Hamish — would tremble and lag;
"Strike, hard!" quoth Hamish, full stern, from the crag;
Then he struck him, and "One!" sang Hamish, and danced with the child
in his mirth.

And no man spake beside Hamish; he counted each stroke with a song.
When the last stroke fell, then he moved him a pace down the height,
And he held forth the child in the heartaching sight [91]
Of the mother, and looked all pitiful grave, as repenting a wrong.

And there as the motherly arms stretched out with the thanksgiving prayer —
 And there as the mother crept up with a fearful swift pace,
 Till her finger nigh felt of the bairnie's face —
In a flash fierce Hamish turned round and lifted the child in the air,

And sprang with the child in his arms from the horrible height in the sea,
 Shrill screeching, "Revenge!" in the wind-rush; and pallid Maclean,
 Age-feeble with anger and impotent pain,
Crawled up on the crag, and lay flat, and locked hold of dead roots
  of a tree —

And gazed hungrily o'er, and the blood from his back
  drip-dripped in the brine, [101]
 And a sea-hawk flung down a skeleton fish as he flew,
 And the mother stared white on the waste of blue,
And the wind drove a cloud to seaward, and the sun began to shine.

____ Baltimore, 1878.

Notes: The Revenge of Hamish

For an appreciation of this fine poem see `Introduction', pp. xlv, xlvii [Part IV], Mr. J. R. Tait, a friend with whom Mr. Lanier discussed `The Revenge of Hamish', kindly writes me that the author took the plot from William Black's novel, `Macleod of Dare'. In chapter iii. Macleod, of Castle Dare, Mull, tells the story to his London entertainer; but, as the story of the novel is identical with that of the poem, it need not be given here. The novel, I should add, gives the name of the chieftain only, though, as it has a Hamish in another connection, it doubtless gave Lanier this name for the henchman. Previous to the reception of Mr. Tait's letter I supposed that Lanier had borrowed his plot from a poem by Charles Mackay, `Maclaine's Child, A Legend of Lochbuy, Mull', which in plot is identical with Lanier's poem, except that the former begins with the speech of the flogged henchman, here named Evan, and ends by telling us that the bodies were found and that of Evan was hanged on a gallows-tree. The poem is too long for quotation, but may be found in any edition of Mackay or in Garrett's `One Hundred Choice Selections: Number Nine' (Phila., 1887).

17. The Macleans, for centuries one of the most powerful of Scottish clans, have since the fourteenth century lived in Mull, one of the largest of the Hebrides Islands. The two leading branches of the clan were the Macleans of Dowart and the Macleans of Lochbuy, both taking their names from the seats of their castles. The Lochbuy family now spells its name MacLAINE. For a detailed history of the clan see Keltie's `History of the Scottish Highlands, Highland Clans', etc. (London, 1885). Interesting books about Mull and the Hebrides are: Johnson's `A Journey to the Hebrides' and Robert Buchanan's `The Hebrid Isles' (London, 1883). Instructive, too, is Cummin's `Around Mull' (`The Atlantic Monthly', 16. 11-19, 167-176, July, August, 1865).

The Marshes of Glynn

Glooms of the live-oaks, beautiful-braided and woven [1]
With intricate shades of the vines that myriad-cloven
 Clamber the forks of the multiform boughs, —
  Emerald twilights, —
  Virginal shy lights,
Wrought of the leaves to allure to the whisper of vows,
When lovers pace timidly down through the green colonnades
Of the dim sweet woods, of the dear dark woods,
 Of the heavenly woods and glades,
That run to the radiant marginal sand-beach within
  The wide sea-marshes of Glynn; — [11]

Beautiful glooms, soft dusks in the noon-day fire, —
Wildwood privacies, closets of lone desire,
Chamber from chamber parted with wavering arras of leaves, —
Cells for the passionate pleasure of prayer to the soul that grieves,
Pure with a sense of the passing of saints through the wood,
Cool for the dutiful weighing of ill with good; —

O braided dusks of the oak and woven shades of the vine,
While the riotous noon-day sun of the June-day long did shine
Ye held me fast in your heart and I held you fast in mine;
But now when the noon is no more, and riot is rest,
And the sun is a-wait at the ponderous gate of the West,
And the slant yellow beam down the wood-aisle doth seem
Like a lane into heaven that leads from a dream, —
Ay, now, when my soul all day hath drunken the soul of the oak,
And my heart is at ease from men, and the wearisome sound of the stroke
 Of the scythe of time and the trowel of trade is low,
 And belief overmasters doubt, and I know that I know,
 And my spirit is grown to a lordly great compass within,
That the length and the breadth and the sweep of the marshes of Glynn
Will work me no fear like the fear they have wrought me of yore
When length was fatigue, and when breadth was but bitterness sore,
And when terror and shrinking and dreary unnamable pain
Drew over me out of the merciless miles of the plain, —

Oh, now, unafraid, I am fain to face
 The vast sweet visage of space.
To the edge of the wood I am drawn, I am drawn,
Where the gray beach glimmering runs, as a belt of the dawn,
 For a mete and a mark
  To the forest-dark: —
        So:
Affable live-oak, leaning low, —
Thus — with your favor — soft, with a reverent hand,
(Not lightly touching your person, Lord of the land!)
Bending your beauty aside, with a step I stand
On the firm-packed sand,
        Free
By a world of marsh that borders a world of sea.

 Sinuous southward and sinuous northward the shimmering band
 Of the sand-beach fastens the fringe of the marsh to the folds of the land.
Inward and outward to northward and southward the beach-lines
  linger and curl
As a silver-wrought garment that clings to and follows
  the firm sweet limbs of a girl.
Vanishing, swerving, evermore curving again into sight,
Softly the sand-beach wavers away to a dim gray looping of light.
And what if behind me to westward the wall of the woods stands high?
The world lies east: how ample, the marsh and the sea and the sky!
A league and a league of marsh-grass, waist-high, broad in the blade,
Green, and all of a height, and unflecked with a light or a shade,
Stretch leisurely off, in a pleasant plain,
To the terminal blue of the main.

Oh, what is abroad in the marsh and the terminal sea?
 Somehow my soul seems suddenly free
From the weighing of fate and the sad discussion of sin,
By the length and the breadth and the sweep of the marshes of Glynn.

Ye marshes, how candid and simple and nothing-withholding and free
Ye publish yourselves to the sky and offer yourselves to the sea!
Tolerant plains, that suffer the sea and the rains and the sun,
Ye spread and span like the catholic man who hath mightily won
God out of knowledge and good out of infinite pain
And sight out of blindness and purity out of a stain.

As the marsh-hen secretly builds on the watery sod, [71]
Behold I will build me a nest on the greatness of God:
I will fly in the greatness of God as the marsh-hen flies
In the freedom that fills all the space 'twixt the marsh and the skies:
By so many roots as the marsh-grass sends in the sod
I will heartily lay me a-hold on the greatness of God:
Oh, like to the greatness of God is the greatness within
The range of the marshes, the liberal marshes of Glynn.

And the sea lends large, as the marsh: lo, out of his plenty the sea
Pours fast: full soon the time of the flood-tide must be:
Look how the grace of the sea doth go [81]
About and about through the intricate channels that flow
    Here and there,
        Everywhere,
Till his waters have flooded the uttermost creeks and the low-lying lanes,
And the marsh is meshed with a million veins,
That like as with rosy and silvery essences flow
 In the rose-and-silver evening glow.
        Farewell, my lord Sun!
The creeks overflow: a thousand rivulets run
'Twixt the roots of the sod; the blades of the marsh-grass stir; [91]
Passeth a hurrying sound of wings that westward whirr;
Passeth, and all is still; and the currents cease to run;
And the sea and the marsh are one.

How still the plains of the waters be!
The tide is in his ecstasy.
The tide is at his highest height:
        And it is night.

And now from the Vast of the Lord will the waters of sleep
Roll in on the souls of men,
But who will reveal to our waking ken [101]
The forms that swim and the shapes that creep
        Under the waters of sleep?
And I would I could know what swimmeth below when the tide comes in
On the length and the breadth of the marvellous marshes of Glynn.

____ Baltimore, 1878.

Notes: The Marshes of Glynn

Although Dr. Callaway noted in his preface the importance of this poem, he did not include it for lack of space. This would seem to indicate that when he published these "Selected Poems" in 1895, "The Marshes of Glynn" had not yet achieved its later prominence as the greatest of Sidney Lanier's poems — as now seems to be the opinion. The setting of the poem is the salt marshes surrounding the coastal city of Brunswick, Georgia, which is in Glynn County — an area well deserving of the fame Lanier has given it — and it was intended as one installment in a series of "Hymns of the Marshes", of which four poems were completed.

The text is taken from the 1916 edition of "Poems of Sidney Lanier".

William Hayes Ward wrote of this poem: "How naturally his large faith in God finds expression in his `Marshes of Glynn'."

Edwin Mims, in his biography of Sidney Lanier, concludes by quoting this poem.
He writes:

"His best poems move to the cadence of a tune. . . . Sometimes, as in the `Marshes of Glynn' and in the best parts of `Sunrise', there is a cosmic rhythm that is like unto the rhythmic beating of the heart of God, of which Poe and Lanier

have written eloquently."

And later continues:

"Indeed, if one had to rely upon one poem to keep alive the fame of Lanier, he could single out `The Marshes of Glynn' with assurance that there is something so individual and original about it, and that, at the same time, there is such a roll and range of verse in it, that it will surely live not only in American poetry but in English. Here the imagination has taken the place of fancy, the effort to do great things ends in victory, and the melody of the poem corresponds to the exalted thought. It has all the strong points of `Sunrise', with but few of its limitations. There is something of Whitman's virile imagination and Emerson's high spirituality combined with the haunting melody of Poe's best work. Written in 1878, when Lanier was in the full exercise of all his powers, it is the best expression of his genius and one of the few great American poems.

"The background of the poem — as of `Sunrise' — is the forest, the coast and the marshes near Brunswick, Georgia. Early in life Lanier had been thrilled by this wonderful natural scenery, and later visits had the more powerfully impressed his imagination. He is the poet of the marshes as surely as Bryant is of the forests, or Wordsworth of the mountains.

"The poet represents himself as having spent the day in the forest and coming at sunset into full view of the length and the breadth and the sweep of the marshes. The glooms of the live-oaks and the emerald twilights of the `dim sweet woods, of the dear dark woods,' have been as a refuge from the riotous noon-day sun. More than that, in the wildwood privacies and closets of lone desire he has known the passionate pleasure of prayer and the joy of elevated thought. His spirit is grown to a lordly great compass within, — he is ready for what Wordsworth calls a `god-like hour'."

Mr. Callaway also treats the poem in Part III of the `Introduction'.

Remonstrance

Opinion, let me alone: I am not thine. [1]
Prim Creed, with categoric point, forbear
To feature me my Lord by rule and line.
Thou canst not measure Mistress Nature's hair,
Not one sweet inch: nay, if thy sight is sharp,
Would'st count the strings upon an angel's harp?
Forbear, forbear.

Oh let me love my Lord more fathom deep
Than there is line to sound with: let me love
My fellow not as men that mandates keep:
Yea, all that's lovable, below, above, [11]
That let me love by heart, by heart, because
(Free from the penal pressure of the laws)
I find it fair.

The tears I weep by day and bitter night,
Opinion! for thy sole salt vintage fall.
— As morn by morn I rise with fresh delight,
Time through my casement cheerily doth call,
"Nature is new, 'tis birthday every day,
Come feast with me, let no man say me nay,
Whate'er befall." [21]

So fare I forth to feast: I sit beside
Some brother bright: but, ere good-morrow's passed,
Burly Opinion wedging in hath cried,
"Thou shalt not sit by us, to break thy fast,
Save to our Rubric thou subscribe and swear —
`Religion hath blue eyes and yellow hair':
She's Saxon, all."

Then, hard a-hungered for my brother's grace

Till well-nigh fain to swear his folly's true,
 In sad dissent I turn my longing face [31]
To him that sits on the left: "Brother, — with you?"
  — "Nay, not with me, save thou subscribe and swear
  `Religion hath black eyes and raven hair':
        Nought else is true."

 Debarred of banquets that my heart could make
With every man on every day of life,
 I homeward turn, my fires of pain to slake
In deep endearments of a worshiped wife.
  "I love thee well, dear Love," quoth she, "and yet
  Would that thy creed with mine completely met, [41]
        As one, not two."

 Assassin! Thief! Opinion, 'tis thy work.
By Church, by throne, by hearth, by every good
 That's in the Town of Time, I see thee lurk,
And e'er some shadow stays where thou hast stood.
  Thou hand'st sweet Socrates his hemlock sour;
  Thou sav'st Barabbas in that hideous hour,
        And stabb'st the good

 Deliverer Christ; thou rack'st the souls of men;
Thou tossest girls to lions and boys to flames; [51]
 Thou hew'st Crusader down by Saracen;
Thou buildest closets full of secret shames;
  Indifferent cruel, thou dost blow the blaze
  Round Ridley or Servetus; all thy days
        Smell scorched; I would

 — Thou base-born Accident of time and place —
Bigot Pretender unto Judgment's throne —
 Bastard, that claimest with a cunning face
Those rights the true, true Son of Man doth own
  By Love's authority — thou Rebel cold [61]
  At head of civil wars and quarrels old —
        Thou Knife on a throne —

 I would thou left'st me free, to live with love,
And faith, that through the love of love doth find
 My Lord's dear presence in the stars above,
The clods below, the flesh without, the mind
  Within, the bread, the tear, the smile.
  Opinion, damned Intriguer, gray with guile,
        Let me alone.

____ Baltimore, 1878-9.

Notes: Remonstrance

This is the first and the greatest of the `Street-cries': see the introductory note to `Life and Song'.

For an interpretation of the poem see `Introduction', pp. xxix [Part III], xlv, xlvii [Part IV].

26, 33. Amusing illustrations of such intolerance may be found in `Jack-knife and Brambles' (Nashville, 1893), by Bishop Atticus G. Haygood, of the Methodist Church, South. One brother, we are told (p. 278), objected to hearing Bishop Haygood in 1859 because of his wearing a beard; while another (p. 281), along in the thirties, voted against licensing Bishop George F. Pierce because his hair was "combed back from his forehead"!

46. For an account of Socrates, the Greek philosopher, poisoned in 399 B.C., see Xenophon's `Memorabilia' and Plato's

dialogues.

47. See St. Matthew 27:20.

54. For the burning of Nicholas Ridley, an English Bishop, on October 16, 1555, see Green's `Shorter History of England'. Michael Servetus, a Spanish scientific and theological writer, was burned as a heretic at Geneva, October 27, 1553.

Opposition

Of fret, of dark, of thorn, of chill, [1]
 Complain no more; for these, O heart,
Direct the random of the will
 As rhymes direct the rage of art.

The lute's fixt fret, that runs athwart
 The strain and purpose of the string,
For governance and nice consort
 Doth bar his willful wavering.

The dark hath many dear avails;
 The dark distils divinest dews;
The dark is rich with nightingales, [11]
 With dreams, and with the heavenly Muse.

Bleeding with thorns of petty strife,
 I'll ease (as lovers do) my smart
With sonnets to my lady Life
 Writ red in issues from the heart.

What grace may lie within the chill
 Of favor frozen fast in scorn!
When Good's a-freeze, we call it Ill!
 This rosy Time is glacier-born.

Of fret, of dark, of thorn, of chill, [21]
 Complain thou not, O heart; for these
Bank-in the current of the will
 To uses, arts, and charities.

____ Baltimore, 1879-80.

Notes: Opposition

As an introduction to this poem I quote a sentence from Dr. Gates's excellent essay: "As we look at the circumstances of his life, let us carry with us the strains of this poem, which interprets the use of crosses, interferences, and attempted thwartings of one's purpose; for the ethical value of Lanier's life and writings can be fully understood only by remembering how much he overcame and how heroically he persisted in manly work in his chosen art through years of such broken health as would have driven most men to the inert, self-indulgent life of an invalid. The superb power of will which he displayed is a lesson as valuable as the noble poems which it illustrates and enforces."

Marsh Song — At Sunset

Over the monstrous shambling sea, [1]
  Over the Caliban sea,
Bright Ariel-cloud, thou lingerest:
Oh wait, oh wait, in the warm red West, —
  Thy Prospero I'll be.

Over the humped and fishy sea,
  Over the Caliban sea,

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

Over the huge and huddling sea,
  Over the Caliban sea,
Bring hither my brother Antonio, — Man, —
My injurer: night breaks the ban;
  Brother, I pardon thee.

____ Baltimore, 1879-80.

Notes: Marsh Song — At Sunset

At the first reading, no doubt, this song appears indistinct, though poetical. On a second reading, however, with Shakespeare's `Tempest' fresh in mind, it seems, as it is, highly artistic; and we wonder at the happy use made of the Shakespearean characters: the gracious, forgiving Prospero, the rightful Duke of Milan; Antonio, his usurping brother, forgiven notwithstanding; Caliban, the savage, deformed, fish-like slave; and Ariel, the ministering spirit of the air.

With `At Sunset' compare Lanier's `Evening Song', another and a more agreeable sunset picture.

A Ballad of Trees and the Master

Into the woods my Master went,
Clean forspent, forspent.
Into the woods my Master came,
Forspent with love and shame.
But the olives they were not blind to Him,
The little gray leaves were kind to Him:
The thorn-tree had a mind to Him
When into the woods He came.

Out of the woods my Master went,
And He was well content.
Out of the woods my Master came,
Content with death and shame.
When Death and Shame would woo Him last,
From under the trees they drew Him last:
'Twas on a tree they slew Him — last
When out of the woods He came.

____ Baltimore, November, 1880.

Notes: A Ballad of Trees and the Master

In the `Introduction' (p. xxxi ff. [Part III]) I have tried to show the intensity and the breadth of Lanier's love of nature in general. President Gates gives a separate section to Lanier's love of trees and plant-life; and, after quoting some lines on the soothing and inspiring companionship of trees, thus speaks of our Ballad: "This ministration of trees to a mind and heart `forspent with shame and grief' finds its culmination in the pathetic lines upon that olive-garden near Jerusalem, which to those of us who have sat within its shade must always seem the most sacred spot on earth. The almost mystic exaltation of the power of poetic sympathy which inspired these intense lines, `Into the Woods my Master went', may impair their religious effect for many devout souls. But to many others this short poem will express most wonderfully that essential human-heartedness in the Son of Man, our Divine Saviour, which made Him one with us in His need of the quiet, sympathetic ministrations of nature — perhaps the heart of the reason why this olive-grove was `the place where He was wont to go' for prayer." See St. Luke 22:39.

For Lanier's other poems on Christ see `Introduction', p. xxxvii f. [Part III].

Sunrise

In my sleep I was fain of their fellowship, fain

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

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

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

O cunning green leaves, little masters! like as ye gloss
All the dull-tissued dark with your luminous darks that emboss
The vague blackness of night into pattern and plan,
So,
(But would I could know, but would I could know,)
With your question embroid'ring the dark of the question of man, —
So, with your silences purfling this silence of man
While his cry to the dead for some knowledge is under the ban,
Under the ban, —
So, ye have wrought me
Designs on the night of our knowledge, — yea, ye have taught me,
So,
That haply we know somewhat more than we know.

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

My gossip, the owl, — is it thou
That out of the leaves of the low-hanging bough,
As I pass to the beach, art stirred?

Dumb woods, have ye uttered a bird?

. . . . .

Reverend Marsh, low-couched along the sea,
Old chemist, rapt in alchemy,
Distilling silence, — lo,
That which our father-age had died to know — [61]
The menstruum that dissolves all matter — thou
Hast found it: for this silence, filling now
The globed clarity of receiving space,
This solves us all: man, matter, doubt, disgrace,
Death, love, sin, sanity,
Must in yon silence clear solution lie.
Too clear! That crystal nothing who'll peruse?
The blackest night could bring us brighter news.
Yet precious qualities of silence haunt
Round these vast margins, ministrant. [71]
Oh, if thy soul's at latter gasp for space,
With trying to breathe no bigger than thy race
Just to be fellow'd, when that thou hast found
No man with room, or grace enough of bound
To entertain that New thou tell'st, thou art, —
'Tis here, 'tis here thou canst unhand thy heart
And breathe it free, and breathe it free,
By rangy marsh, in lone sea-liberty.

The tide's at full: the marsh with flooded streams
Glimmers, a limpid labyrinth of dreams. [81]
Each winding creek in grave entrancement lies
A rhapsody of morning-stars. The skies
Shine scant with one forked galaxy, —
The marsh brags ten: looped on his breast they lie.

Oh, what if a sound should be made!
Oh, what if a bound should be laid
To this bow-and-string tension of beauty and silence a-spring, —
To the bend of beauty the bow, or the hold of silence the string!
I fear me, I fear me yon dome of diaphanous gleam
Will break as a bubble o'er-blown in a dream, — [91]
Yon dome of too-tenuous tissues of space and of night,
Over-weighted with stars, over-freighted with light,
Over-sated with beauty and silence, will seem
But a bubble that broke in a dream,
If a bound of degree to this grace be laid,
Or a sound or a motion made.

But no: it is made: list! somewhere, — mystery, where?
In the leaves? in the air?
In my heart? is a motion made:
'Tis a motion of dawn, like a flicker of shade on shade. [101]
In the leaves 'tis palpable: low multitudinous stirring
Upwinds through the woods; the little ones, softly conferring,
Have settled my lord's to be looked for; so; they are still;
But the air and my heart and the earth are a-thrill, —
And look where the wild duck sails round the bend of the river, —
And look where a passionate shiver
Expectant is bending the blades
Of the marsh-grass in serial shimmers and shades, —
And invisible wings, fast fleeting, fast fleeting,

Are beating [111]
The dark overhead as my heart beats, — and steady and free
Is the ebb-tide flowing from marsh to sea —
(Run home, little streams,
With your lapfuls of stars and dreams), —
And a sailor unseen is hoisting a-peak,
For list, down the inshore curve of the creek
How merrily flutters the sail, —
And lo, in the East! Will the East unveil?
The East is unveiled, the East hath confessed
A flush: 'tis dead; 'tis alive: 'tis dead, ere the West [121]
Was aware of it: nay, 'tis abiding, 'tis unwithdrawn:
Have a care, sweet Heaven! 'Tis Dawn.

Now a dream of a flame through that dream of a flush is uprolled:
To the zenith ascending, a dome of undazzling gold
Is builded, in shape as a bee-hive, from out of the sea:
The hive is of gold undazzling, but oh, the Bee,
The star-fed Bee, the build-fire Bee,
Of dazzling gold is the great Sun-Bee
That shall flash from the hive-hole over the sea.

Yet now the dew-drop, now the morning gray, [131]
Shall live their little lucid sober day
Ere with the sun their souls exhale away.
Now in each pettiest personal sphere of dew
The summ'd morn shines complete as in the blue
Big dew-drop of all heaven: with these lit shrines
O'er-silvered to the farthest sea-confines,
The sacramental marsh one pious plain
Of worship lies. Peace to the ante-reign
Of Mary Morning, blissful mother mild,
Minded of nought but peace, and of a child. [141]

Not slower than Majesty moves, for a mean and a measure
Of motion, — not faster than dateless Olympian leisure
Might pace with unblown ample garments from pleasure to pleasure, —
The wave-serrate sea-rim sinks unjarring, unreeling,
Forever revealing, revealing, revealing,
Edgewise, bladewise, halfwise, wholewise, — 'tis done!
Good-morrow, lord Sun!
With several voice, with ascription one,
The woods and the marsh and the sea and my soul
Unto thee, whence the glittering stream of all morrows doth roll, [151]
Cry good and past-good and most heavenly morrow, lord Sun.

O Artisan born in the purple, — Workman Heat, —
Parter of passionate atoms that travail to meet
And be mixed in the death-cold oneness, — innermost Guest
At the marriage of elements, — fellow of publicans, — blest
King in the blouse of flame, that loiterest o'er
The idle skies yet laborest fast evermore, —
Thou, in the fine forge-thunder, thou, in the beat
Of the heart of a man, thou Motive, — Laborer Heat:
Yea, Artist, thou, of whose art yon sea's all news, [161]
With his inshore greens and manifold mid-sea blues,
Pearl-glint, shell-tint, ancientest perfectest hues
Ever shaming the maidens, — lily and rose
Confess thee, and each mild flame that glows
In the clarified virginal bosoms of stones that shine,

It is thine, it is thine:

Thou chemist of storms, whether driving the winds a-swirl
Or a-flicker the subtiler essences polar that whirl
In the magnet earth, — yea, thou with a storm for a heart,
Rent with debate, many-spotted with question, part [171]
From part oft sundered, yet ever a globed light,
Yet ever the artist, ever more large and bright
Than the eye of a man may avail of: — manifold One,
I must pass from thy face, I must pass from the face of the Sun:
Old Want is awake and agog, every wrinkle a-frown;
The worker must pass to his work in the terrible town:
But I fear not, nay, and I fear not the thing to be done;
I am strong with the strength of my lord the Sun:
How dark, how dark soever the race that must needs be run,
I am lit with the Sun. [181]

Oh, never the mast-high run of the seas
Of traffic shall hide thee,
Never the hell-colored smoke of the factories
Hide thee,
Never the reek of the time's fen-politics
Hide thee,
And ever my heart through the night shall with knowledge abide thee,
And ever by day shall my spirit, as one that hath tried thee,
Labor, at leisure, in art, — till yonder beside thee
My soul shall float, friend Sun, [191]
The day being done.

____ Baltimore, December, 1880.

Notes: Sunrise

In the words of Mrs. Lanier, "`Sunrise', Mr. Lanier's latest completed poem, was written while his sun of life seemed fairly at the setting, and the hand which first pencilled its lines had not strength to carry nourishment to the lips." See `Introduction', p. xviii [Part I]. Lanier has two other poems on the same theme, both short: `A Sunrise Song' and `Between Dawn and Sunrise' (entered under `Marsh Hymns').

As already pointed out (`Introduction', pp. xxxi [Part III], xlvii [Part IV]), `Sunrise' shows in a powerful way the delicacy and the comprehensiveness of Lanier's love for nature. True, as I have elsewhere stated (`Introduction', p. xlvi [Part IV]), the poem has some serious limitations, more I think than has `The Marshes of Glynn'; but, despite its shortcomings, `Sunrise' is from an absolute stand-point a great poem; while, if we consider the circumstances under which it was produced, it is, in the words of Professor Kent, "a world-marvel".

Aside from the numerous unapproachable snatches in Shakespeare,* I know of nothing on the subject in English literature comparable to `Sunrise'. Mr. W. W. Story's `Sunrise' is perhaps the closest parallel, and yet it is far inferior to Lanier's, as every reader of the two will admit. If one wishes to make further comparisons, he may find sunrise poems in the following authors: Blake, Cowper, Emerson, Hood, Keats, Longfellow, Southey, Thompson, Willis, etc. I may add that an interesting, though superficial article on `The Poetry of Sunrise and Sunset' may be found in `Chambers's Edinburgh Journal', 22, 234, October 7, 1854.

— * Among others I may cite the following passages:

"Hark! hark! the lark at heaven's gate sings,"

in `Cymbeline', 2, 3;

"But look the morn in russet mantle clad
Walks o'er the dew of yon high eastern hill,"

in `Hamlet', 1, 1;

"Night's candles are burnt out, and jocund day
Stands tiptoe on the misty mountain-tops,"

in `Romeo and Juliet', 3, 5; and

"Full many a glorious morning have I seen" etc.,

`Sonnet xxxiii'. —

3, 13-14. See `Introduction', p. xxxii [Part III], and compare l. 26.

39-53. See `Introduction', p. xxxiii [Part III].

42. I had made the comparison between Lanier and St. Francis before reading Dr. Gates's essay on Lanier, and was delighted to find my judgment confirmed by so competent a critic. Dr. Gates is quite emphatic: "Since St. Francis, no soul has seemed so heavily overcharged with this feeling of brotherhood for all created things." `The Canticle of the Sun', otherwise known as `The Song of the Creatures', may be found in metrical form in Mrs. Oliphant's life of St. Francis (New York, 1870) and in prose in Sabatier's (Scribners, New York, 1894).

54. Lanier has an `Owl against Robin'.

57. See `Introduction', p. xli [Part IV].

80-85. See `Introduction', p. xliii [Part IV].

86-152. See `Introduction', p. xlvii [Part IV]. Mr. F. F. Browne says that in lyric sweetness ll. 86-97 recall the best of Keats and Shelley.

114-115. See `Introduction', p. xliv [Part IV].

127. Lanier has a poem entitled `The Bee'.

134-136. See `Introduction', p. xliii [Part IV].

181. Compare Mrs. Easter's tribute, `Lit with the Sun'.

189-192. See `Introduction', p. xxi [Part I], and compare Cowdin's tribute, `Hopeset and Sunrise', and the closing stanza of Hamlin Garland's:

"While heart's blood ebbed at every breath
He passed life's head-land bleak and dun,
Flew through the western gate of Death
And took his place beside the sun."

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[End of original text.]

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— * According to Mrs. Oliver at the Middle Georgia Historical Society, in Macon, Ga., patrons express special interest in these works. —

The Johns Hopkins University has a large collection of Lanier materials. Cynthia Requardt, the Curator of Special Collections, has noted that many visitors are more interested in his music than his poetry. Joan Grattan (Manuscripts) has confirmed that the above selections represent the most important materials on Lanier. The index to these materials is online, at gopher://musicbox.mse.jhu.edu/ and more specifically at gopher://musicbox.mse.jhu.edu/00/mss/ms007.txt (as of 5 March 1998).

Notes to the text:

This text has been amended to include "The Marshes of Glynn", and some notes on the same (mostly drawn from the biography of Sidney Lanier, by Edwin Mims, 1905) that were not in the original.

The Notes to the poems were originally in a section to themselves, between the Poems and the Bibliography.

References to page numbers in the introduction have had amended to include a reference to which part of the introduction that page is in.

The text of some of the poems differs slightly in spelling and punctuation from the text in `Poems of Sidney Lanier'. No effort has been made to make the texts conform, except where this text appeared to be in error.

Changes to the text:

Introduction: IV. Lanier's Poetry: Its Style:

[Of littles that large life compound,'*3*]
  changed to:
[Of littles that large life compound,"'*3*]

"The Revenge of Hamish", line 27:

[Drew leaping to-burn-ward; huskily rose]
  changed to:
[Drew leaping to burn-ward; huskily rose]
  as per "Poems of Sidney Lanier" and common sense.

"Notes: A Ballad of Trees and the Master":

[which inspired these intense lines, `Into the Wood my Master went',]
  changed to:
[which inspired these intense lines, `Into the Woods my Master went',]
  as per the line in the poem.

(It should also be noted that "A Ballad of Trees and the Master" has sometimes been published under the title "Into the Woods My Master Went".)

Bibliography: IV: Uncollected Poems:

[One in Two: `Century Magazine' 12. 417, July, 1877]
  changed to:
[One in Two: `Century Magazine' 12. 417, July, 1887]
  as per the evidence.

Various minor punctuation errors in the Bibliography have also been corrected.

References to verses of scripture have been changed to modern form.
(E.g., John 3:16 instead of John iii. 16.)

ASCII does not allow for the easy use of accents.
The following had to be stripped:

All instances of `Laus Mari(ae)'
All instances of C(ae)dmon
when compared with that of (Ae)schylus, shows an "enormous growth
    Half veile\d in the twilight shade,
"I have a boy whose eyes are blue as your `Ae"thra's'. Every day
Richly expending thy much-bruise/d heart
I speak for each no-tongue/d tree
I'm gwine to stand stiff-legged for de Lord dis blesse\d day.
`Yes,' I rejoined, `a difference toto c(oe)lo,' whereat he laughed again,
Superb and sole, upon a plume/d spray [1]
All instances of Cyclop(ae)dia
    On the sense, entrance/d, flinging
(Ae)olian
The globe/d clarity of receiving space,
From part oft sundered, yet ever a globe/d light,
`Nirva^na'