

A Merciful Governor

By

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Freeditorial 

A MERCIFUL GOVERNOR

Standing within the triple wall of Hell,
And flattening his nose against a grate
Behind whose brazen bars he'd had to dwell
A thousand million ages to that date,
Stoneman bewailed his melancholy fate,
And his big tear-drops, boiling as they fell,
Had worn between his feet, the record mentions,
A deep depression in the "good intentions."
Imperfectly by memory taught how—
For prayer in Hell is a lost art—he prayed,
Uplifting his incinerated brow
And flaming hands in supplication's aid.
"O grant," he cried, "my torment may be stayed—
In mercy, some short breathing spell allow!
If one good deed I did before my ghosting,
Spare me and give Delmas a double roasting."
Breathing a holy harmony in Hell,
Down through the appalling clamors of the place,
Charming them all to willing concord, fell
A Voice ineffable and full of grace:
"Because of all the law-defying race
One single malefactor of the cell
Thou didst not free from his incarceration,
Take thou ten thousand years of condonation."
Back from their fastenings began to shoot
The rusted bolts; with dreadful roar, the gate
Laboriously turned; and, black with soot,
The extinguished spirit passed that awful strait,
And as he legged it into space, elate,
Muttered: "Yes, I remember that galoot—
I'd signed his pardon, ready to allot it,
But stuck it in my desk and quite forgot it."

AN INTERPRETATION

Now Lonergan appears upon the boards,
And Truth and Error sheathe their lingual swords.
No more in wordy warfare to engage,
The commentators bow before the stage,
And bookworms, militant for ages past,
Confess their equal foolishness at last,
Reread their Shakspeare in the newer light
And swear the meaning's obvious to sight.
For centuries the question has been hot:
Was Hamlet crazy, or was Hamlet not?
Now, Lonergan's illuminating art
Reveals the truth of the disputed "part,"
And shows to all the critics of the earth
That Hamlet was an idiot from birth!

A SOARING TOAD

So, Governor, you would not serve again
Although we'd all agree to pay you double.
You find it all is vanity and pain
One clump of clover in a field of stubble
One grain of pleasure in a peck of trouble.
'Tis sad, at your age, having to complain
Of disillusion; but the fault is whose
When pigmies stumble, wearing giants' shoes?
I humbly told you many moons ago
For high preferment you were all unfit.
A clumsy bear makes but a sorry show
Climbing a pole. Let him, judicious, sit
With dignity at bottom of his pit,
And none his awkwardness will ever know.
Some beasts look better, and feel better, too,
Seen from above; and so, I think, would you.
Why, you were mad! Did you suppose because
Our foolish system suffers foolish men
To climb to power, make, enforce the laws,
And, it is whispered, break them now and then,
We love the fellows and respect them when

We've stilled the volume of our loud hurrahs?
When folly blooms we trample it the more
For having fertilized it heretofore.
Behold yon laborer! His garb is mean,
His face is grimy, but who thinks to ask
The measure of his brains? 'Tis only seen
He's fitted for his honorable task,
And so delights the mind. But let him bask
In droll prosperity, absurdly clean—
Is that the man whom we admired before?
Good Lord, how ignorant, and what a bore!
Better for you that thoughtless men had said
(Noting your fitness in the humbler sphere):
"Why don't they make him Governor?" instead
Of, "Why the devil did they?" But I fear
My words on your inhospitable ear
Are wasted like a sermon to the dead.
Still, they may profit you if studied well:
You can't be taught to think, but may to spell.

AN UNDRRESS UNIFORM

The apparel does not proclaim the man
Polonius lied like a partisan,
And Salomon still would a hero seem
If (Heaven dispel the impossible dream!)
He stood in a shroud on the hangman's trap,
His eye burning holes in the black, black cap.
And the crowd below would exclaim amain:
"He's ready to fall for his country again!"

THE PERVERTED VILLAGE

AFTER GOLDSMITH

Sweet Auburn! liveliest village of the plain,
Where Health and Slander welcome every train,
Whence smiling innocence, its tribute paid,
Retires in terror, wounded and dismayed
Dear lovely bowers of gossip and disease,
Whose climate cures us that thy dames may tease,
How often have I knelt upon thy green
And prayed for death, to mitigate their spleen!
How often have I paused on every charm
With mingled admiration and alarm
The brook that runs by many a scandal-mill,
The church whose pastor groans upon the grill,
The cowthorn bush with seats beneath the shade,
Where hearts are struck and reputations flayed;
How often wished thine idle wives, some day,
Might more at whist, less at the devil, play.
Unblest retirement! ere my life's decline
(Killed by detraction) may I witness thine.
How happy she who, shunning shades like these,
Finds in a wolf-den greater peace and ease;
Who quits the place whence truth did earlier fly,
And rather than come back prefers to die!
For her no jealous maids renounce their sleep,
Contriving malices to make her weep;
No iron-faced dames her character debate
And spurn imploring mercy from the gate;
But down she lies to a more peaceful end,
For wolves do not calumniate, but rend
Sinks piecemeal to their maws, a willing prey,
While resignation lubricates the way,
And all her prospects brighten at the last:
To wolves, not women, an approved repast.

1884.

MR. SHEETS

The Devil stood before the gate
Of Heaven. He had a single mate:
Behind him, in his shadow, slunk
Clay Sheets in a perspiring funk.
"Saint Peter, see this season ticket,"
Said Satan; "pray undo the wicket."
The sleepy Saint threw slight regard
Upon the proffered bit of card,
Signed by some clerical dead-beats:
"Admit the bearer and Clay Sheets."
Peter expanded all his eyes:
"Clay Sheets?"—well, I'll be damned!" he cries.
"Our couches are of golden cloud;
Nothing of earth is here allowed.
I'll let you in," he added, shedding
On Nick a smile—"but not your bedding."

A JACK-AT-ALL-VIEWS

So, Estee, you are still alive! I thought
That you had died and were a blessed ghost
I know at least your coffin once was bought
With Railroad money; and 'twas said by most
Historians that Stanford made a boast
The seller "threw you in." That goes for naught
Man takes delight in fancy's fine inventions,
And woman too, 'tis said, if they are French ones.
Do you remember, Estee—ah, 'twas long
And long ago!—how fierce you grew and hot
When anything impeded the straight, strong,
Wild sweep of the great billow you had got
Atop of, like a swimmer bold? Great Scott!
How fine your wavemanship! How loud your song
Of "Down with railroads!" When the wave subsided
And left you stranded you were much divided.
Then for a time you were content to wade
The waters of the "robber barons'" moat.
To fetch, and carry was your humble trade,

And ferry Stanford over in a boat,
Well paid if he bestowed the kindly groat
And spoke you fair and called you pretty maid.
And when his stomach seemed a bit unsteady
You got your serviceable basin ready.
Strange man! how odd to see you, smug and spruce,
There at Chicago, burrowed in a Chair,
Not made to measure and a deal too loose,
And see you lift your little arm and swear
Democracy shall be no more! If it's a fair
And civil question, and not too abstruse,
Were you elected as a "robber baron,"
Or as a Communist whose teeth had hair on?

MY LORD POET

"Who drives fat oxen should himself be fat;"
Who sings for nobles, he should noble be.
There's no non sequitur, I think, in that,
And this is logic plain as a, b, c.
Now, Hector Stuart, you're a Scottish prince,
If right you fathom your descent—that fall
From grace; and since you have no peers, and since
You have no kind of nobleness at all,
'Twere better to sing little, lest you wince
When made by heartless critics to sing small.
And yet, my liege, I bid you not despair
Ambition conquers but a realm at once:
For European bays arrange your hair
Two continents, in time, shall crown you Dunce!

TO THE FOOL-KILLER

Ah, welcome, welcome! Sit you down, old friend;
Your pipe I'll serve, your bottle I'll attend.
'Tis many a year since you and I have known
Society more pleasant than our own
In our brief respites from excessive work
I pointing out the hearts for you to dirk.
What have you done since lately at this board

We canvassed the deserts of all the horde
And chose what names would please the people best,
Engraved on coffin-plates—what bounding breast
 Would give more satisfaction if at rest?
 But never mind—the record cannot fail:
 The loftiest monuments will tell the tale.
I trust ere next we meet you'll slay the chap
Who calls old Tyler "Judge" and Merry "Cap"
 Calls John P. Irish "Colonel" and John P.,
Whose surname Jack-son speaks his pedigree,
 By the same title—men of equal rank
 Though one is belly all, and one all shank,
 Showing their several service in the fray:
 One fought for food and one to get away.
 I hope, I say, you'll kill the "title" man
 Who saddles one on every back he can,
 Then rides it from Beërsheba to Dan!
 Another fool, I trust, you will perform
Your office on while my resentment's warm:
 He shakes my hand a dozen times a day
 If, luckless, I so often cross his way,
Though I've three senses besides that of touch,
 To make me conscious of a fool too much.
Seek him, friend Killer, and your purpose make
 Apparent as his guilty hand you take,
And set him trembling with a solemn: "Shake!"
 But chief of all the addle-witted crew
 Conceded by the Hangman's League to you,
The fool (his dam's acquainted with a knave)
Whose fluent pen, of his no-brain the slave,
 Strews notes of introduction o'er the land
 And calls it hospitality—his hand
 May palsy seize ere he again consign
 To me his friend, as I to Hades mine!
Pity the wretch, his faults howe'er you see,
 Whom A accredits to his victim, B.
Like shuttlecock which battledores attack
(One speeds it forward, one would drive it back)
 The trustful simpleton is twice unblest—
A rare good riddance, an unwelcome guest.
The glad consignor rubs his hands to think

How duty is commuted into ink;
The consignee (his hands he cannot rub
He has the man upon them) mutters: "Cub!"
And straightway plans to lose him at the Club.
You know, good Killer, where this dunce abides
The secret jungle where he writes and hides
Though no exploring foot has e'er upstirred
His human elephant's exhaustless herd.
Go, bring his blood! We'll drink it—letting fall
A due libation to the gods of Gall.
On second thought, the gods may have it all.

ONE AND ONE ARE TWO

The trumpet sounded and the dead
Came forth from earth and ocean,
And Pickering arose and sped
Aloft with wobbling motion.
"What makes him fly lop-sided?" cried
A soul of the elected.
"One ear was wax," a rogue replied,
"And isn't resurrected."
Below him on the pitted plain,
By his abandoned hollow,
His hair and teeth tried all in vain
The rest of him to follow.
Saint Peter, seeing him ascend,
Came forward to the wicket,
And said: "My mutilated friend,
I'll thank you for your ticket."
"The Call," said Pickering, his hand
To reach the latch extended.
Said Peter, affable and bland:
"The free-list is suspended—
"What claim have you that's valid here?"
That ancient vilifier
Reflected; then, with look austere,
Replied: "I am a liar."
Said Peter: "That is simple, neat
And candid Anglo-Saxon,
But—well, come in, and take a seat
Up there by Colonel Jackson."

MONTAGUE LEVERSON

As some enormous violet that towers
Colossal o'er the heads of lowlier flowers
Its giant petals royally displayed,
And casting half the landscape into shade;
Delivering its odors, like the blows
Of some strong slugger, at the public nose;
Pride of two Nations—for a single State
Would scarce suffice to sprout a plant so great;
So Leverson's humility, outgrown
The meaner virtues that he deigns to own,
To the high skies its great corolla rears,
O'ertopping all he has except his ears.

THE WOFUL TALE OF MR. PETERS

I should like, good friends, to mention the disaster which befell
Mr. William Perry Peters, of the town of Muscatel,
Whose fate is full of meaning, if correctly understood—
Admonition to the haughty, consolation to the good.
It happened in the hot snap which we recently incurred,
When 'twas warm enough to carbonize the feathers of a bird,
And men exclaimed: "By Hunky!" who were bad enough to swear,
And pious persons supervised their adjectives with care.
Mr. Peters was a pedagogue of honor and repute,
His learning comprehensive, multifarious, minute.
It was commonly conceded in the section whence he came
That the man who played against him needed knowledge of the game.
And some there were who whispered, in the town of Muscatel,
That besides the game of Draw he knew Orthography as well;
Though, the school directors, frigidly contemning that as stuff,
Thought that Draw (and maybe Spelling, if it pleased him) was enough.
Withal, he was a haughty man—indubitably great,
But too vain of his attainments and his power in debate.
His mien was contumelious to men of lesser gift:
"It's only me," he said, "can give the human mind a lift.
"Before a proper audience, if ever I've a chance,
You'll see me chipping in, the cause of Learning to advance.

Just let me have a decent chance to back my mental hand
And I'll come to center lightly in a way they'll understand."
Such was William Perry Peters, and I feel a poignant sense
 Of grief that I'm unable to employ the present tense;
But Providence disposes, be our scheming what it may,
 And disposed of Mr. Peters in a cold, regardless way.
It occurred in San Francisco, whither Mr. Peters came
 In the cause of Education, feeling still the holy flame
 Of ambition to assist in lifting up the human mind
To a higher plane of knowledge than its Architect designed.
 He attended the convention of the pedagogic host;
 He was first in the Pavilion, he was last to leave his post.
For days and days he narrowly observed the Chairman's eye,
 His efforts ineffectual to catch it on the fly.
The blessed moment came at last: the Chairman tipped his head.
 "The gentleman from ah—um—er," that functionary said.
 The gentleman from ah—um—er reflected with a grin:
"They'll know me better by-and-by, when I'm a-chipping in."
 So William Perry Peters mounted cheerfully his feet—
 And straightway was aglow with an incalculable heat!
 His face was as effulgent as a human face could be,
 And caloric emanated from his whole periphery;
 For he felt himself the focus of non-Muscatelish eyes,
And the pain of their convergence was a terror and surprise.
As with pitiless impaction all their heat-waves on him broke
 He was seen to be evolving awful quantities of smoke!
"Put him out!" cried all in chorus; but the meaning wasn't clear
 Of that succoring suggestion to his obfuscated ear;
 And it notably augmented his incinerating glow
 To regard himself excessive, or in any way de trop.
Gone was all his wild ambition to lift up the human mind!—
Gone the words he would have uttered!—gone the thought that lay behind!
For "words that burn" may be consumed in a superior flame,
And "thoughts that breathe" may breathe their last, and die a death of shame.
He'd known himself a shining light, but never had he known
 Himself so very luminous as now he knew he shone.
 "A pillar, I, of fire," he'd said, "to guide my race will be;"
 And now that very inconvenient thing to him was he.
He stood there all irresolute; the seconds went and came;
The minutes passed and did but add fresh fuel to his flame.
How long he stood he knew not—'twas a century or more

And then that incandescent man levanted for the door!
He darted like a comet from the building to the street,
Where Fahrenheit attested ninety-five degrees of heat.
Vicissitudes of climate make the tenure of the breath
Precarious, and William Perry Peters froze to death!

TWIN UNWORTHIES

Ye parasites that to the rich men stick,
As to the fattest sheep the thrifty tick—
Ed'ard to Stanford and to Crocker Ben
(To Ben and Ed'ard many meaner men,
And lice to these)—who do the kind of work
That thieves would have the honesty to shirk
Whose wages are that your employers own
The fat that reeks upon your every bone
And deigns to ask (the flattery how sweet!)
About its health and how it stands the heat,
Hail and farewell! I meant to write about you,
But, no, my page is cleaner far without you.

ANOTHER PLAN

Editor Owen, of San Jose,
Commonly known as "our friend J.J."
Weary of scribbling for daily bread,
Weary of writing what nobody read,
Slept one day at his desk and dreamed
That an angel before him stood and beamed
With compassionate eyes upon him there.
Editor Owen is not so fair
In feature, expression, form or limb
But glances like that are familiar to him;
And so, to arrive by the shortest route

At his visitor's will he said, simply: "Toot."
"Editor Owen," the angel said,
"Scribble no more for your daily bread.
Your intellect staggers and falls and bleeds,
Weary of writing what nobody reads.
Eschew now the quill—in the coming years
Homilize man through his idle ears.
Go lecture!" "Just what I intended to do,"
Said Owen. The angel looked pained and flew.
Editor Owen, of San Jose,
Commonly known as "our friend J.J."
Scribbling no more to supply his needs,
Weary of writing what nobody reads,
Passes of life each golden year
Speaking what nobody comes to hear.

A POLITICAL APOSTATE

Good friend, it is with deep regret I note
The latest, strangest turning of your coat;
Though any way you wear that mental clout
The seamy side seems always to be out.
Who could have thought that you would e'er sustain
The Southern shotgun's arbitrary reign!
Your sturdy hand assisting to replace
The broken yoke on a delivered race;
The ballot's purity no more your care,
With equal privilege to dark and fair.
To Yesterday a traitor, to To-day
You're constant but the better to betray
To-morrow. Your convictions all are naught
But the wild asses of the world of thought,
Which, flying mindless o'er the barren plain,
Perceive at last they've nothing so to gain,
And, turning penitent upon their track,
Economize their strength by flying back.
Ex-champion of Freedom, battle-lunged,
No more, red-handed, or at least red-tongued,
Brandish the javelin which by others thrown
Clove Sambo's heart to quiver in your own!

Confess no more that when his blood was shed,
 And you so sympathetically bled,
 The bow that spanned the mutual cascade
 Was but the promise of a roaring trade
 In offices. Your fingering now the trigger
Shows that you knew your Negro was a nigger!
 Ad hominem this argumentum runs:
 Peace!—let us fire another kind of guns.
 I grant you, friend, that it is very true
 The Blacks are ignorant—and sable, too.
What then? One way of two a fool must vote,
 And either way with gentlemen of note
 Whose villain feuds the fact attest too well
 That pedagogues nor vice nor error quell.
 The fiercest controversies ever rage
 When Miltons and Salmasii engage.
 No project wide attention ever drew
 But it departed all the learned crew.
As through their group the cleaving line's prolonged
 With fiery combatants each field is thronged.
 In battle-royal they engage at once
 For guidance of the hesitating dunce.
 The Titans on the heights contend full soon
 On this side Webster and on that Calhoun,
 The monstrous conflagration of their fight
 Startling the day and splendoring the night!
 Both are unconquerable—one is right.
Will't keep the pigmy, if we make him strong,
 From siding with a giant in the wrong?
 When Genius strikes for error, who's afraid
 To arm poor Folly with a wooden blade?
 O Rabelais, you knew it all!—your good
 And honest judge (by men misunderstood)
 Knew to be right there was but one device
 Less fallible than ignorance—the dice.
The time must come—Heaven expedite the day!
 When all mankind shall their decrees obey,
 And nations prosper in their peaceful sway.

TINKER DICK

Good Parson Dickson preached, I'm told,
A sermon—ah, 'twas very old
And very, very, bald!
'Twas all about—I know not what
It was about, nor what 'twas not.
"A Screw Loose" it was called.
Whatever, Parson Dick, you say,
The world will get each blessed day
Still more and more askew,
And fall apart at last. Great snakes!
What skillful tinker ever takes
His tongue to turn a screw?

BATS IN SUNSHINE

Well, Mr. Kemble, you are called, I think,
A great divine, and I'm a great profane.
You as a Congregationalist blink
Some certain truths that I esteem a gain,
And drop them in the coffers of my brain,
Pleased with the pretty music of their chink.
Perhaps your spiritual wealth is such
A golden truth or two don't count for much.
You say that you've no patience with such stuff
As by Rénan is writ, and when you read
(Why do you read?) have hardly strength enough
To hold your hand from flinging the vile screed
Into the fire. That were a wasteful deed
Which you'd repent in sackcloth extra rough;
For books cost money, and I'm told you care
To lay up treasures Here as well as There.
I fear, good, pious soul, that you mistake
Your thrift for toleration. Never mind:
Rénan in any case would hardly break
His great, strong, charitable heart to find
The bats and owls of your myopic kind
Pained by the light that his ideas make.
'Tis Truth's best purpose to shine in at holes
Where cower the Kembles, to confound their souls!

A WORD TO THE UNWISE

Charles Main, of Main & Winchester, attend
With friendly ear the chit-chat of a friend
Who knows you not, yet knows that you and he
Travel two roads that have a common end.
We journey forward through the time allowed,
I humbly bending, you erect and proud.
Our heads alike will stable soon the worm
The one that's lifted, and the one that's bowed.
You in your mausoleum shall repose,
I where it pleases Him who sleep bestows;
What matter whether one so little worth
Shall stain the marble or shall feed the rose?
Charles Main, I had a friend who died one day.
A metal casket held his honored clay.
Of cyclopean architecture stood
The splendid vault where he was laid away.
A dozen years, and lo! the roots of grass
Had burst asunder all the joints; the brass,
The gilded ornaments, the carven stones
Lay tumbled all together in a mass.
A dozen years! That taxes your belief.
Make it a thousand if the time's too brief.
'Twill be the same to you; when you are dead
You cannot even count your days of grief.
Suppose a pompous monument you raise
Till on its peak the solar splendor blaze
While yet about its base the night is black;
But will it give your glory length of days?
Say, when beneath your rubbish has been thrown,
Some rogue to reputation all unknown
Men's backs being turned—should lift his thieving hand,
Efface your name and substitute his own.
Whose then would be the monument? To whom
Would be the fame? Forgotten in your gloom,
Your very name forgotten—ah, my friend,
The name is all that's rescued by the tomb.
For memory of worth and work we go
To other records than a stone can show.
These lacking, naught remains; with these

The stone is needless for the world will know.
Then build your mausoleum if you must,
And creep into it with a perfect trust;
But in the twinkling of an eye the plow
Shall pass without obstruction through your dust.
Another movement of the pendulum,
And, lo! the desert-haunting wolf shall come,
And, seated on the spot, shall howl by night
O'er rotting cities, desolate and dumb.

ON THE PLATFORM

When Dr. Bill Bartlett stepped out of the hum
Of Mammon's distracting and wearisome strife
To stand and deliver a lecture on "Some
Conditions of Intellectual Life,"
I cursed the offender who gave him the hall
To lecture on any conditions at all!
But he rose with a fire divine in his eye,
Haranguing with endless abundance of breath,
Till I slept; and I dreamed of a gibbet reared high,
And Dr. Bill Bartlett was dressing for death.
And I thought in my dream: "These conditions, no doubt,
Are bad for the life he was talking about."
So I cried (pray remember this all was a dream):
"Get off of the platform!—it isn't the kind!"
But he fell through the trap, with a jerk at the beam,
And wiggled his toes to unburden his mind.
And, O, so bewitching the thoughts he advanced,
That I clung to his ankles, attentive, entranced!

A DAMPENED ARDOR

The Chinatown at Bakersfield
Was blazing bright and high;
The flames to water would not yield,
Though torrents drenched the sky
And drowned the ground for miles around
The houses were so dry.
Then rose an aged preacher man
Whom all did much admire,
Who said: "To force on you my plan
I truly don't aspire,
But streams, it seems, might quench these beams
If turned upon the fire."
The fireman said: "This hoary wight
His folly dares to thrust
On us! 'Twere well he felt our might
Nay, he shall feel our must!"
With jet of wet and small regret
They laid that old man's dust.

ADAIR WELCKER, POET

The Swan of Avon died—the Swan
Of Sacramento'll soon be gone;
And when his death-song he shall coo,
Stand back, or it will kill you too.

TO A WORD-WARRIOR

Frank Pixley, you, who kiss the hand
That strove to cut the country's throat,
Cannot forgive the hands that smote
Applauding in a distant land,
Applauding carelessly, as one
The weaker willing to befriend
Until the quarrel's at an end,

Then learn by whom it was begun.
When North was pitted against South
Non-combatants on either side
In calculating fury vied,
And fought their foes by word of mouth.
That devil's-camisade you led
With formidable feats of tongue.
Upon the battle's rear you hung
With Samson's weapon slew the dead!
So hot the ardor of your soul
That every fierce civilian came,
His torch to kindle at your name,
Or have you blow his cooling coal.
Men prematurely left their beds
And sought the gelid bath—so great
The heat and splendor of your hate
Of Englishmen and "Copperheads."
King Liar of deceitful men,
For imposition doubly armed!
The patriots whom your speaking charmed
You stung to madness with your pen.
There was a certain journal here,
Its English owner growing rich
Your hand the treason wrote for which
A mob cut short its curst career.
If, Pixley, you had not the brain
To know the true from false, or you
To Truth had courage to be true,
And loyal to her perfect reign;
If you had not your powers arrayed
To serve the wrong by tricky speech,
Nor pushed yourself within the reach
Of retribution's accolade,
I had not had the will to go
Outside the olive-bordered path
Of peace to cut the birch of wrath,
And strip your body for the blow.
Behold how dark the war-clouds rise
About the mother of our race!
The lightnings gild her tranquil face
And glitter in her patient eyes.

Her children throng the hither flood
And lean intent above the beach.
Their beating hearts inhibit speech
With stifling tides of English blood.
"Their skies, but not their hearts, they change
Who go in ships across the sea"
Through all centuries to be
The strange new land will still be strange.
The Island Mother holds in gage
The souls of sons she never saw;
Superior to law, the law
Of sympathetic heritage.
Forgotten now the foolish reign
Of wrath which sundered trivial ties.
A soldier's sabre vainly tries
To cleave a spiritual chain.
The iron in our blood affines,
Though fratricidal hands may spill.
Shall Hate be throned on Bunker Hill,
Yet Love abide at Seven Pines?

A CULINARY CANDIDATE

A cook adorned with paper cap,
Or waiter with a tray,
May be a worthy kind of chap
In his way,
But when we want one for Recorder,
Then, Mr. Walton, take our order.

THE OLEOMARGARINE MAN

Once—in the county of Marin,
Where milk is sold to purchase gin
Renowned for butter and renowned
For fourteen ounces to the pound
A bull stood watching every turn
Of Mr. Wilson with a churn,
As that deigning worthy stalked
About him, eying as he walked,

El Toro's sleek and silken hide,
His neck, his flank and all beside;
Thinking with secret joy: "I'll spread
That mammal on a slice of bread!"
Soon Mr. Wilson's keen concern
To get the creature in his churn
Unhorsed his caution—made him blind
To the fell vigor of bullkind,
Till, filled with valor to the teeth,
He drew his dasher from its sheath
And bravely brandished it; the while
He smiled a dark, portentous smile;
A deep, sepulchral smile; a wide
And open smile, which, at his side,
The churn to copy vainly tried;
A smile so like the dawn of doom
That all the field was palled in gloom,
And all the trees within a mile,
As tribute to that awful smile,
Made haste, with loyalty discreet,
To fling their shadows at his feet.
Then rose his battle-cry: "I'll spread
That mammal on a slice of bread!"
To such a night the day had turned
That Taurus dimly was discerned.
He wore so meek and grave an air
It seemed as if, engaged in prayer
This thunderbolt incarnate had
No thought of anything that's bad:
This concentrated earthquake stood
And gave his mind to being good.
Lightly and low he drew his breath
This magazine of sudden death!
All this the thrifty Wilson's glance
Took in, and, crying, "Now's my chance!"
Upon the bull he sprang amain
To put him in his churn. Again
Rang out his battle-yell: "I'll spread
That mammal on a slice of bread!"
Sing, Muse, that battle-royal—sing
The deeds that made the region ring,

The blows, the bellowing, the cries,
The dust that darkened all the skies,
The thunders of the contest, all
Nay, none of these things did befall.
A yell there was—a rush—no more:
El Toro, tranquil as before,
Still stood there basking in the sun,
Nor of his legs had shifted one
Stood there and conjured up his cud
And meekly munched it. Scenes of blood
Had little charm for him. His head
He merely nodded as he said:
"I've spread that butterman upon
A slice of Southern Oregon."

GENESIS

God said, "Let there be Crime," and the command
Brought Satan, leading Stoneman by the hand.
"Why, that's Stupidity, not Crime," said God
"Bring what I ordered." Satan with a nod
Replied, "This is one element—when I
The other—Opportunity—supply
In just equivalent, the two'll affine
And in a chemical embrace combine
And Crime result—for Crime can only be
Stupiditate of Opportunity."
So leaving Stoneman (not as yet endowed
With soul) in special session on a cloud,
Nick to his sooty laboratory went,
Returning soon with t'other element.
"Here's Opportunity," he said, and put
Pen, ink, and paper down at Stoneman's foot.
He seized them—Heaven was filled with fires and thunders,
And Crime was added to Creation's wonders!

LLEWELLEN POWELL

Villain, when the word is spoken,
And your chains at last are broken
When the gibbet's chilling shade
 Ceases darkly to enfold you,
And the angel who enrolled you
 As a master of the trade
 Of assassination sadly
 Blots the record he has made,
And your name and title paints
 In the calendar of saints;
When the devils, dancing madly
 In the midmost Hell, are very
 Multitudinously merry—
 Then beware, beware, beware!
 Nemesis is everywhere!
You shall hear her at your back,
And, your hunted visage turning,
Fancy that her eyes are burning
 Like a tiger's on your track!
You shall hear her in the breeze
 Whispering to summer trees.
You shall hear her calling, calling
 To your spirit through the storm
 When the giant billows form
And the splintered lightning, falling
Down the heights of Heaven, appalling,
 Splendors all the tossing seas!
On your bed at night reclining,
Stars into your chamber shining
 As they roll around the Pole,
None their purposes divining,
Shall appear to search your soul,
 And to gild the mark of Cain
That burns into your tortured brain!
And the dead man's eyes shall ever
 Meet your own wherever you,
 Desperate, shall turn you to,
And you shall escape them never!
 By your heritage of guilt;

By the blood that you have spilt;
By the Law that you have broken;
 By the terrible red token
That you bear upon your brow;
 By the awful sentence spoken
 And irrevocable vow
Which consigns you to a living
 Death and to the unforgiving
Furies who avenge your crime
 Through the periods of time;
 By that dread eternal doom
Hinted in your future's gloom,
 As the flames infernal tell
Of their power and perfection
 In their wavering reflection
On the battlements of Hell;
 By the mercy you denied,
I condemn your guilty soul
 In your body to abide,
 Like a serpent in a hole!

THE SUNSET GUN.

Off Santa Cruz the western wave
 Was crimson as with blood:
The sun was sinking to his grave
 Beneath that angry flood.
Sir Walter Turnbull, brave and stout,
 Then shouted, "Ho! lads; run
The powder and the ball bring out
 To fire the sunset gun.
"That punctual orb did ne'er omit
 To keep, by land or sea,
 Its every engagement; it
 Shall never wait for me."
Behold the black-mouthed cannon stand,
 Ready with charge and prime,
The lanyard in the gunner's hand.
 Sir Walter waits the time.
The glowing orb sinks in the sea,

And clouds of steam aspire,
Then fade, and the horizon's free.
Sir Walter thunders: "Fire!"
The gunner pulls—the lanyard parts
And not a sound ensues.
The beating of ten thousand hearts
Was heard at Santa Cruz!
Off Santa Cruz the western wave
Was crimson as with blood;
The sun, with visage stern and grave,
Came back from out the flood.

THE "VIDUATE DAME"

'Tis the widow of Thomas Blythe,
And she goeth upon the spree,
And red are cheeks of the bystanders
For her acts are light and free.
In a seven-ounce costume
The widow of Thomas Blythe,
Y-perched high on the window ledge,
The difficult can-can tryeth.
Ten constables they essay
To bate the dame's halloing.
With the widow of Thomas Blythe
Their hands are overflowing,
And they cry: "Call the National Guard
To quell this parlous muss—
For all of the widows of Thomas Blythe
Are upon the spree and us!"
O long shall the eerie tale be told
By that posse's surviving tithes;
And with tears bedewed he'll sing this rude
Ballad of the widow of Thomas Blythe.

FOUR OF A KIND

ROBERT F. MORROW

Dear man! although a stranger and a foe
To soft affection's humanizing glow;
Although untaught how manly hearts may throb
With more desires than the desire to rob;
Although as void of tenderness as wit,
And owning nothing soft but Maurice Schmitt;
Although polluted, shunned and in disgrace,
You fill me with a passion to embrace!
Attentive to your look, your smile, your beck,
I watch and wait to fall upon your neck.
Lord of my love, and idol of my hope,
You are my Valentine, and I'm

A ROPE.

ALFRED CLARKE JR.

Illustrious son of an illustrious sire
Entrusted with the duty to cry "Fire!"
And call the engines out, exert your power
With care. When, looking from your lofty tower,
You see a ruddy light on every wall,
Pause for a moment ere you sound the call:
It may be from a fire, it may be, too,
From good men's blushes when they think of you.

JUDGE RUTLEDGE

Sultan of Stupids! with enough of brains
To go indoors in all uncommon rains,
But not enough to stay there when the storm
Is past. When all the world is dry and warm,
In irking comfort, lamentably gay,
Keeping the evil tenor of your way,
You walk abroad, sweet, beautiful and smug,

And Justice hears you with her wonted shrug,
Lifts her broad bandage half-an-inch and keeps
One eye upon you while the other weeps.

W.H.L. BARNES

Happy the man who sin's proverbial wage
Receives on the instalment plan—in age.
For him the bulldog pistol's honest bark
Has naught of terror in its blunt remark.
He looks with calmness on the gleaming steel
If e'er it touched his heart he did not feel:
Superior hardness turned its point away,
Though urged by fond affinity to stay;
His bloodless veins ignored the futile stroke,
And moral mildew kept the cut in cloak.
Happy the man, I say, to whom the wage
Of sin has been commuted into age.
Yet not quite happy—hark, that horrid cry!
His cruel mirror wounds him in the eye!

RECONCILIATION

Stanford and Huntington, so long at outs,
Kissed and made up. If you have any doubts
Dismiss them, for I saw them do it, man;
And then—why, then I clutched my purse and ran.

A VISION OF CLIMATE

I dreamed that I was poor and sick and sad,
Broken in hope and weary of my life;
My ventures all miscarrying—naught had
For all my labor in the heat and strife.
And in my heart some certain thoughts were rife
Of an unsummoned exit. As I lay
Considering my bitter state, I cried:
"Alas! that hither I did ever stray.
Better in some fair country to have died
Than live in such a land, where Fortune never
(Unless he be successful) crowns Endeavor."
Then, even as I lamented, lo! there came
A troop of Presences—I knew not whence
Nor what they were: thought cannot rightly name
What's known through spiritual evidence,
Reported not by gross material sense.
"Why come ye here?" I seemed to cry (though naught
My sleeping tongue did utter) to the first
"What are ye?—with what woful message fraught?
Ye have a ghastly look, as ye had burst
Some sepulcher in memory. Weird creatures,
I'm sure I'd know you if ye had but features."
Some subtle organ noted the reply
(Inaudible to ear of flesh the tone):
"The Finest Climate in the World am I,
From Siskiyou to San Diego known—
From the Sierra to the sea. The zone
Called semi-tropical I've pulled about
And placed it where it does most good, I trust.
I shake my never-failing bounty out
Alike upon the just and the unjust."
"That's very true," said I, "but when 'tis shaken
My share by the unjust is ever taken."
"Permit me," it resumed, "now to present
My eldest son, the Champagne Atmosphere,
And others to rebuke your discontent—
The Mammoth Squash, Strawberry All the Year,
The fair No Lightning—flashing only here
The Wholesome Earthquake and Italian Sky,

With its Unstriking Sun; and last, not least,
The Compos Mentis Dog. Now, ingrate, try
To bring a better stomach to the feast:
When Nature makes a dance and pays the piper,
To be unhappy is to be a viper!"
"Why, yet," said I, "with all your blessings fine
(And Heaven forbid that I should speak them ill)
I yet am poor and sick and sad. Ye shine
With more of splendor than of heat: for still,
Although my will is warm, my bones are chill."
"Then warm you with enthusiasm's blaze—
Fortune waits not on toil," they cried; "O then
Join the wild chorus clamoring our praise—
Throw up your beaver and throw down you pen!"
"Begone!" I shouted. They bewent, a-smirking,
And I, awakening, fell straight a-working.

A "MASS" MEETING

It was a solemn rite as e'er
Was seen by mortal man.
The celebrants, the people there,
Were all Republican.
There Estee bent his grizzled head,
And General Dimond, too,
And one—'twas Reddick, some one said,
Though no one clearly knew.
I saw the priest, white-robed and tall
(Assistant, Father Stow)—
He was the pious man men call
Dan Burns of Mexico.
Ah, 'twas a high and holy rite
As any one could swear.
"What does it mean?" I asked a wight
Who knelt apart in prayer.
"A mass for the repose," he said,
"Of Colonel Markham's"——"What,
Is gallant Colonel Markham dead?
'Tis sad, 'tis sad, God wot!"
"A mass"—repeated he, and rose

To go and kneel among
The worshipers—"for the repose
Of Colonel Markham's tongue."

FOR PRESIDENT, LELAND STANFORD

Mahomet Stanford, with covetous stare,
Gazed on a vision surpassingly fair:
Far on the desert's remote extreme
A mountain of gold with a mellow gleam
Reared its high pinnacles into the sky,
The work of mirage to delude the eye.
Pixley Pasha, at the Prophet's feet
Piously licking them, swearing them sweet,
Ventured, observing his master's glance,
To beg that he order the mountain's advance.
Mahomet Stanford exerted his will,
Commanding: "In Allah's name, hither, hill!"
Never an inch the mountain came.
Mahomet Stanford, with face aflame,
Lifted his foot and kicked, alack!
Pixley Pasha on the end of the back.
Mollified thus and smiling free,
He said: "Since the mountain won't come to me,
I'll go to the mountain." With infinite pains,
Camels in caravans, negroes in trains,
Warriors, workmen, women, and fools,
Food and water and mining tools
He gathered about him, a mighty array,
And the journey began at the close of day.
All night they traveled—at early dawn
Many a wearisome league had gone.
Morning broke fair with a golden sheen,
Mountain, alas, was nowhere seen!
Mahomet Stanford pounded his breast,
Pixley Pasha he thus addressed:
"Dog of mendacity, cheat and slave,
May jackasses sing o'er your grandfather's grave!"

FOR MAYOR

O Abner Doble—whose "catarrhal name"
Budd of that ilk might envy—'tis a rough
Rude thing to say, but it is plain enough
Your name is to be sneezed at: its acclaim
Will "fill the speaking trump of future fame"
With an impeded utterance—a puff
Suggesting that a pinch or two of snuff
Would clear the tube and somewhat disinflate.
Nay, Abner Doble, you'll not get from me
My voice and influence: I'll cheer instead,
Some other man; for when my voice ascends a
Tall pinnacle of praise, and at high C
Sustains a chosen name, it shan't be said
My influence is naught but influenza.

A CHEATING PREACHER

Munhall, to save my soul you bravely try,
Although, to save my soul, I can't say why.
'Tis naught to you, to me however much
Why, bless it! you might save a million such
Yet lose your own; for still the "means of grace"
That you employ to turn us from the place
By the arch-enemy of souls frequented
Are those which to ensnare us he invented!
I do not say you utter falsehoods—I
Would scorn to give to ministers the lie:
They cannot fight—their calling has estopped it.
True, I did not persuade them to adopt it.
But, Munhall, when you say the Devil dwells
In all the breasts of all the infidels—
Making a lot of individual Hells
In gentlemen instinctively who shrink
From thinking anything that you could think,
You talk as I should if some world I trod
Where lying is acceptable to God.
I don't at all object—forbid it Heaven!
That your discourse you temperately leaven

With airy reference to wicked souls
Cursing impenitent on glowing coals,
Nor quarrel with your fancy, blithe and fine,
Which represents the wickedest as mine.
Each ornament of style my spirit eases:
The subject saddens, but the manner pleases.
But when you "deal damnation round" 'twere sweet
To think hereafter that you did not cheat.
Deal, and let all accept what you allot 'em.
But, blast you! you are dealing from the bottom!

A CROCODILE

Nay, Peter Robertson, 'tis not for you
To blubber o'er Max Taubles for he's dead.
By Heaven! my hearty, if you only knew
How better is a grave-worm in the head
Than brains like yours—how far more decent, too,
A tomb in far Corea than a bed
Where Peter lies with Peter, you would covet
His happier state and, dying, learn to love it.
In the recesses of the silent tomb
No Maunderings of yours disturb the peace.
Your mental bag-pipe, droning like the gloom
Of Hades audible, perforce must cease
From troubling further; and that crack o' doom,
Your mouth, shaped like a long bow, shall release
In vain such shafts of wit as it can utter—
The ear of death can't even hear them flutter.

THE AMERICAN PARTY

Oh, Marcus D. Boruck, me hearty,
I sympathize wid ye, poor lad!
A man that's shot out of his party
Is mighty onlucky, bedad!
An' the sowl o' that man is sad.
But, Marcus, gossoon, ye deserve it
Ye know for yerself that ye do,
For ye j'ined not intendin' to sarve it,
But hopin' to make it sarve you,
Though the roll of its members wuz two.
The other wuz Pixley, an' "Surely,"
Ye said, "he's a kite that wall sail."
An' so ye hung till him securely,
Enactin' the role of a tail.
But there wuzn't the ghost of a gale!
But the party to-day has behind it
A powerful backin', I'm told;
For just enough Irish have j'ined it
(An' I'm m'anin' to be enrolled)
To kick ye out into the cold.
It's hard on ye, darlint, I'm thinkin'
So young—so American, too—
Wid bypassers grinnin' an' winkin',
An' sayin', wid ref'rence to you:
"Get onto the murtherin' Joo!"
Republicans never will take ye
They had ye for many a year;
An' Dimocrats—angels forsake ye!
If ever ye come about here
We'll brand ye and scollop yer ear!

UNCOLONELED

Though war-signs fail in time of peace, they say,
Two awful portents gloom the public mind:
All Mexico is arming for the fray
And Colonel Mark McDonald has resigned!
We know not by what instinct he divined
The coming trouble—may be, like the steed
Described by Job, he smelled the fight afar.
Howe'er it be, he left, and for that deed
Is an aspirant to the G.A.R.
When cannon flame along the Rio Grande
A citizen's commission will be handy.

THE GATES AJAR

The Day of Judgment spread its glare
O'er continents and seas.
The graves cracked open everywhere,
Like pods of early peas.
Up to the Court of Heaven sped
The souls of all mankind;
Republicans were at the head
And Democrats behind.
Reub. Lloyd was there before the tube
Of Gabriel could call:
The dead in Christ rise first, and Reub.
Had risen first of all.
He sat beside the Throne of Flame
As, to the trumpet's sound,
Four statesmen of the Party Came
And ranged themselves around
Pure spirits shining like the sun,
From taint and blemish free
Great William Stow was there for one,
And George A. Knight for three.
Souls less indubitably white
Approached with anxious air,
Judge Blake at head of them by right

Of having been a Mayor.
His ermine he had donned again,
Long laid away in gums.
'Twas soiled a trifle by the stains
Of politicians' thumbs.
Then Knight addressed the Judge of Heaven:
"Your Honor, would it trench
On custom here if Blake were given
A seat upon the Bench?"
'Twas done. "Tom Shannon!" Peter cried.
He came, without ado,
In forma pauperis was tried,
And was acquitted, too!
Stow rose, remarking: "I concur."
Lloyd added: "That suits us.
I move Tom's nomination, sir,
Be made unanimous."

TIDINGS OF GOOD

Old Nick from his place of last resort
Came up and looked the world over.
He saw how the grass of the good was short
And the wicked lived in clover.
And he gravely said: "This is all, all wrong,
And never by me intended.
If to me the power should ever belong
I shall have this thing amended."
He looked so solemn and good and wise
As he made this observation
That the men who heard him believed their eyes
Instead of his reputation.
So they bruited the matter about, and each
Reported the words as nearly
As memory served—with additional speech
To bring out the meaning clearly.
The consequence was that none understood,
And the wildest rumors started
Of something intended to help the good
And injure the evil-hearted.

Then Robert Morrow was seen to smile
 With a bright and lively joyance.
 "A man," said he, "that is free from guile
 Will now be free from annoyance.
 "The Featherstones doubtless will now increase
 And multiply like the rabbits,
 While jailers, deputy sheriffs, police,
 And writers will form good habits.
 "The widows more easily robbed will be,
 And no juror will ever heed 'em,
 But open his purse to my eloquent plea
 For security, gain, or freedom."
 When Benson heard of the luck of the good
 (He was eating his dinner) he muttered:
 "It cannot help me, for 'tis understood
 My bread is already buttered.
 "My plats of surveys are all false, they say,
 But that cannot greatly matter
 To me, for I'll tell the jurors that they
 May lick, if they please, my platter."

ARBORICULTURE

[Californians are asking themselves how Joaquin Miller will make the trees grow which
 he proposes to plant in the form of a Maltese cross on Goat Island, in San Francisco
 Bay.—New York Graphic.]

You may say they won't grow, and say they'll decay—
 Say it again till you're sick of the say,
 Get up on your ear, blow your blaring bazoo
 And hire a hall to proclaim it; and you
 May stand on a stump with a lifted hand
 As a pine may stand or a redwood stand,
 And stick to your story and cheek it through.
 But I point with pride to the far divide
 Where the Snake from its groves is seen to glide
 To Mariposa's arboreal suit,
 And the shaggy shoulders of Shasta Butte,
 And the feathered firs of Siskiyou;

And I swear as I sit on my marvelous hair
I roll my marvelous eyes and swear,
And sneer, and ask where would your forests be
To-day if it hadn't been for me!
Then I rise tip-toe, with a brow of brass,
Like a bully boy with an eye of glass;
I look at my gum sprouts, red and blue,
And I say it loud and I say it low:
"They know their man and you bet they'll grow!"

A SILURIAN HOLIDAY

'Tis Master Fitch, the editor;
He takes an holiday.
Now wherefore, venerable sir,
So resolutely gay?
He lifts his head, he laughs aloud,
Odzounds! 'tis drear to see!
"Because the Boodle-Scribbler crowd
Will soon be far from me.
"Full many a year I've striven well
To freeze the caitiffs out
By making this good town a Hell,
But still they hang about.
"They maken mouths and eke they grin
At the dollar limit game;
And they are holpen in that sin
By many a wicked dame.
"In sylvan bowers hence I'll dwell
My bruised mind to ease.
Farewell, ye urban scenes, farewell!
Hail, unfamiliar trees!"
Forth Master Fitch did bravely hie,
And all the country folk
Besought him that he come not nigh
The deadly poison oak!
He smiled a cheerful smile (the day
Was straightway overcast)—
The poison oak along his way
Was blighted as he passed!

REJECTED

When Dr. Charles O'Donnell died
They sank a box with him inside.
The plate with his initials three
Was simply graven—"C.O.D."
That night two demons of the Pit
Adown the coal-hole shunted it.
Ten million million leagues it fell,
Alighting at the gate of Hell.
Nick looked upon it with surprise,
A night-storm darkening his eyes.
"They've sent this rubbish, C.O.D.
I'll never pay a cent!" said he.

JUDEX JUDICATUS

Judge Armstrong, when the poor have sought your aid,
To be released from vows that they have made
In haste, and leisurely repented, you,
As stern as Rhadamanthus (Minos too,
And Æeacus) have drawn your fierce brows down
And petrified them with a moral frown!
With iron-faced rigor you have made them run
The gauntlet of publicity—each Hun
Or Vandal of the public press allowed
To throw their households open to the crowd
And bawl their secret bickerings aloud.
When Wealth before you suppliant appears,
Bang! go the doors and open fly your ears!
The blinds are drawn, the lights diminished burn,
Lest eyes too curious should look and learn
That gold refines not, sweetens not a life
Of conjugal brutality and strife—
That vice is vulgar, though it gilded shine
Upon the curve of a judicial spine.
The veiled complainant's whispered evidence,
The plain collusion and the no defense,
The sealed exhibits and the secret plea,

The unrecorded and unseen decree,
The midnight signature and—chink! chink! chink!
Nay, pardon, upright Judge, I did but think
I heard that sound abhorred of honest men;
No doubt it was the scratching of your pen.
O California! long-enduring land,
Where Judges fawn upon the Golden Hand,
Proud of such service to that rascal thing
As slaves would blush to render to a king
Judges, of judgment destitute and heart,
Of conscience conscious only by the smart
From the recoil (so insight is enlarged)
Of duty accidentally discharged;—
Invoking still a "song o' sixpence" from
The Scottish fiddle of each lusty palm,
Thy Judges, California, skilled to play
This silent music, through the livelong-day
Perform obsequious before the rich,
And still the more they scratch the more they itch!

ON THE WEDDING OF AN AËRONAUT

Aëronaut, you're fairly caught,
Despite your bubble's leaven:
Out of the skies a lady's eyes
Have brought you down to Heaven!
No more, no more you'll freely soar
Above the grass and gravel:
Henceforth you'll walk—and she will chalk
The line that you're to travel!

A HASTY INFERENCE

The Devil one day, coming up from the Pit,
All grimy with perspiration,
Applied to St. Peter and begged he'd admit
Him a moment for consultation.
The Saint showed him in where the Master reclined
On the throne where petitioners sought him;
Both bowed, and the Evil One opened his mind

Concerning the business that brought him:
"For ten million years I've been kept in a stew
Because you have thought me immoral;
And though I have had my opinion of you,
You've had the best end of the quarrel.
"But now—well, I venture to hope that the past
With its misunderstandings we'll smother;
And you, sir, and I, sir, be throned here at last
As equals, the one to the other."
"Indeed!" said the Master (I cannot convey
A sense of his tone by mere letters)
"What makes you presume you'll be bidden to stay
Up here on such terms with your betters?"
"Why, sure you can't mean it!" said Satan. "I've seen
How Stanford and Crocker you've nourished,
And Huntington—bless me! the three like a green
Umbrageous great bay-tree have flourished.
They are fat, they are rolling in gold, they command
All sources and well-springs of power;
You've given them houses, you've given them land
Before them the righteous all cower."
"What of that?" "What of that?" cried the Father of Sin;
"Why, I thought when I saw you were winking
At crimes such as theirs that perhaps you had been
Converted to my way of thinking."

A VOLUPTUARY

Who's this that lispeth in the thickening throng
Which crowds to claim distinction in my song?
Fresh from "the palms and temples of the South,"
The mixed aromas quarrel in his mouth:
Of orange blossoms this the lingering gale,
And that the odor of a spicy tale.
Sir, in thy pleasure-dome down by the sea
(No finer one did Kubla Khan decree)
Where, Master of the Revels, thou dost stand
With joys and mysteries on either hand,
Dost keep a poet to report the rites
And sing the tale of those Elysian nights?

Faith, sir, I'd like the place if not too young.
I'm no great bard, but—I can hold my tongue.

AD CATTONUM

I know not, Mr. Catton, who you are,
Nor very clearly why; but you go far
To show that you are many things beside
A Chilean Consul with a tempting hide;
But what they are I hardly could explain
Without afflicting you with mental pain.
Your name (gods! what a name the muse to woo
Suggesting cats, and hinting kittens, too!)
Points to an origin—perhaps Maltese,
Perhaps Angoran—where the wicked cease
From fiddling, and the animals that grow
The strings that groan to the tormenting bow
Live undespoiled of their insides, resigned
To give their name and nature to mankind.
With Chilean birth your name but poorly tallies;
The test is—Did you ever sell tamales?
It matters very little, though, my boy,
If you're from Chile or from Illinois;
You can't, because you serve a foreign land,
Spit with impunity on ours, expand,
Cock-turkeywise, and strut with blind conceit,
All heedless of the hearts beneath your feet,
Fling falsehoods as a sower scatters grain
And, for security, invoke disdain.
Sir, there are laws that men of sense observe,
No matter whence they come nor whom they serve
The laws of courtesy; and these forbid
You to malign, as recently you did,
As servant of another State, a State
Wherein your duties all are concentrate;
Branding its Ministers as rogues—in short,
Inviting cuffs as suitable retort.
Chileno or American, 'tis one
Of any land a citizen, or none
If like a new Thersites here you rail,

Loading with libels every western gale,
You'll feel the cudgel on your scurvy hump
Impinging with a salutary thump.
'Twill make you civil or 'twill make you jump!
THE NATIONAL GUARDSMAN

I'm a gorgeous golden hero
And my trade is taking life.
Hear the twittle-twittle-tweero
Of my sibillating fife
And the rub-a-dub-a-dum
Of my big bass drum!
I'm an escort strong and bold,
The Grand Army to protect.
My countenance is cold
And my attitude erect.
I'm a Californian Guard
And my banner flies aloft,
But the stones are O, so hard!
And my feet are O, so soft!

THE BARKING WEASEL

You say, John Irish, Mr. Taylor hath
A painted beard. Quite likely that is true,
And sure 'tis natural you spend your wrath
On what has been least merciful to you.
By Taylor's chin, if I am not mistaken,
You like a rat have recently been shaken.
To wear a beard of artificial hue
May be or this or that, I know not what;
But, faith, 'tis better to be black-and-blue
In beard from dallying with brush and pot
Than to be so in body from the beating
That hardy rogues get when detected cheating.
You're whacked about the mazzard rather more
Of late than any other man in town.
Certes your vulnerable back is sore
And tender, too, your corrigible crown.
In truth your whole periphery discloses
More vivid colors than a bed of posies!

You call it glory! Put your tongue in sheath!
Scars got in battle, even if on the breast,
May be a shameful record if, beneath,
A robber heart a lawless strife attest.
John Sullivan had wounds, and Paddy Ryan
Nay, as to that, even Masten has, and Bryan.
'Tis willingly conceded you've a knack
At holding the attention of the town;
The worse for you when you have on your back
What did not grow there—prithee put it down!
For pride kills thrift, and you lack board and lodging,
Even while the brickbats of renown you're dodging.

A REAR ELEVATION

Once Moses (in Scripture the story is told)
Entreated the favor God's face to behold.
Compassion divine the petition denied
Lest vision be blasted and body be fried.
Yet this much, the Record informs us, took place:
Jehovah, concealing His terrible face,
Protruded His rear from behind a great rock,
And edification ensued without shock.
So godlike Salvini, lest worshipers die,
Averting the blaze of his withering eye,
Tempers his terrors and shows to the pack
Of feeble adorers the broad of his back.
The fires of their altars, which, paled and declined
Before him, burn all the more brightly behind.
O happy adorers, to care not at all
Where fawning may tickle or lip-service fall!

IN UPPER SAN FRANCISCO

I heard that Heaven was bright and fair,
And politicians dwelt not there.
'Twas said by knowing ones that they
Were in the Elsewhere—so to say.
So, waking from my last long sleep,
I took my place among the sheep.
I passed the gate—Saint Peter eyed
Me sharply as I stepped inside.
He thought, as afterward I learned,
That I was Chris, the Unreturned.
The new Jerusalem—ah me,
It was a sorry sight to see!
The mansions of the blest were there,
And mostly they were fine and fair;
But O, such streets!—so deep and wide,
And all unpaved, from side to side!
And in a public square there grew
A blighted tree, most sad to view.
From off its trunk the bark was ripped
Its very branches all were stripped!
An angel perched upon the fence
With all the grace of indolence.
"Celestial bird," I cried, in pain,
"What vandal wrought this wreck? Explain."
He raised his eyelids as if tired:
"What is a Vandal?" he inquired.
"This is the Tree of Life. 'Twas stripped
By Durst and Siebe, who have shipped
"The bark across the Jordan—see?—
And sold it to a tannery."
"Alas," I sighed, "their old-time tricks!
That pavement, too, of golden bricks
"They've gobbled that?" But with a scowl,
"You greatly wrong them," said the fowl:
"'Twas Gilleran did that, I fear—
Head of the Street Department here."
"What! what!" cried I—"you let such chaps
Come here? You've Satan, too, perhaps."
"We had him, yes, but off he went,

Yet showed some purpose to repent;
"But since your priests and parsons filled
The place with those their preaching killed"
(Here Siebe passed along with Durst,
Psalming as if their lungs would burst)
"He swears his foot no more shall press
('Tis cloven, anyhow, I guess)
"Our soil. In short, he's out on strike
But devils are not all alike."
Lo! Gilleran came down the street,
Pressing the soil with broad, flat feet!

NIMROD

There were brave men, some one has truly said,
Before Atrides (those were mostly dead
Behind him) and ere you could e'er occur
Actaeon lived, Nimrod and Bahram-Gur.
In strength and speed and daring they excelled:
The stag they overtook, the lion felled.
Ah, yes, great hunters flourished before you,
And—for Munchausen lived—great talkers too.
There'll be no more; there's much to kill, but—well,
You have left nothing in the world to tell!

CENSOR LITERARUM

So, Parson Stebbins, you've released your chin
To say that here, and here, we press-folk ail.
'Tis a great thing an editor to skin
And hang his faulty pelt upon a nail
(If over-eared, it has, at least, no tail)
And, for an admonition against sin,
Point out its maculations with a rod,
And act, in short, the gentleman of God.
'Twere needless cruelty to spoil your sport
By comment, critical or merely rude;
But you, too, have, according to report,
Despite your posing as a holy dude,
Imperfect spiritual pulchritude
For so severe a judge. May't please the court,
We shall appeal and take our case at once

Before that higher court, a taller dunce.
Sir, what were you without the press? What spreads
The fame of your existence, once a week,
From the Pacific Mail dock to the Heads,
Warning the people you're about to wreak
Upon the human ear your Sunday freak?—
Whereat the most betake them to their bed
Though some prefer to slumber in the pews
And nod assent to your hypnotic views.
Unhappy man! can you not still your tongue
When (like a luckless brat afflict with worms,
By cruel fleas intolerably stung,
Or with a pang in its small lap) it squirms?
Still must it vulgarize your feats of lung?
No preaching better were, the sun beneath,
If you had nothing there behind your teeth.

BORROWED BRAINS

Writer folk across the bay
Take the pains to see and say
All their upward palms in air:
"Joaquin Miller's cut his hair!"
Hasten, hasten, writer folk
In the gutters rake and poke,
If by God's exceeding grace
You may hit upon the place
Where the barber threw at length
Samson's literary strength.
Find it, find it if you can;
Happy the successful man!
He has but to put one strand
In his beaver's inner band
And his intellect will soar
As it never did before!
While an inch of it remains
He will noted be for brains,
And at last ('twill so befall)
Fit to cease to write at all.

THE FYGHTYNGE SEVENTH

It is the gallant Seventh—
It fyghteth faste and free!
God wot the where it fyghteth
I ne desyre to be.
The Gonfalon it flyeth,
Seeming a Flayme in Sky;
The Bugel loud yblowen is,
Which sayeth, Doe and dye!
And (O good Saints defende us
Agaynst the Woes of Warr)
Drawn Tongues are flashing deadly
To smyte the Foeman sore!
With divers kinds of Riddance
The smoaking Earth is wet,
And all aflowe to seaward goe
The Torrents wide of Sweat!
The Thunder of the Captens,
And eke the Shouting, mayketh
Such horrid Din the Soule within
The boddy of me quayketh!
Who fyghteth the bold Seventh?
What haughty Power defyes?
Their Colonel 'tis they drubben sore,
And dammen too his Eyes!

INDICTED

Dear Bruner, once we had a little talk
(That is to say, 'twas I did all the talking)
About the manner of your moral walk:
How devious the trail you made in stalking,
On level ground, your law-protected gam
"Another's Dollar" is, I think, its name.
Your crooked course more recently is not
So blamable; for, truly, you have stumbled
On evil days; and 'tis your luckless lot
To traverse spaces (with a spirit humbled,
Contrite, dejected and divinely sad)
Where, 'tis confessed, the walking's rather bad.

Jordan, the song says, is a road (I thought
It was a river) that is hard to travel;
And Dublin, if you'd find it, must be sought
Along a highway with more rocks than gravel.
In difficulty neither can compete
With that wherein you navigate your feet.
As once George Gorham said of Pixley, so
I say of you: "The prison yawns before you,
The turnkey stalks behind!" Now will you go?
Or lag, and let that functionary floor you?
To change the metaphor—you seem to be
Between Judge Wallace and the deep, deep sea!

OVER THE BORDER

O, justice, you have fled, to dwell
In Mexico, unstrangled,
Lest you should hang as high as—well,
As Haman dangled.
(I know not if his cord he twanged,
Or the King proved forgiving.
'Tis hard to think of Haman hanged,
And Haymond living.)
Yes, as I said: in mortal fear
To Mexico you journeyed;
For you were on your trial here,
And ill attorneyed.
The Law had long regarded you
As an extreme offender.
Religion looked upon you, too,
With thoughts untender.
The Press to you was cold as snow,
For sin you'd always call so.
In Politics you were de trop,
In Morals also.
All this is accurately true
And, faith! there might be more said;
But—well, to save your thrapple you
Fled, as aforesaid.

You're down in Mexico—that's plain
As that the sun is risen;
For Daniel Burns, down there, his chain
Drags round in prison.

ONE JUDGE

Wallace, created on a noble plan
To show us that a Judge can be a Man;
Through moral mire exhaling mortal stench
God-guided sweet and foot-clean to the Bench;
In salutation here and sign I lift
A hand as free as yours from lawless thrift,
A heart—ah, would I truly could proclaim
My bosom lighted with so pure a flame!
Alas, not love of justice moves my pen
To praise, or to condemn, my fellow men.
Good will and ill its busy point incite:
I do but gratify them when I write.
In palliation, though, I'd humbly state,
I love the righteous and the wicked hate.
So, sir, although we differ we agree,
Our work alike from persecution free,
And Heaven, approving you, consents to me.
Take, therefore, from this not all useless hand
The crown of honor—not in all the land
One honest man dissenting from the choice,
Nor in approval one Fred. Crocker's voice!

TO AN INSOLENT ATTORNEY

So, Hall McAllister, you'll not be warned
My protest slighted, admonition scorned!
To save your scoundrel client from a cell
As loth to swallow him as he to swell
Its sum of meals insurgent (it decries
All wars intestinal with meats that rise)
You turn your scurril tongue against the press
And damn the agency you ought to bless.
Had not the press with all its hundred eyes
Discerned the wolf beneath the sheep's disguise

And raised the cry upon him, he to-day
Would lack your company, and you would lack his pay.
Talk not of "hire" and consciences for sale
You whose profession 'tis to threaten, rail,
Calumniate and libel at the will
Of any villain who can pay the bill—
You whose most honest dollars all were got
By saying for a fee "the thing that's not!"
To you 'tis one, to challenge or defend;
Clients are means, their money is an end.
In my profession sometimes, as in yours
Always, a payment large enough secures
A mercenary service to defend
The guilty or the innocent to rend.
But mark the difference, nor think it slight:
We do not hold it proper, just and right;
Of selfish lies a little still we shame
And give our villainies another name.
Hypocrisy's an ugly vice, no doubt,
But blushing sinners can't get on without.
Happy the lawyer!—at his favored hands
Nor truth nor decency the world demands.
Secure in his immunity from shame,
His cheek ne'er kindles with the tell-tale flame.
His brains for sale, morality for hire,
In every land and century a licensed liar!
No doubt, McAllister, you can explain
How honorable 'tis to lie for gain,
Provided only that the jury's made
To understand that lying is your trade.
A hundred thousand volumes, broad and flat,
(The Bible not included) proving that,
Have been put forth, though still the doubt remains
If God has read them with befitting pains.
No Morrow could get justice, you'll declare,
If none who knew him foul affirmed him fair.
Ingenious man! how easy 'tis to raise
An argument to justify the course that pa
Grant that the perfect welfare of the State
Requires the aid of those who in debate
As mercenaries lost in early youth

The fine distinction between lie and truth
Who cheat in argument and set a snare
To take the feet of Justice unaware
Who serve with livelier zeal when rogues assist
With perjury, embracery (the list
Is long to quote) than when an honest soul,
Scorning to plot, conspire, intrigue, cajole,
Reminds them (their astonishment how great!)
He'd rather suffer wrong than perpetrate.
I grant, in short, 'tis better all around
That ambidextrous consciences abound
In courts of law to do the dirty work
That self-respecting scavengers would shirk.
What then? Who serves however clean a plan
By doing dirty work, he is a dirty man!

ACCEPTED

Charles Shortridge once to St. Peter came.
"Down!" cried the saint with his face aflame;
"'Tis writ that every hardy liar
Shall dwell forever and ever in fire!"
"That's what I said the night that I died,"
The sinner, turning away, replied.
"What! you said that?" cried the saint—"what! what!
You said 'twas so writ? Then, faith, 'tis not!
I'm a devil at quoting, but I begin
To fail in my memory. Pray walk in."

A PROMISED FAST TRAIN

I turned my eyes upon the Future's scroll
And saw its pictured prophecies unroll.
I saw that magical life-laden train
Flash its long glories o'er Nebraska's plain.
I saw it smoothly up the mountain glide.
"O happy, happy passengers!" I cried.
For Pleasure, singing, drowned the engine's roar,
And Hope on joyous pinions flew before.
Then dived the train adown the sunset slope
Pleasure was silent and unseen was Hope.
Crashes and shrieks attested the decay

That greed had wrought upon that iron way.
The rusted rails broke down the rotting ties,
And clouds of flying spikes obscured the skies.
My coward eyes I drew away, distressed,
And fixed them on the terminus to-West,
Where soon, its melancholy tale to tell,
One bloody car-wheel wobbled in and fell!

ONE OF THE SAINTS

Big Smith is an Oakland School Board man,
And he looks as good as ever he can;
And he's such a cold and a chaste Big Smith
That snowflakes all are his kin and kith.
Wherever his eye he chances to throw
The crystals of ice begin to grow;
And the fruits and flowers he sees are lost
By the singeing touch of a sudden frost.
The women all shiver whenever he's near,
And look upon us with a look austere
Effect of the Smithian atmosphere.
Such, in a word, is the moral plan
Of the Big, Big Smith, the School Board man.
When told that Madame Ferrier had taught
Hernani in school, his fist he brought
Like a trip-hammer down on his bulbous knee,
And he roared: "Her Nanny? By gum, we'll see
If the public's time she dares devote
To the educatin' of any dam goat!"
"You do not entirely comprehend—
Hernani's a play," said his learned friend,
"By Victor Hugo—immoral and bad.
What's worse, it's French!" "Well, well, my lad,"
Said Smith, "if he cuts a swath so wide
I'll have him took re'glar up and tried!"
And he smiled so sweetly the other chap
Thought that himself was a Finn or Lapp
Caught in a storm of his native snows,
With a purple ear and an azure nose.

The Smith continued: "I never pursue
Immoral readin'." And that is true:
He's a saint of remarkably high degree,
With a mind as chaste as a mind can be;
But read!—the devil a word can he!

A MILITARY INCIDENT

Dawn heralded the coming sun
Fort Douglas was computing
The minutes—and the sunrise gun
Was manned for his saluting.
The gunner at that firearm stood,
The which he slowly loaded,
When, bang!—I know not how it could,
But sure the charge exploded!
Yes, to that veteran's surprise
The gun went off sublimely,
And both his busy arms likewise
Went off with it, untimely.
Then said that gunner to his mate
(He was from Ballyshannon):
"Bedad, the sun's a minute late,
Accardin' to this cannon!"

SUBSTANCE VERSUS SHADOW

So, gentle critics, you would have me tilt,
Not at the guilty, only just at Guilt!
Spare the offender and condemn Offense,
And make life miserable to Pretense!
"Whip Vice and Folly—that is satire's use
But be not personal, for that's abuse;
Nor e'er forget what, 'like a razor keen,
Wounds with a touch that's neither felt nor seen.'"
Well, friends, I venture, destitute of awe,
To think that razor but an old, old saw,
A trifle rusty; and a wound, I'm sure,

That's felt not, seen not, one can well endure.
 Go to! go to!—you're as unfitted quite
 To give advice to writers as to write.
 I find in Folly and in Vice a lack
 Of head to hit, and for the lash no back;
 Whilst Pixley has a pow that's easy struck,
 And though good Deacon Fitch (a Fitch for luck!)
 Has none, yet, lest he go entirely free,
 God gave to him a corn, a heel to me.
 He, also, sets his face (so like a flint
 The wonder grows that Pickering doesn't skin't)
 With cold austerity, against these wars
 On scamps—'tis Scampery that he abhors!
 Behold advance in dignity and state
 Grave, smug, serene, indubitably great
 Stanford, philanthropist! One hand bestows
 In alms what t'other one as justice owes.
 Rascality attends him like a shade,
 But closes, woundless, o'er my baffled blade,
 Its limbs unsevered, spirit undismayed.
 Faith! I'm for something can be made to feel,
 If, like Pelides, only in the heel.
 The fellow's self invites assault; his crimes
 Will each bear killing twenty thousand times!
 Anon Creed Haymond—but the list is long
 Of names to point the moral of my song.
 Rogues, fools, impostors, sycophants, they rise,
 They foul the earth and horrify the skies
 With Mr. Huntington (sole honest man
 In all the reek of that rapsallion clan)
 Denouncing Theft as hard as e'er he can!

THE COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC MORALS

The Senate met in Sacramento city;
 On public morals it had no committee
 Though greatly these abounded. Soon the quiet
 Was broken by the Senators in riot.
 Now, at the end of their contagious quarrels,
 There's a committee but no public morals.

CALIFORNIA

Why should he not have been allowed
To thread with peaceful feet the crowd
Which filled that Christian street?
The Decalogue he had observed,
From Faith in Jesus had not swerved,
And scorning pious platitudes,
He saw in the Beatitudes
A lamp to guide his feet.
He knew that Jonah downed the whale
And made no bones of it. The tale
That Ananias told
He swore was true. He had no doubt
That Daniel laid the lions out.
In short, he had all holiness,
All meekness and all lowliness,
And was with saints enrolled.
'Tis true, some slight excess of zeal
Sincerely to promote the weal
Of this most Christian state
Had moved him rudely to divide
The queue that was a pagan's pride,
And in addition certify
The Faith by making fur to fly
From pelt as well as pate?
But, Heavenly Father, thou dost know
That in this town these actions go
For nothing worth a name.
Nay, every editorial ass,
To prove they never come to pass
Will damn his soul eternally,
Although in his own journal he
May read the printed shame.
From bloody hands the reins of pow'r
Fall slack; the high-decisive hour
Strikes not for liars' ears.
Remove, O Father, the disgrace
That stains our California's face,
And consecrate to human good
The strength of her young womanhood
And all her golden years!

DE YOUNG—A PROPHECY

Running for Senator with clumsy pace,
He stooped so low, to win at least a place,
That Fortune, tempted by a mark so droll,
Sprang in and kicked him to the winning pole.

TO EITHER

Back further than
I know, in San
Francisco dwelt a wealthy man.
So rich was he
That none could be
Wise, good and great in like degree.
'Tis true he wrought,
In deed or thought,
But few of all the things he ought;
But men said: "Who
Would wish him to?
Great souls are born to be, not do!"
One thing, indeed,
He did, we read,
Which was becoming, all agreed:
Grown provident,
Ere life was spent
He built a mighty monument.
For longer than
I know, in San
Francisco lived a beggar man;
And when in bed
They found him dead—
"Just like the scamp!" the people said.
He died, they say,
On the same day
His wealthy neighbor passed away.
What matters it
When beggars quit
Their beats? I answer: Not a bit.
They got a spade
And pick and made

A hole, and there the chap was laid.
"He asked for bread,"
'Twas neatly said:
"He'll get not even a stone instead."
The years rolled round:
His humble mound
Sank to the level of the ground;
And men forgot
That the bare spot
Was like (and was) the beggar's lot.
Forgotten, too,
Was t'other, who
Had reared the monument to woo
Inconstant Fame,
Though still his name
Shouted in granite just the same.
That name, I swear,
They both did bear
The beggar and the millionaire.
That lofty tomb,
Then, honored—whom?
For argument here's ample room.
I'll not debate,
But only state
The scamp first claimed it at the Gate.
St. Peter, proud
To serve him, bowed
And showed him to the softest cloud.

DISAPPOINTMENT

The Senate woke; the Chairman's snore
Was stilled, its echoes balking;
The startled members dreamed no more,
For Steele, who long had held the floor,
Had suddenly ceased talking.
As, like Elijah, in his pride,
He to his seat was passing,
"Go up thou baldhead!" Reddy cried.
Then six fierce bears ensued and tried
To sunder him for "sassing."
Two seized his legs, and one his head,
The fourth his trunk, to munch on;
The fifth preferred an arm instead;
The last, with rueful visage, said:
"Pray what have I for luncheon?"
Then to that disappointed bear
Said Steele, serene and chipper,
"My friend, you shall not lack your share:
Look in the Treasury, and there
You'll find his other flipper."

THE VALLEY OF THE SHADOW OF THEFT

In fair Yosemite, that den of thieves
Wherein the minions of the moon divide
The travelers' purses, lo! the Devil grieves,
His larger share as leader still denied.
El Capitan, foreseeing that his reign
May be disputed too, beclouds his head.
The joyous Bridal Veil is torn in twain
And the crêpe steamer dangles there instead.
The Vernal Fall abates her pleasant speed
And hesitates to take the final plunge,
For rumors reach her that another greed
Awaits her in the Valley of the Sponge.
The Brothers envy the accord of mind
And peace of purpose (by the good deplored
As honor among Commissioners) which bind
That confraternity of crime, the Board.
The Half-Dome bows its riven face to weep,

But not, as formerly, because bereft:
Prophetic dreams afflict him when asleep
Of losing his remaining half by theft.
Ambitious knaves! has not the upper sod
Enough of room for every crime that crawls
But you must loot the Palaces of God
And daub your filthy names upon the walls?

DOWN AMONG THE DEAD MEN

Within my dark and narrow bed
I rested well, new-laid:
I heard above my fleshless head
The grinding of a spade.
A gruffer note ensued and grew
To harsh and harsher strains:
The poet Welcker then I knew
Was "snatching" my remains.
"O Welcker, let your hand be stayed
And leave me here in peace.
Of your revenge you should have made
An end with my decease."
"Hush, Mouldyshanks, and hear my moan:
I once, as you're aware,
Was eminent in letters—known
And honored everywhere.
"My splendor made all Berkeley bright
And Sacramento blind.
Men swore no writer e'er could write
Like me—if I'd a mind.
"With honors all insatiate,
With curst ambition smit,
Too far, alas! I tempted fate
I published what I'd writ!
"Good Heaven! with what a hunger wild
Oblivion swallows fame!
Men who have known me from a child
Forget my very name!
"Even creditors with searching looks
My face cannot recall;
My heaviest one—he prints my books

Oblivious most of all.
"O I should feel a sweet content
If one poor dun his claim
Would bring to me for settlement,
And bully me by name.
"My dog is at my gate forlorn;
It howls through all the night,
And when I greet it in the morn
It answers with a bite!"
"O Poet, what in Satan's name
To me's all this ado?
Will snatching me restore the fame
That printing snatched from you?"
"Peace, dread Remains; I'm not about
To do a deed of sin.
I come not here to hale you out
I'm trying to get in."

THE LAST MAN

I dreamed that Gabriel took his horn
On Resurrection's fateful morn,
And lighting upon Laurel Hill
Blew long, blew loud, blew high and shrill.
The houses compassing the ground
Rattled their windows at the sound.
But no one rose. "Alas!" said he,
"What lazy bones these mortals be!"
Again he plied the horn, again
Deflating both his lungs in vain;
Then stood astonished and chagrined
At raising nothing but the wind.
At last he caught the tranquil eye
Of an observer standing by—
Last of mankind, not doomed to die.
To him thus Gabriel: "Sir, I pray
This mystery you'll clear away.
Why do I sound my note in vain?
Why spring they not from out the plain?
Where's Luning, Blythe and Michael Reese,
Magee, who ran the Golden Fleece?"

Where's Asa Fisk? Jim Phelan, who
Was thought to know a thing or two
Of land which rose but never sank?
Where's Con O'Connor of the Bank,
And all who consecrated lands
Of old by laying on of hands?
I ask of them because their worth
Was known in all they wished—the earth.
Brisk boomers once, alert and wise,
Why don't they rise, why don't they rise?"
The man replied: "Reburied long
With others of the shrouded throng
In San Mateo—carted there
And dumped promiscuous, anywhere,
In holes and trenches—all misfits—
Mixed up with one another's bits:
One's back-bone with another's shin,
A third one's skull with a fourth one's grin
Your eye was never, never fixed
Upon a company so mixed!
Go now among them there and blow:
'Twill be as good as any show
To see them, when they hear the tones,
Compiling one another's bones!
But here 'tis vain to sound and wait:
Naught rises here but real estate.
I own it all and shan't disgorge.
Don't know me? I am Henry George."

ARBOR DAY

Hasten, children, black and white
Celebrate the yearly rite.
Every pupil plant a tree:
It will grow someday to be
Big and strong enough to bear
A School Director hanging there.

THE PIUTE

Unbeautiful is the Piute!
Howe'er bedecked with bravery,
His person is unsavory
Of soap he's destitute.
He multiplies upon the earth
In spite of all admonishing;
All censure his astonishing
And versatile unworth.
Upon the Reservation wide
We give for his inhabiting
He goes a-jackass rabbiting
To furnish his inside.
The hopper singing in the grass
He seizes with avidity:
He loves its tart acidity,
And gobbles all that pass.
He penetrates the spider's veil,
Industriously pillages
The toads' defenseless villages,
And shadows home the snail.
He lightly runs to earth the quaint
Red worm and, deftly troweling,
He makes it with his boweling
Familiarly acquaint.
He tracks the pine-nut to its lair,
Surrounds it with celerity,
Regards it with asperity
Smiles, and it isn't there!
I wish he'd open up a grin
Of adequate vivacity
And carrying capacity
To take his Agent in.

FAME

He held a book in his knotty paws,
And its title grand read he:
"The Chronicles of the Kings" it was,
By the History Companee.
"I'm a monarch," he said
(But a tear he shed)
"And my picter here you see.
"Great and lasting is my renown,
However the wits may flout
As wide almost as this blessed town"
(But he winced as if with gout).
"I paid 'em like sin
For to put me in,
But it's O, and O, to be out!"

ONE OF THE REDEEMED

Saint Peter, standing at the Gate, beheld
A soul whose body Death had lately felled.
A pleasant soul as ever was, he seemed:
His step was joyous and his visage beamed.
"Good morning, Peter." There was just a touch
Of foreign accent, but not overmuch.
The Saint bent gravely, like a stately tree,
And said: "You have the advantage, sir, of me."
"Rénan of Paris," said the immortal part
"A master of the literary art.
"I'm somewhat famous, too, I grieve to tell,
As controversialist and infidel."
"That's of no consequence," the Saint replied,
"Why, I myself my Master once denied.
"No one up here cares anything for that.
But is there nothing you were always at?
"It seems to me you were accused one day
Of something—what it was I can't just say."
"Quite likely," said the other; "but I swear
My life was irreproachable and fair."
Just then a soul appeared upon the wall,

Singing a hymn as loud as he could bawl.
 About his head a golden halo gleamed,
 As well befitted one of the redeemed.
 A harp he bore and vigorously thumbed,
 Strumming he sang, and, singing, ever strummed.
 His countenance, suffused with holy pride,
 Glowed like a pumpkin with a light inside.
 "Ah! that's the chap," said Peter, "who declares:
 'Rénan's a rake and drunkard—smokes and swears.'
 "Yes, that's the fellow—he's a preacher—came
 From San Francisco. Mansfield was his name."
 "Do you believe him?" said Rénan. "Great Scott!
 Believe? Believe the blackguard? Of course not!
 "Just walk right in and make yourself at home.
 And if he pecks at you I'll cut his comb.
 "He's only here because the Devil swore
 He wouldn't have him, for the smile he wore."
 Resting his eyes one moment on that proof
 Of saving grace, the Frenchman turned aloof,
 And stepping down from cloud to cloud, said he:
 "Thank you, monsieur,—I'll see if he'll have me."

A CRITIC

[Apparently the Cleveland Leader is not a good judge of
poetry.—The Morning Call.]

That from you, neighbor! to whose vacant lot
 Each rhyming literary knacker scourges
 His cart-compelling Pegasus to trot,
 As folly, fame or famine smartly urges?
 Admonished by the stimulating goad,
 How gaily, lo! the spavined crow-bait prances
 Its cart before it—eager to unload
 The dead-dog sentiments and swill-tub fancies.
 Gravely the sweating scavenger pulls out
 The tail-board of his curst imagination,
 Shoots all his rascal rubbish, and, no doubt,
 Thanks Fortune for so good a dumping-station.
 To improve your property, the vile cascade
 Your thrift invites—to make a higher level.

In vain: with tons of garbage overlaid,
Your baseless bog sinks slowly to the devil.
"Rubbish may be shot here"—familiar sign!
I seem to see it in your every column.
You have your wishes, but if I had mine
'Twould to your editor mean something solemn.

A QUESTION OF ELIGIBILITY

It was a bruised and battered chap
The victim of some dire mishap,
Who sat upon a rock and spent
His breath in this ungay lament:
"Some wars—I've frequent heard of such
Has beat the everlastin' Dutch!
But never fight was fit by man
To equal this which has began
In our (I'm in it, if you please)
Academy of Sciences.
For there is various gents belong
To it which go persistent wrong,
And loving the debates' delight
Calls one another names at sight.
Their disposition, too, accords
With fighting like they all was lords!
Sech impulses should be withstood:
'Tis scientific to be good.
"'Twas one of them, one night last week,
Rose up his figure for to speak:
'Please, Mr. Chair, I'm holding here
A resolution which, I fear,
Some ancient fossils that has bust
Their cases and shook off their dust
To sit as Members here will find
Unpleasant, not to say unkind.'
And then he read it every word,
And silence fell on all which heard.
That resolution, wild and strange,
Proposed a fundamental change,
Which was that idiots no more

Could join us as they had before!
"No sooner was he seated than
The members rose up, to a man.
Each chap was primed with a reply
And tried to snatch the Chairman's eye.
They stomped and shook their fists in air,
And, O, what words was uttered there!
"The Chair was silent, but at last
He hove up his proportions vast
And stilled them tumults with a look
By which the undauntedest was shook.
He smiled sarcastical and said:
'If Argus was the Chair, instead
Of me, he'd lack enough of eyes
Each orator to recognize!
And since, denied a hearing, you
Might maybe undertake to do
Each other harm before you cease,
I've took some steps to keep the peace:
I've ordered out—alas, alas,
That Science e'er to such a pass
Should come!—I've ordered out—the gas!'
"O if a tongue or pen of fire
Was mine I could not tell entire
What the ensuin' actions was.
When swollered up in darkness' jaws
We fit and fit and fit and fit,
And everything we felt we hit!
We gouged, we scratched and we pulled hair,
And O, what words was uttered there!
And when at last the day dawn came
Three hundred Scientists was lame;
Two hundred others couldn't stand,
They'd been so careless handled, and
One thousand at the very least
Was spread upon the floor deceased!
'Twere easy to exaggerate,
But lies is things I mortal hate.
"Such, friends, is the disaster sad
Which has befel the Cal. Acad.
And now the question is of more

Importance than it was before:
Shall vacancies among us be
To idiots threw open free?"

FLEET STROTHER

What! you were born, you animated doll,
Within the shadow of the Capitol?
'Twas always thought (and Bancroft so assures
His trusting readers) it was reared in yours.
CALIFORNIAN SUMMER PICTURES

THE FOOT-HILL RESORT

Assembled in the parlor
Of the place of last resort,
The smiler and the snarler
And the guests of every sort
The elocution chap
With rhetoric on tap;
The mimic and the funny dog;
The social sponge; the money-hog;
Vulgarian and dude;
And the prude;
The adiposing dame
With pimply face aflame;
The kitten-playful virgin—
Vergin' on to fifty years;
The solemn-looking sturgeon
Of a firm of auctioneers;
The widower flirtatious;
The widow all too gracious;
The man with a proboscis and a sepulcher beneath.
One assassin picks the banjo, and another picks his teeth.

THE IN-COMING CLIMATE

Now o' nights the ocean breeze
Makes the patient flinch,
For that zephyr bears a sneeze

In every cubic inch.
Lo! the lively population
Chorus in sternutation
A catarrhal acclamation!

A LONG-FELT WANT

Dimly apparent, through the gloom
Of Market-street's opaque simoom,
A queue of people, parti-sexed,
Awaiting the command of "Next!"
A sidewalk booth, a dingy sign:
"Teeth dusted nice—five cents a shine."

TO THE HAPPY HUNTING GROUNDS

Wide windy reaches of high stubble field;
A long gray road, bordered with dusty pines;
A wagon moving in a "cloud by day."
Two city sportsmen with a dove between,
Breast-high upon a fence and fast asleep
A solitary dove, the only dove
In twenty counties, and it sick, or else
It were not there. Two guns that fire as one,
With thunder simultaneous and loud;
Two shattered human wrecks of blood and bone!
And later, in the gloaming, comes a man—
The worthy local coroner is he,
Renowned all thereabout, and popular
With many a remain. All tenderly
Compiling in a game-bag the débris,
He glides into the gloom and fades from sight.
The dove, cured of its ailment by the shock,
Has flown, meantime, on pinions strong and fleet,
To die of age in some far foreign land.