

Gettysburg - Patriotism

You wore the blue and I the gray
On this historic field; And all throughout the dreadful fray
We felt our muscles steeled For deeds which men may never know,
Nor page of history ever show.

My father, sir, with soul to dare,
Throughout the day and night,
Stood on old Little Round Top there,
And watched the changeful fight,
And, with a hoarse, inspiring cry,
Held up the stars and bars on high.

At last the flag went down, and then —
Ah, you can guess the rest —
I never saw his face again.
My father's loyal breast
Is strewn with these sweet flow'rs, I wot,
That seem to love this sacred spot.

The smoke of battle 's cleared away,
And all its hatreds, too;
And as I clasp your hand to-day,
O man who wore the blue,
On yonder hill I seem to see
My father smiling down on me.

St. Martin's Lane - Places

St. Martin's Lane winds up the hill
And trends a devious way; I walk therein amid the din
Of busy London day: I walk where wealth and squalor meet,
And think upon a time When ethers trod this saintly sod,
And heard St. Martin's chime.

But when those solemn bells invoke
The midnight's slumbrous grace, The ghosts of men come back again
To haunt that curious place: The ghosts of sages, poets, wits,
Come back in goodly train; And all night long, with mirth and song,
They walk St. Martin's Lane.

There 's Jerrold paired with Thackeray,
Maginn and Thomas Moore, And here and there and everywhere
Fraserians by the score; And one wee ghost that climbs the hill
Is welcomed with a shout, — No king could be revered as he, —
The padre, Father Prout!

They banter up and down the street,
And clamor at the door Of yonder inn, which once has been
The scene of mirth galore: *T is now a lonely, musty shell,
Deserted, like to fall; And Echo mocks their ghostly knocks,
And iterates their call.

Come back, thou ghost of ruddy host,
From Pluto's misty shore; Renew to-night the keen delight
Of by-gone years once more; Brew for this merry, motley horde,
And serve the steaming cheer; And grant that I may lurk hard by,
To see the mirth, and hear.

Ah, me! I dream what things may seem
To others childish vain, And yet at night 't is my delight
To walk St. Martin's Lane; For, in the light of other days,
I walk with those I love, And all the time St. Martin's chime
Makes piteous moan above.

Pike's Peak - Nature

I Stood upon the peak, amid the air;
Below me lay the peopled, busy earth.
Life, life, and life again was everywhere,
And everywhere were melody and mirth,
Save on that peak, and silence brooded there.

I vaunted then myself, and half aloud
I gloried in the journey I had done:
Eschewing earth and earth's seductive crowd,
I'd scaled this steep, despite the rocks and sun;
Of such a feat might any man be proud!

But, as I boasted thus, my burro brayed;
I turned, and lo! a tear was in his eye,
And as I gazed, methought the burro sayed:

"Prithee, who brought you up this mountain high
Was it your legs or mine the journey made?"

Then moralled I: The sturdiest peak is Fame's!
And there be many on its very height,
Who strut in pride and vaunt their empty claims,
While those poor human asses who delight
To place them there have unremembered names!

New Year's Eve - Holidays

Good old days — dear old days
When my heart beat high and bold —
When the things of earth seemed full of life,
And the future a haze of gold!
Oh, merry was I that winter night,
And gleeful our little one's din,
And tender the grace of my darling's face
As we watched the new year in.
But a voice — a spectre's, that mocked at love —
Came out of the yonder hall;
"Tick-tock, tick-tock!" 't was the solemn clock
That ruefully croaked to all. Yet what knew we of the griefs to be
In the year we longed to greet?
Love — love was the theme of the sweet, sweet dream
I fancied might never fleet!
But the spectre stood in that yonder gloom,
And these were the words it spake,
"Tick-tock, tick-tock" — and they seemed to mock
A heart about to break.
T is new-year's eve, and again I watch
In the old familiar place,
And I 'm thinking again of that old time when
I looked on a dear one's face.
Never a little one hugs my knee
And I hear no gleeful shout —
I am sitting alone by the old hearthstone,
Watching the old year out.
But I welcome the voice in yonder gloom
That solemnly calls to me:
"Tick-tock, tick-tock!" —for so the clock

Tells of a life to be;
"Tick-tock, tick-tock!" — 't is so the clock
Tells of eternity.

A Valentine To My Wife - Holidays

Accept, dear girl, this little token,
And if between the lines you seek,
You 'll find the love I 've often spoken —
The love my dying lips shall speak.

Our little ones are making merry
O'er am'rous ditties rhymed in jest,

But in these words (though awkward — very,
The genuine article 's expressed.

You are as fair and sweet and tender,
Dear brown-eyed little sweetheart mine,
As when, a callow youth and slender,
I asked to be your Valentine.

What though these years of ours be fleeting?
What though the years of youth be flown ?
I 'll mock old Tempus with repeating,
"I love my love and her alone!"

And when I fall before his reaping,
And when my stuttering speech is dumb,
Think not my love is dead or sleeping,
But that it waits for you to come.

So take, dear love, this little token,
And if there speaks in any line
The sentiment I 'd fain have spoken,
Say, will you kiss your Valentine ?

Grant - Patriotism

His was the sword that from its scabbard leapt
To cleave the way where freedom could be won,
And where it led a conquering army swept
Till all was done.

Then that same valorous hand which swung the sword
Back to its sheath returned the patriot blade,
And bore sweet peace where crushed rebellion's horde
Stood all dismayed.

And now a spirit, speeding from above,
Chills that great heart with his destroying breath,
And all a people's reverence and love
Are mocked by death.

The Bells of Notre Dame - Places

What though the radiant thoroughfare
Teems with a noisy throng?
What though men bandy everywhere
The ribald jest and song?
Over the din of oaths and cries
Broodeth a wondrous calm,
And 'mid that solemn stillness rise
The bells of Notre Dame.

"Heed not, dear Lord," they seem to say,
"Thy weak and erring child;
And thou, O gentle Mother, pray
That God be reconciled;
And on mankind, O Christ, our King,
Pour out Thy gracious balm," —
'T is thus they plead and thus they sing,
Those bells of Notre Dame.

And so, methinks, God, bending down
To ken the things of earth,
Heeds not the mockery of the town
Or cries of ribald mirth;
For ever soundeth in His ears

A penitential psalm, —
'T is thy angelic voice He hears,
O bells of Notre Dame!

Plead on, O bells, that thy sweet voice
May still forever be
An intercession to rejoice
Benign divinity;
And that thy tuneful grace may fall
Like dew, a quickening balm,
Upon the arid hearts of all,
O bells of Notre Dame!

Spirit Lake - Nature

Upon this beautiful expanse
Of purple waves and spray
The wanton prairie zephyrs dance
With sunbeams all the day.
And ships go sailing to and fro;
The sea-gulls circle round;
Above the splash of ebb and flow
The children's voices sound.

See how the playful pickerel speeds
Upon his devious way
Among the lissome, clinging weeds,
In hot pursuit of prey;
And here or there the greedy bass
In their erratic flight
Like dark electric shadows pass
Before our wondering sight.

Oh, what a wealth of life is here —
What pike and carp abound!
Within these waters, cool and clear,
What game may not be found!
You only have to bait your hook
And cast it in the spray;
Down — fathoms down — it sinks; and look!
You 've caught your finny prey.

O beauteous lake with pebbly shore
And skies of azure hue,
With gulls and zephyrs skimming o'er
Thy waves of restless blue,
To thee I dedicate this hymn
In melancholic spite —
To thee, where bass and pickerel swim,
But only bullheads bite.