

Smooth-edged yet tapering off in gloomy point,  
 With that long line of sultry red beneath,  
 As if its tightly vested bosom bore  
 The lightning close concealed.  
 Ye fair and soft and ever varying Clouds!  
 Where in your golden circuit, find ye out  
 The Armory of Heaven, rifling thence  
 Its gleaming swords? — Ye tearful Clouds!  
 Feminine ever, light or dark or grim,  
 I fear ye not, I wonder and admire,  
 And gladly would I charter this soft wind,  
 That now is here, and now will undulate  
 Your yielding lines, to bear me softly hence,  
 That I might stand upon that golden edge,  
 And bathe my brow in that delicious gloom,  
 And leaning, gaze into the sudden gap  
 From whence the Lightning passes!

Night has come, and the bright eyes of stars,  
 And the voice-gifted wind, and severed wide,  
 Ye flee, like startled spirits through the sky  
 Over and over to the mighty North,  
 Returnless race, forgetting and forgot  
 Of that red, western cradle whence ye sprung!

As wild, as fitful, is the gathering mass  
 Of this eventful world, — enlarging heaps  
 Of care and joy and grief we christen Life.  
 Like these, they shine full oft in green and gold,  
 Or brightly ravishing foam: — utterly fond,  
 We seek repose, confiding on their breast,  
 And lo, they sink and sink, most noiseless sink,  
 And leave us in the arms of nothingness.  
 Like these, they pass, in ever-varying form,  
 As glancing angels, or assassin grim,  
 Sharp-gleaming daggers, 'neath concealing garb!

Might we but dwell within the upper Heaven!  
 In the immensity of soul, — the realm  
 Of stars serene, and suns and cloudless moons,  
 Ranging delighted, while far down below  
 The Atmosphere of life concocts its shapes  
 Evil or beautiful, and smile on all,  
 As gorgeous pictures spread beneath the feet.

Oh Thou, supreme infinitude of Thought!  
 Thou, who art height and depth! whither is Life,  
 And what are we, but vanishing shadows all  
 O'er the eternal ocean of thy Being!  
 It is thy will, the sunbeam of thy will  
 That perviates and modifies the air  
 Of mortal life, in which the spirit dwells:  
 Thou congregatest these joys and hopes and griefs,  
 In thee they beam or gloom. Eternal Sun!

Let them not come between my soul and thee;  
 Let me rejoice in thy o'erflooding light,  
 Fill up my being's urn, until a Star,  
 Once kindled, ne'er extinct, my soul may burn  
 In the pure light of an excelling love,  
 Giving out rays, as lavishly as given!

“THE FUTURE IS BETTER THAN THE PAST.”

Not where long-passed ages sleep,  
 Seek we Eden's golden trees,  
 In the future, folded deep,  
 Are its mystic harmonies.

All before us lies the way,  
 Give the past unto the wind;  
 All before us is the Day,  
 Night and darkness are behind.

Eden with its angels hold,  
 Love and flowers and coolest sea,  
 Is not ancient story told,  
 But a glowing prophecy.

In the spirit's perfect air,  
 In the passions tame and kind,  
 Innocence from selfish care  
 The real Eden we shall find.

It is coming, it shall come,  
 To the patient and the striving,  
 To the quiet heart at home,  
 Thinking wise and faithful living.

When all error is worked out,  
 From the heart and from the life;  
 When the Sensuous is laid low,  
 Through the Spirit's holy strife;

When the Soul to Sin hath died,  
 True and beautiful and sound;  
 Then all earth is sanctified,  
 Upsprings Paradise around.

Then shall come the Eden days,  
 Guardian watch from Seraph-eyes;  
 Angels on the slanting rays,  
 Voices from the opening skies.

From this spirit-land, afar,  
 All disturbing force shall flee;  
 Stir nor toil nor hope shall mar  
 Its immortal unity.

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AUGUST SHOWER.

THE gladsome music of the shower!  
 The hastening, tripping, mingling sound,  
 Above, beneath me, all around,  
 On bank and tree and flower.

The rose lifts up its lip serene,  
 The insect's still, that restless thing,  
 He makes no noise, he stirs no wing,  
 So fresh he grows and clean.

The branches thrill and drip and bow,  
 Luxurious to the air;  
 How green they look, how sweet and fair  
 They gladly seem to know.

And still it pours, the welcome rain  
 Far down its rivers creep,  
 The very roots are bathing deep  
 The fainting roots of grain.

Yet more! exhaustless 't is, as Love,  
 The bladed grass is full,  
 The pebble-stones are beautiful,  
 So cool and wet above!

A pause, — again, — it's almost past,  
 The flowers seem to think,  
 As gasping eagerly, they drink  
 The fresh, the sweet, the last.

The Earth is like recovered child,  
 Heeding not, how an hour ago  
 It panting lay and faint and low,  
 So glad it is and wild.

The lighted West! Oh God of Love!  
 Below, in silvery streams,  
 Like to Aurora's softest beams,  
 While gold bursts out above!

THE PHARISEES.

IF we may trust the statement of grave philosophers, who have devoted their lives to Science, and given proofs of what they affirm, which are manifest to the senses, as well as evident to the understanding, there were once, in very distant ages, classes of monsters on the earth, which differed, in many respects, from any animals now on its surface. They find the bones of these animals "under the bottom of the monstrous world," or imbedded in masses of stone, which have since formed over them. They discover the footprints, also, of these monstrous creatures, in what was once soft clay, but has since become hard stone, and so has preserved these traces for many a thousand years. These creatures gradually became scarce, and at last disappeared entirely from the face of the earth, while nobler races grew up and took their place. The relics of these monsters are gathered together by the curious. They excite the wonder of old men and little girls, of the sage and the clown.

Now there was an analogous class of moral monsters in old time. They began quite early, though no one knows who was the first of the race. They have left their footprints all over the civilized globe, in the mould of institutions, laws, politics, and religions, which were once pliant, but have since become petrified in the ages, so that they seem likely to preserve these marks for many centuries to come. The relics of these moral monsters are preserved for our times in the histories and institutions of past ages. But they excite no astonishment, when discovered, because, while the sauri of gigantic size, the mammoth and the mastodon, are quite extinct, the last of the Pharisees has not yet been seen, but his race is vigorous and flourishing now as of old time. Specimens of this monster are by no means rare. They are found living in all countries, and in every walk of life. We do not search for him in the halls of a museum, or the cabinets of the curious, but every man has seen a Pharisee going at large on the earth. The race, it seems, began early. The Pharisees are of ancient blood; some tracing their genealogy to the great father of Lies himself. However this may be, it is certain, we find them