



—Poems of
Inspiration

It Can Be Done



By Joseph Morris—selected

IT CAN BE DONE

—POEMS OF INSPIRATION—

COLLECTED BY

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(Selected by Nurture-Inspire-Teach)

FOREWORD

This is a volume of inspirational poems. Its purpose is to bring men courage and resolution, to cheer them, to fire them with new confidence when they grow dispirited, to strengthen their faith that THINGS CAN BE DONE. It is better for this purpose than the entire works of any one poet, for it takes the cream of many and has greater diversity than any one writer can show.

It is made up chiefly of very recent poems--not such as were written for anthologies of poetical "gems," but such as speak directly to the heart, always in very simple language, often in the phrases of shop or office or street. Included, however, with the poems of the day are a few of the fine old pieces that have been of comfort to men through the ages.

Besides the poems themselves, the volume contains helps to their understanding and enjoyment. The pieces are introduced by short comments; these serve the same purpose as the strain played by the pianist before the singer begins to sing; they create a mood, give a point of view, throw light on the meaning of what follows. Also the lives of the authors are briefly summarized; this is in answer to our natural interest in the writer of a poem we like, and in the case of living poets it brings together facts hardly to be found anywhere else.

Finally, the book is not one to be read and then cast aside. It is to be kept as a constant companion and an unfailing recourse in weariness or gloom. Human companions are not always in the mood to cheer us, and may talk upon themes we dislike. But this book will converse or be silent, it is never out of sorts or discouraged, and so far from being wed to some single topic, it will speak to us at any time on any subject we desire.

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BE THE BEST OF WHATEVER YOU ARE

We all dream of great deeds and high positions, away from the pettiness and humdrum of ordinary life. Yet success is not occupying a lofty place or doing conspicuous work; it is being the best that is in you. Rattling around in too big a job is much worse than filling a small one to overflowing. Dream, aspire by all means; but do not ruin the life you must lead by dreaming pipe-dreams of the one you would like to lead.

Make the most of what you have and are. Perhaps your trivial, immediate task is your one sure way of proving your mettle. Do the thing near at hand, and great things will come to your hand to be done.

If you can't be a pine on the top of the hill
Be a scrub in the valley--but be
The best little scrub by the side of the rill;
Be a bush if you can't be a tree.

If you can't be a bush be a bit of the grass,
And some highway some happier make;
If you can't be a muskie then just be a bass--
But the liveliest bass in the lake!

We can't all be captains, we've got to be crew,
There's something for all of us here.
There's big work to do and there's lesser to do,
And the task we must do is the near.

If you can't be a highway then just be a trail,
If you can't be the sun be a star;
It isn't by size that you win or you fail--
Be the best of whatever you are!

 Douglas Malloch.

THE HOUSE BY THE SIDE OF THE ROAD

This poem has as its keynote friendship and sympathy for other people. It is a paradox of life that by hoarding love and happiness we lose them, and that only by giving them away can we keep them for ourselves. The more we share, the more we possess. We of course find in other people weaknesses and sins, but our best means of curing these are through a wise and sympathetic understanding.

Let me live in a house by the side of the road,
Where the race of men go by--
The men who are good and the men who are bad,
As good and as bad as I.
I would not sit in the scorner's seat,
Or hurl the cynic's ban;--
Let me live in a house by the side of the road
And be a friend to man.

I see from my house by the side of the road,
By the side of the highway of life,
The men who press with the ardor of hope,
The men who are faint with the strife.
But I turn not away from their smiles nor their tears--
Both parts of an infinite plan;--
Let me live in my house by the side of the road
And be a friend to man.

I know there are brook-gladdened meadows ahead
And mountains of wearisome height;
And the road passes on through the long afternoon
And stretches away to the night.
But still I rejoice when the travelers rejoice,
And weep with the strangers that moan,

Nor live in my house by the side of the road
Like a man who dwells alone.

Let me live in my house by the side of the road
Where the race of men go by--
They are good, they are bad, they are weak, they are strong,
Wise, foolish--so am I.
Then why should I sit in the scorner's seat
Or hurl the cynic's ban?--
Let me live in my house by the side of the road
And be a friend to man.

Sam Walter Foss.

From "Dreams in Homespun."

FOUR THINGS

What are the qualities of ideal manhood? Various people have given various answers to this question. Here the poet states what qualities he thinks indispensable.

Four things a man must learn to do
If he would make his record true:
To think without confusion clearly;
To love his fellow-men sincerely;
To act from honest motives purely;
To trust in God and Heaven securely.

Henry Van Dyke. From "Collected Poems."

IF

The central idea of this poem is that success comes from self-control and a true sense of the values of things. In extremes lies danger. A man must not lose heart because of doubts or opposition, yet he must do his best to see the grounds for both. He must not be deceived into thinking either triumph or disaster final; he must use each wisely--and push on.

In all things he must hold to the golden mean. If he does, he will own the world, and even better, for his personal reward he will attain the full stature of manhood.

If you can keep your head when all about you
Are losing theirs and blaming it on you,
If you can trust yourself when all men doubt you,
But make allowance for their doubting too;
If you can wait and not be tired by waiting,
Or being lied about, don't deal in lies,
Or being hated don't give way to hating,
And yet don't look too good, nor talk too wise:

If you can dream--and not make dreams your master;
If you can think--and not make thoughts your aim,
If you can meet with Triumph and Disaster
And treat those two imposters just the same;
If you can bear to hear the truth you've spoken
Twisted by knaves to make a trap for fools,
Or watch the things you gave your life to, broken,
And stoop and build 'em up with worn-out tools:

If you can make one heap of all your winnings
And risk it on one turn of pitch-and-toss,
And lose, and start again at your beginnings
And never breathe a word about your loss;

If you can force your heart and nerve and sinew
To serve your turn long after they are gone,
And so hold on when there is nothing in you
Except the Will which says to them; "Hold on!"

If you can talk with crowds and keep your virtue,
Or walk with Kings--nor lose the common touch,
If neither foes nor loving friends can hurt you,
If all men count with you, but none too much;
If you can fill the unforgiving minute
With sixty seconds' worth of distance run,
Yours is the Earth and everything that's in it,
And--which is more--you'll be a Man, my son!

Rudyard Kipling.

From "Rudyard Kipling's Verse, 1885-1918."

IT COULDN'T BE DONE

After a thing has been done, everybody is ready to declare it easy. But before it has been done, it is called impossible. One reason why people fear to embark upon great enterprises is that they see all the difficulties at once. They know they could succeed in the initial tasks, but they shrink from what is to follow. Yet "a thing begun is half done." Moreover the surmounting of the first barrier gives strength and ingenuity for the harder ones beyond. Mountains viewed from a distance seem to be unscalable. But they can be climbed, and the way to begin is to take the first upward step. From that moment the mountains are less high. As Hannibal led his army across the foothills, then among the upper ranges, and finally over the loftiest peaks and passes of the Alps, or as Peary pushed farther and farther into

the solitudes that encompass the North Pole, so can you achieve any purpose whatsoever if you heed not the doubters, meet each problem as it arises, and keep ever with you the assurance It Can Be Done.

Somebody said that it couldn't be done,
But he with a chuckle replied
That "maybe it couldn't," but he would be one
Who wouldn't say so till he'd tried.
So he buckled right in with the trace of a grin
On his face. If he worried he hid it.
He started to sing as he tackled the thing
That couldn't be done, and he did it.

Somebody scoffed: "Oh, you'll never do that;
At least no one ever has done it";
But he took off his coat and he took off his hat,
And the first thing we knew he'd begun it.
With a lift of his chin and a bit of a grin,
Without any doubting or quiddit,
He started to sing as he tackled the thing
That couldn't be done, and he did it.

There are thousands to tell you it cannot be done,
There are thousands to prophesy failure;
There are thousands to point out to you one by one,
The dangers that wait to assail you.
But just buckle in with a bit of a grin,
Just take off your coat and go to it;
Just start to sing as you tackle the thing
That "cannot be done," and you'll do it.

Edgar A. Guest. From "The Path to Home."

FRIENDS OF MINE

We like to be hospitable. To what should we be more hospitable than a glad spirit or a kind impulse?

Good-morning, Brother Sunshine,
Good-morning, Sister Song,
I beg your humble pardon
If you've waited very long.
I thought I heard you rapping,
To shut you out were sin,
My heart is standing open,
Won't you
walk
right
in?

Good-morning, Brother Gladness,
Good-morning, Sister Smile,
They told me you were coming,
So I waited on a while.
I'm lonesome here without you,
A weary while it's been,
My heart is standing open,
Won't you
walk
right
in?

Good-morning, Brother Kindness,
Good-morning, Sister Cheer,
I heard you were out calling,

So I waited for you here.
Some way, I keep forgetting
I have to toil or spin
When you are my companions,
Won't you
walk
right
in?

James W. Foley. From "The Voices of Song."

WANTED--A MAN

Business and the world are exacting in their demands upon us. They make no concessions to half-heartedness, incompetence, or plodding mediocrity. But for the man who has proved his worth and can do the exceptional things with originality and sound judgment, they are eagerly watchful and have rich rewards.

You say big corporations scheme
To keep a fellow down;
They drive him, shame him, starve him too
If he so much as frown.
God knows I hold no brief for them;
Still, come with me to-day
And watch those fat directors meet,
For this is what they say:
"In all our force not one to take
The new work that we plan!
In all the thousand men we've hired
Where shall we find a man?"

The world is shabby in the way
It treats a fellow too;
It just endures him while he works,
And kicks him when he's through.
It's ruthless, yes; let him make good,
Or else it grabs its broom
And grumbles: "What a clutter's here!
We can't have this. Make room!"

And out he goes. It says, "Can bread
Be made from mouldy bran?
The men come swarming here in droves,
But where'll I find a man?"

Yes, life is hard. But all the same
It seeks the man who's best.
Its grudging makes the prizes big;
The obstacle's a test.
Don't ask to find the pathway smooth,
To march to fife and drum;
The plum-tree will not come to you;
Jack Horner, hunt the plum.

The eyes of life are yearning, sad,
As humankind they scan.
She says, "Oh, there are men enough,
But where'll I find a man?"

__St. Clair Adams.__

JUST BE GLAD

Misfortunes overtake us, difficulties confront us; but these things must not induce us to give up. A Congressman who had promised Thomas B. Reed to be present at a political meeting telegraphed at the last moment:

"Cannot come; washout on the line."

"No need to stay away," said Reed's answering telegram; "buy another shirt."

O heart of mine, we shouldn't
Worry so!
What we've missed of calm we couldn't
Have, you know!
What we've met of stormy pain,
And of sorrow's driving rain,
We can better meet again,
If it blow!

We have erred in that dark hour
We have known,
When our tears fell with the shower,
All alone!--
Were not shine and shower blent
As the gracious Master meant?--
Let us temper our content
With His own.

For, we know, not every morrow
Can be sad;
So, forgetting all the sorrow
We have had,

Let us fold away our fears,
And put by our foolish tears,
And through all the coming years
Just be glad.

James Whitcomb Riley.
From the Biographical Edition Of the
Complete Works of James Whitcomb Riley.

OPPORTUNITY

"I lack only one of having a hundred," said a student after an examination; "I have the two naughts." And all he did lack was a one, _rightly placed_. The world is full of opportunities. Discernment to perceive, courage to undertake, patience to carry through, will change the whole aspect of the universe for us and bring positive achievement out of meaningless negation.

With doubt and dismay you are smitten
You think there's no chance for you, son?
Why, the best books haven't been written
The best race hasn't been run,
The best score hasn't been made yet,
The best song hasn't been sung,
The best tune hasn't been played yet,
Cheer up, for the world is young!

No chance? Why the world is just eager
For things that you ought to create
Its store of true wealth is still meagre
Its needs are incessant and great,

It yearns for more power and beauty
More laughter and love and romance,
More loyalty, labor and duty,
No chance--why there's nothing but chance!

For the best verse hasn't been rhymed yet,
The best house hasn't been planned,
The highest peak hasn't been climbed yet,
The mightiest rivers aren't spanned,
Don't worry and fret, faint hearted,
The chances have just begun,
For the Best jobs haven't been started,
The Best work hasn't been done.

Berton Braley. From "A Banjo at Armageddon."

SOLITUDE

If we try to make others share [our sorrows], we are shunned.
But struggling and weary humanity is glad enough to share our
joys.

Laugh, and the world laughs with you;
Weep, and you weep alone;
For the sad old earth
Must borrow its mirth,
It has trouble enough of its own.

Sing, and the hills will answer;
Sigh, it is lost on the air;
 The echoes bound
 To a joyful sound,
But shrink from voicing care.

Rejoice, and men will seek you;
Grieve, and they turn and go;
 They want full measure
 Of all your pleasure,
But they do not want your woe.

Be glad, and your friends are many;
Be sad, and you lose them all;
 There are none to decline
 Your nectared wine,
But alone you must drink life's gall.

Feast, and your halls are crowded;
Fast, and the world goes by;
 Succeed and give,
 And it helps you live,
But it cannot help you die.

There is room in the halls of pleasure
For a long and lordly train;
 But one by one
 We must all file on
Through the narrow aisles of pain.

Ella Wheeler Wilcox. From "How Salvator Won."

UNSUBDUED

"An artist's career," said Whistler, "always begins to-morrow." So does the career of any man of courage and imagination. The Eden of such a man does not lie in yesterday. If he has done well, he forgets his achievements and dreams of the big deeds ahead. If he has been thwarted, he forgets his failures and looks forward to vast, sure successes. If fate itself opposes him, he defies it.

I have hoped, I have planned, I have striven,
To the will I have added the deed;
The best that was in me I've given,
I have prayed, but the gods would not heed.

I have dared and reached only disaster,
I have battled and broken my lance;
I am bruised by a pitiless master
That the weak and the timid call Chance.

I am old, I am bent, I am cheated
Of all that Youth urged me to win;
But name me not with the defeated,
To-morrow again, I begin.

S.E. Kiser. From "Poems That Have Helped Me."

WORK "A SONG OF TRIUMPH"

When Captain John Smith was made the leader of the colonists at Jamestown, Va., he discouraged the get-rich-quick seekers of gold by announcing flatly, "He who will not work shall not eat." This rule made of Jamestown the first permanent English settlement in the New World. But work does more than lead to material success. It gives an outlet from sorrow, restrains wild desires, ripens and refines character, enables human beings to cooperate with God, and when well done, brings to life its consummate satisfaction. Every man is a Prince of Possibilities, but by work alone can he come into his Kingship.

Work!

Thank God for the might of it,
The ardor, the urge, the delight of it--
Work that springs from the heart's desire,
Setting the brain and the soul on fire--
Oh, what is so good as the heat of it,
And what is so glad as the beat of it,
And what is so kind as the stern command,
Challenging brain and heart and hand?

Work!

Thank God for the pride of it,
For the beautiful, conquering tide of it.
Sweeping the life in its furious flood,
Thrilling the arteries, cleansing the blood,
Mastering stupor and dull despair,
Moving the dreamer to do and dare.
Oh, what is so good as the urge of it,
And what is so glad as the surge of it,
And what is so strong as the summons deep,
Rousing the torpid soul from sleep?

Work!

Thank God for the pace of it,
For the terrible, keen, swift race of it;
Fiery steeds in full control,
Nostrils a-quiver to greet the goal.
Work, the Power that drives behind,
Guiding the purposes, taming the mind,
Holding the runaway wishes back,
Reining the will to one steady track,
Speeding the energies faster, faster,
Triumphing over disaster.

Oh, what is so good as the pain of it,
And what is so great as the gain of it?
And what is so kind as the cruel goad,
Forcing us on through the rugged road?

Work!

Thank God for the swing of it,
For the clamoring, hammering ring of it,
Passion and labor daily hurled
On the mighty anvils of the world.
Oh, what is so fierce as the flame of it?
And what is so huge as the aim of it?
Thundering on through dearth and doubt,
Calling the plan of the Maker out.
Work, the Titan; Work, the friend,
Shaping the earth to a glorious end,
Draining the swamps and blasting the hills,
Doing whatever the Spirit wills--
Rending a continent apart,
To answer the dream of the Master heart.
Thank God for a world where none may shirk--
Thank God for the splendor of work!

__Angela Morgan.__ From "The Hour Has Struck."

HOW DID YOU DIE?

Did you tackle that trouble that came your way
With a resolute heart and cheerful?
Or hide your face from the light of day
With a craven soul and fearful?
Oh, a trouble's a ton, or a trouble's an ounce,
Or a trouble is what you make it,
And it isn't the fact that you're hurt that counts,
But only how did you take it?

You are beaten to earth? Well, well, what's that!
Come up with a smiling face.
It's nothing against you to fall down flat,
But to lie there--that's disgrace.
The harder you're thrown, why the higher you bounce
Be proud of your blackened eye!
It isn't the fact that you're licked that counts;
It's how did you fight--and why?

And though you be done to the death, what then?
If you battled the best you could,
If you played your part in the world of men,
Why, the Critic will call it good.
Death comes with a crawl, or comes with a pounce,
And whether he's slow or spry,
It isn't the fact that you're dead that counts,
But only how did you die?

Edmund Vance Cooke. From "Impertinent Poems."

RABBI BEN EZRA (SELECTED VERSES)

To some people success is everything, and the easier it is gained the better. To Browning success is nothing unless it is won by painful effort. What Browning values is struggle. Throes, rebuffs, even failure to achieve what we wish, are to be welcomed, for the effects of vigorous endeavor inweave themselves into our characters; moreover through struggle we lift ourselves from the degradation into which the indolent fall. In the intervals of strife we may look back dispassionately upon what we have gone through, see where we erred and where we did wisely, watch the workings of universal laws, and resolve to apply hereafter what we have hitherto learned.

Then, welcome each rebuff
That turns earth's smoothness rough,
Each sting that bids nor sit nor stand but go!
Be our joys three-parts pain!
Strive, and hold cheap the strain;
Learn, nor account the pang; dare, never grudge the throe!

For thence,--a paradox
Which comforts while it mocks,--
Shall life succeed in that it seems to fail:
What I aspired to be,
And was not, comforts me:
A brute I might have been, but would not sink i' the scale.

So, still within this life,
Though lifted o'er its strife,
Let me discern, compare, pronounce at last,
"This rage was right i' the main,
That acquiescence vain:
The Future I may face now I have proved the Past."

For more is not reserved
To man, with soul just nerved
To act to-morrow what he learns to-day:
Here, work enough to watch
The Master work, and catch
Hints of the proper craft, tricks of the tool's true play.

Robert Browning.

TO MELANCHOLY

The last invitation anybody would accept is "Come, let us weep together." If we keep melancholy at our house, we should be careful to have it under lock and key, so that no one will observe it.

Melancholy,
Melancholy,
I've no use for you, by Golly!
Yet I'm going to keep you hidden
In some chamber dark, forbidden,
Just as though you were a prize, sir,
Made of gold, and I a miser--
Not because I think you jolly,
 Melancholy!
Not for that I mean to hoard you,
Keep you close and lodge and board you
As I would my sisters, brothers,
Cousins, aunts, and old grandmothers,
But that you shan't bother others

With your sniffing, snuffling folly,
Howling,
Yowling,
Melancholy.

John Kendrick Bangs. From "Songs of Cheer."

THE ANSWER

When the battle breaks against you and the crowd forgets to cheer

When the Anvil Chorus echoes with the essence of a jeer;
When the knockers start their panning in the knocker's nimble way

With a rap for all your errors and a josh upon your play--
There is one quick answer ready that will nail them on the wing;

There is one reply forthcoming that will wipe away the sting;
There is one elastic come-back that will hold them, as it should--
-
Make good.

No matter where you finish in the mix-up or the row,
There are those among the rabble who will pan you anyhow;
But the entry who is sticking and delivering the stuff
Can listen to the yapping as he giggles up his cuff;
The loafer has no come-back and the quitter no reply
When the Anvil Chorus echoes, as it will, against the sky;
But there's one quick answer ready that will wrap them in a hood--
Make good.

Grantland Rice. From "The Spotlight."

THE WORLD IS AGAINST ME

Babe Ruth doesn't complain that opposing pitchers try to strike him out; he swings at the ball till he swats it for four bases. Ty Cobb doesn't complain that whole teams work wits and muscles overtime to keep him from stealing home; he pits himself against them all and comes galloping or hurdling or sliding in. What other men can do any man can do if he works long enough with a brave enough heart.

"The world is against me," he said with a sigh.
"Somebody stops every scheme that I try.
The world has me down and it's keeping me there;
I don't get a chance. Oh, the world is unfair!
When a fellow is poor then he can't get a show;
The world is determined to keep him down low."

"What of Abe Lincoln?" I asked. "Would you say
That he was much richer than you are to-day?
He hadn't your chance of making his mark,
And his outlook was often exceedingly dark;
Yet he clung to his purpose with courage most grim
And he got to the top. Was the world against him?"

"What of Ben Franklin? I've oft heard it said
That many a time he went hungry to bed.
He started with nothing but courage to climb,
But patiently struggled and waited his time.
He dangled awhile from real poverty's limb,
Yet he got to the top. Was the world against him?"

"I could name you a dozen, yes, hundreds, I guess,
Of poor boys who've patiently climbed to success;
All boys who were down and who struggled alone,
Who'd have thought themselves rich if your fortune they'd
known;
Yet they rose in the world you're so quick to condemn,
And I'm asking you now, was the world against them?"

Edgar A. Guest. From "Just Folks."

SAY NOT THE STRUGGLE NOUGHT AVAILETH

In any large or prolonged enterprise we are likely to take too limited a view of the progress we are making. The obstacles do not yield at some given point; we therefore imagine we have made no headway. Successive waves may seem to rise no higher on the land, but far back in swollen creek and inlet is proof that the tide is coming in. As we look toward the east, we are discouraged at the slowness of daybreak; but by looking westward we see the whole landscape illumined.

Say not the struggle nought availeth,
The labor and the wounds are vain,
The enemy faints not, nor faileth,
And as things have been they remain.

If hopes were dupes, fears may be liars;
It may be, in yon smoke conceal'd,
Your comrades chase e'en now the fliers,
And, but for you, possess the field.

For while the tired waves, vainly breaking,
Seem here no painful inch to gain,
Far back, through creeks and inlets making,
Comes silent, flooding in, the main.

And not by eastern windows only,
When daylight comes, comes in the light,
In front, the sun climbs slow, how slowly,
But westward, look, the land is bright.

Arthur Hugh Clough.

WORTH WHILE

A little boy whom his mother had rebuked for not turning a deaf ear to temptation protested, with tears, that he had no deaf ear. But temptation, even when heard, must somehow be resisted. Yea, especially when heard! We deserve no credit for resisting it unless it comes to our ears like the voice of the siren.

It is easy enough to be pleasant,
When life flows by like a song,
But the man worth while is one who will smile,
When everything goes dead wrong.
For the test of the heart is trouble,
And it always comes with the years,
And the smile that is worth the praises of earth,
Is the smile that shines through tears.

It is easy enough to be prudent,
When nothing tempts you to stray,
When without or within no voice of sin
Is luring your soul away;
But it's only a negative virtue
Until it is tried by fire,
And the life that is worth the honor on earth,
Is the one that resists desire.

By the cynic, the sad, the fallen,
Who had no strength for the strife,
The world's highway is cumbered to-day,
They make up the sum of life.
But the virtue that conquers passion,
And the sorrow that hides in a smile,
It is these that are worth the homage on earth
For we find them but once in a while.

Ella Wheeler Wilcox. From "Poems of Sentiment."

HOPE

Gloom and despair are really ignorance in another form. They fail to reckon with the fact that what appears to be baneful often turns out to be good. Lincoln lost the senatorship to Douglas and thought he had ended his career; had he won the contest, he might have remained only a senator. Life often has surprise parties for us. Things come to us masked in gloom and black; but Time, the revealer, strips off the disguise, and lo, what we have is blessings.

Never go gloomy, man with a mind,
Hope is a better companion than fear;
Providence, ever benignant and kind,
Gives with a smile what you take with a tear;
All will be right,
Look to the light.

Morning was ever the daughter of night;
All that was black will be all that is bright,
Cheerily, cheerily, then cheer up.

Many a foe is a friend in disguise,
Many a trouble a blessing most true,
Helping the heart to be happy and wise,
With love ever precious and joys ever new.
Stand in the van,
Strike like a man!

This is the bravest and cleverest plan;
Trusting in God while you do what you can.
Cheerily, cheerily, then cheer up.

Anonymous.

I'M GLAD

I'm glad the sky is painted blue;
And the earth is painted green;
And such a lot of nice fresh air
All sandwiched in between.

Anonymous.

THE CHAMBERED NAUTILUS

The nautilus is a small mollusk that creeps upon the bottom of the sea, though it used to be supposed to swim, or even to spread a kind of sail so that the wind might drive it along the surface. What interests us in this poem is the way the nautilus grows. Just as a tree when sawed down has the record of its age in the number of its rings, so does the nautilus measure its age by the ever-widening compartments of its shell. These it has successively occupied. The poet, looking upon the now empty shell, thinks of human life as growing in the same way. We advance from one state of being to another, each nobler than the one which preceded it, until the spirit leaves its shell altogether and attains a glorious and perfect freedom.

This is the ship of pearl, which, poets feign,
Sailed the unshadowed main,--
The venturous bark that flings
On the sweet summer wind its purpled wings
In gulfs enchanted, where the Siren sings,
And coral reefs lie bare,
Where the cold sea-maids rise to sun their streaming hair.

Its webs of living gauze no more unfurl;
Wrecked is the ship of pearl!
And every chambered cell,
Where its dim dreaming life was wont to dwell,
As the frail tenant shaped his growing shell,
Before thee lies revealed,--
Its irised ceiling rent, its sunless crypt unsealed!

Year after year beheld the silent toil
That spread his lustrous coil;
Still, as the spiral grew,

He left the past year's dwelling for the new,
Stole with soft step its shining archway through,
Built up its idle door,
Stretched in his last-found home, and knew the old no more.

Thanks for the heavenly message brought by thee,
Child of the wandering sea,
Cast from her lap, forlorn!
From thy dead lips a clearer note is born
Than ever Triton blew from wreathed horn!
While on mine ear it rings,
Through the deep caves of thought I hear a voice that sings:--

Build thee more stately mansions, O my soul,
As the swift seasons roll!
Leave thy low-vaulted past!
Let each new temple, nobler than the last,
Shut thee from heaven with a dome more vast,
Till thou at length art free,
Leaving thine outgrown shell by life's unresting sea!

Oliver Wendell Holmes.

PIPPA'S SONG

This little song vibrates with an optimism that embraces the whole universe. A frequent error in quoting it is the substitution of the word _well_ for _right_. Browning is no such shallow optimist as to believe that all is well with the world, but he does maintain that things are right with the world, for in spite of its present evils it is slowly working its way toward perfection, and in the great scheme of things it may make these evils themselves an instrument to move it toward its ultimate goal.

The year's at the spring
And day's at the morn;
Morning's at seven;
The hillside's dew-pearled;
The lark's on the wing;
The snail's on the thorn;
God's in his heaven--
All's right with the world.

Robert Browning.

OWNERSHIP

The true value of anything lies, not in the object itself or in its legal possession, but in our attitude to it. We may own a thing in fee simple, yet derive from it nothing but vexation. For those who have little, as indeed for those who have much, there are no surer means of happiness than enjoying that which they do not possess. Emerson shows us that two harvests may be gathered from every field--a material one by the man who raised the crop, and an esthetic or spiritual one by whosoever can see beauty or thrill with an inner satisfaction.

They ride in Packards, those swell guys,
While I can't half afford a Ford;
Choice fillets fill a void for them,
We've cheese and prunes the place I board;
They've smirking servants hanging round,
You'd guess by whom my shoes are shined.
But all the same I'm rich as they,
For ownership's a state of mind.

They own, you say? Pshaw, they possess!
And what a fellow has, has him!
The rich can't stop and just enjoy
Their lawns and shrubs and house-fronts trim.
They're tied indoors and foot the bills;
I stroll or stray, as I'm inclined--
Possession was not meant for use,
But ownership's a state of mind.

The folks who have must try to keep
Against the thieves who swarm and steal;
They dare not stride, they mince along--
Their pavement's a banana peel.
Who owns, the jeweler or I,
Yon gems by window-bars confined?
Possession lies in locks and keys;
True ownership's a state of mind.

I own my office (I've a boss,
But so have all men--so has he);
The business is not mine, but yet
I own the whole blamed company;
Stockholders are less proud than I
When competition's auld lang syned.
What care I that the profit's theirs?
I have what counts--an owner's mind.

The pretty girls I meet are mine
(I do not choose to tell them so);
I own the flowers, the trees, the birds;
I own the sunshine and the snow;
I own the block, I own the town--
The smiles, the songs of humankind.
For ownership is how you feel;
It's just a healthy state of mind.

St. Clair Adams.

A SMILING PARADOX

Good nature or ill is like the loaves and fishes. The more we give away, the more we have.

I've squandered smiles to-day,
And, strange to say,
Altho' my frowns with care I've stowed away,
To-night I'm poorer far in frowns than at the start;
While in my heart,
Wherein my treasures best I store,
I find my smiles increased by several score.

John Kendrick Bangs. From "Songs of Cheer."

THE NEW DUCKLING

There are people who, without having anything exceptional in their natures or purposes or visions, yet try to be different for the sake of being different. They are not content to be what they are; they wish to be "utterly other." Of course they are hollow, artificial, insincere; moreover they are nuisances. Their very foundations are wrong ones. Be yourself unless you're a fool; in that case, of course, try to be somebody else.

"I want to be new," said the duckling.

"O ho!" said the wise old owl,

While the guinea-hen clattered off chuckling

To tell all the rest of the fowl.

"I should like a more elegant figure,"
That child of a duck went on.

"I should like to grow bigger and bigger,
Until I could swallow a swan.

"I _won't_ be the bond slave of habit,
I _won't_ have these webs on my toes.
I want to run round like a rabbit,
A rabbit as red as a rose.

"I _don't_ want to waddle like mother,
Or quack like my silly old dad.
I want to be utterly other,
And _frightfully_ modern and mad."

"Do you know," said the turkey, "you're quacking!
There's a fox creeping up thro' the rye;
And, if you're not utterly lacking,
You'll make for that duck-pond. Good-bye!"

But the duckling was perky as perky.
"Take care of your stuffing!" he called.
(This was horribly rude to a turkey!)
"But you aren't a real turkey," he bawled.

"You're an Early-Victorian Sparrow!
A fox is more fun than a sheep!
I shall show that _my_ mind is not narrow
And give him my feathers--to keep."

Now the curious end of this fable,
So far as the rest ascertained,
Though they searched from the barn to the stable,
Was that _only his feathers remained._

So he _wasn't_ the bond slave of habit,
And he _didn't_ have webs on his toes;
And _perhaps_ he runs round like a rabbit,
A rabbit as red as a rose.

Alfred Noyes. From "Collected Poems."

CAN YOU SING A SONG?

Nothing lifts the spirit more than a song, especially the _inward_
song
of a worker who can sound it alike at the beginning of his task,
in the
heat of midday, and in the weariness and cool of the evening.

Can you sing a song to greet the sun,
Can you cheerily tackle the work to be done,
Can you vision it finished when only begun,
Can you sing a song?

Can you sing a song when the day's half through,
When even the thought of the rest wearies you,
With so little done and so much to do,
Can you sing a song?

Can you sing a song at the close of the day,
When weary and tired, the work's put away,
With the joy that it's done the best of the pay,
Can you sing a song?

Joseph Morris.

JUST WHISTLE

There is a psychological benefit in the mere physical act of whistling. When the body makes music, the spirit falls into harmonies too and the discords that assail us cease to make themselves heard.

When times are bad an' folks are sad
An' gloomy day by day,
Jest try your best at lookin' glad
An' whistle 'em away.

Don't mind how troubles bristle,
Jest take a rose or thistle.
Hold your own
An' change your tone
An' whistle, whistle, whistle!

A song is worth a world o' sighs.
When red the lightnings play,
Look for the rainbow in the skies
An' whistle 'em away.

Don't mind how troubles bristle,
The rose comes with the thistle.
Hold your own
An' change your tone
An' whistle, whistle, whistle!

Each day comes with a life that's new,
A strange, continued story
But still beneath a bend o' blue
The world rolls on to glory.

Don't mind how troubles bristle,
Jest take a rose or thistle.
Hold your own
An' change your tone
An' whistle, whistle, whistle!

Frank L. Stanton.

"Yes, it's pretty hard," the optimistic old woman admitted. "I have to get along with only two teeth, one in the upper jaw and one in the lower--but thank God, they meet."

THE JOY OF LIVING

Men too often act as if life were nothing more than hardships to be endured and difficulties to be overcome. They look upon what is happy or inspiring with eyes that really fail to see. As Wordsworth says of Peter Bell,

"A primrose by the river's brim
A yellow primrose was to him,
And it was nothing more."

But to stop now and then and realize that the world is fresh and buoyant and happy, will do much to keep the spirit young. We should be glad that we are alive, should tell ourselves often in the words of Charles Lamb:

"I am in love with this green earth."

The south wind is driving
His splendid cloud-horses
Through vast fields of blue.
The bare woods are singing,
The brooks in their courses
Are bubbling and springing
And dancing and leaping,
The violets peeping.
I'm glad to be living:
Aren't you?

__Gamaliel Bradford.__

THERE WILL ALWAYS BE SOMETHING TO DO

There will always be dangers to face, my boy;
There will always be goals to take;
Men shall be tried, when the roads divide,
And proved by the choice they make.
There will always be burdens to bear, my boy;
There will always be need to pray;
There will always be tears through the future years,
As loved ones are borne away.

There will always be God to serve, my boy,
And always the Flag above;
They shall call to you until life is through
For courage and strength and love.
So these are things that I dream, my boy,
And have dreamed since your life began:
That whatever befalls, when the old world calls,
It shall find you a sturdy man.

__Edgar A. Guest.__ From "The Path to Home."

GOOD INTENTIONS

Thinking you would like a square meal will not in itself earn you one. Thinking you would like a strong body will not without effort on your part make you an athlete. Thinking you would like to be kind or successful will not bring you gentleness or achievement if you stop with mere thinking. The arrows of intention must have the bow of strong purpose to impel them.

The road to hell, they assure me,
With good intentions is paved;
And I know my desires are noble,
But my deeds might brand me deprived.
It's the warped grain in our nature,
And St. Paul has written it true:
"The good that I would I do not;
But the evil I would not I do."

I've met few men who are monsters
When I came to know them inside;
Yet their bearing and dealings external
Are crusted with cruelty, pride,
Scorn, selfishness, envy, indifference,
Greed--why the long list pursue?
The good that they would they do not;
But the evil they would not they do.

Intentions may still leave us beast-like;
With unchangeable purpose we're men.
We must drive the nail home--and then clinch it
Or storms shake it loose again.
In things of great import, in trifles,
We our recreant souls must subdue
Till the evil we would not we do not
And the good that we would we do.

__St. Clair Adams.__

PHILOSOPHY FOR CROAKERS

Many people seem to get pleasure in seeing all the bad there is, and in making everything about them gloomy. They are like the old woman who on being asked how her health was, replied: "Thank the Lord, I'm poorly."

Some folks git a heap o' pleasure
Out o' lookin' glum;
Hoard their cares like it was treasure--
Fear they won't have some.
Wear black border on their spirit;
Hang their hopes with crape;
Future's gloomy and they fear it,
Sure there's no escape.

Now there ain't no use of whining
Weightin' joy with lead;
There is silver in the linin'
Somewhere on ahead.

Can't enjoy the sun to-day--
It may rain to-morrow;
When a pain won't come their way,
Future pains they borrow.
If there's good news to be heard,
Ears are stuffed with cotton;
Evils dire are oft inferred;
Good is all forgotten.

Now I've had my share of trouble;
Back been bent with ill;
Big load makes the joy seem double
When I mount the hill.

Now it's best to sing a song
'Stead o' sit and mourn;
Rose you'll find grows right along
Bigger than the thorn.

But I've found folks good and kind,
'Cause I thought they would be;
Most men try, at least I find,
To be what they should be.

Joseph Morris.

DUTY

In a single sentence Emerson crystallizes the faith that nothing is impossible to those whose guide is duty. His words, though spoken primarily of youth, apply to the whole of human life.

So nigh is grandeur to our dust,
So near is God to man,
When duty whispers low, _Thou must_,
The youth replies, _I can_.

Ralph Waldo Emerson.

THE CALL OF THE UNBEATEN

P.T. Barnum had shrewdness, inventiveness, hair-trigger readiness in acting or deciding, an eye for hidden possibilities, an instinct for determining beforehand what would prove popular. All these qualities helped him in his original and extraordinary career. But the quality he valued most highly was the one he called "stick-to-it-iveness." This completed the others. Without it the great showman could not have succeeded at all. Nor did he think that any man who lacks it will make much headway in life.

We know how rough the road will be,
How heavy here the load will be,
We know about the barricades that wait along the track;
But we have set our soul ahead
Upon a certain goal ahead
And nothing left from hell to sky shall ever turn us back.

We know how brief all fame must be,
We know how crude the game must be,
We know how soon the cheering turns to jeering down the
block;
But there's a deeper feeling here
That Fate can't scatter reeling here,
In knowing we have battled with the final ounce in stock.

We sing of no wild glory now,
Emblazoning some story now
Of mighty charges down the field beyond some guarded pit;
But humbler tasks befalling us,
Set duties that are calling us,
Where nothing left from hell to sky shall ever make us
quit.

Grantland Rice. From "The Spotlight."

POLONIUS'S ADVICE TO LAERTES

A father's advice to his son how to conduct himself in the world: Don't tell all you think, or put into action thoughts out of harmony or proportion with the occasion. Be friendly, but not common; don't dull your palm by effusively shaking hands with every chance newcomer. Avoid quarrels if you can, but if they are forced on you, give a good account of yourself. Hear every man's censure (opinion), but express your own ideas to few. Dress well, but not ostentatiously. Neither borrow nor lend. And guarantee yourself against being false to others by setting up the high moral principle of being true to yourself.

Give thy thoughts no tongue,
Nor any unproportion'd thought his act.
Be thou familiar, but by no means vulgar;
The friends thou hast, and their adoption tried,
Grapple them to thy soul with hoops of steel;
But do not dull thy palm with entertainment
Of each new-hatch'd, unfledg'd comrade. Beware
Of entrance to a quarrel, but, being in,
Bear 't that th' opposed may beware of thee.
Give every man thine ear, but few thy voice;
Take each man's censure, but reserve thy judgment.
Costly thy habit as thy purse can buy,
But not express'd in fancy; rich, not gaudy;
For the apparel oft proclaims the man.

* * * * *

Neither a borrower, nor a lender be;
For loan oft loses both itself and friend,
And borrowing dulls the edge of husbandry.
This above all: to thine own self be true,

And it must follow, as the night the day,
Thou canst not then be false to any man.

William Shakespeare.

HOW DO YOU TACKLE YOUR WORK?

It would be foolish to begin digging a tunnel through a mountain with a mere pick and spade. We must assemble for the task great mechanical contrivances. And so with our energies of will; a slight tool means a slight achievement; a huge, aggressive engine, driving on at full blast, means corresponding bigness of results.

How do you tackle your work each day?
Are you scared of the job you find?
Do you grapple the task that comes your way
With a confident, easy mind?
Do you stand right up to the work ahead
Or fearfully pause to view it?
Do you start to toil with a sense of dread
Or feel that you're going to do it?

You can do as much as you think you can,
But you'll never accomplish more;
If you're afraid of yourself, young man,
There's little for you in store.
For failure comes from the inside first,
It's there if we only knew it,
And you can win, though you face the worst,
If you feel that you're going to do it.

How do you tackle your work each day?
With confidence clear, or dread?
What to yourself do you stop and say
When a new task lies ahead?
What is the thought that is in your mind?
Is fear ever running through it?
If so, just tackle the next you find
By thinking you're going to do it.

Edgar A. Guest. From "A Heap o' Livin'."

MAN OR MANIKIN

The world does not always distinguish between appearance and true merit. Pretence often gets the plaudits, but desert is above them--it has rewards of its own.

No matter whence you came, from a palace or a ditch,
You're a man, man, man, if you square yourself to life;
And no matter what they say, hermit-poor or Midas-rich,
You are nothing but a husk if you sidestep strife.

For it's do, do, do, with a purpose all your own,
That makes a man a man, whether born a serf or king;
And it's loaf, loaf, loaf, lolling on a bench or throne
That makes a being thewed to act a limp and useless thing!

No matter what you do, miracles or fruitless deeds,
You're a man, man, man, if you do them with a will;
And no matter how you loaf, cursing wealth or mumbling
creeds,
You are nothing but a noise, and its weight is nil.

For it's be, be, be, champion of your heart and soul,
That makes a man a man, whether reared in silk or rags;
And it's talk, talk, talk, from a tattered shirt or stole,
That makes the image of a god a manikin that brags.

Richard Butler Glaenger. From "Munsey's Magazine."

HAVING DONE AND DOING

(ADAPTED FROM "TROILUS AND CRESSIDA")

A member of Parliament, having succeeded notably in his maiden effort at speech-making, remained silent through the rest of his career lest he should not duplicate his triumph. This course was stupid; in time the address which had brought him fame became a theme for disparagement and mockery. A man cannot rest upon his laurels, else he will soon lack the laurels to rest on. If he has true ability, he must from time to time show it, instead of asking us to recall what he did in the past. There is a natural instinct which makes the whole world kin. It is distrust of a mere reputation. It is a hankering to be shown. Unless the evidence to set us right is forthcoming, we will praise dust which is gilded over rather than gold which is dusty from disuse.

Time hath, my lord, a wallet at his back,
Wherein he puts alms for oblivion,
A great-sized monster of ingratitude:
Those scraps are good deeds past; which are devoured
As fast as they are made, forgot as soon
As done: perseverance, dear my lord,
Keeps honor bright: to have done, is to hang
Quite out of fashion, like a rusty mail

In monumental mockery. Take the instant way;
For honor travels in a strait so narrow
Where one but goes abreast: keep, then, the path;
For emulation hath a thousand sons
That one by one pursue: if you give way,
Or hedge aside from the direct forthright,
Like to an entered tide they all rush by
And leave you hindmost;
Or, like a gallant horse fallen in first rank,
Lie there for pavement to the abject rear,
O'errun and trampled on: then what they do in present,
Though less than yours in past, must o'ertop yours;
For time is like a fashionable host,
That slightly shakes his parting guest by the hand,
And with his arms outstretched, as he would fly,
Grasps in the comer: welcome ever smiles,
And farewell goes out sighing. O! let not virtue seek
Remuneration for the thing it was; for beauty, wit,
High birth, vigor of bone, desert in service,
Love, friendship, charity, are subjects all
To envious and calumniating time.
One touch of nature makes the whole world kin,
That all with one consent praise new-born gawds,
Though they are made and moulded of things past,
And give to dust that is a little gilt
More laud than gilt o'er-dusted.
The present eye praises the present object,
Since things in motion sooner catch the eye
Than what not stirs.

William Shakespeare.

FAITH

Faith is not a passive thing--mere believing or waiting. It is an active thing--a positive striving and achievement, even if conditions be untoward.

Faith is not merely praying
Upon your knees at night;
Faith is not merely straying
Through darkness to the light.

Faith is the brave endeavor
The splendid enterprise,
The strength to serve, whatever
Conditions may arise.

__S.E. Kiser.__

OPPORTUNITY

There is a tide in the affairs of men,
Which, taken at the flood, leads on to fortune;
Omitted, all the voyage of their life
Is bound in shallows and in miseries.
On such a full sea are we now afloat;
And we must take the current when it serves,
Or lose our ventures.

__William Shakespeare.__

OPPORTUNITY

To the thought of the preceding poem we have here a direct answer. No matter how a man may have failed in the past, the door of opportunity is always open to him. He should not give way to useless regrets; he should know that the future is within his control, that it will be what he chooses to make it.

They do me wrong who say I come no more
When once I knock and fail to find you in;
For every day I stand outside your door,
And bid you wake, and rise to fight and win.

Wail not for precious chances passed away,
Weep not for golden ages on the wane!
Each night I burn the records of the day,--
At sunrise every soul is born again!

Laugh like a boy at splendors that have sped,
To vanished joys be blind and deaf and dumb;
My judgments seal the dead past with its dead,
But never bind a moment yet to come.

Though deep in mire, wring not your hands and weep;
I lend my arm to all who say "I can!"
No shame-faced outcast ever sank so deep,
But yet might rise and be again a man!

Dost thou behold thy lost youth all aghast?
Dost reel from righteous Retribution's blow?
Then turn from blotted archives of the past,
And find the future's pages white as snow.

Art thou a mourner? Rouse thee from thy spell;
Art thou a sinner? Sins may be forgiven;
Each morning gives thee wings to flee from hell,
Each night a star to guide thy feet to heaven.

Walter Malone.

PREPAREDNESS

For all your days prepare,
And meet them ever alike:
When you are the anvil, bear--
When you are the hammer, strike.

Edwin Markham.

From "The Gates of Paradise, and Other Poems."

THE WISDOM OF FOLLY

"Jog on, jog on, the footpath way,
And merrily hent the stile-a:
A merry heart goes all the day,
Your sad tires in a mile-a."

Shakespeare's lilting stanza conveys a great truth--the power of cheerfulness to give impetus and endurance. The a at the end of lines is merely an addition in singing; the word hent means take.

The cynics say that every rose
Is guarded by a thorn which grows
 To spoil our posies;
But I no pleasure therefore lack;
I keep my hands behind my back
 When smelling roses.

Though outwardly a gloomy shroud
The inner half of every cloud
 Is bright and shining:
I therefore turn my clouds about,
And always wear them inside out
 To show the lining.

My modus operandi this--
To take no heed of what's amiss;
 And not a bad one;
Because, as Shakespeare used to say,
A merry heart goes twice the way
 That tires a sad one.

__Ellen Thorneycroft Fowler.
(The Honorable Mrs. Alfred Felkin.)__

From "Verses Wise and Otherwise."

SEE IT THROUGH

An American traveler in Italy stood watching a lumberman who, as the logs floated down a swift mountain stream, jabbed his hook in an occasional one and drew it carefully aside. "Why do you pick out those few?" the traveler asked. "They all look alike."

"But they are not alike, seignior. The logs I let pass have grown on the side of a mountain, where they have been protected all their lives. Their grain is coarse; they are good only for lumber. But these logs, seignior, grew on the top of the mountain. From the time they were sprouts and saplings they were lashed and buffeted by the winds, and so they grew strong with fine grain. We save them for choice work; they are not 'lumber,' seignior."

When you're up against a trouble,
Meet it squarely, face to face;
Lift your chin and set your shoulders,
Plant your feet and take a brace.
When it's vain to try to dodge it,
Do the best that you can do;
You may fail, but you may conquer,
See it through!

Black may be the clouds about you
And your future may seem grim,
But don't let your nerve desert you;
Keep yourself in fighting trim.
If the worse is bound to happen,
Spite of all that you can do,
Running from it will not save you,
See it through!

Even hope may seem but futile,
When with troubles you're beset,
But remember you are facing
Just what other men have met.
You may fail, but fall still fighting;
Don't give up, whate'er you do;
Eyes front, head high to the finish.
See it through!

Edgar A. Guest. From "Just Folks."

DECEMBER 31

If January 1 is an ideal time for renewed consecration, December 31 is an ideal time for thankful reminiscence. The year has not brought us everything we might have hoped, but neither has it involved us in everything we might have feared. Many are the perils, the failures, the miseries we have escaped, and life to us is still gracious and wholesome and filled to the brim with satisfaction.

Best day of all the year, since I
May see thee pass and know
That if thou dost not leave me high
Thou hast not found me low,
And since, as I behold thee die,
Thou leavest me the right to say
That I to-morrow still may vie
With them that keep the upward way.

Best day of all the year to me,
Since I may stand and gaze
Across the grayish past and see
So many crooked ways
That might have led to misery,
Or might have ended at Disgrace--
Best day since thou dost leave me free
To look the future in the face.

Best day of all days of the year,
That was so kind, so good,
Since thou dost leave me still the dear
Old faith in brotherhood--
Best day since I, still striving here,
May view the past with small regret,
And, undisturbed by doubts or fear,
Seeks paths that are untrod as yet.

__S.E. Kiser.__

RING OUT, WILD BELLS

This great New Year's piece belongs almost as well to every day in the year, since it expresses a social ideal of justice and happiness.

Ring out, wild bells, to the wild sky,
The flying cloud, the frosty light:
The year is dying in the night;
Ring out, wild bells, and let him die.

Ring out the old, ring in the new,
Ring, happy bells, across the snow:
The year is going, let him go;
Ring out the false, ring in the true.

Ring out the grief that saps the mind,
For those that here we see no more;
Ring out the feud of rich and poor,
Ring in redress to all mankind.

Ring out a slowly dying cause,
And ancient forms of party strife;
Ring in the nobler modes of life,
With sweeter manners, purer laws.

Ring out the want, the care, the sin,
The faithless coldness of the times;
Ring out, ring out my mournful rhymes,
But ring the fuller minstrel in.

Ring out false pride in place and blood,
The civic slander and the spite;
Ring in the love of truth and right,
Ring in the common love of good.

Ring out old shapes of foul disease;
Ring out the narrowing lust of gold;
Ring out the thousand wars of old,
Ring in the thousand years of peace.

Ring in the valiant man and free,
The larger heart, the kindlier hand;
Ring out the darkness of the land,
Ring in the Christ that is to be.

Alfred Tennyson.

WORK

The dog that dropped his bone to snap at its reflection in the water went dinnerless. So do we often lose the substance--the joy--of our work by longing for tasks we think better fitted to our capabilities.

Let me but do my work from day to day,
In field or forest, at the desk or loom,
In roaring market-place or tranquil room;
Let me but find it in my heart to say,
When vagrant wishes beckon me astray,
"This is my work; my blessing, not my doom;
Of all who live, I am the one by whom
This work can best be done in the right way."

Then shall I see it not too great, nor small
To suit my spirit and to prove my powers;
Then shall I cheerful greet the laboring hours,

And cheerful turn, when the long shadows fall
At eventide, to play and love and rest,
Because I know for me my work is best.

Henry Van Dyke. From "Collected Poems."

START WHERE YOU STAND

When a man who had been in the penitentiary applied to Henry Ford for employment, he started to tell Mr. Ford his story. "Never mind," said Mr. Ford, "I don't care about the past. Start where you stand!"--Author's note.

Start where you stand and never mind the past,
The past won't help you in beginning new,
If you have left it all behind at last
Why, that's enough, you're done with it, you're through;
This is another chapter in the book,
This is another race that you have planned,
Don't give the vanished days a backward look,
Start where you stand.

The world won't care about your old defeats
If you can start anew and win success,
The future is your time, and time is fleet
And there is much of work and strain and stress;
Forget the buried woes and dead despairs,
Here is a brand new trial right at hand,
The future is for him who does and dares,
Start where you stand.

Old failures will not halt, old triumphs aid,
To-day's the thing, to-morrow soon will be;
Get in the fight and face it unafraid,
And leave the past to ancient history;
What has been, has been; yesterday is dead
And by it you are neither blessed nor banned,
Take courage, man, be brave and drive ahead,
Start where you stand.

Berton Braley. From "A Banjo at Armageddon."

A HOPEFUL BROTHER

A Cripple Creek miner remarked that he had hunted for gold for twenty-five years. He was asked how much he had found. "None," he replied, "but the prospects are good."

Ef you ask him, day or night,
When the worl' warn't runnin' right,
"Anything that's good in sight?"
This is allus what he'd say,
In his uncomplainin' way--
"Well, I'm hopin'."

When the winter days waz nigh,
An' the clouds froze in the sky,
Never sot him down to sigh,
But, still singin' on his way,
He'd stop long enough to say--
"Well, I'm hopin'."

Dyin', asked of him that night
(Sperrit waitin' fer its flight),
"Brother, air yer prospec's bright?"
An'--last words they heard him say,
In the ol', sweet, cheerful way--
"Well, I'm hopin'."

Frank L. Stanton. "The Atlanta Constitution."

A SONG OF THANKSGIVING

We should have grateful spirits, not merely for personal benefits, but also for the right to sympathize, to understand, to help, to trust, to struggle, to aspire.

Thank God I can rejoice
In human things--the multitude's glad voice,
The street's warm surge beneath the city light,
The rush of hurrying faces on my sight,
The million-celled emotion in the press
That would their human fellowship confess.
Thank Thee because I may my brother feed,
That Thou hast opened me unto his need,
Kept me from being callous, cold and blind,
Taught me the melody of being kind.
Thus, for my own and for my brother's sake--
Thank Thee I am awake!

Thank Thee that I can trust!
That though a thousand times I feel the thrust
Of faith betrayed, I still have faith in man,
Believe him pure and good since time began--

Thy child forever, though he may forget
The perfect mould in which his soul was set.
Thank Thee that when love dies, fresh love springs up.
New wonders pour from Heaven's cup.
Young to my soul the ancient need returns,
Immortal in my heart the ardor burns;
My altar fires replenished from above--
 Thank Thee that I can love!

Thank Thee that I can hear,
Finely and keenly with the inner ear,
Below the rush and clamor of a throng
The mighty music of the under-song.
And when the day has journeyed to its rest,
Lo, as I listen, from the amber west,
Where the great organ lifts its glowing spires,
There sounds the chanting of the unseen choirs.
Thank Thee for sight that shows the hidden flame
Beneath all breathing, throbbing things the same,
Thy Pulse the pattern of the thing to be....
 Thank Thee that I can see!

Thank Thee that I can feel!
That though life's blade be terrible as steel,
My soul is stript and naked to the fang,
I crave the stab of beauty and the pang.
_To be alive,
To think, to yearn, to strive,_
To suffer torture when the goal is wrong,
To be sent back and fashioned strong
Rejoicing in the lesson that was taught
By all the good the grim experience wrought;
At last, exulting, to _arrive_....
 Thank God I am alive!

Angela Morgan. From "The Hour Has Struck."

LOSE THE DAY LOITERING

Anything is hard to begin, whether it be taking a cold bath, writing a letter, clearing up a misunderstanding, or falling to on the day's work. Yet "a thing begun is half done." No matter how unpleasant a thing is to do, begin it and immediately it becomes less unpleasant. Form the excellent habit of making a start.

Lose the day loitering, 'twill be the same story
To-morrow, and the next more dilatory,
For indecision brings its own delays,
And days are lost lamenting o'er lost days.
Are you in earnest? Seize this very minute!
What you can do, or think you can, begin it!
Only engage, and then the mind grows heated;
Begin it, and the work will be completed.

__Johann Wolfgang von Goethe.__

PLAYING THE GAME

We don't like the man who whines that the cards were stacked against him or that the umpire cheated. We admire the chap who, when he must take his medicine, takes it cheerfully, bravely. To play the game steadily is a merit, whether the game be a straight one or crooked. A thoroughbred, even though bad, has more of our respect than the craven who cleaves to the proprieties solely from fear to violate them. It has well been said:

"The mistakes which make us men are better than the accuracies that keep us children."

Yes, he went an' stole our steers,
So, of course, he had to die;
I ain't sheddin' any tears,
But, when I cash in--say, I
Want to take it like that guy--
Laughin', jokin', with the rest,
Not a whimper, not a cry,
Standin' up to meet the test
Till we swung him clear an' high,
With his face turned toward the west!

Here's the way it looks to me;
Cattle thief's no thing to be,
But if you take up that trade,
Be the best one ever made;
If you've got a thing to do
Do it strong an' SEE IT THROUGH!

That was him! He played the game,
Took his chances, bet his hand,
When at last the showdown came
An' he lost, he kept his sand;
Didn't weep an' didn't pray,
Didn't waver er repent,
Simply tossed his cards away,
Knowin' well just what it meant.
Never claimed the deck was stacked,
Never called the game a snide,
Acted like a man should act,
Took his medicine--an' died!

So I say it here again,
What I think is true of men;
They should try to do what's right,
Fair an' square an' clean an' white,

But, whatever is their line,
Bad er good er foul er fine,
Let 'em go the Limit, play
Like a plunger, that's the way!

Berton Braley. From "Songs of the Workaday World."

RESOLVE

There are some things we should all resolve to do. What are they? Any one may make a list for himself. It would be interesting to compare it with the one here given by the poet.

To keep my health!
To do my work!
To live!
To see to it I grow and gain and give!
Never to look behind me for an hour!
To wait in weakness, and to walk in power;
But always fronting onward to the light,
Always and always facing towards the right.
Robbed, starved, defeated, fallen, wide astray--
On, with what strength I have!
Back to the way!

Charlotte Perkins Gilman. From "In This Our World."

WHEN NATURE WANTS A MAN

Only melting and hammering can shape and temper steel for fine use. Only struggle and suffering can give a man the qualities that enable him to render large service to humanity. Lincoln was born in a log cabin. He split rails, and coned a few books by the firelight in the evening. He became a backwoods lawyer with apparently no advantages or encouraging prospects. But all the while he had his visions, which ever became nobler; and the adversities he knew but gave him the deeper sympathy for others and the wider and steadier outlook on human problems. Thus when the supreme need arose, Lincoln was ready--harsh-visaged nature had done its work of moulding and preparing a man.

When Nature wants to drill a man
And thrill a man,
And skill a man,
When Nature wants to mould a man
To play the noblest part;
When she yearns with all her heart
To create so great and bold a man
That all the world shall praise--
Watch her method, watch her ways!
How she ruthlessly perfects
Whom she royally elects;
How she hammers him and hurts him
And with mighty blows converts him
Into trial shapes of clay which only Nature understands--
While his tortured heart is crying and he lifts beseeching
hands!--
How she bends, but never breaks,
When his good she undertakes....
How she uses whom she chooses

And with every purpose fuses him,
By every art induces him
To try his splendor out--
Nature knows what she's about.

When Nature wants to take a man
And shake a man
And wake a man;
When Nature wants to make a man
To do the Future's will;
When she tries with all her skill
And she yearns with all her soul
To create him large and whole....
With what cunning she prepares him!
How she goads and never spares him,
How she whets him and she frets him
And in poverty begets him....
How she often disappoints
Whom she sacredly anoints,
With what wisdom she will hide him,
Never minding what betide him
Though his genius sob with slighting and his pride may not
forget!
Bids him struggle harder yet.
Makes him lonely
So that only
God's high messages shall reach him
So that she may surely teach him
What the Hierarchy planned.
Though he may not understand
Gives him passions to command--
How remorselessly she spurs him,
With terrific ardor stirs him
When she poignantly prefers him!

When Nature wants to name a man
And fame a man
And tame a man;
When Nature wants to shame a man
To do his heavenly best....
When she tries the highest test
That her reckoning may bring--
When she wants a god or king!--
How she reins him and restrains him
So his body scarce contains him
While she fires him
And inspires him!
Keeps him yearning, ever burning for a tantalising goal--
Lures and lacerates his soul.
Sets a challenge for his spirit,
Draws it higher when he's near it--
Makes a jungle, that he clear it;
Makes a desert, that he fear it
And subdue it if he can--
So doth Nature make a man.
Then, to test his spirit's wrath
Hurls a mountain in his path--
Puts a bitter choice before him
And relentless stands o'er him.
"Climb, or perish!" so she says....
Watch her purpose, watch her ways!

Nature's plan is wondrous kind
Could we understand her mind ...
Fools are they who call her blind.
When his feet are torn and bleeding
Yet his spirit mounts unheeding,
All his higher powers speeding
Blazing newer paths and fine;
When the force that is divine

Leaps to challenge every failure and his ardor still is sweet
And love and hope are burning in the presence of defeat....
Lo, the crisis! Lo, the shout
That must call the leader out.
When the people need salvation
Doth he come to lead the nation....
Then doth Nature show her plan
When the world has found--a man!

Angela Morgan. From "Forward, March!"

SELF-DEPENDENCE

One star does not ask another to adore it or amuse it; Mt. Shasta, though it towers for thousands of feet above its neighbors, does not repine that it is alone or that the adjacent peaks see much that it misses under the clouds. Nature does not trouble itself about what the rest of nature is doing. But man constantly worries about other men--what they think of him, do to him, fail to emulate in him, have or secure in comparison with him. He lacks nature's inward quietude. Calmness and peace come by being self-contained.

Weary of myself, and sick of asking
What I am, and what I ought to be,
At this vessel's prow I stand, which bears me
Forwards, forwards, o'er the starlit sea.

And a look of passionate desire
O'er the sea and to the stars I send:
"Ye who from my childhood up have calmed me,
Calm me, ah, compose me to the end!"

"Ah, once more," I cried, "ye stars, ye waters,
On my heart your mighty charm renew;
Still, still let me, as I gaze upon you,
Feel my soul becoming vast like you!"

From the intense, clear, star-sown vault of heaven,
Over the lit sea's unquiet way,
In the rustling night-air came the answer:
"Wouldst thou BE as these are? LIVE as they.

"Unaffrighted by the silence round them,
Undistracted by the sights they see,
These demand not that the things without them
Yield them love, amusement, sympathy.

"And with joy the stars perform their shining,
And the sea its long, moon-silver'd roll;
For self-poised they live, nor pine with noting
All the fever of some differing soul.

"Bounded by themselves, and unregardful
In what state God's other works may be,
In their own tasks all their powers pouring,
These attain the mighty life you see."

O air-born voice! long since, severely clear,
A cry like thine in mine own heart I hear:
"Resolve to be thyself; and know that he
Who finds himself, loses his misery!"

__Matthew Arnold.__

A LITTLE PRAYER

We should strive to bring what happiness we can to others. More still, we should strive to bring them no unhappiness. When we come to die, it is, as George Eliot once said, not our kindness or our patience or our generosity that we shall regret, but our intolerance and our harshness.

That I may not in blindness grope,
But that I may with vision clear
Know when to speak a word of hope
Or add a little wholesome cheer.

That tempered winds may softly blow
Where little children, thinly clad,
Sit dreaming, when the flame is low,
Of comforts they have never had.

That through the year which lies ahead
No heart shall ache, no cheek be wet,
For any word that I have said
Or profit I have tried to get.

__S.E. Kiser.__

LIFE AND DEATH

Life! I know not what thou art,
But know that thou and I must part;
And when, or how, or where we met
I own to me a secret yet.

Life! We've been long together,
Through pleasant and through cloudy weather;
'Tis hard to part when friends are dear;
Perhaps will cost a sigh, a tear;
Then steal away, give little warning,
Choose thine own time;
Say not "Good Night"--but in some brighter clime,
Bid me "Good Morning!"

__Anna Barbauld.__

LIFE AND DEATH

Many a man would die for wife and children, for faith, for country. But would he live for them? That, often, is the more heroic course--and the more sensible. A rich man was hiring a driver for his carriage. He asked each applicant how close he could drive to a precipice without toppling over. "One foot," "Six inches," "Three inches," ran the replies. But an Irishman declared, "Faith, and I'd keep as far away from the place as I could." "Consider yourself employed," was the rich man's comment.

So he died for his faith. That is fine--
More than most of us do.
But stay, can you add to that line
That he lived for it, too?

In death he bore witness at last
As a martyr to truth.
Did his life do the same in the past
From the days of his youth?

It is easy to die. Men have died
For a wish or a whim--
From bravado or passion or pride.
Was it harder for him?

But to live: every day to live out
All the truth that he dreamt,
While his friends met his conduct with doubt,
And the world with contempt--

Was it thus that he plodded ahead,
Never turning aside?
Then we'll talk of the life that he led--
Never mind how he died.

Ernest H. Crosby

TWO AT A FIRESIDE

I built a chimney for a comrade old,
I did the service not for hope or hire--
And then I traveled on in winter's cold,
Yet all the day I glowed before the fire.

Edwin Markham.

From "The Man with the Hoe, and Other Poems."

TO-DAY

We often lose the happiness of to-day by brooding over the sorrows of yesterday or fearing the troubles of to-morrow. This is exceedingly foolish. There is always some pleasure at hand; seize it, and at no time will you be without pleasure. You cannot change the past, but your spirit at this moment will in some measure shape your future. Live life, therefore, in the present tense; do not miss the joys of to-day.

Sure, this world is full of trouble--
I ain't said it ain't.
Lord! I've had enough, an' double,
Reason for complaint.
Rain an' storm have come to fret me,
Skies were often gray;
Thorns an' brambles have beset me
On the road--but, say,
Ain't it fine to-day?

What's the use of always weepin',
Makin' trouble last?
What's the use of always keepin'
Thinkin' of the past?
Each must have his tribulation,
Water with his wine.
Life it ain't no celebration.
Trouble? I've had mine--
But to-day is fine.

It's to-day that I am livin',
Not a month ago,
Havin', losin', takin', givin',
As time wills it so.

Yesterday a cloud of sorrow
Fell across the way;
It may rain again to-morrow,
It may rain--but, say,
Ain't it fine to-day!

__Douglas Malloch.__

THE THINGS THAT HAVEN'T BEEN DONE BEFORE

It is said that if you hold a stick in front of the foremost sheep in a flock that files down a trail in the mountains, he will jump it—and that every sheep thereafter will jump when he reaches the spot, even if the stick be removed. So are many people mere unthinking imitators, blind to facts and opportunities about them. Kentucky could not be lived in by the white race till Daniel Boone built his cabin there. The air was not part of the domain of humanity till the Wright brothers made themselves birdmen.

The things that haven't been done before,
Those are the things to try;
Columbus dreamed of an unknown shore
At the rim of the far-flung sky,
And his heart was bold and his faith was strong
As he ventured in dangers new,
And he paid no heed to the jeering throng
Or the fears of the doubting crew.

The many will follow the beaten track
With guideposts on the way,
They live and have lived for ages back
With a chart for every day.

Someone has told them it's safe to go
On the road he has traveled o'er,
And all that they ever strive to know
Are the things that were known before.

A few strike out, without map or chart,
Where never a man has been,
From the beaten paths they draw apart
To see what no man has seen.
There are deeds they hunger alone to do;
Though battered and bruised and sore,
They blaze the path for the many, who
Do nothing not done before.

The things that haven't been done before
Are the tasks worth while to-day;
Are you one of the flock that follows, or
Are you one that shall lead the way?
Are you one of the timid souls that quail
At the jeers of a doubting crew,
Or dare you, whether you win or fail,
Strike out for a goal that's new?

Edgar A. Guest. From "A Heap o' Livin'."

THE HAS-BEENS

I read the papers every day, and oft encounter tales which show there's hope for every jay who in life's battle fails. I've just been reading of a gent who joined the has-been ranks, at fifty years without a cent, or credit at the banks. But undismayed he buckled down, refusing to be beat, and captured fortune and renown; he's now on Easy Street. Men say that fellows down and out ne'er leave the rocky track, but facts

will show, beyond a doubt, that has-beens do come back. I know, for I who write this rhyme, when forty-odd years old, was down and out, without a dime, my whiskers full of mold. By black disaster I was trounced until it jarred my spine; I was a failure so pronounced I didn't need a sign. And after I had soaked my coat, I said (at forty-three), "I'll see if I can catch the goat that has escaped from me." I labored hard; I strained my dome, to do my daily grind, until in triumph I came home, my billy-goat behind. And any man who still has health may with the winners stack, and have a chance at fame and wealth--for has-beens do come back.

Walt Mason. From "Walt Mason, His Book."

WISHING

We all tend to begin our reforms too far away from home. The man who wishes improvement strongly enough to set to work on himself is the man who will obtain results.

Do you wish the world were better?
Let me tell you what to do.
Set a watch upon your actions,
Keep them always straight and true.
Rid your mind of selfish motives,
Let your thoughts be clean and high.
You can make a little Eden
Of the sphere you occupy.

Do you wish the world were wiser?

Well, suppose you make a start,
By accumulating wisdom
In the scrapbook of your heart;
Do not waste one page on folly;
Live to learn, and learn to live.
If you want to give men knowledge
You must get it, ere you give.

Do you wish the world were happy?

Then remember day by day
Just to scatter seeds of kindness
As you pass along the way,
For the pleasures of the many
May be oftentimes traced to one.
As the hand that plants an acorn
Shelters armies from the sun.

Ella Wheeler Wilcox. From "Poems of Power."

AWARENESS

A man must keep a keen sense of the drift and significance of what he is engaged in if he is to make much headway. Yet many human beings are so sunk in the routine of their work that they fail to realize what it is all for. A man who was tapping with a hammer the wheels of a railroad train remarked that he had been at the job for twenty-seven years. "What do you do when a wheel doesn't sound right?" a passenger inquired. The man was taken aback. "I never found one that sounded that way," said he.

God--let me be aware.

Let me not stumble blindly down the ways,
Just getting somehow safely through the days,
Not even groping for another hand,
Not even wondering why it all was planned,
Eyes to the ground unseeking for the light,
Soul never aching for a wild-winged flight,
Please, keep me eager just to do my share.

God--let me be aware.

God--let me be aware.

Stab my soul fiercely with others' pain,
Let me walk seeing horror and stain.
Let my hands, groping, find other hands.
Give me the heart that divines, understands.
Give me the courage, wounded, to fight.
Flood me with knowledge, drench me in light.
Please--keep me eager just to do my share.

God--let me be aware.

 Miriam Teichner.

ONE OF THESE DAYS

The worst fault in a hound is to run counter--to follow the trail backward, not forward. Is the fault less when men are guilty of it? Behind us is much that we have found to be faithless, cruel, or unpleasant. Why go back to that? Why not go forward to the things we really desire?

Say! Let's forget it! Let's put it aside!
Life is so large and the world is so wide.
Days are so short and there's so much to do,
What if it was false--there's plenty that's true.
Say! Let's forget it! Let's brush it away
Now and forever, so what do you say?
All of the bitter words said may be praise
One of these days.

Say! Let's forget it! Let's wipe off the slate,
Find something better to cherish than hate.
There's so much good in the world that we've had,
Let's strike a balance and cross off the bad.
Say! Let's forgive it, whatever it be,
Let's not be slaves when we ought to be free.
We shall be walking in sunshiny ways
One of these days.

Say! Let's not mind it! Let's smile it away,
Bring not a withered rose from yesterday;
Flowers are so fresh from the wayside and wood,
Sorrows are blessings but half understood.
Say! Let's not mind it, however it seems,
Hope is so sweet and holds so many dreams;
All of the sere fields with blossoms shall blaze
One of these days.

Say! Let's not take it so sorely to heart!
Hates may be friendships just drifted apart,
Failure be genius not quite understood,
Say! Let's get closer to somebody's side,
See what his dreams are and learn how he tried,
See if our scoldings won't give way to praise
One of these days.

Say! Let's not wither! Let's branch out and rise
Out of the byways and nearer the skies.
Let's spread some shade that's refreshing and deep
Where some tired traveler may lie down and sleep.
Say! Let's not tarry! Let's do it right now;
So much to do if we just find out how!
We may not be here to help folks or praise
One of these days.

James W. Foley. From "The Voices of Song."

GOD

We often think people shallow, think them incapable of anything serious or profound, because their work is humdrum and their speech trivial. Such a judgment is unfair, since that part of our own life which shows itself to others is superficial likewise, though we are conscious that within us is much that it does not reveal.

I think about God.
Yet I talk of small matters.
Now isn't it odd
How my idle tongue chatters!
Of quarrelsome neighbors,
Fine weather and rain,
Indifferent labors,
Indifferent pain,
Some trivial style
Fashion shifts with a nod.
And yet all the while
I am thinking of God.

Gamaliel Bradford. From "Shadow Verses."

MY TRIUMPH

The poet, looking back upon the hopes he has cherished, perceives that he has fallen far short of achieving them. The songs he has sung are less sweet than those he has dreamed of singing; the wishes he has wrought into facts are less noble than those that are yet unfulfilled. But he looks forward to the time when all that he desires for humankind shall yet come to pass. The praise will not be his; it will belong to others. Still, he does not envy those who are destined to succeed where he failed. Rather does he rejoice that through them his hopes for the race will be realized. And he is happy that by longing for just such a triumph he shares in it--he makes it his triumph.

Let the thick curtain fall;
I better know than all
How little I have gained,
How vast the unattained.

Not by the page word-painted
Let life be banned or sainted:
Deeper than written scroll
The colors of the soul.

Sweeter than any sung
My songs that found no tongue
Nobler than any fact
My wish that failed to act.

Others shall sing the song,
Others shall right the wrong,--
Finish what I begin,
And all I fail of win.

What matter, I or they?
Mine or another's day,
So the right word be said
And life the sweeter made?

Hail to the coming singers!
Hail to the brave light-bringers!
Forward I reach and share
All that they sing and dare.

The airs of heaven blow o'er me;
A glory shines before me
Of what mankind shall be,--
Pure, generous, brave, and free.

A dream of man and woman
Diviner but still human,
Solving the riddle old,
Shaping the Age of Gold!

The love of God and neighbor;
An equal-handed labor;
The richer life, where beauty
Walks hand in hand with duty.

Ring, bells in unreamed steeples,
The joy of unborn peoples!
Sound, trumpets far off blown,
Your triumph is my own.

Parcel and part of all,
I keep the festival,
Fore-reach the good to be,
And share the victory.

I feel the earth move sunward,
I join the great march onward,
And take, by faith, while living,
My freehold of thanksgiving.

__John Green leaf Whittier.__

THE RECTIFYING YEARS

Time brings the deeper understanding that clears up our misconceptions; it shows us the error of our hates; it dispels our worries and our fears; it allays the grief that seemed too poignant to be borne.

Yes, things are more or less amiss;
To-day it's that, to-morrow this;
Yet with so much that's out of whack,
Life does not wholly jump the track
Because, since matters move along,
No one thing's always staying wrong.
So heed not failures, losses, fears,
But trust the rectifying years.

What we shall have's not what we've got;
Our pains don't linger in one spot--
They skip about; the seesaw's end
That's up will mighty soon descend;
You've looked at bacon? Life's like that--
A streak of lean, a streak of fat.
Change, like a sky that clouds, that clears,
Hangs o'er the rectifying years.

Uneven things not leveled down
Are somehow simply got aroun';
The sting is taken from offence;
The evil has its recompense;
The broken heart is knit again;
The baffled longing knows not pain;
Wrong fades and trouble disappears
Before the rectifying years.

Then envy, hate towards man or class
Should from your sinful nature pass.
Though others hold a higher place
Or have more power or wealth or grace,
The best of them, be sure, cannot
Escape the common human lot;
So many smiles, so many tears
Come with the rectifying years.

__St. Clair Adams.__

HELPING' OUT

"I always look out for Number One," was the favorite remark of a man who thought he had found the great rule to success, but he had only stated his own doctrine of selfishness, and his life was never very successful. A man must be big to succeed, and selfishness is always cramping and narrow.

Da's a lot of folks what preach all day
An' always pointing' out de way,
Dey say dat prayin' all de time
An' keepin' yo' heart all full of rhyme
Will lead yo' soul to heights above
Whah angels coo like a turtledove.
But I's des lookin' round, dat's me--
I's trustin' lots in what I see;
It 'pears to me da's lots to do
Befo' we pass dat heavenly blue.
I believes in prayin', preachin' about,
But believe a lot mo' in helpin' out.

I believes in 'ligin, it's mighty sweet,
But de kind dat gits in yo' hands and feet
An' makes you work when dey ain't no praise,
Nuthin' but a heart dat's all a-blaze.
If it rains or shines, dey's des de same--
Say, bless you, honey, Sunshine's dey name;
Dey don't fuss round 'bout how much pay
But climbs up de trail, helpin' all de way.
De load is often twice der size,
And smilin' is der biggest prize.
Dey never gits dis awful gout
'Cause dey's busy all de time in helpin' out.

We had an old mule on Massa's place,
As fo' looks he'd certainly lose de race;
But der wa'n't a horse fo' miles around
Could pull mo' load or plow mo' ground.
An' when dat donkey brayed his best,
He seemed to know he'd licked de rest.
Dat bray of his was strong as wool--
It always come at de hardest pull.
We need mo' mules with brains on guard

Dat knos de game of pullin' hard,
An' a heart dat's tender, true and stout,
Dat believes all day in helpin' out.

We's all des human, des common clay,
Des needs a little help to make work play.
I'se read a lot of philosophy day an' night,
An' worked around a heap wid de law of right.
I'se seen de high an' mighty come an' go,
I'se seen de simple spirit come from below;
An' I'se seen a lot of principle most folks miss--
I'se not a-stretchin' truth when I say dis:
"Keep a-smilin' an' a-lovin' an a-doin' all yo' can,
Fo' yo' loses all yo' trouble when yo' help yo' fellow man;
An' you gits on best yo'self, an' of this dey ain't no doubt,
When yo' practise de art of always helpin' out."

William Judson Kibby.

OPENING PARADISE

We appreciate even the common things of life if we are denied them.

See the wretch, that long has tost
On the thorny bed of Pain,
At length repair his vigor lost,
And breathe and walk again:
The meanest flow'r'et of the vale,
The simplest note that swells the gale,
The common Sun, the air, and skies,
To him are opening Paradise.

Thomas Gray.

IT MAY BE

Many, many are the human struggles in which we can lend no aid. But if we cannot help, at least we need not hinder.

It may be that you cannot stay
To lend a friendly hand to him
Who stumbles on the slippery way,
Pressed by conditions hard and grim;
It may be that you dare not heed
His call for help, because you lack
The strength to lift him, but you need
Not push him back.

It may be that he has not won
The right to hope for your regard;
He may in folly have begun
The course that he has found so hard;
It may be that your fingers bleed,
That Fortune turns a bitter frown
Upon your efforts, but you need
Not kick him down.

__S.E. Kiser.__

LIFE

In life is necessarily much monotony, sameness. But our triumph may lie in putting richness and meaning into routine that apparently lacks them.

Forenoon and afternoon and night,--Forenoon,
And afternoon, and night,--Forenoon, and--what!
The empty song repeats itself. No more?
Yea, that is Life: make this forenoon sublime,
This afternoon a psalm, this night a prayer,
And Time is conquered, and thy crown is won.

Edward Rowland Sill. From "Poems."

THE GRUMPY GUY

When students came, full of ambition, to the great scientist Agassiz, he gave each a fish and told him to find out what he could about it. They went to work and in a day or two were ready for their report. But Agassiz didn't come round. To kill time they went to work again, observed, dissected, conjectured, and when at the end of a fortnight Agassiz finally appeared, they felt that their knowledge was really exhaustive. The master's brief comment was that they had made a fair beginning, and again he left.

They then fell to in earnest and after weeks and months of investigation declared that a fish was the most fascinating of studies. If our interest in life fails, it is not from material to work on. No two leaves are alike, not two human beings are alike, and if we are discerning, the attraction of any one of them is infinite.

The Grumpy Guy was feeling blue; the Grumpy Guy was
glum;

The Grumpy Guy with baleful eye took Misery for a chum.
He hailed misfortunes as his pals, and murmured, "Let 'em
come!"

"Oh, what's the blooming use?" he yelled, his face an angry
red,

"When everything's been thought before and everything's
been said?

And what's a Grumpy Guy to do except to go to bed?

"And where's the joy the poets sing, the merriment and fun?

How can one start a thing that's new when everything's begun?

--

When everything's been planned before and everything's
been done?--

"When everything's been dreamed before and everything's
been sought?

When everything that ever ran has, so to speak, been caught?--

-

When every game's been played before and every battle
fought?"

I started him at solitaire, a fooling, piffling game.

He played it ninety-seven hours and failed to find it tame.

In all the times he dealt the cards no two games were the
same.

He never tumbled to its tricks nor mastered all its curves.

He grunted, "Well, this takes the cake, the pickles and
preserves!

Its infinite variety is getting on my nerves."

"Its infinite variety!" I scoffed. "Just fifty-two
Poor trifling bits of pasteboard!--their combinations few
Compared to what there is in man!--the poorest!--even you!

"Variety! You'll never find in forty-seven decks
One tenth of the variety found in the gentler sex.
Card combinations are but frills to hang around their necks.

"The sun won't rise to-morrow as it came to us to-day,
'Twill be older, we'll be older, and to Time this debt we pay.
For nothing can repeat itself, for nothing knows the way."

Then the Grumpy Guy was silent as a miser hoarding pelf.
He knew 'twas time to put his grouch away upon the shelf.
And so he did.--You see, I was just talking to myself!

Griffith Alexander. From "The Pittsburg Dispatch."

THE FIGHTER

If life were all easy, we should degenerate into weaklings--into
human mush. It is the fighting spirit that makes us strong. Nor do
any of us lack for a chance to exercise this spirit. Struggle is
everywhere; as Kearny said at Fair Oaks, "There is lovely
fighting along the whole line."

I fight a battle every day
Against discouragement and fear;
Some foe stands always in my way,
The path ahead is never clear!

I must forever be on guard
Against the doubts that skulk along;
I get ahead by fighting hard,
But fighting keeps my spirit strong.

I hear the croakings of Despair,
The dark predictions of the weak;
I find myself pursued by Care,
No matter what the end I seek;
My victories are small and few,
It matters not how hard I strive;
Each day the fight begins anew,
But fighting keeps my hopes alive.

My dreams are spoiled by circumstance,
My plans are wrecked by Fate or Luck;
Some hour, perhaps, will bring my chance,
But that great hour has never struck;
My progress has been slow and hard,
I've had to climb and crawl and swim,
Fighting for every stubborn yard,
But I have kept in fighting trim.

I have to fight my doubts away,
And be on guard against my fears;
The feeble croaking of Dismay
Has been familiar through the years;
My dearest plans keep going wrong,
Events combine to thwart my will,
But fighting keeps my spirit strong,
And I am undefeated still!

S.E. Kiser. From "The New York American."

TO YOUTH AFTER PAIN

Since pain is the lot of all, we cannot hope to escape it. Since only through pain can we come into true and helpful sympathy with men, we should not wish to escape it.

What if this year has given
Grief that some year must bring,
What if it hurt your joyous youth,
Crippled your laughter's wing?
You always knew it was coming,
Coming to all, to you,
They always said there was suffering--
Now it is done, come through.

Even if you have blundered,
Even if you have sinned,
Still is the steadfast arch of the sky
And the healing veil of the wind....
And after only a little,
A little of hurt and pain,
You shall have the web of your own old dreams
Wrapping your heart again.

Only your heart can pity
Now, where it laughed and passed,
Now you can bend to comfort men,
One with them all at last,
You shall have back your laughter,
You shall have back your song,
Only the world is your brother now,
Only your soul is strong!

Margaret Widdemer. From "The Old Road to Paradise."

CAN'T

"Impossible," Napoleon is quoted as saying, "is a word found only in the dictionary of fools."

Can't is the worst word that's written or spoken;
Doing more harm here than slander and lies;
On it is many a strong spirit broken,
And with it many a good purpose dies.
It springs from the lips of the thoughtless each morning
And robs us of courage we need through the day:
It rings in our ears like a timely-sent warning
And laughs when we falter and fall by the way.

Can't is the father of feeble endeavor,
The parent of terror and half-hearted work;
It weakens the efforts of artisans clever,
And makes of the toiler an indolent shirk.
It poisons the soul of the man with a vision,
It stifles in infancy many a plan;
It greets honest toiling with open derision
And mocks at the hopes and the dreams of a man.

Can't is a word none should speak without blushing;
To utter it should be a symbol of shame;
Ambition and courage it daily is crushing;
It blights a man's purpose and shortens his aim.
Despise it with all of your hatred of error;
Refuse it the lodgment it seeks in your brain;
Arm against it as a creature of terror,
And all that you dream of you some day shall gain.

Can't is the word that is foe to ambition,
An enemy ambushed to shatter your will;
Its prey is forever the man with a mission
And bows but to courage and patience and skill.
Hate it, with hatred that's deep and undying,
For once it is welcomed 'twill break any man;
Whatever the goal you are seeking, keep trying
And answer this demon by saying: "I _can_."

Edgar A. Guest. From "A Heap o' Livin'."

HOLD FAST

A football coach who told his players that their rivals were too strong for them would be seeking a new position the next year. If the opposing team is formidable, he says so; if his men have their work cut out for them, he admits it; but he mentions these things as incitements to effort. Merely saying of victory that it can be won is among the surest ways of winning it.

When you're nearly drowned in trouble, and the world is dark
as ink;

When you feel yourself a-sinking 'neath the strain,
And you think, "I've got to holler 'Help!'" just take another
breath

And pretend you've lost your voice--and can't complain!
(That's the idea!)

Pretend you've lost your voice and can't complain!

When the future glowers at you like a threatening thunder
cloud,

Just grit your teeth and bend your head and say:

"It's dark and disagreeable and I can't help feeling blue,
But there's coming sure as fate a brighter day!"

(Say it slowly!)

"But there's coming sure as fate, a brighter day!"

You have bluffed your way through ticklish situations; that I know.

You are looking back on troubles past and gone;
Now, turn the tables, and as you have fought and won before,
Just BLUFF YOURSELF to keep on holding on!

(Try it once.)

Just bluff YOURSELF to keep on--holding on.

Don't worry if the roseate hues of life are faded out,
Bend low before the storm and wait awhile.
The pendulum is bound to swing again and you will find
That you have not forgotten how to smile.

(That's the truth!)

That you have not forgotten how to smile.

Everard Jack Appleton. From "The Quiet Courage."

THE GAME

Let's play it out--this little game called Life,
Where we are listed for so brief a spell;
Not just to win, amid the tumult rife,
Or where acclaim and gay applauses swell;
Nor just to conquer where some one must lose,
Or reach the goal whatever be the cost;
For there are other, better ways to choose,
Though in the end the battle may be lost.

Let's play it out as if it were a sport
Wherein the game is better than the goal,
And never mind the detailed "score's" report
Of errors made, if each with dauntless soul
But stick it out until the day is done,
Not wasting fairness for success or fame,
So when the battle has been lost or won,
The world at least can say: "He played the game."

Let's play it out--this little game called Work,
Or War or Love or what part each may draw;
Play like a man who scorns to quit or shirk
Because the break may carry some deep flaw;
Nor simply holding that the goal is all
That keeps the player in the contest staying;
But stick it out from curtain rise to fall,
As if the game itself were worth the playing.

Grantland Rice. From "The Spotlight."

SWELLITIS

A certain employer of large numbers of men makes it a principle to praise none of them, not because they are undeserving, and not because he dislikes to commend, but because experience has taught him that usually the praise goes to the head of the recipient, both impairing his work and making it harder for others to associate with him. A good test of a man is his way of taking commendation. He may, even while grateful, be stirred to humility that he has not done better still, and may resolve to accomplish more. Or imitating the frog who wished to look like an ox, he may swell and swell until--figuratively speaking—he bursts.

Somebody said he'd done it well,
And presto! his head began to swell;
Bigger and bigger the poor thing grew--
A wonder it didn't split in two.
In size a balloon could scarcely match it;
He needed a fishing-pole to scratch it;---
But six and a half was the size of his hat,
And it rattled around on his head at that!

"Good work," somebody chanced to say,
And his chest swelled big as a load of hay.
About himself, like a rooster, he crowed;
Of his wonderful work he bragged and blowed
He marched around with a peacock strut;
Gigantic to him was the figure he cut;--
But he wore a very small-sized suit,
And loosely it hung on him, to boot!

HE was the chap who made things hum!
HE was the drumstick and the drum!
HE was the shirt bosom and the starch!
HE was the keystone in the arch!
HE was the axis of the earth!
Nothing existed before his birth!
But when he was off from work a day
Nobody knew that he was away!

This is a fact that is sad to tell:
It's the empty head that is bound to swell;
It's the light-weight fellow who soars to the skies
And bursts like a bubble before your eyes.
A big man is humbled by honest praise,
And tries to think of all the ways
To improve his work and do it well;--
But a little man starts of himself to yell!

Joseph Morris:

CARES

To those who are wearied, fretted, and worried there is no physician like nature. When our nerves are frazzled and our sleep is unrefreshing, we can find no better antidote to the clamorous grind and frenzy of the city than the stillness and solitude of hills, streams, and tranquil stars. That man lays up for himself resources of strength who now and then exchanges the ledger for green leaves, the factory for wild flowers, business for brook-croon and bird-song.

The little cares that fretted me,
I lost them yesterday
Among the fields above the sea,
Among the winds at play;
Among the lowing of the herds,
The rustling of the trees,
Among the singing of the birds,
The humming of the bees.

The foolish fears of what may happen,
I cast them all away
Among the clover-scented grass,
Among the new-mown hay;
Among the husking of the corn
Where drowsy poppies nod,
Where ill thoughts die and good are born
Out in the fields with God.

__Elisabeth Barrett Browning.__

FAITH

Any one who has ridden across the continent on a train must marvel at the faith and imagination of the engineers who constructed the road—the topographical advantages seized, the grades made easy of ascent, the curves and straight stretches planned, the tunnels so carefully calculated that workmen beginning on opposite sides of a mountain met in the middle--and all this visualized and thought out before the actual work was begun. Faith has such foresight, such courage, whether it toils actively or can merely bide its time.

The tree-top, high above the barren field,
Rising beyond the night's gray folds of mist,
Rests stirless where the upper air is sealed
To perfect silence, by the faint moon kissed.
But the low branches, drooping to the ground,
Sway to and fro, as sways funeral plume,
While from their restless depths low whispers sound:
"We fear, we fear the darkness and the gloom;
Dim forms beneath us pass and reappear,
And mournful tongues are menacing us here."

Then from the topmost bough falls calm reply:
"Hush, hush, I see the coming of the morn;
Swiftly the silent night is passing by,
And in her bosom rosy Dawn is borne.
'Tis but your own dim shadows that ye see,
'Tis but your own low moans that trouble ye."

So Life stands, with a twilight world around;
Faith turned serenely to the steadfast sky,
Still answering the heart that sweeps the ground
Sobbing in fear, and tossing restlessly--

"Hush, hush! The Dawn breaks o'er the Eastern sea,
'Tis but thine own dim shadow troubling thee."

Edward Rowland Sill. From "Poems."

WHAT DARK DAYS DO

A real man does not want all his barriers leveled. He of course welcomes easy tasks, but he welcomes hard ones also. The difficult or unpleasant thing puts him on his mettle, throws him on his own resources. It gives him something of

"The stern joy which warriors feel
In foemen worthy of their steel."

Moreover as a foil or contrast it enables him to value more truly the good things he constantly enjoys, perhaps without perceiving them.

I sorter like a gloomy day,
Th' kind that jest _won't_ smile;
It makes a feller hump hisself
T' make life seem wuth while.
When sun's a-shinin' an' th' sky
Is washed out bright an' gay,
It ain't no job to whistle--but
It is--
When skies air gray!

So gloomy days air good fer us,
They make us look about
To find our blessin's--make us count

The friends who never doubt,
Most any one kin smile and joke
And hold blue-devils back
When it is bright, but we must work
T' grin--
When skies air black!

That's why I sorter _like_ dark days,
That put it up to me
To keep th' gloom from soakin' in
My whole anatomy!
An' if they _never_ come along
My soul would surely rust--
Th' dark days keeps my cheerfulness
From draggin'
In th' dust!

Everard Jack Appleton. From "The Quiet Courage."

GLADNESS

A coal miner does not need the sun's illumination. He carries his own light.

The world has brought not anything
To make me glad to-day!
The swallow had a broken wing,
And after all my journeying
There was no water in the spring--
My friend has said me nay.
But yet somehow I needs must sing
As on a [happier] day.

Dusk fails as gray as any tear,
There is no hope in sight!
But something in me seems so fair,
That like a star I needs must wear
A safety made of shining air
Between me and the night.
Such inner weavings do I wear
All fashioned of delight!

I need not for these robes of mine
The loveliness of earth,
But happenings remote and fine
Like threads of dreams will blow and shine
In gossamer and crystalline,
And I was glad from birth.
So even while my eyes repine,
My heart is clothed in mirth.

__Anna Hempstead Branch.__

From "The Shoes That Danced, and Other Poems."

THE RAINBOW

Our lives are not a hodge-podge of separate experiences, though they sometimes seem so. They are held together by simple things which we behold again and again with the same emotions. Thus the man is what the boy has been; the tree is inclined in the precise direction the twig was bent.

My heart leaps up when I behold
A rainbow in the sky:
So was it when my life began;
So is it now I am a man;
So be it when I shall grow old,
Or let me die!
The Child is father of the Man;
And I could wish my days to be
Bound each to each by natural piety.

William Wordsworth.

THE FIRM OF GRIN AND BARRETT

It has been said that when disaster overtakes us, we can do one of two things--we can grin and bear it, or we needn't grin. The spirit that keeps a smile on our faces when our burden is heaviest is the spirit that will win in the long run. Many men know how to take success quietly. The real test of a man is the way he takes failure.

No financial throe volcanic
Ever yet was known to scare it;
Never yet was any panic
Scared the firm of Grin and Barrett.
From the flurry and the fluster,
From the ruin and the crashes,
They arise in brighter lustre,
Like the phoenix from his ashes.
When the banks and corporations
Quake with fear, they do not share it;
Smiling through all perturbations
Goes the firm of Grin and Barrett.
Grin and Barrett,
Who can scare it?
Scare the firm of Grin and Barrett?

When the tide-sweep of reverses
Smites them, firm they stand and dare it
Without wailings, tears, or curses,
This stout firm of Grin and Barrett.
Even should their house go under
In the flood and inundation,
Calm they stand amid the thunder
Without noise or demonstration.
And, when sackcloth is the fashion,
With a patient smile they wear it,
Without petulance or passion,
This old firm of Grin and Barrett.
Grin and Barrett,
Who can scare it?
Scare the firm of Grin and Barrett?

When the other firms show dizziness,
Here's a house that does not share it.
Wouldn't you like to join the business?
Join the firm of Grin and Barrett?
Give your strength that does not murmur,
And your nerve that does not falter,
And you've joined a house that's firmer
Than the old rock of Gibraltar.
They have won a good prosperity;
Why not join the firm and share it?
Step, young fellow, with celerity;
Join the firm of Grin and Barrett.
Grin and Barrett,
Who can scare it?
Scare the firm of Grin and Barrett?

Sam Walter Foss. From "Songs of the Average Man."

CHALLENGE

Life, I challenge you to try me,
Doom me to unending pain;
Stay my hand, becloud my vision,
Break my heart and then--again.

Shatter every dream I've cherished,
Fill my heart with ruthless fear;
Follow every smile that cheers me
With a bitter, blinding tear.

Thus I dare you; you can try me,
Seek to make me cringe and moan,
Still my unbound soul defies you,
I'll withstand you--and, alone!

 Jean Nette.

YOUR MISSION

One of the most often-heard of sentences is "I don't know what I'm to do in the world." Yet very few people are ever for a moment out of something to do, especially if they do not insist on climbing to the top of the pole and waving the flag, but are willing to steady the pole while somebody else climbs.

If you cannot on the ocean
Sail among the swiftest fleet,

Rocking on the highest billows,
Laughing at the storms you meet;
You can stand among the sailors,
Anchored yet within the bay,
You can lend a hand to help them
As they launch their boats away.

If you are too weak to journey
Up the mountain, steep and high,
You can stand within the valley
While the multitudes go by;
You can chant in happy measure
As they slowly pass along--
Though they may forget the singer,
They will not forget the song.

* * * * *

If you cannot in the harvest
Garner up the richest sheaves,
Many a grain, both ripe and golden,
Oft the careless reaper leaves;
Go and glean among the briars
Growing rank against the wall,
For it may be that their shadow
Hides the heaviest grain of all.

If you cannot in the conflict
Prove yourself a soldier true;
If, where fire and smoke are thickest,
There's no work for you to do;
When the battle field is silent,
You can go with careful tread;
You can bear away the wounded,
You can cover up the dead.

Do not then stand idly waiting
For some greater work to do;
Fortune is a lazy goddess,
She will never come to you;
Go and toil in any vineyard,
Do not fear to do and dare.
If you want a field of labor
You can find it anywhere.

__Ellen M.H. Gates.__

VICTORY

To fail is not a disgrace; the disgrace lies in not trying. In his old age Sir Walter Scott found that a publishing firm he was connected with was heavily in debt. He refused to take advantage of the bankruptcy law, and sat down with his pen to make good the deficit. Though he wore out his life in the struggle and did not live to see the debt entirely liquidated, he died an honored and honorable man.

I call no fight a losing fight
If, fighting, I have gained some straight new strength;
If, fighting, I turned ever toward the light,
All unallied with forces of the night;
If, beaten, quivering, I could say at length:
"I did no deed that needs to be unnamed;
I fought--and lost--and I am unashamed."

__Miriam Teichner.__

TIMES GO BY TURNS

One of the greatest blessings in life is alteration. The ins become outs, the outs ins; the ups become downs, the downs ups; and so on—and it is better so. We must not get too highly elated at success, for life is not all success. We must not grow too downcast from failure, for life is not all failure.

The lopped tree in time may grow again,
Most naked plants renew both fruit and flower;
The sorriest wight may find release of pain,
The driest soil suck in some moistening shower;
Time goes by turns, and chances change by course,
From foul to fair, from better hap to worse.

The sea of Fortune doth not ever flow;
She draws her favors to the lowest ebb;
Her tides have equal times to come and go;
Her loom doth weave the fine and coarsest web;
No joy so great but runneth to an end,
No hap so hard but may in fine amend.

Not always fall of leaf, nor ever Spring;
Not endless night, yet not eternal day;
The saddest birds a season find to sing;
The roughest storm a calm may soon allay.
Thus, with succeeding turns God tempereth all,
That man may hope to rise, yet fear to fall.

A chance may win that by mischance was lost;
That net that holds no great takes little fish;
In some things all, in all things none are crost;
Few all they need, but none have all they wish.
Unmingled joys here to no man befall;
Who least, hath some; who most, hath never all.

—Robert Southwell—

TO-DAY

The past did not behold to-day; the future shall not. We must use it now if it is to be of any benefit to mankind.

So here hath been dawning
Another blue day;
Think, wilt thou let it
Slip useless away?

Out of Eternity
This new day is born;
Into Eternity,
At night will return.

Behold it aforeside
No eye ever did;
So soon it for ever
From all eyes is hid.

Here hath been dawning
Another blue day;
Think, wilt thou let it
Slip useless away?

—Thomas Carlyle.—

UNAFRAID

I have no fear. What is in store for me
Shall find me ready for it, undismayed.
God grant my only cowardice may be
Afraid--to be afraid!

Everard Jack Appleton. From "The Quiet Courage."

KEEP ON KEEPIN' ON

The author of these homely stanzas has caught perfectly the spirit which succeeds in the rough-and-tumble of actual life.

If the day looks kinder gloomy
And your chances kinder slim,
If the situation's puzzlin'
And the prospect's awful grim,
If perplexities keep pressin'
Till hope is nearly gone,
Just bristle up and grit your teeth
And keep on keepin' on.

Frettin' never wins a fight
And fumin' never pays;
There ain't no use in broodin'
In these pessimistic ways;
Smile just kinder cheerfully
Though hope is nearly gone,
And bristle up and grit your teeth
And keep on keepin' on.

There ain't no use in growlin'
And grumblin' all the time,
When music's ringin' everywhere
And everything's a rhyme.
Just keep on smilin' cheerfully
If hope is nearly gone,
And bristle up and grit your teeth
And keep on keepin' on.

Anonymous.

THE DISAPPOINTED

Those who have striven nobly and failed deserve sympathy. Sometimes they deserve also praise unreserved, in that they have refused to do something ignoble which would have led to what the world calls success.

They have lived the idea which Macbeth merely proclaimed:

"I dare do all that may become a man;
Who dares do more is none."

There are songs enough for the hero
Who dwells on the heights of fame;
I sing of the disappointed--
For those who have missed their aim.

I sing with a tearful cadence
For one who stands in the dark,
And knows that his last, best arrow
Has bounded back from the mark.

I sing for the breathless runner,
The eager, anxious soul,
Who falls with his strength exhausted.
Almost in sight of the goal;

For the hearts that break in silence,
With a sorrow all unknown,
For those who need companions,
Yet walk their ways alone.

There are songs enough for the lovers
Who share love's tender pain,
I sing for the one whose passion
Is given all in vain.

For those whose spirit comrades
Have missed them on their way,
I sing, with a heart o'erflowing,
This minor strain to-day.

And I know the Solar system
Must somewhere keep in space
A prize for that spent runner
Who barely lost the race.

For the plan would be imperfect
Unless it held some sphere
That paid for the toil and talent
And love that are wasted here.

Ella Wheeler Wilcox. From "Picked Poems."

LET ME LIVE OUT MY YEARS

We speak of the comforts and ease of old age, but our noblest selves do not really desire them. We want to do more than exist. We want to be alive to the very last.

Let me live out my years in heat of blood!
Let me die drunken with the dreamer's wine!
Let me not see this soul-house built of mud
Go toppling to the dust--a vacant shrine!

Let me go quickly like a candle light
Snuffed out just at the heyday of its glow!
Give me high noon--and let it then be night!
Thus would I go.

And grant that when I face the grisly Thing,
My song may triumph down the gray Perhaps!
Let me be as a tuneswept fiddlestring
That feels the Master Melody--and snaps.

John G. Neihardt From "The Quest" (collected lyrics).

PER ASPERA

A motto has been made of the Latin phrase "per aspera ad astra," of which the translation sometimes given is "through bolts and bars to the stars."

Thank God, a man can grow!
He is not bound
With earthward gaze to creep along the ground:

Though his beginnings be but poor and low,
Thank God, a man can grow!
The fire upon his altars may burn dim,
The torch he lighted may in darkness fail,
And nothing to rekindle it avail,--
Yet high beyond his dull horizon's rim,
Arcturus and the Pleiads beckon him.

Florence Earle Coates. From "Poems."

TIT FOR TAT

We are quick to notice obstacles, grudges, affronts. Are we equally quick to recognize the kindly influences that speed us on our way? The truth is we are each of us a debtor to life, and as honest men we should do all we can to discharge the obligation.

"Life," you say, "'s an old curmudgeon; yes, a thing whose heart is flint;

When I ask a friendly greeting, all I get's an angry glint.
Let me do it every good turn that I can--my very best,
Still it strikes me, trips, maligns me, and denies my least request.

"So," you say, "my patience ended, I will give it tit for tat."
What a bunch of animosities is covered by your hat!
All the roses life can offer bloom and beckon to your soul,
But you close your eyes to roses and in thorns lie down and roll.

Life does nothing for you, sonny? What a notion you have!

Say,

Make a little inventory of its gifts to you to-day.

You've a house or room to sleep in--did you build it with your hand?

If you did, who made the hammer and who cleared for you the land?

And electric lights--you use them; did you also put them there?

Beefsteak, coal, your mail, shoes, street cars--do they come like rain from air?

Or do countless men, far-scattered, toil that you may have more ease?--

Stokers, hodmen, farmers, plumbers, Yankees, dagoes, Japanese?

"Oh, that's general," you tell me. You have private blessings too.

Why, your mother in your childhood slaved and wrought and lived for you.

Helpful hands were all around you--hopes, fond wishes in the past;

Even now each day from somewhere friendly looks are on you cast.

Though you've been both crossed and harried, you've not struggled on alone;

Through the discords of endeavor comes to you an answering tone.

Life has done you many favors. Will you give it tit for tat?

Since you've looked so much at this side, won't you have a look at that?

Don't help only those who've helped you, count the rest as strangers, foes;

How long now would you have lasted had all done as you propose?

Many and many a benefactor you did not nor can repay--
There's your mother. Pass the kindness on to others--that's the way.

Life it is that's given freely. Unto life make due return.

Whether folks are undeserving, neither seek nor wish to learn.

Hit your dervedest for your teammates every time you come to bat,

And the world will be more happy that you give it tit for tat.

St. Clair Adams.

THE KINGDOM OF MAN

The wisest men know that the greatest world is not outside them.

What of the outer drear,
As long as there's inner light;
As long as the sun of cheer
Shines ardently bright?

As long as the soul's a-wing,
As long as the heart is true,
What power hath trouble to bring
A sorrow to you?

No bar can enage the soul,
Nor capture the spirit free,
As long as old earth shall roll,
Or hours shall be.

Our world is the world within,
Our life is the thought we take,
And never an outer sin
Can mar it or break.

Brood not on the rich man's land,
Sigh not for miser's gold,
Holding in reach of your hand
The treasure untold

That lies in the Mines of Heart,
That rests in the soul alone--
Bid worry and care depart,
Come into your own!

John Kendrick From "Songs of Cheer."

ABOU BEN ADHEM

Abou Ben Adhem (may his tribe increase!)
Awoke one night from a deep dream of peace,
And saw, within the moonlight in his room,
Making it rich, and like a lily in bloom,
An angel writing in a book of gold:--
Exceeding peace had made Ben Adhem bold,
And to the presence in the room he said,

"What writest thou?"--The vision raised its head,
And with a look made of all sweet accord,
Answered, "The names of those who love the Lord."
"And is mine one?" said Abou. "Nay, not so,"
Replied the angel. Abou spoke more low,
But cheerily still; and said, "I pray thee, then,
Write me as one that loves his fellow-men."

The angel wrote, and vanished. The next night
It came again with a great wakening light,
And showed the names whom love of God had blessed,
And, lo! Ben Adhem's name led all the rest.

Leigh Hunt.

THIS WORLD

There is good in life and there is ill. The question is where we
should put the emphasis.

This world that we're a-livin' in
Is mighty hard to beat;
You git a thorn with every rose,
But _ain't _the roses _sweet_!

Frank L. Stanton. From "The Atlanta Constitution."

LAUGH A LITTLE BIT

"A merry heart doeth good like a medicine"; a little laughter
cures many a seeming ill.

Here's a motto, just your fit--
Laugh a little bit.
When you think you're trouble hit,
Laugh a little bit.
Look misfortune in the face.
Brave the beldam's rude grimace;
Ten to one 'twill yield its place,
If you have the wit and grit
Just to laugh a little bit.

Keep your face with sunshine lit,
Laugh a little bit.
All the shadows off will flit,
If you have the grit and wit
Just to laugh a little bit.

Cherish this as sacred writ--
Laugh a little bit.
Keep it with you, sample it,
Laugh a little bit.
Little ills will sure betide you,
Fortune may not sit beside you,
Men may mock and fame deride you,
But you'll mind them not a whit
If you laugh a little bit.

Edmund Vance Cooke. From "A Patch of Pansies."

A SONG OF LIFE

Many of us merely exist, and think that we live. What we should regain at all costs is freshness and intensity of being. This need not involve turbulent activity. It may involve quite the opposite.

Say not, "I live!"

Unless the morning's trumpet brings
A shock of glory to your soul,
Unless the ecstasy that sings
Through rushing worlds and insects' wings,
Sends you upspringing to your goal,
Glad of the need for toil and strife,
Eager to grapple hands with Life--
Say not, "I live!"

Say not, "I live!"

Unless the energy that rings
Throughout this universe of fire
A challenge to your spirit flings,
Here in the world of men and things,
Thrilling you with a huge desire
To mate your purpose with the stars,
To shout with Jupiter and Mars--
Say not, "I live!"

Say not, "I live!"

Such were a libel on the Plan
Blazing within the mind of God
Ere world or star or sun began.
Say rather, with your fellow man,
"I grub; I burrow in the sod."
Life is not life that does not flame
With consciousness of whence it came--
Say not, "I live!"

__Angela Morgan.__ From "The Hour Has Struck."

LIFE

Most of us have failed or gone astray in one fashion or another,
at one
time or another. But we need not become despondent at such
times. We
should resolve to reap the full benefit of the discovery of our
weakness, our folly.

All in the dark we grope along,
And if we go amiss
We learn at least which path is wrong,
And there is gain in this.

We do not always win the race
By only running right,
We have to tread the mountain's base
Before we reach its height.

* * * * *

But he who loves himself the last
And knows the use of pain,
Though strewn with errors all his past,
He surely shall attain.

Some souls there are that needs must taste
Of wrong, ere choosing right;
We should not call those years a waste
Which led us to the light.

—Etta Wheeler Wilcox.— From "Poems of Power."

A TOAST TO MERRIMENT

A lady said to Whistler that there were but two painters-- himself and Velazquez. He replied: "Madam, why drag in Velazquez?" So it is with Joyousness and Gloom. Both exist,--but why drag in Gloom?

Make merry! Though the day be gray
Forget the clouds and let's be gay!
How short the days we linger here:
A birth, a breath, and then--the bier!
Make merry, you and I, for when
We part we may not meet again!

What tonic is there in a frown?
You may go up and I go down,
Or I go up and you--who knows
The way that either of us goes?
Make merry! Here's a laugh, for when
We part we may not meet again!

Make merry! What of frets and fears?
There is no happiness in tears.
You tremble at the cloud and lo!
'Tis gone--and so 'tis with our woe,
Full half of it but fancied ills.
Make merry! 'Tis the gloom that kills.

Make merry! There is sunshine yet,
The gloom that promised, let's forget,
The quip and jest are on the wing,
Why sorrow when we ought to sing?
Refill the cup of joy, for then
We part and may not meet again.

A smile, a jest, a joke--alas!
We come, we wonder, and we pass.
The shadow falls; so long we rest
In graves, where is no quip or jest.
Good day! Good cheer! Good-bye! For then
We part and may not meet again!

James W. Foley. From "Friendly Rhymes."

NEVER TROUBLE TROUBLE

To borrow trouble is to contract a debt that any man is better without. If your troubles are not borrowed, they are not likely to be many or great.

I used to hear a saying
That had a deal of pith;
It gave a cheerful spirit
To face existence with,
Especially when matters
Seemed doomed to go askew,
'Twas _Never trouble trouble
Till trouble troubles you._

Not woes at hand, those coming
Are hardest to resist;
We hear them stalk like giants,
We see them through a mist.
But big things in the brewing
Are small things in the brew;
So never trouble trouble
Till trouble troubles you.

Just look at things through glasses
That show the evidence;
One lens of them is courage,
The other common sense.
They'll make it clear, misgivings
Are just a bugaboo;
No more you'll trouble trouble
Till trouble troubles you.

—St. Clair Adams.—

CLEAR THE WAY

Humanity is always meeting obstacles. All honor to the men who do not fear obstacles, but push them aside and press on. Stephenson was explaining his idea that a locomotive steam engine could run along a track and draw cars after it. "But suppose a cow gets on the track," some one objected. "So much the worse," said Stephenson, "for the cow."

Men of thought! be up and stirring,
Night and day;
Sow the seed, withdraw the curtain,
Clear the way!
Men of action, aid and cheer them,
As ye may!
There's a fount about to stream,
There's a light about to gleam,
There's a warmth about to glow,

There's a flower about to blow;
There's midnight blackness changing
 Into gray!
Men of thought and men of action,
 Clear the way!

Once the welcome light has broken,
 Who shall say
What the unimagined glories
 Of the day?
What the evil that shall perish
 In its ray?
Aid it, hopes of honest men;
Aid the dawning, tongue and pen;
Aid it, paper, aid it, type,
Aid it, for the hour is ripe;
And our earnest must not slacken
 Into play.
Men of thought and men of action,
 Clear the way!

Lo! a cloud's about to vanish
 From the day;
And a brazen wrong to crumble
 Into clay!
With the Right shall many more
Enter, smiling at the door;
With the giant Wrong shall fall
Many others great and small,
That for ages long have held us
 For their prey.
Men of thought and men of action,
 Clear the way!

__Charles Mackay.__

ONE FIGHT MORE

We need not expect much of the man who, when defeated, gives way either to despair or to a wild impulse for immediate revenge. But from the man who stores up his strength quietly and bides his time for a new effort, we may expect everything.

Now, think you, Life, I am defeated quite?
More than a single battle shall be mine
Before I yield the sword and give the sign
And turn, a crownless outcast, to the night.
Wounded, and yet unconquered in the fight,
I wait in silence till the day may shine
Once more upon my strength, and all the line
Of your defenses break before my might.

Mine be that warrior's blood who, stricken sore,
Lies in his quiet chamber till he hears
Afar the clash and clang of arms, and knows
The cause he lived for calls for him once more;
And straightway rises, whole and void of fears,
And armed, turns him singing to his foes.

—Theodosia Garrison.— From "The Earth Cry."

A PSALM OF LIFE

At times this existence of ours seems to be meaningless; whether we have succeeded or whether we have failed appears to make little difference to us, and therefore effort seems scarcely worth while. But Longfellow tells us this view is all wrong. The past can take care of itself, and we need not even worry very

much about the future; but if we are true to our own natures, we must be up and doing in the present. Time is short, and mastery in any field of human activity is so long a process that it forbids us to waste our moments. Yet we must learn also how to wait and endure. In short, we must not become slaves to either indifference or impatience, but must make it our business to play a man's part in life.

Tell me not, in mournful numbers,
Life is but an empty dream!--
For the soul is dead that slumbers,
And things are not what they seem.

Life is real! Life is earnest!
And the grave is not its goal;
Dust thou art, to dust returnest,
Was not spoken of the soul.

Not enjoyment, and not sorrow,
Is our destined end or way;
But to act, that each to-morrow
Find us farther than to-day.

Art is long, and Time is fleeting,
And our hearts, though stout and brave,
Still, like muffled drums, are beating
Funeral marches to the grave.

In the world's broad field of battle,
In the bivouac of Life,
Be not like dumb, driven cattle!
Be a hero in the strife!

Trust no Future, howe'er pleasant!
Let the dead Past bury its dead!
Act,--act in the living Present!
Heart within, and God o'erhead!

Lives of great men all remind us
We can make our lives sublime,
And, departing, leave behind us
Footprints on the sands of time;

Footprints, that perhaps another,
Sailing o'er life's solemn main,
A forlorn and shipwrecked brother,
Seeing, shall take heart again.

Let us, then, be up and doing,
With a heart for any fate;
Still achieving, still pursuing,
Learn to labor and to wait.

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow.

A CREED

Men may seem sundered from each other; but the soul that each possesses, and the destiny common to all, invest them with a basic brotherhood.

There is a destiny that makes us brothers:
None goes his way alone:
All that we send into the lives of others
Comes back into our own.

I care not what his temples or his creeds,
One thing holds firm and fast--
That into his fateful heap of days and deeds
The soul of a man is cast.

Edwin Markham From "Lincoln, and Other Poems."

BATTLE CRY

We should win if we can. But in any case we should prove our
manhood by fighting.

More than half beaten, but fearless,
Facing the storm and the night;
Breathless and reeling but tearless,
Here in the lull of the fight,
I who bow not but before thee,
God of the fighting Clan,
Lifting my fists, I implore Thee,
Give me the heart of a Man!

What though I live with the winners
Or perish with those who fall?
Only the cowards are sinners,
Fighting the fight is all.
Strong is my foe--he advances!
Snapt is my blade, O Lord!
See the proud banners and lances!
Oh, spare me this stub of a sword!

Give me no pity, nor spare me;
Calm not the wrath of my Foe.
See where he beckons to dare me!
Bleeding, half beaten--I go.
Not for the glory of winning,
Not for the fear of the night;
Shunning the battle is sinning--
Oh, spare me the heart to fight!

Red is the mist about me;
Deep is the wound in my side;
"Coward" thou criest to flout me?
O terrible Foe, thou hast lied!
Here with my battle before me,
God of the fighting Clan,
Grant that the woman who bore me
Suffered to suckle a Man!

__John G. Neihardt.__ From "The Quest" (collected lyrics).

THE HAPPY HEART

One of our objects in life should be to find happiness, contentment. The means of happiness are surprisingly simple. We need not be rich or high-placed or powerful in order to be content. In fact the lowly are often the best satisfied. Izaak Walton lived the simple life and thanked God that there were so many things in the world of which he had no need.

Art thou poor, yet hast thou golden slumbers?
O sweet content!
Art thou rich, yet is thy mind perplexed?
O punishment!

Dost thou laugh to see how fools are vexed
To add to golden numbers, golden numbers?
O sweet content! O sweet, O sweet content!
Work apace, apace, apace, apace;
Honest labor bears a lovely face;
Then hey nonny nonny, hey nonny nonny!

Canst drink the waters of the crispéd spring?
O sweet content!
Swimm'st thou in wealth, yet sink'st in thine own tears?
O punishment!
Then he that patiently want's burden bears
No burden bears, but is a king, a king!
O sweet content! O sweet, O sweet content!
Work apace, apace, apace, apace;
Honest labor bears a lovely face;
Then hey nonny nonny, hey nonny nonny!

__Thomas Dekker.__

IF YOU CAN'T GO OVER OR UNDER, GO ROUND

Often the straight road to the thing we desire is blocked. We should not then weakly give over our purpose, but should set about attaining it by some indirect method. A politician knows that one way of getting a man's vote is to please the man's wife, and that one way of pleasing the wife is to kiss her baby.

A baby mole got to feeling big,
And wanted to show how he could dig;
So he plowed along in the soft, warm dirt
Till he hit something hard, and it surely hurt!

A dozen stars flew out of his snout;
He sat on his haunches, began to pout;
Then rammed the thing again with his head--
His grandpap picked him up half dead.
"Young man," he said, "though your pate is bone.
You can't butt your way through solid stone.
This bit of advice is good, I've found:
If you can't go over or under, go round."

A traveler came to a stream one day,
And because it presumed to cross his way,
And wouldn't turn round to suit his whim
And change its course to go with him,
His anger rose far more than it should,
And he vowed he'd cross right where he stood.
A man said there was a bridge below,
But not a step would he budge or go.
The current was swift and the bank was steep,
But he jumped right in with a violent leap.
A fisherman dragged him out half-drowned:
"When you can't go over or under, go round."

If you come to a place that you can't get _through_,
Or _over_ or _under_, the thing to do
Is to find a way _round_ the impassable wall,
Not say you'll go YOUR way or not at all.
You can always get to the place you're going,
If you'll set your sails as the wind is blowing.
If the mountains are high, go round the valley;
If the streets are blocked, go up some alley;
If the parlor-car's filled, don't scorn a freight;
If the front door's closed, go in the side gate.
To reach your goal this advice is sound:
If you can't go over or under, go round!

Joseph Morris.

THICK IS THE DARKNESS

How many of us forget when the sun goes down that it will rise again!

Thick is the darkness--
Sunward, O, sunward!
Rough is the highway--
Onward, still onward!

Dawn harbors surely
East of the shadows.
Facing us somewhere
Spread the sweet meadows.

Upward and forward!
Time will restore us:
Light is above us,
Rest is before us.

William Ernest Henley.

THE CELESTIAL SURGEON

We may acquire the resolution to be happy by resting on a bed of roses. If that fails us, we should try a bed of nettles.

If I have faltered more or less
In my great task of happiness;
If I have moved among my race
And shown no glorious morning face;

If beams from happy human eyes
Have moved me not; if morning skies,
Books, and my food, and summer rain
Knocked on my sullen heart in vain:--
Lord, thy most pointed pleasure take
And stab my spirit broad awake;
Or, Lord, if too obdurate I,
Choose thou, before that spirit die,
A piercing pain, a killing sin,
And to my dead heart run them in!

Robert Louis Stevenson.

MAN, BIRD, AND GOD

Robert Bruce, despairing of his country's cause, was aroused to new hope and purpose by the sight of a spider casting its lines until at last it had one that held. In the following passage the poet, uncertain as to his own future, yet trusts the providence which guides the birds in their long and uncharted migrations.

I go to prove my soul!
I see my way as birds their trackless way.
I shall arrive! what time, what circuit first,
I ask not: but unless God send his hail
Or blinding fireballs, sleet or stifling snow,
In some time, his good time, I shall arrive:
He guides me and the bird. In his good time!

Robert Browning.

SUBMISSION

There are times when the right thing to do is to submit. There are times when the right thing is to strive, to fight. To put forth one's best effort is itself a reward. But sometimes it brings a material reward also. The frog that after falling into the churn found that it couldn't jump out and wouldn't try, was drowned. The frog that kept leaping in brave but seemingly hopeless endeavor at last churned the milk, mounted the butter for a final effort, and escaped.

Submission? They have preached at that so long.
As though the head bowed down would right the wrong,
As though the folded hand, the coward heart
Were saintly signs of souls sublimely strong;
As though the man who acts the waiting part
And but submits, had little wings a-start.
But may I never reach that anguished plight
Where I at last grow weary of the fight.

Submission: "Wrong of course must ever be
Because it ever was. 'Tis not for me
To seek a change; to strike the maiden blow.
'Tis best to bow the head and not to see;
'Tis best to dream, that we need never know
The truth. To turn our eyes away from woe."
Perhaps. But ah--I pray for keener sight,
And may I not grow weary of the fight.

__Miriam Teichner.__

STABILITY

Whom do we wish for our friends and allies? On whom would we wish to depend in a time of need? Those who are not the slaves of fortune, but have made the most of both her buffets and her rewards. Those who control their fears and rash impulses, and do not give way to sudden emotion. Amid confusion and disaster men like these will stand, as Jackson did at Bull Run, like a veritable stone wall.

Since my dear soul was mistress of her choice
And could of men distinguish, her election
Hath sealed thee for herself; for thou hast been
As one, in suffering all, that suffers nothing,
A man that fortune's buffets and rewards
Hast ta'en with equal thanks; and bless'd are those
Whose blood and judgment are so well commingled
That they are not a pipe for fortune's finger
To sound what stop she please. Give me that man
That is not passion's slave, and I will wear him
In my heart's core, ay, in my heart of heart,
As I do thee.

__William Shakespeare.__

THE BARS OF FATE

"There ain't no such beast," ejaculated a farmer as he gazed at the rhinoceros at a circus. His incredulity did not of course do away with the existence of the creature. But our incredulity about many of our difficulties will do away with them. They exist chiefly in our imaginations.

I stood before the bars of Fate
And bowed my head disconsolate;
So high they seemed, so fierce their frown.
I thought no hand could break them down.

Beyond them I could hear the songs
Of valiant men who marched in throngs;
And joyful women, fair and free,
Looked back and waved their hands to me.

I did not cry "Too late! too late!"
Or strive to rise, or rail at Fate,
Or pray to God. My coward heart,
Contented, played its foolish part.

So still I sat, the tireless bee
Sped o'er my head, with scorn for me,
And birds who build their nests in air
Beheld me, as I were not there.

From twig to twig, before my face,
The spiders wove their curious lace,
As they a curtain fine would see
Between the hindering bars and me.

Then, sudden change! I heard the call
Of wind and wave and waterfall;
From heaven above and earth below
A clear command--"ARISE AND GO!"

I upward sprang in all my strength,
And stretched my eager hands at length
To break the bars--no bars were there;
My fingers fell through empty air!

Ellen M.H. Gates. From "To the Unborn Peoples."

ULTIMATE ACT

It is well to have purposes we can carry out. It is also well to have purposes so lofty that we cannot carry them out; for these latter are the mighty inner fires which warm our being at its core and without which our impulse to do even the lesser things would be feeble.

I had rather cut man's purpose deeper than
Achieving it be crowned as conqueror;
To will divinely is to accomplish more
Than a mere deed: it fills anew the wan
Aspect of life with blood; it draws upon
Sources beyond the common reach and lore
Of mortals, to replenish at its core
The God-impassioned energy of man.
And herewith all the worlds of deed and thought
Quicken again with meaning--pulse and thrill
With Deity--that had forgot His touch.

There is not any act avails so much
As this invisible wedding of the will
With Life--yea, though it seem to accomplish naught.

Henry Bryan Binns. From "The Free Spirit."

HE WHOM A DREAM HATH POSSESSED

The man possessed by a vision is not perplexed, troubled,
restricted, as the rest of us are. He wanders yet is not lost from
home, sees a million dawns yet never night descending, faces
death and destruction and in them finds triumph.

He whom a dream hath possessed knoweth no more of
doubting,
For mist and the blowing of winds and the mouthing of words
he scorns;
Not the sinuous speech of schools he hears, but a knightly
shouting,
And never comes darkness down, yet he greeteth a million
morns.

He whom a dream hath possessed knoweth no more of
roaming;
All roads and the flowing of waves and the speediest flight he
knows,
But wherever his feet are set, his soul is forever homing,
And going, he comes, and coming he heareth a call and goes.

He whom a dream hath possessed knoweth no more of sorrow,
At death and the dropping of leaves and the fading of suns

he smiles,

For a dream remembers no past and scorns the desire of a
morrow,

And a dream in a sea of doom sets surely the ultimate isles.

He whom a dream hath possessed treads the impalpable
marches,

From the dust of the day's long road he leaps to a laughing
star,

And the ruin of worlds that fall he views from eternal arches,
And rides God's battlefield in a flashing and golden car.

Sheamus O Sheel. From "The Lyric Year."

SERENITY

Calmness of mind to face anything the future may have in store
is expressed in this quatrain.

Here's a sigh to those who love me
And a smile to those who hate;
And whatever sky's above me,
Here's a heart for every fate.

Lord Byron.

An optimist has been described as a man who orders oysters at a restaurant and expects to find a pearl to pay the bill with. This of course is not optimism, but brazen brainlessness. Yet somehow the pearls come only to those who expect them.

CLEON AND I

Toward the end of the yacht race in which the America won her historic cup the English monarch, who was one of the spectators, inquired: "Which boat is first?" "The America seems to be first, your majesty," replied an aide. "And which is second?" asked the monarch. "Your majesty, there seems to be no second." So it is in the race for happiness. The man who is natural, who is open and kind of heart, is always first. The man who is merely rich or sheltered or proud is not even a good second.

Cleon hath a million acres, ne'er a one have I;
Cleon dwelleth in a palace, in a cottage I;
Cleon hath a dozen fortunes, not a penny I;
Yet the poorer of the twain is Cleon, and not I.

Cleon, true, possesses acres, but the landscape I;
Half the charm to me it yieldeth money can not buy,
Cleon harbors sloth and dullness, freshening vigor I;
He in velvet, I in fustian, richer man am I.

Cleon is a slave to grandeur, free as thought am I;
Cleon fees a score of doctors, need of none have I;
Wealth-surrounded, care-environed, Cleon fears to die;
Death may come, he'll find me ready, happier man am I.

Cleon sees no charm in nature, in a daisy I;
Cleon hears no anthems ringing in the sea and sky;
Nature sings to me forever, earnest listener I;
State for state, with all attendants, who would change?
Not I.

Charles Mackay.

THE PESSIMIST

Most of our ills and troubles are not very serious when we come to examine the realities of them. Or perhaps we expect too much. An old negro was complaining that the railroad would not pay him for his mule, which it had killed--nay, would not even give him back his rope. "What rope?" he was asked. "Why, sah," answered he, "de rope dat I tied de mule on de track wif."

Nothing to do but work,
Nothing to eat but food,
Nothing to wear but clothes
To keep one from going nude.

Nothing to breathe but air
Quick as a flash 'tis gone;
Nowhere to fall but off,
Nowhere to stand but on.

Nothing to comb but hair,
Nowhere to sleep but in bed,
Nothing to weep but tears,
Nothing to bury but dead.

Nothing to sing but songs,
Ah, well, alas! alack!
Nowhere to go but out,
Nowhere to come but back.

Nothing to see but sights,
Nothing to quench but thirst,
Nothing to have but what we've got;
Thus thro' life we are cursed.

Nothing to strike but a gait;
Everything moves that goes.
Nothing at all but common sense
Can ever withstand these woes.

Ben King. From "Ben King's Verse."

A PROBLEM TO BE SOLVED

There are irritating, troublesome people about us. Of what use is it to be irritating in our turn or to add to the trouble? Most offenders have their better side. Our wisest course is to find this and upon the basis of it build up a better relationship.

There's a fellow in your office
Who complains and carps and whines
Till you'd almost do a favor
To his heirs and his assigns.
But I'll tip you to a secret
(And this chap's of course involved)--
He's no foeman to be fought with;
He's a problem to be solved.

There's a duffer in your district
Whose sheer cussedness is such
He has neither pride nor manners--
No, nor gumption, overmuch.
'Twould be great to up and tell him
Where to go. But be resolved--
He's no foeman to be fought with,
Just a problem to be solved.

This old earth's (I'm sometimes thinking)
One menagerie of freaks--
Folks invested with abnormal
Lungs or brains or galls or beaks.
But we're not just shrieking monkeys
In a dim, vast cage revolved;
We're not foemen to be fought with,
Merely problems to be solved.

St. Clair Adams.

PROSPICE

Here the poet looks forward to death. He does not ask for an easy death; he does not wish to creep past an experience which all men sooner or later must face, and which many men have faced so heroically. He has fought well in life; he wishes to make the last fight too. The poem was written shortly after the death of Mrs. Browning, and the closing lines refer to her.

Fear death?--to feel the fog in my throat,
The mist in my face,
When the snows begin, and the blasts denote
I am nearing the place,
The power of the night, the press of the storm,
The post of the foe;
Where he stands, the Arch Fear in a visible form,
Yet the strong man must go:
For the journey is done and the summit attained,
And the barriers fall,
Though a battle's to fight ere the guerdon be gained,
The reward of it all.
I was ever a fighter, so--one fight more,
The best and the last!
I would hate that death bandaged my eyes, and forbore.
And bade me creep past.
No! let me taste the whole of it, fare like my peers
The heroes of old,
Bear the brunt, in a minute pay glad life's arrears
Of pain, darkness and cold.
For sudden the worst turns the best to the brave,
The black minute's at end,
And the elements' rage, the fiend-voices that rave,
Shall dwindle, shall blend,
Shall change, shall become first a peace out of pain,
Then a light, then thy breast,
O thou soul of my soul! I shall clasp thee again,
And with God be the rest!

Robert Browning.

STAND FORTH!

The human spirit can triumph over difficulties, as flowers bloom along the edge of the Alpine snow.

Stand forth, my soul, and grip thy woe,
Buckle the sword and face thy foe.
What right hast thou to be afraid
When all the universe will aid?
Ten thousand rally to thy name,
Horses and chariots of flame.
Do others fear? Do others fail?
My soul must grapple and prevail.
My soul must scale the mountainside
And with the conquering army ride--
Stand forth, my soul!

Stand forth, my soul, and take command.
'Tis I, thy master, bid thee stand.
Claim thou thy ground and thrust thy foe,
Plead not thine enemy should go.
Let others cringe! My soul is free,
No hostile host can conquer me.
There lives no circumstance so great
Can make me yield, or doubt my fate.
My soul must know what kings have known.
Must reach and claim its rightful throne--
Stand forth, my soul!

I ask no truce, I have no qualms,
I seek no quarter and no alms.
Let those who will obey the sod,
My soul sprang from the living God.
'Tis I, the king, who bid thee stand;
Grasp with thy hand my royal hand--
Stand forth!

Angela Morgan. From "The Hour Has Struck."

LIFE, NOT DEATH

Sometimes life is so unsatisfying that we think we should like to be rid of it. But we really are not longing for death; we are longing for more life.

Whatever crazy sorrow saith,
No life that breathes with human breath
Has ever truly longed for death.

'Tis life, whereof our nerves are scant,
Oh life, not death, for which we pant;
More life, and fuller, that I want.

Alfred Tennyson.

THE UNMUSICAL SOLOIST

In any sort of athletic contest a man who individually is good—perhaps even of the very best--may be a poor member of the team because he wishes to do all the playing himself and will not co-operate with his fellows. Every coach knows how such a man hashes the game. The same thing is true in business or in anything else where many people work together; a really capable man often fails because he hogs the center of the stage and wants to be the whole show. To seek petty, immediate triumphs instead of earning and waiting for the big, silent approval of one's own conscience and of those who understand, is a mark of inferiority. It is also a barrier to usefulness, for an egotistical man is necessarily selfish and a selfish man cannot co-operate.

Music hath charms--at least it should;
Even a homely voice sounds good
That sings a cheerful, gladsome song
That shortens the way, however long.
A screechy fife, a bass drum's beat
Is wonderful music to marching feet;
A scratchy fiddle or banjo's thump
May tickle the toes till they want to jump.
But one musician fills the air
With discords that jar folks everywhere.
A pity it is he ever was born--
The discordant fellow who toots his own horn.

He gets in the front where all can see--
"Now turn the spot-light right on me,"
He says, and sings in tones sonorous
His own sweet halleluiah chorus.
Refrain and verse are both the same--
The pronoun I or his own name.
He trumpets his worth with such windy tooting
That louder it sounds than cowboys shooting.
This man's a nuisance wherever he goes,
For the world soon tires of the chap who blows.
Whether mighty in station or hoer of corn,
Unwelcome's the fellow who toots his own horn.

The poorest woodchopper makes the most sound;
A poor cook clatters the most pans around;
The rattling spoke carries least of the load;
And jingling pennies pay little that's owed;
A rooster crows but lays no eggs;
A braggart blows but drives no pegs.
He works out of harmony with any team,
For others are skim milk and he is the cream.
"The world," so far as he can see,

"Consists of a few other folks and ME."
He richly deserves to be held in scorn--
The ridiculous fellow who toots his own horn.

Joseph Morris.

MEETIN' TROUBLE

Some students of biology planned a trick on their professor. They took the head of one beetle, the body of another of a totally different species, the wings of a third, the legs of a fourth. These members they carefully pasted together. Then they asked the professor what kind of bug the creature was. He answered promptly, "A humbug." Just such a monstrosity is trouble--especially future trouble. Some things about it are real, but the whole combined menace is only an illusion, not a thing which actually exists at all. Face the trouble itself; give no heed to that idea of it which invests it with a hundred dire calamities.

Trouble in the distance seems all-fired big--
Sorter makes you shiver when you look at it a-comin';
Makes you wanter edge aside, er hide, er take a swig
Of somethin' that is sure to set your worried head a-hummin'.
Trouble in the distance is a mighty skeery feller--
But wait until it reaches you afore you start to beller!

Trouble standin' in th' road and frownin' at you, black,
Makes you feel like takin' to the weeds along the way;
Wish to goodness you could turn and hump yerself straight
back;
Know 'twill be awful when he gets you close at bay!

Trouble standin' in the road is bound to make you shy--
But wait until it reaches you afore you start to cry!

Trouble face to face with you ain't pleasant, but you'll find
That it ain't one-ha'f as big as fust it seemed to be;
Stand up straight and bluff it out! Say, "I gotter a mind
To shake my fist and skeer you off--you don't belong ter me!"
Trouble face to face with you? Though you mayn't feel gay,
Laugh at it as if you wuz--and it'll sneak away!

Everard Jack Appleton. From "The Quiet Courage."

PRESS ON

The spirit that has tamed this continent is the spirit which says,
"Press on." It appeals, not so much to men in the mass, as to
individuals. There is only one way for mankind to go forward.
Each
individual must be determined that, come what will, he will
never quail
or recede.

Press on! Surmount the rocky steps,
Climb boldly o'er the torrent's arch;
He fails alone who feebly creeps,
He wins who dares the hero's march.
Be thou a hero! Let thy might
Tramp on eternal snows its way,
And through the ebon walls of night
Hew down a passage unto day.

Press on! If Fortune play thee false
To-day, to-morrow she'll be true;
Whom now she sinks she now exalts,
Taking old gifts and granting new,
The wisdom of the present hour
Makes up the follies past and gone;
To weakness strength succeeds, and power
From frailty springs! Press on, press on!

Park Benjamin.

MY CREED

We all have a philosophy of life, whether or not we formulate it. Does it end in self, or does it include our relations and our duties to our fellows? General William Booth of the Salvation Army was once asked to send a Christmas greeting to his forces throughout the world. His life had been spent in unselfish service; over the cable he sent but one word--OTHERS.

This is my creed: To do some good,
To bear my ills without complaining,
To press on as a brave man should
For honors that are worth the gaining;
To seek no profits where I may,
By winning them, bring grief to others;
To do some service day by day
In helping on my toiling brothers

This is my creed: To close my eyes
To little faults of those around me;
To strive to be when each day dies
Some better than the morning found me;
To ask for no unearned applause,
To cross no river until I reach it;
To see the merit of the cause
Before I follow those who preach it.

This is my creed: To try to shun
The sloughs in which the foolish wallow;
To lead where I may be the one
Whom weaker men should choose to follow.
To keep my standards always high,
To find my task and always do it;
This is my creed--I wish that I
Could learn to shape my action to it.

__S.E. Kiser.__

THE NOBLE NATURE

There is a deceptive glamour about mere bigness. Quality may accompany quantity, but it need not. In fact good things are usually done up in small parcels.

It is not growing like a tree
In bulk, doth make Man better be;
Or standing long an oak, three hundred year,
To fall a log at last, dry, bald, and sere:

A lily of a day
Is fairer far in May,
Although it fall and die that night--
It was the plant and flower of Light.
In small proportions we just beauties see;
And in short measures life may perfect be.

Ben Jonson.

DAYS OF CHEER

Edison says that genius is two parts inspiration, ninety-eight parts perspiration. So happiness is two parts circumstance, ninety-eight parts mental attitude.

"Feelin' fine," he used to say,
Come a clear or cloudy day,
Wave his hand, an' shed a smile,
Keepin' sunny all th' while.
Never let no bugbears grim
Git a wrastle-holt o' him,
Kep' a-smilin' rain or shine,
Tell you he was "feelin' fine!"

"Feelin' fine," he used to say
Wave his hand an' go his way.
Never had no time to lose
So he said, fighting blues.
Had a twinkle in his eye
Always when a-goin' by,
Sort o' smile up into mine,
Tell me he was "feelin' fine!"

"Feelin' fine," he'd allus say,
An' th' sunshine seemed to stay
Close by him, or else he shone
With some sunshine of his own.
Didn't seem no clouds could dim
Any happiness for him,
Allus seemed to have a line
Out f'r gladness--"feelin' fine!"

"Feelin' fine," I've heard him say
Half a dozen times a day,
An' as many times I knowed
He was bearin' up a load.
But he never let no grim
Troubles git much holt on him,
Kep' his spirits jest like wine,
Bubblin' up an' "feelin' fine!"

"Feelin' fine"--I hope he'll stay
All his three score that-a-way,
Lettin' his demeanor be
Sech as you could have or me
Ef we tried, an' went along
Spillin' little drops o' song,
Lettin' rosebuds sort o' twine
O'er th' thorns and "feelin' fine."

James W. Foley. From "Tales of the Trail."

DE SUNFLOWER AIN'T DE DAISY

"Know yourself," said the Greeks. "Be yourself," bade Marcus Aurelius. "Give yourself," taught the Master. Though the third precept is the noblest, the first and second are admirable also. The second is violated on all hands. Yet to be what nature planned us--to develop our own natural selves--is better than to copy those who are wittier or wiser or otherwise better endowed than we. Genuineness should always be preferred to imitation.

De sunflower ain't de daisy, and de melon ain't de rose;
Why is dey all so crazy to be sumfin else dat grows?
Jess stick to de place yo're planted, and do de bes yo knows;
Be de sunflower or de daisy, de melon or de rose.
Don't be what yo ain't, jess yo be what yo is,
If yo am not what yo are den yo is not what you is,
If yo're jess a little tadpole, don't yo try to be de frog;
If yo are de tail, don't yo try to wag de dawg.
Pass de plate if yo can't exhawt and preach;
If yo're jess a little pebble, don't yo try to be de beach;
When a man is what he isn't, den he isn't what he is,
An' as sure as I'm talking, he's a-gwine to get his.

Anonymous.

THE DAFFODILS

The poet in lonely mood came suddenly upon a host of daffodils and was thrilled by their joyous beauty. But delightful as the immediate scene was, it was by no means the best part of his experience. For long afterwards, when he least expected

it, memory brought back the flowers to the eye of his spirit, filled his solitary moments with thoughts of past happiness, and took him once more (so to speak) into the free open air and the sunshine. Just so for us the memory of happy sights we have seen comes back again to bring us pleasure.

I wander'd lonely as a cloud
That floats on high o'er vales and hills,
When all at once I saw a crowd,
A host of golden daffodils,
Beside the lake, beneath the trees,
Fluttering and dancing in the breeze.

Continuous as the stars that shine
And twinkle on the milky way,
They stretch'd in never-ending line
Along the margin of a bay:
Ten thousand saw I at a glance
Tossing their heads in sprightly dance.

The waves beside them danced, but they
Out-did the sparkling waves in glee:--
A Poet could not but be gay
In such a jocund company!
I gazed--and gazed--but little thought
What wealth the show to me had brought;

For oft, when on my couch I lie
In vacant or in pensive mood,
They flash upon that inward eye
Which is the bliss of solitude;
And then my heart with pleasure fills,
And dances with the daffodils.

__William Wordsworth.__

A LITTLE THANKFUL SONG

No man is without a reason to be thankful. If he lacks gratitude, the fault lies at least partly with himself.

For what are we thankful for? For this:
For the breath and the sunlight of life
For the love of the child, and the kiss
On the lips of the mother and wife.
For roses entwining,
For bud and for bloom,
And hopes that are shining
Like stars in the gloom.

For what are we thankful for? For this:
The strength and the patience of toil;
For ever the dreams that are bliss--
The hope of the seed in the soil.
For souls that are whiter
From day unto day;
And lives that are brighter
From going God's way.

For what are we thankful for? For all:
The sunlight--the shadow--the song;
The blossoms may wither and fall,
But the world moves in music along!
For simple, sweet living,
(Tis love that doth teach it)
A heaven forgiving
And faith that can reach it!

Frank L. Stanton. From "The Atlanta Constitution."

TWO RAINDROPS (A FABLE)

An egotist is not only selfish; he is usually ridiculous as well, for he sets us to wondering as to any possible ground for his exalted opinion of himself. The real workers do not emphasize their superiority to other people, do not even emphasize the differences, but are grateful that they may share in humanity's privilege of rendering service.

Two little raindrops were born in a shower,
And one was so pompously proud of his power,
He got in his head an extravagant notion
He'd hustle right off and swallow the ocean.
A blade of grass that grew by the brook
Called for a drink, but no notice he took
Of such trifling things. He must hurry to be
Not a mere raindrop, but the whole sea.
A stranded ship needed water to float,
But he could not bother to help a boat.
He leaped in the sea with a puff and a blare--
And nobody even knew he was there!

But the other drop as along it went
Found the work to do for which it was sent:
It refreshed the lily that drooped its head,
And bathed the grass that was almost dead.
It got under the ships and helped them along,
And all the while sang a cheerful song.
It worked every step of the way it went,
Bringing joy to others, to itself content.
At last it came to its journey's end,
And welcomed the sea as an old-time friend.
"An ocean," it said, "there could not be
Except for the millions of drops like me."

__Joseph Morris,__

MY WAGE

We may as well aim high as low, ask much as little. The world will not miss what it gives us, and our reward will largely be governed by our demands.

I bargained with Life for a penny,
And Life would pay no more,
However I begged at evening
When I counted my scanty store;

For Life is a just employer,
He gives you what you ask,
But once you have set the wages,
Why, you must bear the task.

I worked for a menial's hire,
Only to learn, dismayed,
That any wage I had asked of Life,
Life would have paid.

__Jessie B. Rittenhouse.__ From "The Door of Dreams."

VICTORY IN DEFEAT

The great, radiant souls of earth--the Davids, the Shakespeares, the Lincolns--know grief and affliction as well as joy and triumph. But adversity is never to them mere adversity; it

"Doth suffer a sea-change
Into something rich and strange";

and in the crucible of character their suffering itself is transmuted into song.

Defeat may serve as well as victory
To shake the soul and let the glory out.
When the great oak is straining in the wind,
The boughs drink in new beauty, and the trunk
Sends down a deeper root on the windward side.
Only the soul that knows the mighty grief
Can know the mighty rapture. Sorrows come
To stretch out spaces in the heart for joy.

Edwin Markham.

From "The Shoes of Happiness, and Other Poems."

THE RICHER MINES

No man is so poor but that he is a stockholder. Yet many a man has no real riches; his stocks draw dividends in dollars and cents only.

When it comes to buying shares
In the mines of earth,
May I join the millionaires
Who are rich in mirth.

Let me have a heavy stake
In fresh mountain air--
I will promise now to take
All that you can spare.

When you're setting up your claim
In the Mines of Glee,
Don't forget to use my name--
You can count on me.

Nothing better can be won,
Freer from alloy,
Than a bouncing claim in "Con-
Solidated Joy."

You can have your Copper Stocks
Gold and tin and coal--
What I'd have within my box
Has to do with Soul.

John Kendrick Bangs. From "Songs of Cheer."

BRAVE LIFE

To be absolutely without physical fear may not be the highest courage; to shrink and quake, and yet stand at one's post, may be braver still. So of success. It lies less in the attainment of some external end than in holding yourself to your purposes and ideals; for out of high loyalty and effort comes that intangible thing called character, which is no mere symbol of success, but success itself.

I do not know what I shall find on out beyond the final fight;
I do not know what I shall meet beyond the last barrage of
night;
Nor do I care--but this I know--if I but serve within the fold
And play the game--I'll be prepared for all the endless years
may hold.

Life is a training camp at best for what may wait beyond the years;
A training camp of toiling days and nights that lean to dreams and tears;
But each may come upon the goal, and build his soul above all Fate
By holding an unbroken faith and taking Courage for a mate.

Is not the fight itself enough that man must look to some behest?
Wherein does Failure miss Success if all engaged but do their best?
Where does the Victor's cry come in for wreath of fame or laureled brow
If one he vanquished fought as well as weaker muscle would allow?

If my opponent in the fray should prove to be a stronger foe--
Not of his making--but because the Destinies ordained it so;
If he should win--and I should lose--although I did my utmost part,
Is my reward the less than his if he should strive with equal heart?

On by the sky line, faint and vague, in that Far Country all must know,
No laurel crown of fame may wait beyond the sunset's glow;
But life has given me the chance to train and serve within the fold,
To meet the test--and be prepared for all the endless years may hold.

Grantland Rice. From "The Spotlight."

A SONG OF TO-MORROW

A night's sleep and a new day--these are excellent things to look forward to when one is weary or in trouble.

Li'l bit er trouble,
Honey, fer terday;
Yander come Termorrer--
Shine it all away!

Rainy Sky is sayin',
"Dis'll never do!
Fetch dem rainbow ribbons,
En I'll dress in blue!"

Frank L. Stanton. From "The Atlanta Constitution."

THE GLAD SONG

Gladness begins with the first person, with you. But it may spread far, like the ripples when you toss a stone in the water.

Sing a song, sing a song,
Ring the glad-bells all along;
Smile at him who frowns at you,
He will smile and then they're two.

Laugh a bit, laugh a bit,
Folks will soon be catching it,
Can't resist a happy face;
World will be a merry place.

Laugh a Bit and Sing a Song,
Where they are there's nothing wrong;
Joy will dance the whole world through,
But it must begin with you.

Joseph Morris.

PAINTING THE LILY

Many people are not content to let well enough alone, but spoil what they have by striving for an unnecessary and foolish improvement. If they have a rich title, they try to ornament it still further; if they have refined gold, they try to gild it; if they have a lily, they try to paint it into still purer color.

Therefore, to be possessed with double pomp,
To guard a title that was rich before,
To gild refined gold, to paint the lily,
To throw a perfume on the violet,
To smooth the ice, or add another hue
Unto the rainbow, or with taper-light
To seek the beauteous eye of heaven to garnish,
Is wasteful and ridiculous excess.

William Shakespeare.

A PRETTY GOOD WORLD

The world has its faults, but few of us would give it up till we have to.

Pretty good world if you take it all round--
Pretty good world, good people!
Better be on than under the ground--
Pretty good world, good people!
Better be here where the skies are as blue
As the eyes of your sweetheart a-smilin' at you--
Better than lyin' 'neath daisies and dew--
Pretty good world, good people!

Pretty good world with its hopes and its fears--
Pretty good world, good people!
Sun twinkles bright through the rain of its tears--
Pretty good world, good people!
Better be here, in the pathway you know--
Where the thorn's in the garden where sweet roses grow,
Than to rest where you feel not the fall o' the snow--
Pretty good world, good people!

Pretty good world! Let us sing it that way--
Pretty good world, good people!
Make up your mind that you're in it to stay--
At least for a season, good people!
Pretty good world, with its dark and its bright--
Pretty good world, with its love and its light;
Sing it that way till you whisper, "Good-night!"--
Pretty good world, good people!

Frank L. Stanton. From "The Atlanta Constitution."

ODE TO DUTY

In the first stanza the poet hails duty as coming from God. It is a light to guide us and a rod to check. To obey it does not lead to victory; to obey it is victory--is to live by a high, noble law. In the second stanza he admits that some people do right without driving themselves to it--do it by instinct and "the genial sense of youth." In stanza 3 he looks forward to a time when all people will be thus blessed, but he thinks that as yet it is unsafe for most of us to lose touch completely with stern, commanding duty. In stanzas 4 and 5 he states that he himself has been too impatient of control, has wearied himself by changing from one desire to another, and now wishes to regulate his life by some great abiding principle. In stanza 6 he declares that duty, though stern, is benignant; the flowers bloom in obedience to it, and the stars keep their places. In the final stanza he dedicates his life to its service.

Stern Daughter of the Voice of God!
O Duty! if that name thou love
Who art a light to guide, a rod
To check the erring, and reprove;
Thou who art victory and law
When empty terrors overawe;
From vain temptations dost set free,
And calm'st the weary strife of frail humanity!

There are who ask not if thine eye
Be on them; who, in love and truth
Where no misgiving is, rely
Upon the genial sense of youth:
Glad hearts! without reproach or blot,
Who do thy work, and know it not:
Oh! if through confidence misplaced
They fail, thy saving arms, dread Power! around them cast.

Serene will be our days and bright
And happy will our nature be
When love is an unerring light,
And joy its own security.
And they a blissful course may hold
Ev'n now, who, not unwisely bold,
Live in the spirit of this creed;
Yet seek thy firm support, according to their need.

I, loving freedom, and untried,
No sport of every random gust,
Yet being to myself a guide,
Too blindly have reposed my trust:
And oft, when in my heart was heard
Thy timely mandate, I deferr'd
The task, in smoother walks to stray;
But thee I now would serve more strictly, if I may.

Through no disturbance of my soul
Or strong compunction in me wrought,
I supplicate for thy control,
But in the quietness of thought:
Me this uncharter'd freedom tires;
I feel the weight of chance-desires:
My hopes no more must change their name;
I long for a repose that ever is the same.

Stern Lawgiver! yet thou dost wear
The Godhead's most benignant grace,
Nor know we anything so fair
As is the smile upon thy face;
Flowers laugh before thee on their beds,
And fragrance in thy footing treads;
Thou dost preserve the Stars from wrong;
And the most ancient Heavens, through Thee, are fresh and
strong.

To humbler functions, awful Power!
I call thee: I myself commend
Unto thy guidance from this hour;
Oh let my weakness have an end!
Give unto me, made lowly wise,
The spirit of self-sacrifice;
The confidence of reason give;
And in the light of truth thy Bondman let me live.

William Wordsworth.

SYNDICATED SMILE

A ready and sincere friendliness is the one thing we can show to every human being, whether we know him or not. The world is full of perplexed and lonely people whom even a smile or a kind look will help. Yet that which is so easy to give we too often reserve for a few, and those perhaps the least appreciative.

It's not enough to please your boss
Or fawn round folks with bankrolls;
Be just as friendly to the guys
Whose homespun round their shank rolls.
The best investment in the world
Is goodwill, twenty carat;
It costs you nothing, brings returns;
So get yours out and air it.
A niggard of good nature cheats
Himself and wrongs his fellows.
You'd serve mankind? Then be less close
With friendly nods and hellos.

The syndicated smile!
If you have kept it all the while,
You've vindicated
 The indicated,
 Syndicated
 Smile.

__St. Clair Adams.__

FAIRY SONG

The great beneficent forces of life are not exhausted when once used, but are recurrent. The sun rises afresh each new day. Once a year the springtime returns and "God renews His ancient rapture." So it is with our joys. They do not stay by us constantly; they pass from us and are gone; but we need not trouble ourselves--they are sure to come back.

Shed no tear! O shed no tear!
The flower will bloom another year.
Weep no more! O weep no more!
Young buds sleep in the root's white core.
Dry your eyes! O dry your eyes,
For I was taught in Paradise
To ease my breast of melodies--
 Shed no tear.

Overhead! look overhead,
'Mong the blossoms white and red--
Look up, look up--I flutter now

On this flush pomegranate bough.
See me! 'tis this silvery bill
Ever cures the good man's ill.
Shed no tear! O shed no tear!
The flowers will bloom another year.
Adieu, adieu--I fly, adieu,
I vanish in the heaven's blue--
Adieu, adieu!

__John Keats.__

COWARDS

We might as well accept the inevitable as the inevitable. There is no escaping death or taxes.

Cowards die many times before their deaths:
The valiant never taste of death but once.
Of all the wonders that I yet have heard,
It seems to me most strange that men should fear;
Seeing that death, a necessary end,
Will come, when it will come.

__William Shakespeare.__

THE WORD

Today, whatever may annoy,
The word for it is Joy, just simple joy:
The joy of life;
The joy of children and of wife;
The joy of bright blue skies;
The joy of rain; the glad surprise
Of twinkling stars that shine at night;
The joy of winged things upon their flight;
The joy of noonday, and the tried,
True joyousness of eventide;
The joy of labor and of mirth;
The joy of air, and sea, and earth--
The countless joys that ever flow from Him
Whose vast beneficence doth dim
The lustrous light of day,
And lavish gifts divine upon our way.
Whatever there be of Sorrow
I'll put off till To-morrow,
And when To-morrow comes, why, then
'Twill be To-day, and Joy again!

John Kendrick Bangs. From "The Atlantic Monthly."

JAW

We all like a firm, straightforward chin provided it is not ruled
by a wagging, gossiping tongue.

This fellow's jaw is built so frail
That you could break it like a weed;
That fellow's chin retreats until
You'd think it in a wild stampede.
Defects like these but show how soon
The purpose droops, the spirits flag--
We like a jaw that's made of steel,
Just so it's not inclined to wag.

The lower jaw should be as strong
And changeless as a granite cliff;
Its very look should be a _thus_
And not a _maybe, somehow, if;_
Should mark a soul so resolute
It will not fear or cease or lag--
We need a rugged mandible,
Provided we don't let it wag.

Yes, with endurance, let it too
A tender modesty possess;
And to its grim strength let it add
The gracious power of gentleness.
Above all, let its might of deeds
Induce no loud or vulgar brag--
We like to see a good, firm jaw,
But do not wish to hear it wag.

St. Clair Adams.

IS IT RAINING, LITTLE FLOWER?

"Sweet are the uses of adversity." They bring us benefits not otherwise to be had. To mope because of them is foolish. Showers alternate with sunshine, sorrows with pleasure, pain and weariness with comfort and rest; but accept the one as necessary to the other, and you will enjoy both.

Is it raining, little flower?

Be glad of rain.

Too much sun would wither thee,

'Twill shine again.

The sky is very black, 'tis true,

But just behind it shines

The blue.

Art thou weary, tender heart?

Be glad of pain;

In sorrow the sweetest things will grow

As flowers in the rain.

God watches and thou wilt have sun

When clouds their perfect work

Have done.

Anonymous.

GRADATIM

In the old fable the tortoise won the race from the hare, not by a single burst of speed, but by plodding on steadily, tirelessly. "All things excellent are as difficult as they are rare." Character is not attained over-night. The only way to develop moral muscles is to exercise them patiently and long.

Heaven is not reached at a single bound;
But we build the ladder by which we rise
From the lowly earth to the vaulted skies,
And we mount to its summit, round by round.

I count this thing to be grandly true:
That a noble deed is a step towards God,--
Lifting the soul from the common clod
To a purer air and a broader view.

We rise by the things that are under feet;
By what we have mastered of good and gain;
By the pride deposed and the passion slain,
And the vanquished ills that we hourly meet.

We hope, we aspire, we resolve, we trust,
When the morning calls us to life and light,
But our hearts grow weary, and, ere the night,
Our lives are trailing the sordid dust.

We hope, we resolve, we aspire, we pray,
And we think that we mount the air on wings
Beyond the recall of sensual things,
While our feet still cling to the heavy clay.

Wings for the angels, but feet for men!
We may borrow the wings to find the way--
We may hope, and resolve, and aspire, and pray;
But our feet must rise, or we fall again.

Only in dreams is a ladder thrown
From the weary earth to the sapphire walls;
But the dreams depart, and the vision falls,
And the sleeper wakes on his pillow of stone.

Heaven is not reached at a single bound;
But we build the ladder by which we rise
From the lowly earth to the vaulted skies,
And we mount to its summit, round by round.

J.G. Holland. From "Complete Poetical Writings."

RULES FOR THE ROAD

Ardor of sinew and spirit--what else do we need to make our
journey prosperous and happy?

Stand straight:
Step firmly, throw your weight:
The heaven is high above your head,
The good gray road is faithful to your tread.

Be strong:
Sing to your heart a battle song:
Though hidden foemen lie in wait,
Something is in you that can smile at Fate.

Press through:
Nothing can harm if you are true.
And when the night comes, rest:
The earth is friendly as a mother's breast.

Edwin Markham.
From "The Gates of Paradise, and Other Poems."

LIFE

"What is life?" we ask. "Just one darned thing after another," the cynic replies. Yes, a multiplicity of forces and interests, and each of them, even the disagreeable, may be of real help to us. It's good for a dog, says a shrewd philosopher, to be pestered with fleas; it keeps him from thinking too much about being a dog.

What's life? A story or a song;
A race on any track;
A gay adventure, short or long,
A puzzling nut to crack;
A grinding task; a pleasant stroll;
A climb; a slide down hill;
A constant striving for a goal;
A cake; a bitter pill;
A pit where fortune flouts or stings;
A playground full of fun;--
With many any of these things;
With others all in one.
What's life? To love the things we see;
The hills that touch the skies;
The smiling sea; the laughing lea;
The light in woman's eyes;
To work and love the work we do;
To play a game that's square;
To grin a bit when feeling blue;
With friends our joys to share;
To smile, though games be lost or won;
To earn our daily bread;--
And when at last the day is done
To tumble into bed.

Griffith Alexander, From "The Philadelphia Evening Public Ledger."

BORROWING TROUBLE

It is bad enough to cry over spilt milk. But many of us do worse; we cry over milk that we think is going to be spilt.

In line 1 sic=such;
2, a'=all;
3, nae=no;
4, enow=enough;
5, hae=have;
sturt=fret, trouble.

But human bodies are sic fools,
For a' their colleges an' schools,
That when nae real ills perplex them,
They mak enow themsels to vex them;
An' ay the less they hae to sturt them,
In like proportion less will hurt them.

Robert Burns

UNDISMAYED

He came up smilin'--used to say
He made his fortune that-a-way;
He had hard luck a-plenty, too,
But settled down an' fought her through;
An' every time he got a jolt
He jist took on a tighter holt,
Slipped back some when he tried to climb
But came up smilin' every time.

He came up smilin'--used to git
His share o' knocks, but he had grit,
An' if they hurt he didn't set
Around th' grocery store an' fret.
He jist grabbed Fortune by th' hair
An' hung on till he got his share.
He had th' grit in him to stay
An' come up smilin' every day.

He jist gripped hard an' all alone
Like a set bull-pup with a bone,
An' if he got shook loose, why then
He got up an' grabbed holt again.
He didn't have no time, he'd say,
To bother about yesterday,
An' when there was a prize to win
He came up smilin' an' pitched in.

He came up smilin'--good fer him!
He had th' grit an' pluck an' vim,
So he's on Easy Street, an' durned
If I don't think his luck is earned!
No matter if he lost sometimes,
He's got th' stuff in him that climbs,
An' when his chance was mighty slim,
He came up smilin'--good fer him!

James W. Foley. From "Tales of the Trail."

A HERO

If defeat strengthens and sweetens character, it is not defeat at all, but victory.

He sang of joy; whate'er he knew of sadness
He kept for his own heart's peculiar share:
So well he sang, the world imagined gladness
To be sole tenant there.

For dreams were his, and in the dawn's fair shining,
His spirit soared beyond the mounting lark;
But from his lips no accent of repining
Fell when the days grew dark;

And though contending long dread Fate to master,
He failed at last her enmity to cheat,
He turned with such a smile to face disaster
That he sublimed defeat.

Florence Earle Coates. From "Poems."

WILL

"I can resist anything but temptation," says a character in one of Oscar Wilde's plays. Too many of us have exactly this strength of will. We perhaps do not fall into gross crime, but because of our flabby resolution our lives become purposeless, negative, negligible. No one would miss us in particular if we were out of the way.

I

O well for him whose will is strong!
He suffers, but he will not suffer long;
He suffers, but he cannot suffer wrong.
For him nor moves the loud world's random mock;
Nor all Calamity's hugest waves confound,
Who seems a promontory of rock,
That, compass'd round with turbulent sound,
In middle ocean meets the surging shock,
Tempest-buffeted, citadel-crown'd.

II

But ill for him who, bettering not with time,
Corrupts the strength of heaven-descended Will,
And ever weaker grows thro' acted crime,
Or seeming-genial venial fault,
Recurring and suggesting still!
He seems as one whose footsteps halt,
Toiling in immeasurable sand,
And o'er a weary sultry land,
Far beneath a blazing vault,
Sown in a wrinkle of the monstrous hill
The city sparkles like a grain of salt.

—Alfred Tennyson.—

FABLE

To be impressed by a thing merely because it is big is a human failing. Yet our standard of judgment would be truer if we considered, instead, the success of that thing in performing its own particular task. And quality is better than quantity. The lioness in the old fable was being taunted because she bore only one offspring at a time, not a numerous litter. "It is true," she admitted; "but that one is a lion."

The mountain and the squirrel
Had a quarrel,
And the former called the latter "Little Prig";
Bun replied,
"You are doubtless very big;
But all sorts of things and weather
Must be taken in together,
To make up a year
And a sphere.
And I think it no disgrace
To occupy my place.
If I'm not so large as you,
You are not so small as I,
And not half so sly.
I'll not deny you make
A very pretty squirrel track;
Talents differ; all is well and wisely put;
If I cannot carry forests on my back,
Neither can you crack a nut."

Ralph Waldo Emerson.

DUTY

When Duty comes a-knocking at your gate,
Welcome him in, for if you bid him wait,
He will depart only to come once more
And bring seven other duties to your door.

Edwin Markham.

From "The Gates of Paradise, and Other Poems."

PRAYER FOR PAIN

"The thief steals from himself. The swindler swindles himself," says Emerson. Apparent gain may be actual loss; material escape may be spiritual imprisonment. Any one may idle; but the men who are not content unless they climb the unscalable mountains or cross the uncharted seas or bear the burdens that others shrink from, are the ones who keep the heritage of the spirit undiminished.

I do not pray for peace nor ease,
Nor truce from sorrow:
No suppliant on servile knees
Begs here against to-morrow!

Lean flame against lean flame we flash,
O, Fates that meet me fair;
Blue steel against blue steel we clash--
Lay on, and I shall dare!

But Thou of deeps the awful Deep,
Thou Breather in the clay,
Grant this my only prayer--Oh keep
My soul from turning gray!

For until now, whatever wrought
Against my sweet desires,
My days were smitten harps strung taut,
My nights were slumbrous lyres.

And howsoe'er the hard blow rang
Upon my battered shield,
Some lark-like, soaring spirit sang
Above my battlefield.

And through my soul of stormy night
The zigzag blue flame ran.
I asked no odds--I fought my fight--
Events against a man.

But now--at last--the gray mist chokes
And numbs me. _Leave me pain!
Oh let me feel the biting strokes
That I may fight again!_

John G. Neihardt.

From "The Quest" (collected lyrics).

STEADFAST

No one ever has a trouble so great that some other person has not a greater. The thought of the heroism shown by those more grievously afflicted than we, helps us to bear our own ills patiently.

If I can help another bear an ill
By bearing mine with somewhat of good grace--
Can take Fate's thrusts with not too long a face
And help him through his trials, then I WILL!
For do not braver men than I decline
To bow to troubles graver, far, than mine?

Pain twists this body? Yes, but it shall not
Distort my soul, by all the gods that be!
And when it's done its worst, Pain's victory
Shall be an empty one! Whate'er my lot,
My banner, ragged, but nailed to the mast,
Shall fly triumphant to the very last!

Others so much worse off than I have fought;
Have smiled--have met defeat with unbent head
They shame me into following where they led.
Can I ignore the lesson they have taught?
Strike hands with me! Dark is the way we go,
But souls-courageous line it--that I know!

Everard Jack Appleton.

From "The Quiet Courage."

THE GIFTS OF GOD

Why are we never entirely satisfied? Why are we never at absolute peace or rest? Many are the answers that have been made to this question. The answer here given by the poet is that so richly is man endowed with qualities and attributes that if contentment were added to them, he would be satisfied with what he has, and would not strive for that which is higher still-- the fulfilment of his spiritual cravings.

When God at first made Man,
Having a glass of blessings standing by;
Let us (said He) pour on him all we can:
Let the world's riches, which disperséd lie,
Contract into a span.

So strength first made a way;
Then beauty flow'd, then wisdom, honor, pleasure
When almost all was out, God made a stay,
Perceiving that alone, of all His treasure,
Rest in the bottom lay.

For if I should (said He)
Bestow this jewel also on My creature,
He would adore My gifts instead of Me,
And rest in Nature, not the God of Nature.
So both should losers be.

Yet let him keep the rest,
But keep them with repining restlessness:
Let him be rich and weary, that at least,
If goodness lead him not, yet weariness
May toss him to My breast.

__George Herbert.__

A PHILOSOPHER

"The web of our life is of mingled yarn, good and ill together," says Shakespeare. It behooves us therefore to find the good and to make the best of the ill.

To take things as they be--
That's my philosophy.
No use to holler, mope, or cuss--
If they was changed they might be wuss.

If rain is pourin' down,
An' lightnin' buzzin' roun',
I ain't a-fearin' we'll be hit,
But grin that I ain't out in it.

If I got deep in debt--
It hasn't happened yet--
And owed a man two dollars, Gee!
Why I'd be glad it wasn't three.

If some one come along,
And tried to do me wrong,
Why I should sort of take a whim
To thank the Lord I wasn't him.

I never seen a night
So dark there wasn't light
Somewheres about if I took care
To strike a match and find out where.

John Kendrick Bangs. From "Songs of Cheer."

THE LIFE WITHOUT PASSION

A person may feel deeply without shouting his emotion to the skies, or be strong without seizing occasions to exhibit his strength. In truth we distrust the power which makes too much a display of itself. Let it exert itself only to the point of securing the ends that are really necessary. Restraint, self-control are in truth more mighty than might unshackled, just as a self-possessed opponent is more dangerous than a frenzied one. Moreover, there is a moral side to the question. A good quality, if abused or allowed free sway, becomes a force for evil and does its owner more harm than if he had not possessed it in the first place.

They that have power to hurt, and will do none,
That do not do the thing they most do show,
Who, moving others, are themselves as stone,
Unmoved, cold, and to temptation slow,--

They rightly do inherit heaven's graces,
And husband nature's riches from expense;
They are the lords and owners of their faces,
Others, but stewards of their excellence.

The summer's flower is to the summer sweet,
Though to itself it only live and die;
But if that flower with base infection meet,
The basest weed outbraves his dignity:

For sweetest things turn sourest by their deeds;
Lilies that fester smell far worse than weeds.

William Shakespeare.

CHARACTER OF A HAPPY LIFE

"I'd rather be right than President," said Henry Clay. It is to men who are animated by this spirit that the greatest satisfaction in life comes. For true blessedness does not lie far off and above us. It is close at hand. Booker T. Washington once told a story of a ship that had exhausted its supply of fresh water and signaled its need to a passing vessel. The reply was, "Send down your buckets where you are." Thinking there was some misunderstanding, the captain repeated his signal, only to be answered as before. This time he did as he was bidden and secured an abundance of fresh water. His ship was opposite the mouth of a mighty river which still kept its current unmingled with the waters of the ocean.

How happy is he born and taught
That serveth not another's will;
Whose armor is his honest thought
And simple truth his utmost skill!

Whose passions not his masters are,
Whose soul is still prepared for death,
Not tied unto the world with care
Of public fame or private breath;

Who envies none that chance doth raise
Or vice; who never understood
How deepest wounds are given by praise
Nor rules of state, but rules of good;

Who hath his life from rumors freed,
Whose conscience is his strong retreat;
Whose state can neither flatterers feed,
Nor ruin make accusers great;

Who God doth late and early pray
More of his grace than gifts to lend;
And entertains the harmless day
With a well-chosen book or friend;

--This man is freed from servile bands
Of hope to rise or fear to fall;
Lord of himself, though not of lands;
And having nothing, yet hath all.

Sir Henry Wotton.

ESSENTIALS

The things here named are essential to a happy and successful life. They may not be the only essentials.

Roll up your sleeves, lad, and begin;
Disarm misfortune with a grin;
Let discontent not wag your chin--
Let gratitude.

Don't try to find things all askew;
Don't be afraid of what is new;
Nor banish as unsound, untrue,
A platitude.

If folks don't act as you would choose
Remember life is varied; use
Your common sense; don't get the blues;
Show latitude.

Sing though in quavering sharps and flats,
Love though the folk you love are cats,
Work though you're worn and weary--that's
The attitude.

St. Clair Adams.

THE STONE REJECTED

The story here poetically retold of the great Florentine sculptor shows how much a lofty spirit may make of unpromising material.

For years it had been trampled in the street
Of Florence by the drift of heedless feet--
The stone that star-touched Michael Angelo
Turned to that marble loveliness we know.

You mind the tale--how he was passing by
When the rude marble caught his Jovian eye,
That stone men had dishonored and had thrust
Out to the insult of the wayside dust.
He stooped to lift it from its mean estate,
And bore it on his shoulder to the gate,
Where all day long a hundred hammers rang.
And soon his chisel round the marble sang,
And suddenly the hidden angel shone:
It had been waiting prisoned in the stone.

Thus came the cherub with the laughing face
That long has lighted up an altar-place.

Edwin Markham.

From "The Gates of Paradise, and Other Poems."

GOOD DEEDS

The influence of good deeds usually extends far beyond the limits we can see or trace; but as well not have the power to do them as not use it.

How far that little candle throws his beams!
So shines a good deed in a naughty world.
Heaven doth with us as we with torches do;
Not light them for themselves; for if our virtues
Did not go forth of us, 'twere all alike
As if we had them not.

__William Shakespeare.__

YOU MAY COUNT THAT DAY

A class of little settlement girls besought Mrs. George Herbert Palmer, one insufferable summer morning, to tell them how to be happy. "I'll give you three rules," she said, "and you must keep them every day for a week. First, commit something good to memory each day. Three or four words will do, just a pretty bit of poem, or a Bible verse. Do you understand?"

A girl jumped up. "I know; you want us to learn something we'd be glad to remember if we went blind." Mrs. Palmer was relieved; these children understood. She gave the three rules--memorize something good each day, see something beautiful each day, do something helpful each day. When the children reported at the end of the week, not a single day had any of them lost. But hard put to it to obey her? Indeed they had been.

One girl, kept for twenty-four hours within squalid home
-walls by a rain, had nevertheless seen two beautiful things—a
sparrow taking a bath in the gutter, and a gleam of sunlight on
a baby's hair.

If you sit down at set of sun
And count the acts that you have done,
And, counting, find
One self-denying deed, one word
That eased the heart of him who heard--
One glance most kind,
That fell like sunshine where it went--
Then you may count that day well spent.

But if, through all the livelong day,
You've cheered no heart, by yea or nay--
If, through it all
You've nothing done that you can trace
That brought the sunshine to one face--
No act most small
That helped some soul and nothing cost--
Then count that day as worse than lost.

George Eliot.

APPRECIATION

Life's a bully good game with its kicks and cuffs--
Some smile, some laugh, some bluff;
Some carry a load too heavy to bear
While some push on with never a care,
But the load will seldom heavy be
When I appreciate you and you appreciate me.

He who lives by the side of the road
And helps to bear his brother's load
May seem to travel lone and long
While the world goes by with a merry song,
But the heart grows warm and sorrows flee
When I appreciate you and you appreciate me.

When I appreciate you and you appreciate me,
The road seems short to victory;
It buoys one up and calls "Come on,"
And days grow brighter with the dawn;
There is no doubt or mystery
When I appreciate you and you appreciate me.

It's the greatest thought in heaven or earth--
It helps us know our fellow's worth;
There'd be no wars or bitterness,
No fear, no hate, no grasping; yes,
It makes work play, and the careworn free
When I appreciate you and you appreciate me.

_William Judson Kibby, _

KEEP SWEET

Even the direst catastrophes may be softened by our attitude to them. Charles II said to those who had gathered about his deathbed: "You'll pardon any little lapses, gentlemen. I've never done this thing before."

Don't be foolish and get sour when things don't just come your way--

Don't you be a pampered baby and declare, "Now I won't play!"

Just go grinning on and bear it;
Have you heartache? Millions share it,
If you earn a crown, you'll wear it--
Keep sweet.

Don't go handing out your troubles to your busy fellow-men--
If you whine around they'll try to keep from meeting you again;

Don't declare the world's "agin" you,
Don't let pessimism win you,
Prove there's lots of good stuff in you--
Keep sweet.

If your dearest hopes seem blighted and despair looms into view,

Set your jaw and whisper grimly, "Though they're false, yet I'll be true."

Never let your heart grow bitter;
With your lips to Hope's transmitter,
Hear Love's songbirds bravely twitter,
"Keep sweet."

Bless your heart, this world's a good one, and will always help a man;

Hate, misanthropy, and malice have no place in Nature's plan.

Help your brother there who's sighing.
Keep his flag of courage flying;
Help him try--'twill keep you trying--
Keep sweet.

__Strickland W. Gillilan.__

A HYMN TO HAPPINESS

A man who owed Artemus Ward two hundred dollars fell into such hard circumstances that Artemus offered to knock off half the debt. "I won't let you outdo me in generosity," said the man; "I'll knock off the other half." Similarly, when we resolve to live down our causes of gloom, fate comes to our aid and removes most of them altogether.

Let us smile along together,
Be the weather
 What it may.
Through the waste and wealth of hours,
Plucking flowers
 By the way.
Fragrance from the meadows blowing,
Naught of heat or hatred knowing,
Kindness seeking, kindness sowing,
 Not to-morrow, but to-day.

Let us sing along, beguiling
Grief to smiling
 In the song.
With the promises of heaven
Let us leaven
 The day long,
Gilding all the duller seemings
With the roselight of our dreamings,
Splashing clouds with sunlight's gleamings,
 Here and there and all along.

Let us live along, the sorrow
Of to-morrow
 Never heed.
In the pages of the present

What is pleasant
Only read.
Bells but pealing, never knelling,
Hearts with gladness ever swelling.
Tides of charity up welling
In our every dream and deed.

Let us hope along together,
Be the weather
What it may,
Where the sunlight glad is shining,
Not repining
By the way.
Seek to add our meed and measure
To the old Earth's joy and treasure,
Quaff the crystal cup of pleasure,
Not to-morrow, but to-day.

James W. Foley. From "The Voices of Song."

TO A YOUNG MAN

"Jones write a book! Impossible! I knew his father." This attitude towards distinction of any sort, whether in authorship or in the field of action, is characteristic of many of us. We think transcendent ability is entirely above and apart from the things of ordinary life. Yet genius itself has been defined as common sense in an uncommon degree. The great men are human. Shakespeare remembered this when he said, "I think the king is but a man as I am." We should take heart at the thought that since the great are like us, we may develop ourselves until we are like them.

The great were once as you.
They whom men magnify to-day
Once groped and blundered on life's way,
Were fearful of themselves, and thought
By magic was men's greatness wrought.
They feared to try what they could do;
Yet Fame hath crowned with her success
The selfsame gifts that you possess.

The great were young as you,
Dreaming the very dreams you hold,
Longing yet fearing to be bold,
Doubting that they themselves possessed
The strength and skill for every test,
Uncertain of the truths they knew,
Not sure that they could stand to fate
With all the courage of the great.

Then came a day when they
Their first bold venture made,
Scorning to cry for aid.
They dared to stand to fight alone,
Took up the gauntlet life had thrown,
Charged full-front to the fray,
Mastered their fear of self, and then
Learned that our great men are but men.

Oh, Youth, go forth and do!
You, too, to fame may rise;
You can be strong and wise.
Stand up to life and play the man--
You can if you'll but think you can;
The great were once as you.
You envy them their proud success?
'Twas won with gifts that you possess.

__Edgar A. Guest.__

SMILES

Smiles bring out the latent energies within us, as water reveals the bright colors in the stone it flows over.

Smile a little, smile a little,
As you go along,
Not alone when life is pleasant,
But when things go wrong.
Care delights to see you frowning,
Loves to hear you sigh;
Turn a smiling face upon her,
Quick the dame will fly.

Smile a little, smile a little,
All along the road;
Every life must have its burden,
Every heart its load.
Why sit down in gloom and darkness,
With your grief to sup?
As you drink Fate's bitter tonic
Smile across the cup.

Smile upon the troubled pilgrims
Whom you pass and meet;
Frowns are thorns, and smiles are blossoms
Oft for weary feet.
Do not make the way seem harder
By a sullen face,
Smile a little, smile a little,
Brighten up the place.

Smile upon your undone labor;
Not for one who grieves

O'er his task, waits wealth or glory;
He who smiles achieves.
Though you meet with loss and sorrow
In the passing years,
Smile a little, smile a little,
Even through your tears.

Ella Wheeler Wilcox. From "Poems of Power."

SIT DOWN, SAD SOUL

"A watched pot never boils." Though the pot be the pot of happiness, the proverb still holds true.

Sit down, sad soul, and count
The moments flying:
Come,--tell the sweet amount
That's lost by sighing!
How many smiles--a score?
Then laugh, and count no more;
For day is dying.

Lie down, sad soul, and sleep,
And no more measure
The flight of Time, nor weep
The loss of leisure;
But here, by this lone stream,
Lie down with us and dream
Of starry treasure.

We dream: do thou the same:
We love--forever;
We laugh; yet few we shame,
The gentle, never.
Stay, then, till Sorrow dies;
Then--hope and happy skies
Are thine forever!

Bryan Waller Procter.

SONG OF ENDEAVOR

Don Quixote discovered that there are no eggs in last year's bird's-nests. Many of us waste our time in regrets for the past, without seeming to perceive that hope lies only in endeavor for the future.

'Tis not by wishing that we gain the prize,
Nor yet by ruing,
But from our falling, learning how to rise,
And tireless doing.

The heart thrives not in the dull rain and mist
Of gloomy pining.
The sweetest flowers are the flowers sun-kissed,
Where glad light's shining.

Look not behind thee; there is only dust
And vain regretting.
The lost tide ebbs; in the next flood thou must
Learn, by forgetting.

For the lost chances be ye not distressed
To endless weeping;
Be not the thrush that o'er the empty nest
Is vigil keeping.

But in new efforts our regrets to-day
To stillness whiling,
Let us in some pure purpose find the way
To future smiling.

James W. Foley. From "The Voices of Song."

KEEP A-GOIN'!

Some men fail and quit. Some succeed and quit. The wise refuse
to quit, whether they fail or succeed.

Ef you strike a thorn or rose,
Keep a-goin'!
Ef it hails, or ef it snows,
Keep a-goin!
'Taint no use to sit an' whine,
When the fish ain't on yer line;
Bait yer hook an' keep a-tryin'--
Keep a-goin'!

When the weather kills yer crop,
Keep a-goin'!
When you tumble from the top,
Keep a-goin'!
S'pose you're out of every dime,
Bein' so ain't any _crime;_
Tell the world you're feelin' _prime_--
Keep a-goin'!

When it looks like all is up,
Keep a-goin'!
Drain the sweetness from the cup,
Keep a-goin'!
See the wild birds on the wing,
Hear the bells that sweetly ring,
When you feel like sighin' _sing--_
Keep a-goin'!

Frank L. Stanton. From "The Atlanta Constitution."

WHEN EARTH'S LAST PICTURE IS PAINTED

What is it that a human being wants? Most of us have something that we like to do more than anything else. We are not free to do it as we wish. We are handicapped by the need to earn a living, by physical weariness, by the carpings and scoffs of the envious, by the limited time we have at our disposal. But underneath all this is _the spirit of work_--the desire to take up our task for its own sake alone, to give our whole selves to it, to carry it through, not in some partial way, but in accordance with the fulness of our dream.

We want to be free from distractions and interruptions; if we are driven at all, we want it to be by our own inner promptings, not by obligation or necessity. Of course these favorable, these ideal conditions belong to heaven, not to earth. Kipling here explains what they will mean to the artist, the painter; but in doing so he expresses the longings of the true workman of whatsoever sort--he sums up the true spirit of work.

When Earth's last picture is painted and the tubes are twisted and dried,
When the oldest colors have faded, and the youngest critic has died,
We shall rest, and, faith, we shall need it--lie down for an aeon or two,
Till the Master of All Good Workmen shall set us to work anew.

And those that were good will be happy: they shall sit in a golden chair;
They shall splash at a ten-league canvas with brushes of comets' hair.
They shall find real saints to draw from--Magdalene, Peter, and Paul;
They shall work for an age at a sitting and never be tired at all!

And only the Master shall praise us, and only the Master shall blame;
And no one shall work for money, and no one shall work for fame,
But each for the joy of the working, and each, in his separate star,
Shall draw the Thing as he sees It for the God of Things as They are!

Rudyard Kipling. From "Rudyard Kipling's Verse, 1885-1918."