

EIGHTEEN SIXTY-ONE.

Arm'd year--year of the struggle,
No dainty rhymes or sentimental love verses for you terrible year,
Not you as some pale poetling seated at a desk lisping cadenzas
 piano,
But as a strong man erect, clothed in blue clothes, advancing,
 carrying a rifle on your shoulder,
With well-gristled body and sunburnt face and hands, with a knife in
 the belt at your side,
As I heard you shouting loud, your sonorous voice ringing across the
 continent,
Your masculine voice O year, as rising amid the great cities,
Amid the men of Manhattan I saw you as one of the workmen, the
 dwellers in Manhattan,
Or with large steps crossing the prairies out of Illinois and
 Indiana,
Rapidly crossing the West with springy gait and descending the
 Alleghanies,
Or down from the great lakes or in Pennsylvania, or on deck along the
 Ohio river,
Or southward along the Tennessee or Cumberland rivers, or at
 Chattanooga on the mountain top,
Saw I your gait and saw I your sinewy limbs clothed in blue, bearing
 weapons, robust year,

Heard your determin'd voice launch'd forth again and again,
Year that suddenly sang by the mouths of the round-lipp'd cannon,
I repeat you, hurrying, crashing, sad, distracted year.