

satisfied by the demeanour of the vital and great. The swarms of the polished, deprecating, and reflectors, and the polite, float off and leave no remembrance. America prepares with composure and goodwill for the visitors that have sent word. It is not intellect that is to be their warrant and welcome. The talented, the artist, the ingenious, the editor, the statesman, the erudite--they are not unappreciated--they fall in their place and do their work. The soul of the nation also does its work. No disguise can pass on it--no disguise can conceal from it. It rejects none, it permits all. Only toward as good as itself and toward the like of itself will it advance half-way. An individual is as superb as a nation when he has the qualities which make a superb nation. The soul of the largest and wealthiest and proudest nation may well go half-way to meet that of its poets. The signs are effectual. There is no fear of mistake. If the one is true, the other is true. The proof of a poet is that his country absorbs him as affectionately as he has absorbed it.

[Script: Meantime, dear friend,
Farewell, Walt Whitman.]

CHANTS DEMOCRATIC.

STARTING FROM PAUMANOK.

1.

Starting from fish-shape Paumanok,[1] where I was born,
Well-begotten, and raised by a perfect mother;
After roaming many lands--lover of populous pavements;
Dweller in Mannahatta,[2] city of ships, my city,--or on southern savannas;
Or a soldier camped, or carrying my knapsack and gun--or a miner in
California;
Or rude in my home in Dakotah's woods, my diet meat, my drink from the
spring;
Or withdrawn to muse and meditate in some deep recess,
Far from the clank of crowds, intervals passing, rapt and happy;
Aware of the fresh free giver, the flowing Missouri--aware of mighty
Niagara
Aware of the buffalo herds, grazing the plains--the hirsute and strong-
breasted bull;
Of earths, rocks, fifth-month flowers, experienced--stars, rain, snow, my
amaze;
Having studied the mocking-bird's tones, and the mountain hawk's,
And heard at dusk the unrivalled one, the hermit thrush, from the
swamp-cedars,
Solitary, singing in the West, I strike up for a New World.

2.

Victory, union, faith, identity, time,
Yourself, the present and future lands, the indissoluble compacts, riches,
mystery,
Eternal progress, the kosmos, and the modern reports.

This, then, is life;
Here is what has come to the surface after so many throes and convulsions.

How curious! how real!
Under foot the divine soil--over head the sun.

See, revolving, the globe;
The ancestor-continents, away, grouped together;
The present and future continents, north and south, with the isthmus
between.

See, vast trackless spaces;
As in a dream, they change, they swiftly fill;
Countless masses debouch upon them;
They are now covered with the foremost people, arts, institutions, known.

See, projected through time,
For me an audience interminable.

With firm and regular step they wend--they never stop,
Successions of men, Americanos, a hundred millions;
One generation playing its part, and passing on,
Another generation playing its part, and passing on in its turn,
With faces turned sideways or backward towards me, to listen,
With eyes retrospective towards me.

3.

Americanos! conquerors! marches humanitarian;
Foremost! century marches! Libertad! masses!
For you a programme of chants.

Chants of the prairies;
Chants of the long-running Mississippi, and down to the Mexican Sea;
Chants of Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Iowa, Wisconsin, and Minnesota;
Chants going forth from the centre, from Kansas, and thence, equidistant,
Shooting in pulses of fire, ceaseless, to vivify all.

4.

In the Year 80 of the States,[3]
My tongue, every atom of my blood, formed from this soil, this air,

Born here of parents born here, from parents the same, and their parents
the same,

I, now thirty-six years old, in perfect health begin,

Hoping to cease not till death.

Creeds and schools in abeyance,

(Retiring back a while, sufficed at what they are, but never forgotten.)

I harbour, for good or bad--I permit to speak, at every hazard--

Nature now without check, with original energy.

5.

Take my leaves, America! take them South, and take them North!

Make welcome for them everywhere, for they are your own offspring;

Surround them, East and West! for they would surround you;

And you precedents! connect lovingly with them, for they connect lovingly
with you.

I conned old times;

I sat studying at the feet of the great masters:

Now, if eligible, O that the great masters might return and study me!

In the name of these States, shall I scorn the antique?

Why, these are the children of the antique, to justify it.

6.

Dead poets, philosophs, priests,

Martyrs, artists, inventors, governments long since,

Language-shapers on other shores,

Nations once powerful, now reduced, withdrawn, or desolate,

I dare not proceed till I respectfully credit what you have left, wafted

hither:

I have perused it--own it is admirable, (moving awhile among it;)

Think nothing can ever be greater--nothing can ever deserve more than it

deserves;

Regarding it all intently a long while, then dismissing it,

I stand in my place, with my own day, here.

Here lands female and male;

Here the heirship and heiress-ship of the world--here the flame of

materials;

Here spirituality, the translatress, the openly-avowed,

The ever-tending, the finale of visible forms;

The satisfier, after due long-waiting, now advancing,

Yes, here comes my mistress, the Soul.

7.

The SOUL!

For ever and for ever--longer than soil is brown and solid--longer than
water ebbs and flows.

I will make the poems of materials, for I think they are to be the most
spiritual poems;

And I will make the poems of my body and of mortality,

For I think I shall then supply myself with the poems of my soul, and of
immortality.

I will make a song for these States, that no one State may under any
circumstances be subjected to another State;

And I will make a song that there shall be comity by day and by night
between all the States, and between any two of them;

And I will make a song for the ears of the President, full of weapons with
menacing points,

And behind the weapons countless dissatisfied faces:

And a song make I, of the One formed out of all;

The fanged and glittering one whose head is over all;

Resolute, warlike one, including and over all;

However high the head of any else, that head is over all.

I will acknowledge contemporary lands;

I will trail the whole geography of the globe, and salute courteously every
city large and small;

And employments! I will put in my poems, that with you is heroism, upon
land and sea--And I will report all heroism from an American point
of view;

And sexual organs and acts! do you concentrate in me--for I am determined
to tell you with courageous clear voice, to prove you illustrious.

I will sing the song of companionship;

I will show what alone must finally compact these;

I believe These are to found their own ideal of manly love, indicating it
in me;

I will therefore let flame from me the burning fires that were threatening
to consume me;

I will lift what has too long kept down those smouldering fires;

I will give them complete abandonment;

I will write the evangel-poem of comrades and of love;

For who but I should understand love, with all its sorrow and joy?

And who but I should be the poet of comrades?

8.

I am the credulous man of qualities, ages, races;

I advance from the people en masse in their own spirit;

Here is what sings unrestricted faith.

Omnes! Omnes! let others ignore what they may;

I make the poem of evil also--I commemorate that part also;

I am myself just as much evil as good, and my nation is--And I say there is
in fact no evil,

Or if there is, I say it is just as important to you, to the land, or to
me, as anything else.

I too, following many, and followed by many, inaugurate a Religion--I too
go to the wars;

It may be I am destined to utter the loudest cries thereof, the winner's
pealing shouts;

Who knows? they may rise from me yet, and soar above everything.

Each is not for its own sake;

I say the whole earth, and all the stars in the sky, are for religion's
sake.

I say no man has ever yet been half devout enough;

None has ever yet adored or worshipped half enough;

None has begun to think how divine he himself is, and how certain the
future is.

I say that the real and permanent grandeur of these States must be their
religion;

Otherwise there is no real and permanent grandeur;

Nor character, nor life worthy the name, without religion;

Nor land, nor man or woman, without religion.

9.

What are you doing, young man?

Are you so earnest--so given up to literature, science, art, amours?

These ostensible realities, politics, points?

Your ambition or business, whatever it may be?

It is well--Against such I say not a word--I am their poet also;

But behold! such swiftly subside--burnt up for religion's sake;

For not all matter is fuel to heat, impalpable flame, the essential life of
the earth,

Any more than such are to religion.

10.

What do you seek, so pensive and silent?

What do you need, Camerado?

Dear son! do you think it is love?

Listen, dear son--listen, America, daughter or son!

It is a painful thing to love a man or woman to excess--and yet it
satisfies--it is great;

But there is something else very great--it makes the whole coincide;

It, magnificent, beyond materials, with continuous hands, sweeps and

provides for all.

11.

Know you: to drop in the earth the germs of a greater religion,
The following chants, each for its kind, I sing.

My comrade!

For you, to share with me, two greatnesses--and a third one, rising
 inclusive and more resplendent,
The greatness of Love and Democracy--and the greatness of Religion.

Mélange mine own! the unseen and the seen;
Mysterious ocean where the streams empty;
Prophetic spirit of materials shifting and flickering around me;
Living beings, identities, now doubtless near us in the air, that we know
 not of;
Contact daily and hourly that will not release me;
These selecting--these, in hints, demanded of me.

Not he with a daily kiss onward from childhood kissing me
Has winded and twisted around me that which holds me to him,
Any more than I am held to the heavens, to the spiritual world,
And to the identities of the Gods, my lovers, faithful and true,
After what they have done to me, suggesting themes.

O such themes! Equalities!
O amazement of things! O divine average!
O warblings under the sun--ushered, as now, or at noon, or setting!
O strain, musical, flowing through ages--now reaching hither,
I take to your reckless and composite chords--I add to them, and cheerfully
pass them forward.

12.

As I have walked in Alabama my morning walk,
I have seen where the she-bird, the mocking-bird, sat on her nest in the
briars, hatching her brood.
I have seen the he-bird also;
I have paused to hear him, near at hand, inflating his throat, and joyfully
singing.

And while I paused, it came to me that what he really sang for was not
there only,
Nor for his mate nor himself only, nor all sent back by the echoes;
But subtle, clandestine, away beyond,
A charge transmitted, and gift occult, for those being born.

13.

Democracy!

Near at hand to you a throat is now inflating itself and joyfully singing.

Ma femme!

For the brood beyond us and of us,

For those who belong here, and those to come,

I, exultant, to be ready for them, will now shake out carols stronger and
haughtier than have ever yet been heard upon earth.

I will make the songs of passion, to give them their way,

And your songs, outlawed offenders--for I scan you with kindred eyes, and
carry you with me the same as any.

I will make the true poem of riches,--

To earn for the body and the mind whatever adheres, and goes forward, and
is not dropped by death.

I will effuse egotism, and show it underlying all--and I will be the bard
of personality;

And I will show of male and female that either is but the equal of the
other;

And I will show that there is no imperfection in the present--and can be
none in the future;

And I will show that, whatever happens to anybody, it may be turned to
beautiful results--and I will show that nothing can happen more beautiful
than death;

And I will thread a thread through my poems that time and events are
compact,

And that all the things of the universe are perfect miracles, each as
profound as any.

I will not make poems with reference to parts;

But I will make leaves, poems, poemets, songs, says, thoughts, with
reference to ensemble:

And I will not sing with reference to a day, but with reference to all
days;

And I will not make a poem, nor the least part of a poem, but has reference
to the soul;

Because, having looked at the objects of the universe, I find there is no
one, nor any particle of one, but has reference to the soul.

14.

Was somebody asking to see the Soul?

See! your own shape and countenance--persons, substances, beasts, the
trees, the running rivers, the rocks and sands.

All hold spiritual joys, and afterwards loosen them:

How can the real body ever die, and be buried?

Of your real body, and any man's or woman's real body,

Item for item, it will elude the hands of the corpse-cleaners, and pass to
fitting spheres,
Carrying what has accrued to it from the moment of birth to the moment of
death.

Not the types set up by the printer return their impression, the meaning,
the main concern,
Any more than a man's substance and life, or a woman's substance and life,
return in the body and the soul,
Indifferently before death and after death.

Behold! the body includes and is the meaning, the main concern--and
includes and is the soul;
Whoever you are! how superb and how divine is your body, or any part of it.

15.

Whoever you are! to you endless announcements.

Daughter of the lands, did you wait for your poet?
Did you wait for one with a flowing mouth and indicative hand?

Toward the male of the States, and toward the female of the States,
Live words--words to the lands.

O the lands! interlinked, food-yielding lands!

Land of coal and iron! Land of gold! Lands of cotton, sugar, rice!
Land of wheat, beef, pork! Land of wool and hemp! Land of the apple and
grape!
Land of the pastoral plains, the grass-fields of the world! Land of those
sweet-aired interminable plateaus!
Land of the herd, the garden, the healthy house of adobie!
Lands where the north-west Columbia winds, and where the south-west
Colorado winds!
Land of the eastern Chesapeake! Land of the Delaware!
Land of Ontario, Erie, Huron, Michigan!
Land of the Old Thirteen! Massachusetts land! Land of Vermont and
Connecticut!
Land of the ocean shores! Land of sierras and peaks!
Land of boatmen and sailors! Fishermen's land!
Inextricable lands! the clutched together! the passionate ones!
The side by side! the elder and younger brothers! the bony-limbed!
The great women's land! the feminine! the experienced sisters and the
inexperienced sisters!
Far-breathed land! Arctic-braced! Mexican-breezed! the diverse! the
compact!
The Pennsylvanian! the Virginian! the double Carolinian!
O all and each well-loved by me! my intrepid nations! O I at any rate
include you all with perfect love!
I cannot be discharged from you--not from one, any sooner than another!

O Death! O!--for all that, I am yet of you unseen, this hour, with

irrepressible love,
Walking New England, a friend, a traveller,
Splashing my bare feet in the edge of the summer ripples, on Paumanok's
sands,
Crossing the prairies--dwelling again in Chicago--dwelling in every town,
Observing shows, births, improvements, structures, arts,
Listening to the orators and the oratresses in public halls,
Of and through the States, as during life[4]--each man and woman my
neighbour,
The Louisianian, the Georgian, as near to me, and I as near to him and her,
The Mississippian and Arkansian yet with me--and I yet with any of them;
Yet upon the plains west of the spinal river--yet in my house of adobie,
Yet returning eastward--yet in the Sea-Side State, or in Maryland,
Yet Canadian cheerily braving the winter--the snow and ice welcome to me,
or mounting the Northern Pacific, to Sitka, to Aliaska;
Yet a true son either of Maine, or of the Granite State,[5] or of the
Narragansett Bay State, or of the Empire State;[6]
Yet sailing to other shores to annex the same--yet welcoming every new
brother;
Hereby applying these leaves to the new ones, from the hour they unite with
the old ones;
Coming among the new ones myself, to be their companion and equal--coming
personally to you now;
Enjoining you to acts, characters, spectacles, with me.

16.

With me, with firm holding--yet haste, haste on.

For your life, adhere to me;

Of all the men of the earth, I only can unloose you and toughen you;

I may have to be persuaded many times before I consent to give myself to
you--but what of that?

Must not Nature be persuaded many times?

No dainty dolce affettuoso I;

Bearded, sunburnt, gray-necked, forbidding, I have arrived,

To be wrestled with as I pass, for the solid prizes of the universe;

For such I afford whoever can persevere to win them.

17.

On my way a moment I pause;

Here for you! and here for America!

Still the Present I raise aloft--still the Future of the States I harbinge,
glad and sublime;

And for the Past, I pronounce what the air holds of the red aborigines.

The red aborigines!

Leaving natural breaths, sounds of rain and winds, calls as of birds and
animals in the woods, syllabled to us for names;

Okonee, Koosa, Ottawa, Monongahela, Sauk, Natchez, Chattahoochee, Kaqueta,
Oronoco, Wabash, Miami, Saginaw, Chippewa, Oshkosh, Walla-Walla;
Leaving such to the States, they melt, they depart, charging the water and
the land with names.

18.

O expanding and swift! O henceforth,
Elements, breeds, adjustments, turbulent, quick, and audacious;
A world primal again--vistas of glory, incessant and branching;
A new race, dominating previous ones, and grander far, with new contests,
New politics, new literatures and religions, new inventions and arts.

These my voice announcing--I will sleep no more, but arise;
You oceans that have been calm within me! how I feel you, fathomless,
stirring, preparing unprecedented waves and storms.

19.

See! steamers steaming through my poems!
See in my poems immigrants continually coming and landing;
See in arriere, the wigwam, the trail, the hunter's hut, the flat-boat, the
maize-leaf, the claim, the rude fence, and the backwoods village;
See, on the one side the Western Sea, and on the other the Eastern Sea, how

they advance and retreat upon my poems, as upon their own shores;
See pastures and forests in my poems--See animals, wild and tame--See,
beyond the Kansas, countless herds of buffalo, feeding on short
curly grass;
See, in my poems, cities, solid, vast, inland, with paved streets, with
iron and stone edifices, ceaseless vehicles, and commerce;
See the many-cylindered steam printing-press--See the electric telegraph,
stretching across the Continent, from the Western Sea to Manhattan;
See, through Atlantica's depths, pulses American, Europe reaching--pulses
of Europe, duly returned;
See the strong and quick locomotive, as it departs, panting, blowing the
steam-whistle;
See ploughmen, ploughing farms--See miners, digging mines--See the
numberless factories;
See mechanics, busy at their benches, with tools--See, from among them,
superior judges, philosophers, Presidents, emerge, dressed in working
dresses;
See, lounging through the shops and fields of the States, me, well-beloved,
close-held by day and night;
Hear the loud echoes of my songs there! Read the hints come at last.

20.

O Camerado close!

O you and me at last--and us two only.

O a word to clear one's path ahead endlessly!
O something ecstatic and undemonstrable! O music wild!
O now I triumph--and you shall also;
O hand in hand--O wholesome pleasure--O one more desirer and lover!
O to haste, firm holding--to haste, haste on, with me.

[Footnote 1: Paumanok is the native name of Long Island, State of New York.
It presents a fish-like shape on the map.]

[Footnote 2: Mannahatta, or Manhattan, is (as many readers will know) New
York.]

[Footnote 3: 1856.]

[Footnote 4: The poet here contemplates himself as yet living spiritually
and in his poems after the death of the body, still a friend and brother to
all present and future American lands and persons.]

[Footnote 5: New Hampshire.]

[Footnote 6: New York State.]

AMERICAN FEUILLAGE.

AMERICA always!

Always our own feuillage!

Always Florida's green peninsula! Always the priceless delta of Louisiana!

Always the cotton-fields of Alabama and Texas!

Always California's golden hills and hollows--and the silver mountains of New Mexico! Always soft-breathed Cuba!

Always the vast slope drained by the Southern Sea--inseparable with the slopes drained by the Eastern and Western Seas!

The area the eighty-third year of these States[1]--the three and a half millions of square miles;

The eighteen thousand miles of sea-coast and bay-coast on the main--the thirty thousand miles of river navigation,

The seven millions of distinct families, and the same number of dwellings--

Always these, and more, branching forth into numberless branches;

Always the free range and diversity! Always the continent of Democracy!

Always the prairies, pastures, forests, vast cities, travellers, Canada, the snows;

Always these compact lands--lands tied at the hips with the belt stringing the huge oval lakes;

Always the West, with strong native persons--the increasing density there--the habitans, friendly, threatening, ironical, scorning invaders;

All sights, South, North, East--all deeds, promiscuously done at all times,

All characters, movements, growths--a few noticed, myriads unnoticed.

Through Mannahatta's streets I walking, these things gathering.

On interior rivers, by night, in the glare of pine knots, steamboats

wooding up:

Sunlight by day on the valley of the Susquehanna, and on the valleys of the
Potomac and Rappahannock, and the valleys of the Roanoke and Delaware;
In their northerly wilds beasts of prey haunting the Adirondacks the
hills--or lapping the Saginaw waters to drink;

In a lonesome inlet, a sheldrake, lost from the flock, sitting on the
water, rocking silently;

In farmers' barns, oxen in the stable, their harvest labour done--they rest
standing--they are too tired;

Afar on arctic ice, the she-walrus lying drowsily, while her cubs play
around;

The hawk sailing where men have not yet sailed--the farthest polar sea,
ripply, crystalline, open, beyond the floes;

White drift spooning ahead, where the ship in the tempest dashes.

On solid land, what is done in cities, as the bells all strike midnight
together;

In primitive woods, the sounds there also sounding--the howl of the wolf,
the scream of the panther, and the hoarse bellow of the elk;

In winter beneath the hard blue ice of Moosehead Lake, in summer visible
through the clear waters, the great trout swimming;

In lower latitudes, in warmer air, in the Carolinas, the large black
buzzard floating slowly, high beyond the tree-tops,

Below, the red cedar, festooned with tylandria--the pines and cypresses,
growing out of the white sand that spreads far and flat;

Rude boats descending the big Pedee--climbing plants, parasites, with

coloured flowers and berries, enveloping huge trees,
The waving drapery on the live oak, trailing long and low, noiselessly
waved by the wind;
The camp of Georgia waggoners, just after dark--the supper-fires, and the
cooking and eating by whites and negroes,
Thirty or forty great waggons--the mules, cattle, horses, feeding from
troughs,
The shadows, gleams, up under the leaves of the old sycamore-trees--the
flames--also the black smoke from the pitch-pine, curling and
rising;
Southern fishermen fishing--the sounds and inlets of North Carolina's
coast--the shad-fishery and the herring-fishery--the large sweep-
seines--the windlasses on shore worked by horses--the clearing,
curing, and packing houses;
Deep in the forest, in piney woods, turpentine dropping from the incisions
in the trees--There are the turpentine works,
There are the negroes at work, in good health--the ground in all directions
is covered with pine straw.
--In Tennessee and Kentucky, slaves busy in the coalings, at the forge, by
the furnace-blaze, or at the corn-shucking;
In Virginia, the planter's son returning after a long absence, joyfully
welcomed and kissed by the aged mulatto nurse.
On rivers, boatmen safely moored at nightfall, in their boats, under
shelter of high banks,
Some of the younger men dance to the sound of the banjo or fiddle--others
sit on the gunwale, smoking and talking;

Late in the afternoon the mocking-bird, the American mimic, singing in the Great Dismal Swamp--there are the greenish waters, the resinous odour, the plenteous moss, the cypress-tree, and the juniper-tree.

--Northward, young men of Mannahatta--the target company from an excursion returning home at evening--the musket-muzzles all bear bunches of flowers presented by women;

Children at play--or on his father's lap a young boy fallen asleep, (how his lips move! how he smiles in his sleep!)

The scout riding on horseback over the plains west of the Mississippi--he ascends a knoll and sweeps his eye around.

California life--the miner, bearded, dressed in his rude costume--the staunch California friendship--the sweet air--the graves one, in passing, meets, solitary, just aside the horse-path;

Down in Texas, the cotton-field, the negro-cabins--drivers driving mules or oxen before rude carts--cotton-bales piled on banks and wharves.

Encircling all, vast-darting, up and wide, the American Soul, with equal hemispheres--one Love, one Dilation or Pride.

--In arriere, the peace-talk with the Iroquois, the aborigines--the calumet, the pipe of good-will, arbitration, and endorsement,

The sachem blowing the smoke first toward the sun and then toward the earth,

The drama of the scalp-dance enacted with painted faces and guttural exclamations,

The setting-out of the war-party--the long and stealthy march,

The single-file--the swinging hatchets--the surprise and slaughter of enemies.

--All the acts, scenes, ways, persons, attitudes, of these States--
 reminiscences, all institutions,
All these States, compact--Every square mile of these States, without
 excepting a particle--you also--me also.
Me pleased, rambling in lanes and country fields, Paumanok's fields,
Me, observing the spiral flight of two little yellow butterflies, shuffling
 between each other, ascending high in the air;
The darting swallow, the destroyer of insects--the fall-traveller
 southward, but returning northward early in the spring;
The country boy at the close of the day, driving the herd of cows, and
 shouting to them as they loiter to browse by the roadside;
The city wharf--Boston, Philadelphia, Baltimore, Charleston, New Orleans,
 San Francisco,
The departing ships, when the sailors heave at the capstan;
Evening--me in my room--the setting sun,
The setting summer sun shining in my open window, showing the swarm of
 flies, suspended, balancing in the air in the centre of the room,
 darting athwart, up and down, casting swift shadows in specks on
 the opposite wall, where the shine is.
The athletic American matron speaking in public to crowds of listeners;
Males, females, immigrants, combinations--the copiousness--the
 individuality of the States, each for itself--the money-makers;
Factories, machinery, the mechanical forces--the windlass, lever, pulley--
All certainties,
The certainty of space, increase, freedom, futurity;
In space, the sporades, the scattered islands, the stars--on the firm

earth, the lands, my lands!

O lands! O all so dear to me--what you are (whatever it is), I become a part of that, whatever it is.

Southward there, I screaming, with wings slow-flapping, with the myriads of gulls wintering along the coasts of Florida--or in Louisiana, with pelicans breeding,

Otherways, there, atwixt the banks of the Arkansaw, the Rio Grande, the Nueces, the Brazos, the Tombigbee, the Red River, the Saskatchewan, or the Osage, I with the spring waters laughing and skipping and running;

Northward, on the sands, on some shallow bay of Paumanok, I, with parties of snowy herons wading in the wet to seek worms and aquatic plants;

Retreating, triumphantly twittering, the king-bird, from piercing the crow with its bill, for amusement--And I triumphantly twittering;

The migrating flock of wild geese alighting in autumn to refresh themselves--the body of the flock feed--the sentinels outside move around with erect heads watching, and are from time to time relieved by other sentinels--And I feeding and taking turns with the rest;

In Canadian forests, the moose, large as an ox, cornered by hunters, rising desperately on his hind-feet, and plunging with his fore-feet, the hoofs as sharp as knives--And I plunging at the hunters, cornered and desperate;

In the Mannahatta, streets, piers, shipping, store-houses, and the countless workmen working in the shops,

And I too of the Mannahatta, singing thereof--and no less in myself than

the whole of the Mannahatta in itself,
Singing the song of These, my ever-united lands--my body no more inevitably
united part to part, and made one identity, any more than my lands
are inevitably united, and made ONE IDENTITY;
Nativities, climates, the grass of the great pastoral plains,
Cities, labours, death, animals, products, good and evil--these me,--
These affording, in all their particulars, endless feuillage to me and to
America, how can I do less than pass the clue of the union of them, to
afford the like to you?
Whoever you are! how can I but offer you divine leaves, that you also be
eligible as I am?
How can I but, as here, chanting, invite you for yourself to collect
bouquets of the incomparable feuillage of these States?

[Footnote 1: 1858-59.]

THE PAST-PRESENT.

I was looking a long while for the history of the past for myself, and for
these chants--and now I have found it.

It is not in those paged fables in the libraries, (them I neither accept
nor reject;)

It is no more in the legends than in all else;

It is in the present--it is this earth to-day;

It is in Democracy--in this America--the Old World also;

It is the life of one man or one woman to-day, the average man of to-day;

It is languages, social customs, literatures, arts;

It is the broad show of artificial things, ships, machinery, politics,
creeds, modern improvements, and the interchange of nations,

All for the average man of to-day.

YEARS OF THE UNPERFORMED.

Years of the unperformed! your horizon rises--I see it part away for more
 august dramas;

I see not America only--I see not only Liberty's nation but other nations
 embattling;

I see tremendous entrances and exits--I see new combinations--I see the
 solidarity of races;

I see that force advancing with irresistible power on the world's stage;
Have the old forces played their parts? are the acts suitable to them
 closed?

I see Freedom, completely armed, and victorious, and very haughty, with Law
 by her side, both issuing forth against the idea of caste;

--What historic denouements are these we so rapidly approach?

I see men marching and countermarching by swift millions!

I see the frontiers and boundaries of the old aristocracies broken;

I see the landmarks of European kings removed;

I see this day the People beginning their landmarks, all others give way;

Never were such sharp questions asked as this day;

Never was average man, his soul, more energetic, more like a God.

Lo! how he urges and urges, leaving the masses no rest;

His daring foot is on land and sea everywhere--he colonises the Pacific,
 the archipelagoes;

With the steam-ship, the electric telegraph, the newspaper, the wholesale
 engines of war,

With these, and the world-spreading factories, he interlinks all geography,
all lands;

--What whispers are these, O lands, running ahead of you, passing under the
seas?

Are all nations communing? is there going to be but one heart to the globe?

Is humanity forming en masse?--for lo! tyrants tremble, crowns grow dim;

The earth, restive, confronts a new era, perhaps a general divine war;

No one knows what will happen next--such portents fill the days and nights.

Years prophetic! the space ahead as I walk, as I vainly try to pierce it,

is full of phantoms;

Unborn deeds, things soon to be, project their shapes around me;

This incredible rush and heat--this strange ecstatic fever of dreams, O

years!

Your dreams, O years, how they penetrate through me! (I know not whether I

sleep or wake!)

The performed America and Europe grow dim, retiring in shadow behind me,

The unperformed, more gigantic than ever, advance, advance upon me.

FLUX.

Of these years I sing,

How they pass through convulsed pains, as through parturitions;

How America illustrates birth, gigantic youth, the promise, the sure
fulfilment, despite of people--Illustrates evil as well as good;

How many hold despairingly yet to the models departed, caste, myths,
obedience, compulsion, and to infidelity;

How few see the arrived models, the athletes, the States--or see freedom or
spirituality--or hold any faith in results.

But I see the athletes--and I see the results glorious and inevitable--and
they again leading to other results;

How the great cities appear--How the Democratic masses, turbulent, wilful,
as I love them,

How the whirl, the contest, the wrestle of evil with good, the sounding and
resounding, keep on and on;

How society waits unformed, and is between things ended and things begun;

How America is the continent of glories, and of the triumph of freedom, and
of the Democracies, and of the fruits of society, and of all that
is begun;

And how the States are complete in themselves--And how all triumphs and
glories are complete in themselves, to lead onward,

And how these of mine, and of the States, will in their turn be convulsed,
and serve other parturitions and transitions.

And how all people, sights, combinations, the Democratic masses, too,

serve--and how every fact serves,

And how now, or at any time, each serves the exquisite transition of Death.

TO WORKING MEN.

1.

Come closer to me;

Push close, my lovers, and take the best I possess;

Yield closer and closer, and give me the best you possess.

This is unfinished business with me--How is it with you?

(I was chilled with the cold types, cylinder, wet paper between us.)

Male and Female!

I pass so poorly with paper and types, I must pass with the contact of
bodies and souls.

American masses!

I do not thank you for liking me as I am, and liking the touch of me--I
know that it is good for you to do so.

2.

This is the poem of occupations;

In the labour of engines and trades, and the labour of fields, I find the
developments,

And find the eternal meanings.

Workmen and Workwomen!

Were all educations, practical and ornamental, well displayed out of me,
what would it amount to?

Were I as the head teacher, charitable proprietor, wise statesman, what
would it amount to?

Were I to you as the boss employing and paying you, would that satisfy you?

The learned, virtuous, benevolent, and the usual terms;

A man like me, and never the usual terms.

Neither a servant nor a master am I;

I take no sooner a large price than a small price--I will have my own,
whoever enjoys me;

I will be even with you, and you shall be even with me.

If you stand at work in a shop, I stand as nigh as the nighest in the same
shop;

If you bestow gifts on your brother or dearest friend, I demand as good as
your brother or dearest friend;

If your lover, husband, wife, is welcome by day or night, I must be
personally as welcome;

If you become degraded, criminal, ill, then I become so for your sake;

If you remember your foolish and outlawed deeds, do you think I cannot
remember my own foolish and outlawed deeds?

If you carouse at the table, I carouse at the opposite side of the table;

If you meet some stranger in the streets, and love him or her--why I often
meet strangers in the street, and love them.

Why, what have you thought of yourself?

Is it you then that thought yourself less?

Is it you that thought the President greater than you?

Or the rich better off than you? or the educated wiser than you?

Because you are greasy or pimpled, or that you was once drunk, or a thief,

Or diseased, or rheumatic, or a prostitute, or are so now;

Or from frivolity or impotence, or that you are no scholar, and never saw
your name in print,

Do you give in that you are any less immortal?

3.

Souls of men and women! it is not you I call unseen, unheard, untouchable
and untouching;

It is not you I go argue pro and con about, and to settle whether you are
alive or no;

I own publicly who you are, if nobody else owns.

Grown, half-grown, and babe, of this country and every country, indoors and
outdoors, one just as much as the other, I see,

And all else behind or through them.

The wife--and she is not one jot less than the husband;
The daughter--and she is just as good as the son;
The mother--and she is every bit as much as the father.

Offspring of ignorant and poor, boys apprenticed to trades,
Young fellows working on farms, and old fellows working on farms,
Sailor-men, merchant-men, coasters, immigrants,
All these I see--but nigher and farther the same I see;
None shall escape me, and none shall wish to escape me.
I bring what you much need, yet always have,
Not money, amours, dress, eating, but as good;
I send no agent or medium, offer no representative of value, but offer the
value itself.

There is something that comes home to one now and perpetually;
It is not what is printed, preached, discussed--it eludes discussion and
print;
It is not to be put in a book--it is not in this book;
It is for you, whoever you are--it is no farther from you than your hearing
and sight are from you;
It is hinted by nearest, commonest, readiest--it is ever provoked by them.

You may read in many languages, yet read nothing about it;
You may read the President's Message, and read nothing about it there;
Nothing in the reports from the State department or Treasury department, or

in the daily papers or the weekly papers,
Or in the census or revenue returns, prices current, or any accounts of
stock.

4.

The sun and stars that float in the open air;
The apple-shaped earth, and we upon it--surely the drift of them is
something grand!
I do not know what it is, except that it is grand, and that it is
happiness,
And that the enclosing purport of us here is not a speculation, or bon-mot,
or reconnoissance,
And that it is not something which by luck may turn out well for us, and
without luck must be a failure for us,
And not something which may yet be retracted in a certain contingency.

The light and shade, the curious sense of body and identity, the greed that
with perfect complaisance devours all things, the endless pride and
outstretching of man, unspeakable joys and sorrows,
The wonder every one sees in every one else he sees, and the wonders that
fill each minute of time for ever,
What have you reckoned them for, camarado?
Have you reckoned them for a trade, or farm-work? or for the profits of a
store?

Or to achieve yourself a position? or to fill a gentleman's leisure, or a
lady's leisure?

Have you reckoned the landscape took substance and form that it might be
painted in a picture?

Or men and women that they might be written of, and songs sung?

Or the attraction of gravity, and the great laws and harmonious
combinations, and the fluids of the air, as subjects for the
savans?

Or the brown land and the blue sea for maps and charts?

Or the stars to be put in constellations and named fancy names?

Or that the growth of seeds is for agricultural tables, or agriculture
itself?

Old institutions--these arts, libraries, legends, collections, and the
practice handed along in manufactures--will we rate them so high?

Will we rate our cash and business high?--I have no objection;

I rate them as high as the highest--then a child born of a woman and man I
rate beyond all rate.

We thought our Union grand, and our Constitution grand;

I do not say they are not grand and good, for they are;

I am this day just as much in love with them as you;

Then I am in love with you, and with all my fellows upon the earth.

We consider Bibles and religions divine--I do not say they are not divine;

I say they have all grown out of you, and may grow out of you still;
It is not they who give the life--it is you who give the life;
Leaves are not more shed from the trees, or trees from the earth, than they
are shed out of you.

5.

When the psalm sings, instead of the singer;
When the script preaches, instead of the preacher;
When the pulpit descends and goes, instead of the carver that carved the
supporting desk;
When I can touch the body of books, by night or by day, and when they touch
my body back again;
When a university course convinces, like a slumbering woman and child
convince;
When the minted gold in the vault smiles like the night-watchman's
daughter;
When warrantee deeds loafe in chairs opposite, and are my friendly
companions;
I intend to reach them my hand, and make as much of them as I do of men and
women like you.
The sum of all known reverence I add up in you, whoever you are;
The President is there in the White House for you--it is not you who are
here for him;
The Secretaries act in their bureaus for you--not you here for them;

The Congress convenes every twelfth month for you;
Laws, courts, the forming of States, the charters of cities, the going and
coming of commerce and mails, are all for you.

List close, my scholars dear!

All doctrines, all politics and civilisation, exsurge from you;

All sculpture and monuments, and anything inscribed anywhere, are tallied
in you;

The gist of histories and statistics, as far back as the records reach, is
in you this hour, and myths and tales the same;

If you were not breathing and walking here, where would they all be?

The most renowned poems would be ashes, orations and plays would be
vacuums.

All architecture is what you do to it when you look upon it;

Did you think it was in the white or grey stone? or the lines of the arches
and cornices?

All music is what awakes from you, when you are reminded by the
instruments;

It is not the violins and the cornets--it is not the oboe nor the beating
drums, nor the score of the baritone singer singing his sweet
romanza--nor that of the men's chorus, nor that of the women's
chorus,

It is nearer and farther than they.

6.

Will the whole come back then?

Can each see signs of the best by a look in the looking-glass? is there
nothing greater or more?

Does all sit there with you, with the mystic, unseen soul?

Strange and hard that paradox true I give;
Objects gross and the unseen Soul are one.

House-building, measuring, sawing the boards;

Blacksmithing, glass-blowing, nail-making, coopering, tin-roofing, shingle-
dressing,

Ship-joining, dock-building, fish-curing, ferrying, flagging of side-walks
by flaggers,

The pump, the pile-driver, the great derrick, the coal-kiln and brick-kiln,

Coal-mines, and all that is down there,--the lamps in the darkness, echoes,
songs, what meditations, what vast native thoughts looking through
smutched faces,

Ironworks, forge-fires in the mountains, or by the river-banks--men around
feeling the melt with huge crowbars--lumps of ore, the due
combining of ore, limestone, coal--the blast-furnace and the
puddling-furnace, the loup-lump at the bottom of the melt at last--
the rolling-mill, the stumpy bars of pig-iron, the strong, clean
shaped T-rail for railroads;

Oilworks, silkworks, white-lead-works, the sugar-house, steam-saws, the
great mills and factories;

Stone-cutting, shapely trimmings for façades, or window or door lintels--
the mallet, the tooth-chisel, the jib to protect the thumb, Oakum,
the oakum-chisel, the caulking-iron--the kettle of boiling vault-
cement, and the fire under the kettle,

The cotton-bale, the stevedore's hook, the saw and buck of the sawyer, the
mould of the moulder, the working knife of the butcher, the ice-
saw, and all the work with ice,

The implements for daguerreotyping--the tools of the rigger, grappler,
sail-maker, block-maker,

Goods of gutta-percha, papier-mâché, colours, brushes, brush-making,
glaziers' implements,

The veneer and glue-pot, the confectioner's ornaments, the decanter and
glasses, the shears and flat-iron,

The awl and knee-strap, the pint measure and quart measure, the counter and
stool, the writing-pen of quill or metal--the making of all sorts
of edged tools,

The brewery, brewing, the malt, the vats, everything that is done by
brewers, also by wine-makers, also vinegar-makers,

Leather-dressing, coach-making, boiler-making, rope-twisting, distilling,
sign-painting, lime-burning, cotton-picking--electro-plating,
electrotyping, stereotyping,

Stave-machines, planing-machines, reaping-machines,
ploughing-machines, thrashing-machines, steam waggons,

The cart of the carman, the omnibus, the ponderous dray;

Pyrotechny, letting off coloured fireworks at night, fancy figures and
jets,
Beef on the butcher's stall, the slaughter-house of the butcher, the
butcher in his killing-clothes,
The pens of live pork, the killing-hammer, the hog-hook, the scalding's tub,
gutting, the cutter's cleaver, the packer's maul, and the plenteous
winter-work of pork-packing,
Flour-works, grinding of wheat, rye, maize, rice--the barrels and the half
and quarter barrels, the loaded barges, the high piles on wharves
and levees,
The men, and the work of the men, on railroads, coasters, fish-boats,
canals;
The daily routine of your own or any man's life--the shop, yard, store, or
factory;
These shows all near you by day and night-workmen! whoever you are, your
daily life!
In that and them the heft of the heaviest--in them far more than you
estimated, and far less also;
In them realities for you and me--in them poems for you and me;
In them, not yourself--you and your soul enclose all things, regardless of
estimation;
In them the development good--in them, all themes and hints.

I do not affirm what you see beyond is futile--I do not advise you to stop;
I do not say leadings you thought great are not great;
But I say that none lead to greater than those lead to.

7.

Will you seek afar off? You surely come back at last,
In things best known to you finding the best, or as good as the best,
In folks nearest to you finding the sweetest, strongest, lovingest;
Happiness, knowledge, not in another place, but this place--not for another
hour, but this hour;
Man in the first you see or touch--always in friend, brother, nighest
neighbour--Woman in mother, sister, wife;
The popular tastes and employments taking precedence in poems or anywhere,
You workwomen and workmen of these States having your own divine and strong
life,
And all else giving place to men and women like you.

SONG OF THE BROAD-AXE.

1.

Weapon, shapely, naked, wan;

Head from the mother's bowels drawn!

Wooded flesh and metal bone! limb only one, and lip only one!

Grey-blue leaf by red-heat grown! helve produced from a little seed sown!

Resting the grass amid and upon,

To be leaned, and to lean on.

Strong shapes, and attributes of strong shapes--masculine trades, sights
and sounds;

Long varied train of an emblem, dabs of music;

Fingers of the organist skipping staccato over the keys of the great organ.

2.

Welcome are all earth's lands, each for its kind;

Welcome are lands of pine and oak;

Welcome are lands of the lemon and fig;

Welcome are lands of gold;

Welcome are lands of wheat and maize--welcome those of the grape;

Welcome are lands of sugar and rice;

Welcome are cotton-lands--welcome those of the white potato and sweet
potato;

Welcome are mountains, flats, sands, forests, prairies;
Welcome the rich borders of rivers, table-lands, openings,
Welcome the measureless grazing-lands--welcome the teeming soil of
orchards, flax, honey, hemp;
Welcome just as much the other more hard-faced lands;
Lands rich as lands of gold, or wheat and fruit lands;
Lands of mines, lands of the manly and rugged ores;
Lands of coal, copper, lead, tin, zinc;
LANDS OF IRON! lands of the make of the axe!

3.

The log at the wood-pile, the axe supported by it;
The sylvan hut, the vine over the doorway, the space cleared for a garden,
The irregular tapping of rain down on the leaves, after the storm is
lulled,
The wailing and moaning at intervals, the thought of the sea,
The thought of ships struck in the storm, and put on their beam-ends, and
the cutting away of masts;
The sentiment of the huge timbers of old-fashioned houses and barns;
The remembered print or narrative, the voyage at a venture of men,
families, goods,
The disembarkation, the founding of a new city,
The voyage of those who sought a New England and found it--the outset
anywhere,

The settlements of the Arkansas, Colorado, Ottawa, Willamette,
The slow progress, the scant fare, the axe, rifle, saddle-bags;
The beauty of all adventurous and daring persons,
The beauty of wood-boys and wood-men, with their clear untrimmed faces,
The beauty of independence, departure, actions that rely on themselves,
The American contempt for statutes and ceremonies, the boundless impatience
of restraint,
The loose drift of character, the inkling through random types, the
solidification;
The butcher in the slaughter-house, the hands aboard schooners and sloops,
the raftsman, the pioneer,
Lumbermen in their winter camp, daybreak in the woods, stripes of snow on
the limbs of trees, the occasional snapping,
The glad clear sound of one's own voice, the merry song, the natural life
of the woods, the strong day's work,
The blazing fire at night, the sweet taste of supper, the talk, the bed of
hemlock boughs, and the bearskin;
--The house-builder at work in cities or anywhere,
The preparatory jointing, squaring, sawing, mortising,
The hoist-up of beams, the push of them in their places, laying them
regular, Setting the studs by their tenons in the mortises,
according as they were prepared,
The blows of mallets and hammers, the attitudes of the men, their curved
limbs,
Bending, standing, astride the beams, driving in pins, holding on by posts
and braces,

The hooked arm over the plate, the other arm wielding the axe,
The floor-men forcing the planks close, to be nailed,
Their postures bringing their weapons downward on the bearers,
The echoes resounding through the vacant building;
The huge store-house carried up in the city, well under way,
The six framing men, two in the middle, and two at each end, carefully
 bearing on their shoulders a heavy stick for a cross-beam,
The crowded line of masons with trowels in their right hands, rapidly
 laying the long side-wall, two hundred feet from front to rear,
The flexible rise and fall of backs, the continual click of the trowels
 striking the bricks,
The bricks, one after another, each laid so workmanlike in its place, and
 set with a knock of the trowel-handle,
The piles of materials, the mortar on the mortar-boards, and the steady
 replenishing by the hod-men;
--Spar-makers in the spar-yard, the swarming row of well-grown apprentices,
The swing of their axes on the square-hewed log, shaping it toward the
 shape of a mast,
The brisk short crackle of the steel driven slantingly into the pine,
The butter-coloured chips flying off in great flakes and slivers,
The limber motion of brawny young arms and hips in easy costumes;
The constructor of wharves, bridges, piers, bulk-heads, floats, stays
 against the sea;
--The city fireman--the fire that suddenly bursts forth in the close-packed
 square,
The arriving engines, the hoarse shouts, the nimble stepping and daring,

The strong command through the fire-trumpets, the falling in line, the rise
and fall of the arms forcing the water,
The slender, spasmodic blue-white jets--the bringing to bear of the hooks and
ladders, and their execution,
The crash and cut-away of connecting woodwork, or through floors, if the
fire smoulders under them,
The crowd with their lit faces, watching--the glare and dense shadows;
--The forger at his forge-furnace, and the user of iron after him,
The maker of the axe large and small, and the welder and temperer,
The chooser breathing his breath on the cold steel, and trying the edge
with his thumb,
The one who clean-shapes the handle and sets it firmly in the socket;
The shadowy processions of the portraits of the past users also,
The primal patient mechanics, the architects and engineers,
The far-off Assyrian edifice and Mizra edifice,
The Roman lictors preceding the consuls,
The antique European warrior with his axe in combat,
The uplifted arm, the clatter of blows on the helmeted head,
The death-howl, the limpsey tumbling body, the rush of friend and foe
thither,
The siege of revolted lieges determined for liberty,
The summons to surrender, the battering at castle-gates, the truce and
parley;
The sack of an old city in its time,
The bursting in of mercenaries and bigots tumultuously and disorderly,
Roar, flames, blood, drunkenness, madness,

Goods freely rifled from houses and temples, screams of women in the gripe
of brigands,
Craft and thievery of camp-followers, men running, old persons despairing,
The hell of war, the cruelties of creeds,
The list of all executive deeds and words, just or unjust,
The power of personality, just or unjust.

4.

Muscle and pluck for ever!
What invigorates life invigorates death,
And the dead advance as much as the living advance,
And the future is no more uncertain than the present,
And the roughness of the earth and of man encloses as
much as the delicatessen of the earth and of man,
And nothing endures but personal qualities.

What do you think endures?

Do you think the great city endures?

Or a teeming manufacturing state? or a prepared constitution? or the best-
built steamships?

Or hotels of granite and iron? or any chefs-d'oeuvre of engineering,
forts, armaments?

Away! These are not to be cherished for themselves;

They fill their hour, the dancers dance, the musicians play
for them;

The show passes, all does well enough of course,
All does very well till one flash of defiance.

The great city is that which has the greatest man or woman;
If it be a few ragged huts, it is still the greatest city in the
whole world.

5.

The place where the great city stands is not the place of
stretched wharves, docks, manufactures, deposits of produce,
Nor the place of ceaseless salutes of new-comers, or the
anchor-lifters of the departing,
Nor the place of the tallest and costliest buildings, or shops
selling goods from the rest of the earth,
Nor the place of the best libraries and schools--nor the place where money
is plentiest,
Nor the place of the most numerous population.

Where the city stands with the brawniest breed of orators and bards;
Where the city stands that is beloved by these, and loves them in return,
and understands them;
Where no monuments exist to heroes but in the common words and deeds;

Where thrift is in its place, and prudence is in its place;
Where the men and women think lightly of the laws;
Where the slave ceases, and the master of slaves ceases;
Where the populace rise at once against the never-ending audacity of
 elected persons;
Where fierce men and women pour forth, as the sea to the whistle of death
 pours its sweeping and unripped waves;
Where outside authority enters always after the precedence of inside
 authority;
Where the citizen is always the head and ideal--and President, Mayor,
 Governor, and what not, are agents for pay;
Where children are taught to be laws to themselves, and to depend on
 themselves;
Where equanimity is illustrated in affairs;
Where speculations on the Soul are encouraged;
Where women walk in public processions in the streets, the same as the men;
Where they enter the public assembly and take places the same as the men;
Where the city of the faithfulest friends stands;
Where the city of the cleanliness of the sexes stands;
Where the city of the healthiest fathers stands;
Where the city of the best-bodied mothers stands,--
There the great city stands.

6.

How beggarly appear arguments before a defiant deed!

How the floridness of the materials of cities shrivels before a man's or
woman's look!

All waits, or goes by default, till a strong being appears;

A strong being is the proof of the race, and of the ability of the
universe;

When he or she appears, materials are overawed,

The dispute on the Soul stops,

The old customs and phrases are confronted, turned back, or laid away.

What is your money-making now? What can it do now?

What is your respectability now?

What are your theology, tuition, society, traditions, statute-books, now?

Where are your jibes of being now?

Where are your cavils about the Soul now?

Was that your best? Were those your vast and solid?

Riches, opinions, politics, institutions, to part obediently from the path
of one man or woman!

The centuries, and all authority, to be trod under the foot-soles of one
man or woman!

7.

A sterile landscape covers the ore--there is as good as the best, for all
the forbidding appearance;
There is the mine, there are the miners;
The forge-furnace is there, the melt is accomplished; the hammersmen are at
hand with their tongs and hammers;
What always served and always serves is at hand.

Than this nothing has better served--it has served all:
Served the fluent-tongued and subtle-sensed Greek, and long ere the Greek;
Served in building the buildings that last longer than any;
Served the Hebrew, the Persian, the most ancient Hindostanee;
Served the mound-raiser on the Mississippi--served those whose relics
remain in Central America;
Served Albic temples in woods or on plains, with unhewn pillars, and the
druids;
Served the artificial clefts, vast, high, silent, on the snow-covered hills
of Scandinavia;
Served those who, time out of mind, made on the granite walls rough
sketches of the sun, moon, stars, ships, ocean-waves;
Served the paths of the irruptions of the Goths--served the pastoral tribes
and nomads;
Served the long long distant Kelt--served the hardy pirates of the Baltic;
Served, before any of those, the venerable and harmless men of Ethiopia;
Served the making of helms for the galleys of pleasure, and the making of
those for war;
Served all great works on land, and all great works on the sea;

For the mediaeval ages, and before the mediaeval ages;
Served not the living only, then as now, but served the dead.

8.

I see the European headsman;
He stands masked, clothed in red, with huge legs and strong naked arms,
And leans on a ponderous axe.

Whom have you slaughtered lately, European headsman?
Whose is that blood upon you, so wet and sticky?

I see the clear sunsets of the martyrs;
I see from the scaffolds the descending ghosts,
Ghosts of dead lords, uncrowned ladies, impeached ministers, rejected
 kings,
Rivals, traitors, poisoners, disgraced chieftains, and the rest.

I see those who in any land have died for the good cause;
The seed is spare, nevertheless the crop shall never run out;
(Mind you, O foreign kings, O priests, the crop shall never run out.)

I see the blood washed entirely away from the axe;
Both blade and helve are clean;
They spirt no more the blood of European nobles--they clasp no more the

necks of queens.

I see the headsman withdraw and become useless;
I see the scaffold untrodden and mouldy--I see no longer any axe upon it;
I see the mighty and friendly emblem of the power of my own race--the
newest, largest race.

9.

America! I do not vaunt my love for you;
I have what I have.

The axe leaps!
The solid forest gives fluid utterances;
They tumble forth, they rise and form,
Hut, tent, landing, survey,
Flail, plough, pick, crowbar, spade,
Shingle, rail, prop, wainscot, jamb, lath, panel, gable,
Citadel, ceiling, saloon, academy, organ, exhibition house, library,
Cornice, trellis, pilaster, balcony, window, shutter, turret, porch,
Hoe, rake, pitchfork, pencil, waggon, staff, saw, jack-plane, mallet,
wedge, rounce,
Chair, tub, hoop, table, wicket, vane, sash, floor,
Work-box, chest, stringed instrument, boat, frame, and what not,
Capitols of States, and capitol of the nation of States,

Long stately rows in avenues, hospitals for orphans, or for the poor or
sick,

Manhattan steamboats and clippers, taking the measure of all seas.

The shapes arise!

Shapes of the using of axes anyhow, and the users, and all that neighbours
them,

Cutters-down of wood, and haulers of it to the Penobscot or Kennebec,
Dwellers in cabins among the Californian mountains, or by the little lakes,
or on the Columbia,

Dwellers south on the banks of the Gila or Rio Grande--friendly gatherings,
the characters and fun,

Dwellers up north in Minnesota and by the Yellowstone river--dwellers on
coasts and off coasts,

Seal-fishers, whalers, arctic seamen breaking passages through the ice.

The shapes arise!

Shapes of factories, arsenals, foundries, markets;

Shapes of the two-threaded tracks of railroads;

Shapes of the sleepers of bridges, vast frameworks, girders, arches;

Shapes of the fleets of barges, tows, lake craft, river craft.

The shapes arise!

Shipyards and dry-docks along the Eastern and Western Seas, and in many a
bay and by-place,

The live-oak kelsons, the pine-planks, the spars, the hackmatack-roots for

knees,

The ships themselves on their ways, the tiers of scaffolds, the workmen
busy outside and inside,

The tools lying around, the great auger and little auger, the adze, bolt,
line, square, gouge, and bead-plane.

10.

The shapes arise!

The shape measured, sawed, jacked, joined, stained,

The coffin-shape for the dead to lie within in his shroud;

The shape got out in posts, in the bedstead posts, in the posts of the
bride's bed;

The shape of the little trough, the shape of the rockers beneath, the shape
of the babe's cradle;

The shape of the floor-planks, the floor-planks for dancers' feet;

The shape of the planks of the family home, the home of the friendly
parents and children,

The shape of the roof of the home of the happy young man and woman, the
roof over the well-married young man and woman,

The roof over the supper joyously cooked by the chaste wife, and joyously
eaten by the chaste husband, content after his day's work.

The shapes arise!

The shape of the prisoner's place in the court-room, and of him or her

seated in the place;
The shape of the liquor-bar leaned against by the young rum-drinker and the
old rum-drinker;
The shape of the shamed and angry stairs, trod, by sneaking footsteps;
The shape of the sly settee, and the adulterous unwholesome couple;
The shape of the gambling-board with its devilish winnings and losings;
The shape of the step-ladder for the convicted and sentenced murderer, the
murderer with haggard face and pinioned arms,
The sheriff at hand with his deputies, the silent and white-lipped crowd,
the sickening dangling of the rope.

The shapes arise!

Shapes of doors giving many exits and entrances;
The door passing the dissevered friend, flushed and in haste;
The door that admits good news and bad news;
The door whence the son left home, confident and puffed up;
The door he entered again from a long and scandalous absence, diseased,
broken down, without innocence, without means.

11.

Her shape arises,
She less guarded than ever, yet more guarded than ever;
The gross and soiled she moves among do not make her gross and soiled;
She knows the thoughts as she passes--nothing is concealed from her;

She is none the less considerate or friendly therefor;
She is the best beloved--it is without exception--she has no reason to
fear, and she does not fear;
Oaths, quarrels, hiccupped songs, smutty expressions, are idle to her as
she passes;
She is silent--she is possessed of herself--they do not offend her;
She receives them as the laws of nature receive them--she is strong,
She too is a law of nature--there is no law stronger than she is.

12.

The main shapes arise!
Shapes of Democracy, total result of centuries;
Shapes, ever projecting other shapes;
Shapes of a hundred Free States, begetting another hundred;
Shapes of turbulent manly cities;
Shapes of the women fit for these States,
Shapes of the friends and home-givers of the whole earth,
Shapes bracing the earth, and braced with the whole earth.

ANTECEDENTS.

1.

With antecedents;

With my fathers and mothers, and the accumulations of past ages:

With all which, had it not been, I would not now be here, as I am;

With Egypt, India, Phoenicia, Greece, and Rome;

With the Kelt, the Scandinavian, the Alb, and the Saxon;

With antique maritime ventures,--with laws, artisanship, wars, and
journeys;

With the poet, the skald, the saga, the myth, and the oracle;

With the sale of slaves--with enthusiasts--with the troubadour, the
crusader, and the monk;

With those old continents whence we have come to this new continent;

With the fading kingdoms and kings over there;

With the fading religions and priests;

With the small shores we look back to from our own large and present
shores;

With countless years drawing themselves onward, and arrived at these years;

You and Me arrived--America arrived, and making this year;

This year! sending itself ahead countless years to come.

2.

O but it is not the years--it is I--it is You;
We touch all laws, and tally all antecedents;
We are the skald, the oracle, the monk, and the knight--we easily include
 them, and more;
We stand amid time, beginningless and endless--we stand amid evil and good;
All swings around us--there is as much darkness as light;
The very sun swings itself and its system of planets around us:
Its sun, and its again, all swing around us.

3.

As for me, (torn, stormy, even as I, amid these vehement days;)
I have the idea of all, and am all, and believe in all;
I believe materialism is true, and spiritualism is true--I reject no part.

Have I forgotten any part?

Come to me, whoever and whatever, till I give you recognition.

I respect Assyria, China, Teutonia, and the Hebrews;
I adopt each theory, myth, god, and demi-god;
I see that the old accounts, bibles, genealogies, are true, without
 exception;
I assert that all past days were what they should have been;
And that they could nohow have been better than they were,

And that to-day is what it should be--and that America is,
And that to-day and America could nohow be better than they are.

4.

In the name of these States, and in your and my name, the Past,
And in the name of these States, and in your and my name, the Present time.

I know that the past was great, and the future will be great,
And I know that both curiously conjoint in the present time,
For the sake of him I typify--for the common average man's sake--your sake,

if you are he;

And that where I am, or you are, this present day, there is the centre of
all days, all races,

And there is the meaning, to us, of all that has ever come of races and
days, or ever will come.

SALUT AU MONDE!

1.

O take my hand, Walt Whitman!

Such gliding wonders! such sights and sounds!
Such joined unended links, each hooked to the next!
Each answering all--each sharing the earth with all.

What widens within you, Walt Whitman?
What waves and soils exuding?
What climes? what persons and lands are here?
Who are the infants? some playing, some slumbering?
Who are the girls? who are the married women?
Who are the three old men going slowly with their arms about each others'
 necks?
What rivers are these? what forests and fruits are these?
What are the mountains called that rise so high in the mists?
What myriads of dwellings are they, filled with dwellers?

2.

Within me latitude widens, longitude lengthens;
Asia, Africa, Europe, are to the east--America is provided for in the west;
Banding the bulge of the earth winds the hot equator,
Curiously north and south turn the axis-ends;
Within me is the longest day--the sun wheels in slanting rings--it does not
 set for months.
Stretched in due time within me the midnight sun just rises above the
 horizon, and sinks again;

Within me zones, seas, cataracts, plants, volcanoes, groups,
Malaysia, Polynesia, and the great West Indian islands.

3.

What do you hear, Walt Whitman?

I hear the workman singing, and the farmer's wife singing;

I hear in the distance the sounds of children, and of animals early in the
day;

I hear quick rifle-cracks from the riflemen of East Tennessee and Kentucky,
hunting on hills;

I hear emulous shouts of Australians, pursuing the wild horse;

I hear the Spanish dance, with castanets, in the chestnut shade, to the
rebeck and guitar;

I hear continual echoes from the Thames;

I hear fierce French liberty songs;

I hear of the Italian boat-sculler the musical recitative of old poems;

I hear the Virginian plantation chorus of negroes, of a harvest night, in
the glare of pine-knots;

I hear the strong barytone of the 'long-shore-men of Mannahatta;

I hear the stevedores unlading the cargoes, and singing;

I hear the screams of the water-fowl of solitary north-west lakes;

I hear the rustling pattering of locusts, as they strike the grain and
grass with the showers of their terrible clouds;

I hear the Coptic refrain, toward sundown, pensively falling on the breast
of the black venerable vast mother, the Nile;

I hear the bugles of raft-tenders on the streams of Canada;

I hear the chirp of the Mexican muleteer, and the bells of the mule;

I hear the Arab muezzin, calling from the top of the mosque;

I hear the Christian priests at the altars of their churches--I hear the
responsive bass and soprano;

I hear the wail of utter despair of the white-haired Irish grandparents,
when they learn the death of their grandson;

I hear the cry of the Cossack, and the sailor's voice, putting to sea at
Okotsk;

I hear the wheeze of the slave-coffle, as the slaves march on--as the husky
gangs pass on by twos and threes, fastened together with wrist-
chains and ankle-chains;

I hear the entreaties of women tied up for punishment--I hear the sibilant
whisk of thongs through the air;

I hear the Hebrew reading his records and psalms;

I hear the rhythmic myths of the Greeks, and the strong legends of the
Romans;

I hear the tale of the divine life and bloody death of the beautiful God,
the Christ;

I hear the Hindoo teaching his favourite pupil the loves, wars, adages,
transmitted safely to this day from poets who wrote three thousand
years ago.

4.

What do you see, Walt Whitman?

Who are they you salute, and that one after another salute you?

I see a great round wonder rolling through the air:

I see diminute farms, hamlets, ruins, grave-yards, jails, factories,
palaces, hovels, huts of barbarians, tents of nomads, upon the
surface;

I see the shaded part on one side, where the sleepers are sleeping--and the
sun-lit part on the other side;

I see the curious silent change of the light and shade;

I see distant lands, as real and near to the inhabitants of them as my land
is to me.

I see plenteous waters;

I see mountain-peaks--I see the sierras of Andes and Alleghanies, where
they range;

I see plainly the Himalayas, Chian Shahs, Altays, Ghauts;

I see the Rocky Mountains, and the Peak of Winds;

I see the Styrian Alps, and the Karnac Alps;

I see the Pyrenees, Balks, Carpathians--and to the north the Dofrafields,
and off at sea Mount Hecla;

I see Vesuvius and Etna--I see the Anahuacs;

I see the Mountains of the Moon, and the Snow Mountains, and the Red
Mountains of Madagascar;

I see the Vermont hills, and the long string of Cordilleras;
I see the vast deserts of Western America;
I see the Libyan, Arabian, and Asiatic deserts;
I see huge dreadful Arctic and Anarctic icebergs;
I see the superior oceans and the inferior ones--the Atlantic and Pacific,
the sea of Mexico, the Brazilian sea, and the sea of Peru,
The Japan waters, those of Hindostan, the China Sea, and the Gulf of
Guinea,
The spread of the Baltic, Caspian, Bothnia, the British shores, and the Bay
of Biscay,
The clear-sunned Mediterranean, and from one to another of its islands,
The inland fresh-tasted seas of North America,
The White Sea, and the sea around Greenland.
I behold the mariners of the world;
Some are in storms--some in the night, with the watch on the look-out;
Some drifting helplessly--some with contagious diseases.

I behold the sail and steam ships of the world, some in clusters in port,
some on their voyages;
Some double the Cape of Storms--some Cape Verde,--others Cape Guardafui,
Bon, or Bajadore;
Others Dondra Head--others pass the Straits of Sunda--others Cape Lopatka--
others Behring's Straits;
Others Cape Horn--others the Gulf of Mexico, or along Cuba or Hayti--others
Hudson's Bay or Baffin's Bay;
Others pass the Straits of Dover--others enter the Wash--others the Firth

of Solway--others round Cape Clear--others the Land's End;
Others traverse the Zuyder Zee, or the Scheld;
Others add to the exits and entrances at Sandy Hook;
Others to the comers and goers at Gibraltar, or the Dardanelles;
Others sternly push their way through the northern winter-packs;
Others descend or ascend the Obi or the Lena:
Others the Niger or the Congo--others the Indus, the Burampooter and
Cambodia;
Others wait at the wharves of Manhattan, steamed up, ready to start;
Wait, swift and swarthy, in the ports of Australia;
Wait at Liverpool, Glasgow, Dublin, Marseilles, Lisbon, Naples, Hamburg,
Bremen, Bordeaux, the Hague, Copenhagen;
Wait at Valparaiso, Rio Janeiro, Panama;
Wait at their moorings at Boston, Philadelphia, Baltimore, Charleston, New
Orleans, Galveston, San Francisco.

5.

I see the tracks of the railroads of the earth;
I see them welding State to State, city to city, through North America;
I see them in Great Britain, I see them in Europe;
I see them in Asia and in Africa.

I see the electric telegraphs of the earth;
I see the filaments of the news of the wars, deaths, losses, gains,

passions, of my race.

I see the long river-stripes of the earth;

I see where the Mississippi flows--I see where the Columbia flows;

I see the Great River, and the Falls of Niagara;

I see the Amazon and the Paraguay;

I see the four great rivers of China, the Amour, the Yellow River, the
Yiang-tse, and the Pearl;

I see where the Seine flows, and where the Loire, the Rhone, and the
Guadalquivir flow;

I see the windings of the Volga, the Dnieper, the Oder;

I see the Tuscan going down the Arno, and the Venetian along the Po;

I see the Greek seaman sailing out of Egina bay.

6.

I see the site of the old empire of Assyria, and that of Persia, and that
of India;

I see the falling of the Ganges over the high rim of Saukara.

I see the place of the idea of the Deity incarnated by avatars in human
forms;

I see the spots of the successions of priests on the earth--oracles,
sacrificers, brahmins, sabians, lamas, monks, muftis, exhorters;

I see where druids walked the groves of Mona--I see the mistletoe and
vervain;

I see the temples of the deaths of the bodies of Gods--I see the old
signifiers.

I see Christ once more eating the bread of His last supper, in the midst of
youths and old persons:

I see where the strong divine young man, the Hercules, toiled faithfully
and long, and then died;

I see the place of the innocent rich life and hapless fate of the beautiful
nocturnal son, the full-limbed Bacchus;

I see Kneph, blooming, drest in blue, with the crown of feathers on his
head;

I see Hermes, unsuspected, dying, well-beloved, saying to the people, Do
not weep for me,

This is not my true country, I have lived banished from my true country--I
now go back there,

I return to the celestial sphere, where every one goes in his turn.

7.

I see the battlefields of the earth--grass grows upon them, and blossoms
and corn;

I see the tracks of ancient and modern expeditions.

I see the nameless masonries, venerable messages of the unknown events,
heroes, records of the earth;

I see the places of the sagas;
I see pine-trees and fir-frees torn by northern blasts;
I see granite boulders and cliffs--I see green meadows and lakes;
I see the burial-cairns of Scandinavian warriors;
I see them raised high with stones, by the marge of restless oceans, that
the dead men's spirits, when they wearied of their quiet graves,
might rise up through the mounds, and gaze on the tossing billows,
and be refreshed by storms, immensity, liberty, action.

I see the steppes of Asia;
I see the tumuli of Mongolia--I see the tents of Kalmucks and Baskirs;
I see the nomadic tribes, with herds of oxen and cows;
I see the table-lands notched with ravines--I see the jungles and deserts;
I see the camel, the wild steed, the bustard, the fat-tailed sheep, the
antelope, and the burrowing-wolf.

I see the highlands of Abyssinia;
I see flocks of goats feeding, and see the fig-tree, tamarind, date,
And see fields of teff-wheat, and see the places of verdure and gold.

I see the Brazilian vaquero;
I see the Bolivian ascending Mount Sorata;
I see the Wacho crossing the plains--I see the incomparable rider of horses
with his lasso on his arm;
I see over the pampas the pursuit of wild cattle for their hides.

8.

I see little and large sea-dots, some inhabited, some uninhabited;
I see two boats with nets, lying off the shore of Paumanok, quite still;
I see ten fishermen waiting--they discover now a thick school of
 mossbonkers--they drop the joined sein-ends in the water,
The boats separate--they diverge and row off, each on its rounding course
 to the beach, enclosing the mossbonkers;
The net is drawn in by a windlass by those who stop ashore,
Some of the fishermen lounge in their boats--others stand negligently
 ankle-deep in the water, poised on strong legs;
The boats are partly drawn up--the water slaps against them;
On the sand, in heaps and winrows, well out from the water, lie the green-
 backed spotted mossbonkers.

9.

I see the despondent red man in the west, lingering about the banks of
 Moingo, and about Lake Pepin;
He has heard the quail and beheld the honey-bee, and sadly prepared to
 depart.

I see the regions of snow and ice;
I see the sharp-eyed Samoiede and the Finn;

I see the seal-seeker in his boat, poisoning his lance;
I see the Siberian on his slight-built sledge, drawn by dogs;
I see the porpoise-hunters--I see the whale-crews of the South Pacific and
the North Atlantic;
I see the cliffs, glaciers, torrents, valleys, of Switzerland--I mark the
long winters, and the isolation.

I see the cities of the earth, and make myself at random a part of them;
I am a real Parisian;
I am a habitant of Vienna, St. Petersburg, Berlin, Constantinople;
I am of Adelaide, Sidney, Melbourne;
I am of London, Manchester, Bristol, Edinburgh, Limerick,
I am of Madrid, Cadiz, Barcelona, Oporto, Lyons, Brussels, Berne,
Frankfort, Stuttgart, Turin, Florence;
I belong in Moscow, Cracow, Warsaw--or northward in Christiania or
Stockholm--or in Siberian Irkutsk--or in some street in Iceland;
I descend upon all those cities, and rise from them again.

10.

I see vapours exhaling from unexplored countries;
I see the savage types, the bow and arrow, the poisoned splint, the fetish,
and the obi.

I see African and Asiatic towns;

I see Algiers, Tripoli, Derne, Mogadore, Timbuctoo, Monrovia;
I see the swarms of Pekin, Canton, Benares, Delhi, Calcutta, Yedo;
I see the Kruman in his hut, and the Dahoman and Ashantee-man in their
huts;

I see the Turk smoking opium in Aleppo;
I see the picturesque crowds at the fairs of Khiva, and those of Herat;
I see Teheran--I see Muscat and Medina, and the intervening sands--I see
the caravans toiling onward;

I see Egypt and the Egyptians--I see the pyramids and obelisks;
I look on chiselled histories, songs, philosophies, cut in slabs of
sandstone or on granite blocks;

I see at Memphis mummy-pits, containing mummies, embalmed, swathed in
linen

cloth, lying there many centuries;

I look on the fallen Theban, the large-balled eyes, the side-drooping neck,
the hands folded across the breast.

I see the menials of the earth, labouring;

I see the prisoners in the prisons;

I see the defective human bodies of the earth;

I see the blind, the deaf and dumb, idiots, hunchbacks, lunatics;

I see the pirates, thieves, betrayers, murderers, slave-makers of the
earth;

I see the helpless infants, and the helpless old men and women.

I see male and female everywhere;

I see the serene brotherhood of philosophs;
I see the constructiveness of my race;
I see the results of the perseverance and industry of my race;
I see ranks, colours, barbarisms, civilisations--I go among them--I mix
indiscriminately,
And I salute all the inhabitants of the earth.

11.

You, where you are!
You daughter or son of England!
You of the mighty Slavic tribes and empires! you Russ in Russia!
You dim-descended, black, divine-souled African, large, fine-headed,
nobly-formed, superbly destined, on equal terms with me!
You Norwegian! Swede! Dane! Icelander! you Prussian!
You Spaniard of Spain! you Portuguese!
You Frenchwoman and Frenchman of France!
You Belge! you liberty-lover of the Netherlands!
You sturdy Austrian! you Lombard! Hun! Bohemian! farmer of Styria!
You neighbour of the Danube!
You working-man of the Rhine, the Elbe, or the Weser! you working-woman
too!
You Sardinian! you Bavarian! Swabian! Saxon! Wallachian! Bulgarian!
You citizen of Prague! Roman! Neapolitan! Greek!
You lithe matador in the arena at Seville!

You mountaineer living lawlessly on the Taurus or Caucasus!
You Bokh horse-herd, watching your mares and stallions feeding!
You beautiful-bodied Persian, at full speed in the saddle shooting arrows
to the mark!
You Chinaman and Chinawoman of China! you Tartar of Tartary!
You women of the earth subordinated at your tasks!
You Jew journeying in your old age through every risk, to stand once on
Syrian ground!
You other Jews waiting in all lands for your Messiah!
You thoughtful Armenian, pondering by some stream of the Euphrates! you
peering amid the ruins of Nineveh! you ascending Mount Ararat!
You foot-worn pilgrim welcoming the far-away sparkle of the minarets of
Mecca!
You sheiks along the stretch from Suez to Babelmandeb, ruling your families
and tribes!
You olive-grower tending your fruit on fields of Nazareth, Damascus, or
Lake Tiberias!
You Thibet trader on the wide inland, or bargaining in the shops of Lassa!
You Japanese man or woman! you liver in Madagascar, Ceylon, Sumatra,
Borneo!
All you continentals of Asia, Africa, Europe, Australia, indifferent of
place!
All you on the numberless islands of the archipelagoes of the sea!
And you of centuries hence, when you listen to me!
And you, each and everywhere, whom I specify not, but include just the
same!

Health to you! Goodwill to you all--from me and America sent.

Each of us inevitable;

Each of us limitless--each of us with his or her right upon the earth;

Each of us allowed the eternal purports of the earth:

Each of us here as divinely as any is here.

12.

You Hottentot with clicking palate! You woolly-haired hordes!

You owned persons, dropping sweat-drops or blood-drops!

You human forms with the fathomless ever-impressive countenances of brutes!

I dare not refuse you--the scope of the world, and of time and space, are
upon me.

You poor koboo whom the meanest of the rest look down upon, for all your
glimmering language and spirituality!

You low expiring aborigines of the hills of Utah, Oregon, California!

You dwarfed Kamtschatkan, Greenlander, Lap!

You Austral negro, naked, red, sooty, with protrusive lip, grovelling,
seeking your food!

You Caffre, Berber, Soudanese!

You haggard, uncouth, untutored Bedowee!

You plague-swarms in Madras, Nankin, Kaubul, Cairo!

You bather bathing in the Ganges!

You benighted roamer of Amazonia! you Patagonian! you Fejee-man!
You peon of Mexico! you slave of Carolina, Texas, Tennessee!
I do not prefer others so very much before you either;
I do not say one word against you, away back there, where you stand;
You will come forward in due time to my side.

My spirit has passed in compassion and determination around the whole
earth;
I have looked for equals and lovers, and found them ready for me in all
lands;
I think some divine rapport has equalised me with them.

13.

O vapours! I think I have risen with you, and moved away to distant
continents, and fallen down there, for reasons;
I think I have blown with you, O winds;
O waters, I have fingered every shore with you.

I have run through what any river or strait of the globe has run through;
I have taken my stand on the bases of peninsulas, and on the highest
embedded rocks, to cry thence.

Salut au Monde!

What cities the light or warmth penetrates, I penetrate those cities

myself;

All islands to which birds wing their way, I wing my way myself.

Toward all

I raise high the perpendicular hand--I make the signal,

To remain after me in sight for ever,

For all the haunts and homes of men.

A BROADWAY PAGEANT.

(RECEPTION OF THE JAPANESE EMBASSY, JUNE 16, 1860.)

1.

Over sea, hither from Nippon,
Courteous, the Princes of Asia, swart-cheeked princes,
First-comers, guests, two-sworded princes,
Lesson-giving princes, leaning back in their open barouches, bare-headed,
 impassive,
This day they ride through Manhattan.

2.

Libertad!
I do not know whether others behold what I behold,
In the procession, along with the Princes of Asia, the errand-bearers,
Bringing up the rear, hovering above, around, or in the ranks marching;
But I will sing you a song of what I behold, Libertad.

3.

When million-footed Manhattan, unpent, descends to its pavements;
When the thunder-cracking guns arouse me with the proud roar I love;
When the round-mouthed guns, out of the smoke and smell I love, spit their
 salutes;
When the fire-flashing guns have fully alerted me--when heaven-clouds
 canopy my city with a delicate thin haze;
When, gorgeous, the countless straight stems, the forests at the wharves,
 thicken with colours;
When every ship, richly dressed, carries her flag at the peak;
When pennants trail, and street-festoons hang from the windows;
When Broadway is entirely given up to foot-passengers and foot-standers--
when the mass is densest;
When the façades of the houses are alive with people--when eyes gaze,
 riveted, tens of thousands at a time;
When the guests from the islands advance--when the pageant moves forward,
 visible;
When the summons is made--when the answer, that waited thousands of years,
 answers;
I too, arising, answering, descend to the pavements, merge with the crowd,
 and gaze with them.

4.

Superb-faced Manhattan!

Comrade Americanos!--to us, then, at last, the Orient comes.

To us, my city,
Where our tall-topped marble and iron beauties range on opposite sides--to
walk in the space between,
To-day our Antipodes comes.

The Originatress comes,
The land of Paradise--land of the Caucasus--the nest of birth,
The nest of languages, the bequeather of poems, the race of eld,
Florid with blood, pensive, rapt with musings, hot with passion,
Sultry with perfume, with ample and flowing garments,
With sunburnt visage, with intense soul and glittering eyes,
The race of Brahma comes!

See, my cantabile! these, and more, are flashing to us from the procession;
As it moves changing, a kaleidoscope divine it moves changing before us.

Not the errand-bearing princes, nor the tanned Japanee only;
Lithe and silent, the Hindoo appears--the whole Asiatic continent itself
appears--the Past, the dead,
The murky night-morning of wonder and fable, inscrutable,
The enveloped mysteries, the old and unknown hive-bees,
The North--the sweltering South--Assyria--the Hebrews--the Ancient of
ancients,
Vast desolated cities--the gliding Present--all of these, and more, are in
the pageant-procession.

Geography, the world, is in it;
The Great Sea, the brood of islands, Polynesia, the coast beyond;
The coast you henceforth are facing--you Libertad! from your Western golden
shores;
The countries there, with their populations--the millions en masse, are
curiously here;
The swarming market-places--the temples, with idols ranged along the sides,
or at the end--bronze, brahmin, and lama;
The mandarin, farmer, merchant, mechanic, and fisherman;
The singing-girl and the dancing-girl--the ecstatic person--the divine
Buddha;
The secluded Emperors--Confucius himself--the great poets and heroes--the
warriors, the castes, all,
Trooping up, crowding from all directions--from the Altay mountains,
From Thibet--from the four winding and far-flowing rivers
of China,
From the Southern peninsulas, and the demi-continental islands--from
Malaysia;
These, and whatever belongs to them, palpable, show forth to me, and are
seized by me,
And I am seized by them, and friendlily held by them,
Till, as here, them all I chant, Libertad! for themselves and for you.

5.

For I too, raising my voice, join the ranks of this pageant;
I am the chanter--I chant aloud over the pageant;
I chant the world on my Western Sea;
I chant, copious, the islands beyond, thick as stars in the sky;
I chant the new empire, grander than any before--As in a vision it comes to
me;
I chant America, the Mistress--I chant a greater supremacy;
I chant, projected, a thousand blooming cities yet, in time, on those
groups of sea-islands;
I chant my sail-ships and steam-ships threading the archipelagoes;
I chant my stars and stripes fluttering in the wind;
I chant commerce opening, the sleep of ages having done its work--races
reborn, refreshed;
Lives, works, resumed--The object I know not--but the old, the Asiatic,
resumed, as it must be,
Commencing from this day, surrounded by the world.

And you, Libertad of the world!
You shall sit in the middle, well-poised, thousands of years;
As to-day, from one side, the Princes of Asia come to you;
As to-morrow, from the other side, the Queen of England sends her eldest
son to you.

The sign is reversing, the orb is enclosed,
The ring is circled, the journey is done;
The box-lid is but perceptibly opened--nevertheless the perfume pours

copiously out of the whole box.

6.

Young Libertad!

With the venerable Asia, the all-mother,

Be considerate with her, now and ever, hot Libertad--for you are all;

Bend your proud neck to the long-off mother, now sending messages over the
archipelagoes to you:

Bend your proud neck for once, young Libertad.

7.

Were the children straying westward so long? so wide the tramping?

Were the precedent dim ages debouching westward from Paradise so long?

Were the centuries steadily footing it that way, all the while unknown, for
you, for reasons?

They are justified--they are accomplished--they shall now be turned the
other way also, to travel toward you thence;

They shall now also march obediently eastward, for your sake, Libertad.

OLD IRELAND.

1.

Far hence, amid an isle of wondrous beauty,
Crouching over a grave, an ancient sorrowful mother,
Once a queen--now lean and tattered, seated on the ground,
Her old white hair drooping dishevelled round her shoulders;
At her feet fallen an unused royal harp,
Long silent--she too long silent--mourning her shrouded hope and heir;
Of all the earth her heart most full of sorrow, because most full of love.

2.

Yet a word, ancient mother;
You need crouch there no longer on the cold ground, with forehead between
your knees;
O you need not sit there, veiled in your old white hair, so dishevelled;
For know you, the one you mourn is not in that grave;
It was an illusion--the heir, the son you love, was not really dead;
The Lord is not dead--he is risen again, young and strong, in another
country;
Even while you wept there by your fallen harp, by the grave,
What you wept for was translated, passed from the grave,
The winds favoured, and the sea sailed it,

And now, with rosy and new blood,
Moves to-day in a new country.

BOSTON TOWN.

1.

To get betimes in Boston town, I rose this morning early;
Here's a good place at the corner--I must stand and see the show.

2.

Clear the way there, Jonathan!
Way for the President's marshal! Way for the government cannon!
Way for the Federal foot and dragoons--and the apparitions copiously
tumbling.

I love to look on the stars and stripes--I hope the fifes will play "Yankee
Doodle,"
How bright shine the cutlasses of the foremost troops!
Every man holds his revolver, marching stiff through Boston town.

3.

A fog follows--antiques of the same come limping,
Some appear wooden-legged, and some appear bandaged and bloodless.

Why this is indeed a show! It has called the dead out of the earth!

The old graveyards of the hills have hurried to see!

Phantoms! phantoms countless by flank and rear!

Cocked hats of mothy mould! crutches made of mist!

Arms in slings! old men leaning on young men's shoulders!

What troubles you, Yankee phantoms? What is all this chattering of bare
gums?

Does the ague convulse your limbs? Do you mistake your crutches for
firelocks, and level them?

If you blind your eyes with tears, you will not see the President's
marshal;

If you groan such groans, you might baulk the government cannon.

For shame, old maniacs! Bring down those tossed arms, and let your white
hair be;

Here gape your great grandsons--their wives gaze at them from the windows,
See how well-dressed--see how orderly they conduct themselves.

Worse and worse! Can't you stand it? Are you retreating?

Is this hour with the living too dead for you?

Retreat then! Pell-mell!

To your graves! Back! back to the hills, old limpers!

I do not think you belong here, anyhow.

4.

But there is one thing that belongs here--shall I tell you what it is,
gentlemen of Boston?

I will whisper it to the Mayor--He shall send a committee to England;
They shall get a grant from the Parliament, go with a cart to the royal
vault--haste!

Dig out King George's coffin, unwrap him quick from the grave-clothes, box
up his bones for a journey;

Find a swift Yankee clipper--here is freight for you, black-bellied
clipper,

Up with your anchor! shake out your sails! steer straight toward Boston
bay.

5.

Now call for the President's marshal again, bring out the government
cannon,

Fetch home the roarers from Congress,--make another procession, guard it
with foot and dragoons.

This centre-piece for them!

Look, all orderly citizens! Look from the windows, women!

The committee open the box; set up the regal ribs; glue those that will not
stay;

Clap the skull on top of the ribs, and clap a crown on top of the skull.

You have got your revenge, old bluster! The crown is come to its own, and
more than its own.

6.

Stick your hands in your pockets, Jonathan--you are a made man from this
day;

You are mighty 'cute--and here is one of your bargains.

FRANCE, THE EIGHTEENTH YEAR OF THESE STATES.[1]

1.

A great year and place;

A harsh, discordant, natal scream out-sounding, to touch the mother's heart
closer than any yet.

2.

I walked the shores of my Eastern Sea,

Heard over the waves the little voice,

Saw the divine infant, where she woke, mournfully wailing, amid the roar of
cannon, curses, shouts, crash of falling buildings;

Was not so sick from the blood in the gutters running--nor from the single
corpses, nor those in heaps, nor those borne away in the tumbrils;

Was not so desperate at the battues of death--was not so shocked at the
repeated fusillades of the guns.

Pale, silent, stern, what could I say to that long-accrued retribution?

Could I wish humanity different?

Could I wish the people made of wood and stone?

Or that there be no justice in destiny or time?

3.

O Liberty! O mate for me!

Here too the blaze, the bullet, and the axe, in reserve to fetch them out
in case of need,

Here too, though long repressed, can never be destroyed;

Here too could rise at last, murdering and ecstatic;

Here too demanding full arrears of vengeance.

Hence I sign this salute over the sea,

And I do not deny that terrible red birth and baptism,

But remember the little voice that I heard wailing--and wait with perfect
trust, no matter how long;

And from to-day, sad and cogent, I maintain the bequeathed cause, as for
all lands,

And I send these words to Paris with my love,

And I guess some chansonniers there will understand them,

For I guess there is latent music yet in France--floods of it.

O I hear already the bustle of instruments--they will soon be drowning all
that would interrupt them;

O I think the east wind brings a triumphal and free march,

It reaches hither--it swells me to joyful madness,

I will run transpose it in words, to justify it,

I will yet sing a song for you, ma femme!

[Footnote 1: 1793-4---The great poet of Democracy is "not so shocked" at the great European year of Democracy.]

EUROPE, THE SEVENTY-SECOND AND SEVENTY-THIRD YEARS OF THESE STATES.[1]

1.

Suddenly, out of its stale and drowsy lair, the lair of slaves,
Like lightning it leaped forth, half startled at itself,
Its feet upon the ashes and the rags--its hands tight to the throats of
 kings.

O hope and faith!

O aching close of exiled patriots' lives!

O many a sickened heart!

Turn back unto this day, and make yourselves afresh.

2.

And you, paid to defile the People! you liars, mark!

Not for numberless agonies, murders, lusts,

For court thieving in its manifold mean forms, worming from his simplicity
 the poor man's wages,

For many a promise sworn by royal lips, and broken, and laughed at in the
 breaking,

Then in their power, not for all these did the blows strike revenge, or the

heads of the nobles fall;
The People scorned the ferocity of kings.

3.

But the sweetness of mercy brewed bitter destruction, and the frightened
rulers come back;
Each comes in state with his train--hangman, priest, tax-gatherer,
Soldier, lawyer, lord, jailer, and sycophant.

4.

Yet behind all, lowering, stealing--lo, a Shape,
Vague as the night, draped interminably, head, front, and form, in scarlet
folds,
Whose face and eyes none may see:
Out of its robes only this--the red robes, lifted by the arm--
One finger crooked, pointed high over the top, like the head of a snake
appears.

5.

Meanwhile, corpses lie in new-made graves--bloody corpses of young men;

The rope of the gibbet hangs heavily, the bullets of princes are flying,
the creatures of power laugh aloud,
And all these things bear fruits--and they are good.

Those corpses of young men,
Those martyrs that hang from the gibbets--those hearts pierced by the grey
lead,
Cold and motionless as they seem, live elsewhere with unslaughtered
vitality.

They live in other young men, O kings!
They live in brothers, again ready to defy you!
They were purified by death--they were taught and exalted.
Not a grave of the murdered for freedom but grows seed for freedom, in its
turn to bear seed,
Which the winds carry afar and resow, and the rains and the snows nourish.

Not a disembodied spirit can the weapons of tyrants let loose,
But it stalks invisibly over the earth, whispering, counselling,
cautioning.

6.

Liberty! let others despair of you! I never despair of you.

Is the house shut? Is the master away?

Nevertheless, be ready--be not weary of watching:

He will soon return--his messengers come anon.

[Footnote 1: The years 1848 and 1849.]

TO A FOILED REVOLTER OR REVOLTRESS.

1.

Courage! my brother or my sister!

Keep on! Liberty is to be subserved, whatever occurs;

That is nothing that is quelled by one or two failures, or any number of
failures,

Or by the indifference or ingratitude of the people, or by any
unfaithfulness,

Or the show of the tushes of power, soldiers, cannon, penal statutes.

2.

What we believe in waits latent for ever through all the continents, and
all the islands and archipelagoes of the sea.

What we believe in invites no one, promises nothing, sits in calmness and
light, is positive and composed, knows no discouragement,

Waiting patiently, waiting its time.

3.

The battle rages with many a loud alarm, and frequent advance and retreat,
The infidel triumphs--or supposes he triumphs,
The prison, scaffold, garrote, handcuffs, iron necklace and anklet, lead-
balls, do their work,
The named and unnamed heroes pass to other spheres,
The great speakers and writers are exiled--they lie sick in distant lands,
The cause is asleep--the strongest throats are still, choked
with their own blood,
The young men drop their eyelashes toward the ground when they meet;
But, for all this, Liberty has not gone out of the place, nor the infidel
entered into possession.

When Liberty goes out of a place, it is not the first to go, nor the second
or third to go,
It waits for all the rest to go--it is the last.

When there are no more memories of heroes and martyrs,
And when all life and all the souls of men and women are discharged from
any part of the earth,
Then only shall Liberty be discharged from that part of the earth,
And the infidel and the tyrant come into possession.

4.

Then courage! revolter! revoltress!

For till all ceases neither must you cease.

5.

I do not know what you are for, (I do not know what I am for myself, nor
what anything is for,)

But I will search carefully for it even in being foiled,

In defeat, poverty, imprisonment--for they too are great.

Did we think victory great?

So it is--But now it seems to me, when it cannot be helped, that defeat is
great,

And that death and dismay are great.