

Classic Poetry Series

Henry Clay Work
- poems -

Publication Date:

2012

Publisher:

Poemhunter.com - The World's Poetry Archive

Henry Clay Work(1 October 1832 – 8 June 1884)

Henry Clay Work was an American composer and songwriter.

Biography

He was born in Middletown, Connecticut, to Alanson and Amelia (Forbes) Work. His father opposed slavery, and Work was himself an active abolitionist and Union supporter. His family's home became a stop on the Underground Railroad, assisting runaway slaves to freedom in Canada, for which his father was once imprisoned.

Work was self taught in music. By the time he was 23, he worked as a printer in Chicago, specializing in setting musical type. He allegedly composed in his head as he worked, without a piano, using the noise of the machinery as an inspiration. His first published song was "We Are Coming, Sister Mary", which eventually became a staple in Christy's Minstrels shows.

Work produced much of his best material during the Civil War. In 1862 he published "Kingdom Coming" using his own lyrics based upon snippets of Negro speech he had heard. This use of slave dialect (Irish too was a favourite) tended to limit the appeal of Work's works and make them frowned upon today. However, "Kingdom Coming" appeared in the Jerome Kern show "Good Morning, Dearie" on Broadway in 1921, and was heard in the background in the 1944 Judy Garland film "Meet Me in St. Louis". 1862 also saw his novelty song "Grafted Into the Army", followed in 1863 by "Babylon is Fallen" ("Don't you see the black clouds risin' ober yonder"), "The Song of a Thousand Years", and "God Save the Nation". His 1864 effort "Wake Nicodemus" was popular in minstrel shows.

In 1865 he wrote his greatest hit, inspired by Sherman's march to the sea, "Marching Through Georgia" at the end of the previous year. Thanks to its lively melody, the song was immensely popular, its million sheet-music sales being unprecedented. It is a cheerful marching song and has since been pressed into service many times, including by Princeton University as a football fight song. Timothy Shay Arthur's play Ten Nights in a Barroom, had Work's 1864 "Come Home, Father", a dirgesome song bemoaning the demon drink: too mawkish for modern tastes, but always sung at Temperance Meetings.

Settling into sentimental balladry, Work had significant post-Civil War success with the "The Lost Letter", and "The Ship That Never Returned"—a tune reused in the "Wreck of the Old 97" and "MTA". A massive hit was "My Grandfather's

Clock", published in 1876, which was introduced by Sam Lucas in Hartford, Connecticut, and again secured more than a million sales of the sheet music, along with popularizing the phrase, "grandfather clock."

By 1880 Work was living in New York City, giving his occupation as a musician. He died in Hartford two years later at the age of 51. He was survived by his wife, Sarah Parker Work, and one of their four children.

Henry Clay Work was inducted into the Songwriters Hall of Fame in 1970. He was a distant cousin to Frances Work, a great-grandmother of Diana, Princess of Wales.

Andy Veto

Andy Veto never slept a wink last night;
Darkeys, he's your Moses!
Andy had to take us extra drink last night;
Darkeys, he's your Moses!
There was one who led you thro' the sea, you know,
He who paid his life, and left you free, you know;
But Andy V. receipts the bill, so he, you know--
Why, darkeys, he's your Moses!

Come! Come! Joshua, come!
Don't you think it's time the journey closes?
For you know we'll never stand in the promised land
While Andy Veto's our Moses.

Moses can't afford to let his people vote;
Darkey's, he's your Moses!
He must watch his little flock, his own scapegoat,
For, darkeys he's your Moses!
Thinking of you brings him wakeful nights, you know;
You might up and take your "civil rights," you know,
And make a "war of roses" with the whites, you know;
So, darkeys, he's your Moses!

Andy Veto thought he wore a crown last night;
Darkeys, he's your Moses!
When the people spoke, it tumbled down last night;
But, darkeys, he's your Moses!
Were it not a pretty sight--methinks I see
Thirty million loyal people, proud and free,
Around the throne of Andy Veto bend the knee;
Oh, darkeys, he's your Moses!

Andy Veto been a fishing for "another term;"
Darkeys, he's your Moses!
Guess that when vacation comes we'll change the firm,
If, darkeys, he's your Moses!
Ev'ry-thing is going wrong while Andy leads;
We must change the diet on which Andy feeds;
Ah! "reconstruction," that is just what Andy needs;

And, darkeys, he's your Moses!

Henry Clay Work

Babylon Is Fallen!

Don't you see de black clouds
Risin' ober yonder,
Whar de Massa's old plantation am?
Neber you be frightened,
Dem is only darkies,
Come to jine an' fight for Uncle Sam,

Look out dar, now!
We's agwine to shoot!
Look out dar, don't you understand?
(Oh, don't you know dat)
Babylon is fallen!
Babylon is fallen!
An' we's agwine to occupy the land.

Don't you see the lightnin'
Flashin' in de canebrake,
Like as if we's gwine to hab a storm?
No! You is mistaken,
'Tis darkies' bay'nets,
An' de buttons on dar uniform.

Way up in the cornfield,
Whar you hear de tunder,
Dat is our ole forty-pounder gun;
When the shells are missin',
Den we load wid punkins,
All de same to make the cowards run.

Mass was de Kernel
In de Rebel army,
Eber sence he went an' run away;
But his lubly darkies,
Dey has been a-watchin',
An' dey take him pris'ner tudder day.

We will be be the Massa,
He will be the sarvant,
Try him how he like it for a spell;

So we crack de Butt'nuts,
So we take the Kernel,
So the cannon carry back de shell.

Henry Clay Work

Beautiful Rose

Off on the prairie, where the balmy air
Kisses the waving corn,
There lives a farmer, with a daughter fair--
Fair as a summer's morn!
She has a nature gentle as a dove,
Pure as the mountain snows;
Say! is it strange that everyone should love--
Love such a girl as Rose?

Beautiful Rose! lovely Rose!
Pride of the prairie bower!
Everybody loves her--everybody knows
She is the fairest flower.

Rose is a lady yet from early dawn,
Labors her skillful hand;
She is the housewife, now her mother's gone--
Gone to the better land.
Rose has the beauty--father has the gold--
Both will be hers one day;
For she is young, while he is growing old--
Old people pass away.

Clerks from the city, plowmen from the field,
Lords from a foreign land;
Each in their turn have very humbly kneeled--
Kneeled for her heart and hand.
But to them all she made the same reply--
Kindly but firmly, "No!"
And none but I can tell the reason why--
Why she should treat them so.

Henry Clay Work

Brave Boys Are They!

Heavily falls the rain;
Wild are the breezes tonight;
But 'neath the roof, the hours as they fly,
Are happy and calm and bright.
Gathering round our fireside,
Tho' it be summer time,
We sit and talk of brothers abroad
Forgetting the midnight chime

Brave boys are they!
Gone at their country's call;
And yet, and yet we cannot forget
That many brave boys must fall.

Under the homestead roof
Nestled so cozy and warm,
While soldiers sleep, with little or naught
To shelter them from the storm.
Resting on grassy couches,
Pillow'd on hillocks damp;
Of martial fare, how little we know,
Till brothers are in the camp.

Thinking no less of them,
Loving our country the more,
We sent them forth to fight for the flag
Their fathers before them bore.
Though the great tear drops started,
This was our parting trust:
God bless you, boys! we'll welcome you home
When rebels are in the dust.

May the bright wings of love
Guard them wherever they roam;
The time has come when brothers must fight,
And sisters must pray at home.
Oh! The dread field of battle!
Soon to be strewn with graves!
If brothers fall, then bury them where

Our banner in triumph waves.

Henry Clay Work

Columbia's Guardian Angels

An echo floats down from the mountains,
And finds on the prairies release;
An echo whose wonderful burden
Is "Victory! Liberty! Peace!"

The glorious trio, behold they are coming!
Their heralds are standing e'en now at the door:
[Are coming, are coming, are coming, are coming once more.]

Go tell the lone watchers of earth, they are coming
To bless us -- be with us -- forsake us no more.
[Are coming, are coming, are coming, are coming once more.]

"Glory to God in the highest!"
And the people shall answer "Amen!"
Columbia's Guardian Angels
Return to their empire again.

The banner hangs high in the heavens,
The beacon commences to burn;
The shout of the freedman goes upward,
To welcome their waited return.

The stronghold of Tyranny trembles --
Her minions retire in dismay,
Like specters that fade in the darkness,
Before the arrival of day.

They bring us the place among nations,
Our ancestors gave us before;
The birthright that some would have barter'd,
They now in its fullness restore.

They bring us the blessing of blessings,
Which few were looking to see --
A firm and unchangeable Union,
In fact, as in theory, free!

Come Back To The Farm!

Brother, come back! come back!
Dear brother, what can be the charm,
That holds you so strong -- that keeps you so long
Away from your father's able farm?
Poor Father, he tells how he needs you --
And would it be more than is due.
His labors to share, his burdens to bear,
Who once bore your burdens for you!

'Tis the voice of your sister -- she calls you,
In tones both of love and alarm!
"By dead mother's prayers -- by father's gray hairs --
Dear brother, come back to the farm."

Father, tho' years ago
The ablest and strongest of men,
Is failing at last -- you know he has past
The milestone of three-score and ten.
He's feeble, he's trembling, he's lonely,
Who once was so fearless and brave;
Yet you are away, while day after day
He totters on down to the grave.

Come from the wide, wide world,
Where dangers and perils abound!
Oh how can you roam so far from your home,
Where safety and comfort are found?
Come bring us the light of your presence,
Come give us the strength of your arm;
That we may once more see joy, as of yore,
Sit smiling upon the old farm.

Henry Clay Work

Come Home, Father!

'Tis The
SONG OF LITTLE MARY,
Standing at the bar-room door
While the shameful midnight revel
Rages wildly as before.

Father, dear father, come home with me now!
The clock in the steeple strikes one;
You said you were coming right home from the shop,
As soon as your day's work was done.
Our fire has gone out our house is all dark
And mother's been watching since tea, --
With poor brother Benny so sick in her arms,
And no one to help her but me. --
Come home! come home! come home! --
Please, father, dear father, come home. --

Hear the sweet voice of the child
Which the night winds repeat as they roam!
Oh who could resist this most plaintive of prayers?
"Please, father, dear father, come home."

Father, dear father, come home with me now!
The clock in the steeple strikes two;
The night has grown colder, and Benny is worse
But he has been calling for you.
Indeed he is worse Ma says he will die,
Perhaps before morning shall dawn; --
And this is the message she sent me to bring
"Come quickly, or he will be gone." --
Come home! come home! come home! --
Please, father, dear father, come home. --

Hear the sweet voice of the child
Which the night winds repeat as they roam!
Oh who could resist this most plaintive of prayers?
"Please, father, dear father, come home."

Father, dear father, come home with me now!

The clock in the steeple strikes three;
The house is so lonely the hours are so long
For poor weeping mother and me.
Yes, we are alone poor Benny is dead,
And gone with the angels of light; --
And these were the very last words that he said
"I want to kiss Papa good night." --
Come home! come home! come home! --
Please, father, dear father, come home. --

Hear the sweet voice of the child
Which the night winds repeat as they roam!
Oh who could resist this most plaintive of prayers?
"Please, father, dear father, come home."

Henry Clay Work

Come To Me, Sunbeam! I'M Dying

Come to me, Sunbeam! I'm dying
Uncared for, distress'd and alone.
Even now the pale angel with icy hand seizes
The heart that throbb'd along with your own.
Darling! delay not; for enginewheel stay not;
But wing'd by love, fly to my side:
Swift as the morning-beams fly, or I may not
Your coming abide.

Bring the calm joy of your presence--
To a chill'd heart the warmth of your love;
With a glance of these dear eyes this darkness illumine,
Until there comes light from above.
Eyes that shine clearest, with language sincerest,
Come speak me forgiven and bless'd:
Would you refuse me, my chosen! my dearest!
This dying request?

Still for your footsteps I listen;
Each moment I listen and long
For the voice that might break this dead silence with music
As sweet as an angelic song.
Can you not hear me? Oh will you not cheer me,
At least with one loving adieu?
Yield me how can I when you are not near me?
I'm dying for you.

One in this world, and one only,
Could soothe me, could comfort me now;
Charm'd away were my anguish and you here beside me,
Your gentle hand laid on my brow.
Come, I entrust you! If once I might meet you--
Sweet Sunbeam! what doubts you dispel!
Clasp my hand; kiss me, love! so will I greet you
In Heaven ... Farewell!

Henry Clay Work

Come, Pretty School-Girl!

On this rolling planet ever have you seen
A home so like a palace waiting for its queen? --
A dwelling place so fair,
So fill'd with treasures rare,
As the little white cottage on Evergreen Square?

Come, pretty school girl! lay your books aside;
Yes graduate tomorrow -- tomorrow be my bride;
My fortune share,
And reign queen there,
In the little white cottage on Evergreen Square.

Red as are the roses climbing on its wall,
Your cheeks of richer crimson shall out-bloom them all.
Your eyes (beyond compare)
A brighter gleam shall wear,
In the little white cottage on Everygreen Square.

Flow'rs of rarest fragrance all the year shall bloom,
And singing birds make music in your chosen room.
Come, breathe its balmy air!
Come, charm away my care,
In the little white cottage on Everygreen Square.

Henry Clay Work

Corporal Schnapps

Mine heart ish proken into little pits,
I tells you, friend, what for;
Mine schweetheart, von coot patriotic kirl,
She trives me off mit der war.
I fights for her der pattles of te flag --
I schtrikes so prave as I can;
Put now long time she nix remempers me,
And coes mit another man.

Ah! mine fraulein! You ish so ferry unkind!
You coes mit Hans to Zhermany to live,
And leaves poor Schnapps pehind,
Leaves poor Schnapps pehind.

I march all tay, no matter if der schtorm
Pe worse ash Moses' flood;
I lays all night, mine head upon a schtump,
And "sinks to sleep" in der mud.
Der nightmare comes -- I catch him ferry pad --
I treams I schleeps mit der Ghost;
I wakes next morning frusen in der cround,
So schtiff as von schtone post.

They kives me hart-pread, tougher as a rock --
It almost preaks mine shaw;
I schplite him sometimes mit an iron wedge,
And cuts him up mit a saw.
They kives me peef, as ferry, ferry salt,
Like Sodom's wife, you know;
I surely dinks they put him in der prine
Von hundred years aco.

Py'n py we take von city in der South --
We schtays there von whole year;
I kite me sourcroust much as I can eat,
And plenty loqcar pier.
I meets von lady repel in der street,
So handsome offer I see;
I makes to her von ferry callant pow --

Put ah! she schpits on me.

"Hard times!" you say, "what for you volunteer!"

I todt you friend, what for;

Mine schweetheart, von coot patriotic kirl,

She trove me off mit der war.

Alas! alas! mine pretty little von

Will schmile no more on me;

Put schtill I fights der pattle of te flag

To set mine countries free.

Henry Clay Work

Crossing The Grand Sierras

All aboard! all aboard!
The hissing breath of the iron steed
Proclaims his wish to be quickly freed;
And soon as the stroke from the bell we hear,
He springs at the touch of his engineer,
And a way we glide
O'er prairies wide,
Through verdant vales,
And mountain dales,
To the last great chain,
Which has striv'n in vain
With the Lightning! the Lightning!
the Lightning Palace Train.

Forgetting far Atlantic,
And midway scenes romantic,
We scale the peaks gigantic,
Which guard the Land of Gold:
Here silver rills are leaping,
Here lovely lakes are sleeping,
And snowclad granites keeping
Their "watch of years" untold.

We sing a wond'rous story,
No nation sang before!
A Continental Chorus,
That echoes either shore:
We sang it on the summit!
We sing it on the plain!
We've climbed the Grand Sierras
With the Lightning Palace Train,
With the Lighning! the Lighning!
the Lightning Palace Train.

All aboard! all aboard!
No toil can tire our important steed,
So once again will we test his speed!
How quick is the wish of our hearts obey'd!
He starts at the turn of the downward grade,

And again we glide
By torent side,
O'er trestl'd deeps,
Through tunel'd steeps,
While the victries wane
Which they sought to gain
With the Lightning! the Lightning!
the Lightning Palace Train.

'Neath timber'd roofs unending,
From winters snows defending,
Through canyons wild descending
To the City of the Plain:
We leave the scenes terrific,
We pass the fields prolific,
And view the broad Pacific--
The Golden gated main.

Henry Clay Work

Crying For Bread

"Please, lady! please pay my Ma for her sewing;
The suit fits you splendidly--that you'll allow.
Oh! don't say tomorrow! I see you are going;
But this will not hinder long--please pay me now.
Ma work'd all night for you! ev'ry minute;
Now she lies groaning with pain in her head;
And there by the pantry (with not a thing in it),
Sits poor little Theodore crying for bread!
Poor little Theodore crying for bread!"

"On! driver, on! they have all gone before us,
And I will not be late at the ball," Beauty said;
And wintry winds echoed her answer in chorus
With poor little Theodore crying for bread!
Poor little Theodore crying for bread!

"Please lady! please pay my Ma for her sewing;
I'll run and get change for you. Don't call me bold--
But how could you dance tonight all the time knowing
That we were left suffering, hungry and cold?
Ma looks so wild! she keeps calling for Daisy;
That was the name of my sister that's dead.
Oh! what shall I do, with my Ma going crazy,
And poor little Theodore crying for bread?
Poor little Theodore crying for bread!"

"Please lady! please pay my Ma for her sewing;
She must have some medicine--that let me buy.
Now, don't speak of beggars! 'tis money you're owing:
Do please, pay me part of it--else we must die."
On the wheels roll'd, and Fidele returned weeping;
Ah! in her absence a spirit had fled,
And morning light found her a weary watch keeping,
With poor little Theodore crying for bread!
Poor little Theodore crying for bread!"

Henry Clay Work

Dad's A Millionaire

I wish you joy, my little ragged throng--
Your Dad's a millionaire!
The fortune's come, we've waited for so long,
And I'm a millionaire!
Come Will, come Bub--go buy some better shoes;
Come Liz, come Lu--go tell your Ma the news--
Though once poor, we're now as rich as Jews,
For I'm a millionaire.

Hurrah! hurrah! now give us a rousing song--
Good bye! good bye! to poverty, want and care;
The fortune's come, we've waited for so long,
And Dad's a millionaire!

Good news! I'll go a shopping--so I will,
For Dad's a millionaire!
And I must have a thousand dollar bill,
As Dad's a millionaire!
Put on your duds, and you'll go with me Lu!
Come Bub, go call a carriage from the square;
We'll ride in style along the avenue,
For Dad's a millionaire.

Hip, hip, hooray! run up the striped flay--
My Dad's a millionaire!
This bless-ed day, I'll buy a trotting nag,
For Dad's a millionaire!
I vow, I'll smoke three-cent gigars no more!
Here, take them Bub, and pitch them out the door;
I'll have the best--the dearest in the store,
Now Dad's a millionaire.

So, wife, you think this house will never do
Now I'm a millionaire?
Well, I must build a mansion then for you,
As I'm a millionaire!
Though as for me, I think I should invest--
My whole pile in some mammoth farm out West,
Yet I can build, if you should think it best,

Since I'm a millionaire.

I'll tell you what! we'll give a party then,
As Dad's a millionaire!
And we'll invite none but the "upper ten,"
Since Dad's a millionaire!
I should be sure to find another beau,
For dukes and lords, and nobles would be there--
I've turn'd him off--the tailor's clerk, you know,
Now Dad's a millionaire.

Henry Clay Work

Don'T Be Cruel To The Motherless Darlings

The sun that sank just now beyond those calm waters
Shines not for me;
The sun that will to-morrow gild yonder mountain
I shall not see.
Faint forms draw near, and seem to beckon, beckon;
"Come now!" sweet voices seem to say;
And, but for thought of these my poor little darlings,
Glad I obey!

I must let go each little hand;
I must leave all behind.
Oh! don't be cruel to the motherless darlings;
Don't be unkind!

Since first I looked upon my Delbert and Daisy
Five years and three --
'Twas love and gentleness, 'twas ruling by kindness,
Won them to me.
Harsh words will draw them nearer never, never!
But love their hidden hearts will find.
Oh! don't be cruel to the motherless darlings;
Don't be unkind!

'Twould break their little hearts if, while in your keeping,
Love were withdrawn --
If, through your cold neglect, they lose all their sunshine
When I am gone.
To this, my dying message, listen, listen!
Keep this, my last request, in mind:
Oh! don't be cruel to the motherless darlings;
Don' be unkind!

Henry Clay Work

Farewell, My Loved One!

Round me now, beneath the weeping willow,
Night's refreshing breezes blow;
Anguish drove me from a sleepless pillow
Hours and hours ago.
You, and you alone, may know my sorrow--
You, my confidante of yore--
You, my loved one, when I must, tomorrow
Lose forever more!

Farewell, my loved one!
Yet once more
Let me press you to my heart;
Once, our Fate, with cruel fingers,
Tears our souls apart.

Though you may forget it, I remember--
Yes! for sweet it was to know--
What you told me in that dear December,
Years and years ago.
Whisper once again a truth so cheering,
Would you not those words deny;
And the sound shall linger in my hearing,
Even till I die.

Fondly let the last adieu be spoken,
Since we must our dreams dismiss;
These heart-linklets, since they must be broken
Break them with a kiss.
Then, though bitter tears will still be flowing,
One sweet comfort may I claim,
As I walk this world of changes--knowing
You are still the same.

While my treasure I relinquish, let me
Wish you heart-wealth that endures;
Even should you by and by forget me,
Faithful friends be yours.
May you never know a life so lonely,
Or a sky so dark above!

May you never having one love only,
Lose that only love!

Henry Clay Work

Georgie Sails To-Morrow!

For sixteen years, a merry, laughing maiden,
I have warbl'd only songs of joy;
And in this heart, so very lightly laden,
Happy thoughts have ever found employ.
But times will change! and now there comes a sorrow,
Which bids me ev'ry joy resign:

My Georgie sails for China seas tomorrow,
And he knows not yet that he is mine--
My Georgie sails for China seas tomorrow,
And he knows not yet that he is mine--

How should he know? 'twas from a dream awaking,
When they told me he and I must part;
For not until the tie was nearly breaking,
Had I felt its tendrils on my heart.
These lips are seal'd--I cannot tell my sorrow,
And hope must die without a sign:

Oh, who can tell the fearful scenes of danger,
And the hardships Georgie dear must know!
On stormy seas, in foreign lands a stranger,
Oh, I cannot, cannot let him go!
My heart will break! where shall I patience borrow,
For months thro' which I can but pine?

The last farewell--that solemn word is spoken,
And my spirit trembles with its thrill;
His manly tones, by deep emotion broken,
In my inmost soul are ringing still.
But strange, wild joy is mingled with my sorrow,
And smiles among my tear-drops shine:

My Georgie sails for China seas to-morrow,
But he knows--he knows that he is mine.
My Georgie sails for China seas to-morrow,
But he knows--he knows that he is mine.

Henry Clay Work

Grafted Into The Army

Our Jimmy has gone for to live in a tent,
they have grafted him into the Army,
he finally puckered up courage and went,
when they grafted him into the Army.
I told them the child was too young, alas!
At the captains forequarters, they said he would pass,
they'd train him up well in the Infantry class,
so they grafted him into the Army.

Oh, Jimmy, farewell! Your brothers fell way down in Alabammy;
I though they would spare a lone widder's heir,
but they grafted him into the Army.

Dressed up in his unicorn, dear little chap,
they have grafted him into the Army;
it seems but a day since he sot in my lap,
but they grafted him into the Army.
And these are the trousies he used to wear,
them very same buttons, the patch and the tear;
but Uncle Sam gave him a bran' new pair
when they grafted him into the Army.

Now in my provisions I see him revealed,
they have grafted him into the Army;
a picket beside the contented field,
they have grafted him into the Army.
He looks kinder sickish -- begins to cry,
a big volunteer standing right in his eye!
Oh, what if the ducky should up and die,
now they've grafted him into the Army.

Henry Clay Work

Grand-Father's Clock

My grand-father's clock was too large for the shelf,
So it stood ninety years on the floor;
It was taller by half than the old man himself,
Though it weighed not a penny weight more.
It was bought on the morn of the day that he was born,
And was always his treasure and pride;
But it stopp'd short never to go again
When the old man died.

Ninety years, without slumbering (tick, tick, tick, tick)
His life seconds numbering (tick, tick, tick, tick)
It stopp'd short never to go again
When the old man died.

In watching its pendulum swing to and fro,
Many hours had he spent while a boy;
And in childhood and manhood the clock seemed to know
And to share both his grief and his joy.
For it struck twenty-four when he entered at the door,
With a blooming and beautiful bride;
But it stopp'd short never to go again
When the old man died.

Ninety years, without slumbering (tick, tick, tick, tick)
His life seconds numbering (tick, tick, tick, tick)
It stopp'd short never to go again
When the old man died.

My grandfather said that of those he could hire,
Not a servant so faithful he found;
For it wasted no time, and had but one desire --
At the close of each week to be wound.
And it kept in its place -- not a frown upon its face,
And its hands never hung by its side;
But it stopp'd short never to go again
When the old man died.

Ninety years, without slumbering (tick, tick, tick, tick)
His life seconds numbering (tick, tick, tick, tick)

It stopp'd short never to go again
When the old man died.

It rang an alarm in the dead of the night --
An alarm that for years had been dumb;
And we knew that his spirit was pluming for flight --
That his hour of departure had come.
Still the clock kept the time, with a soft and muffled chime,
As we silently stood by his side;
But it stopp'd short never to go again
When the old man died.

Ninety years, without slumbering (tick, tick, tick, tick)
His life seconds numbering (tick, tick, tick, tick)
It stopp'd short never to go again
When the old man died.

Henry Clay Work

Grandmother Told Me So

The declaration has been spoken,
For Grandmother told me so.
The darkeys have got their fetlocks broken,
For Grandmother told me so.
Oh, won't they have a lot of iron on hand!
And when the news travels,
Oh, won't it be grand!
'Twill sweep like a sugarcane over the land,
For Grandmother told me so.

American Eagle! hysterical bird!
Oh, flap your wing and crow!
The slaves are embellished--yes, that's the word,
For Grandmother told me so!

There's curious times in that ur section,
For Grandmother told me so.
They think they will have a resurrection,
For Grandmother told me so.
The penholders raving like persons insane --
The darkeys in exodus, raising cane,
And singing like martingales after a rain,
For Grandmother told me so.

But President Abe forgot Kentucky,
For Grandmother told me so.
And Geneses, too -- and that's unlucky,
For Grandmother told me so.
Malicious champagne will be open'd in vain,
Until we shall break the last ox-yoke and chain --
Till through the Benighted States freedom shall reign,
For Grandmother told me so.

Henry Clay Work

Joy In Heaven

FIRST SPIRIT

Sister spirit, listen!
Methinks I hear a song,
Resounding strangely, sadly,
These peaceful plains along.

SECOND SPIRIT

'Tis like those lays we sang in earthly days,
When we trod our pilgrimage of pain;

FIRST SPIRIT

And earthlike are those values
Which chant the solemn strain:

CHORUS OF MORTALS

Low in the dust before Thee,
Great King of Kings, we fall!
Least of the host which adore Thee,
Do not despise our call!
From the paths of right,
We have wander'd, we have wander'd,
We have all gone astray;
In thy holy sight,
We are guilty, we are guilty --
We have all gone astray;
Yet hear us! hear us! hear us,
And cast us not away.

CHORUS OF ANGELS

Children of Earth! your pray'r is heard in Heaven,
Where Mercy heeds the softest whisper'd moan:
Ransom'd, arise! your sins are all forgiven,
Your Father saith who sitteth on the Throne:
And it is his gracious bidding:

"Bring forth the robes!" --
his heart of love was yearning
To greet repentant sons far away.
Lost once, but found!
We welcome their returning!
There's joy in Heav'n today!
There's joy in Heav'n today!

FIRST SPIRIT

Sister spirit, yonder,
By that celestial gate,
What throngs of weary pilgrims,
In supplication wait.

SECOND SPIRIT

They know and yet how fondly those are met,
Who at last from wandering ways draw nigh --

FIRST SPIRIT

They know not yet how boundless
His love to whom they cry:

CHORUS OF MORTALS

No place claim we with the Holy,
Thronging thy blissfull halls;
Grant us a refuge lowly,
Graciously near these walls.
There on bended knees,
Tho' unworthy, most unworthy,
We will worship and pray;
Oh, hear us! hear us! hear us,
And cast us not away.

CHORUS OF ANGELS

Children of Earth! no more, in sadness bended,
You supplicate a distant Throne of Grace:
Ransom'd, arise! your days of prayer are ended --

You meet your waiting Father face to face:
For he sendeth heralds saying:
"Unfold the gates! -- with gladness come before us,
And to the royal seats to my guests convey."
Angels! begin the neverending chorus!
There's joy in Heav'n today!
There's joy in Heav'n today!

And I heard, and I heard
as it were the voice of a great multitude,
and the voice of many waters,
and the voice of mighty thunderings,
say ---- - ing;

FULL CHORUS

Glory to God! Glory to God!
Glory to God in the highest!

QUARTETTE

He gathers his wanderers home
We welcome the last arrived one!
Oh, bles-sed employ!
our infinite joy (our infinte joy)
Is begun!

FULL CHORUS

Now will we sing to Thee
(to Thee) (to Thee) now will we sing,
Our Father, our Redeemer and our King,
New songs (our sweetest songs)
of praise (our purest praise)
Our choicest, noblest, most triumphant lays,
For ev - (-er, ever) -er
more (For ever more)
For ev - (-er, ever) -er more.
Praise ye the Lord
For ev - (-er, ever) -er more.

King Bibler's Army

It was ten years ago when the belle of the village
Gave here her hand to the young millionaire,
Every tongue (even those of the bells in the steeple)
Saying "Joy to the Heav'n-blest pair!"
She was sweet as the rosebud that blooms in the valley;
He was manly, and noble, and brave.
Tell me, where are they now?
In the sad-eyed procession,
Marching, down, down, down to the grave.

Hark! hark! a pageant passes
(tramp, tramp, tramp, tramp):
I hear the tread of moving masses
(tramp, tramp, tramp, tramp)
O Heaven save our young men --
'tis King Bibler's Army,
Marching down, down, down to the grave.

At the head of the boat are the dashing lieutenants
Who entice young recruits into line;
Arm in arm, three abreast, they keep step with the music,
Bearing goblets of blood red wine.
In the rear, by and by, we shall see them together,
As they stagger along on the pave,
With their wives and their children, a rag-robed procession,
Marching, down, down, down to the grave.

From the front to the rear is the rule of promotion
In the army King Bibler commands;
And the pension is pov'rty, disease and dishonor,
With a forfeit of home and lands.
So the friend that was treated to cordials and juleps,
Will be treated at last like a slave,
As he fags at the end of the chaingang procession,
Marching, down, down, down to the grave.

Would you fill up the ranks? let your town send its quota:
Seventy thousand recruits must be found,
For the gravediggers reckon they bury that number

Every year in the cold, cold ground.
Yet the rest hobble on, and the colors they carry,
Though in tatters, triumphantly wave,
For they vanquish themselves in this madman's procession,
Marching, down, down, down to the grave.

Henry Clay Work

Kingdom Coming

Say, darkeys, hab you seen de massa,
Wid de muffstash on his face,
Go long de road some time dis mornin',
Like he gwine to leag de place?
He seen a smoke, way up de ribber,
Whar de Linkum gumboats lay;
He took his hat, an' lef berry sudden,
An' I spec he's run away!

De massa run? ha, ha!
De darkey stay? ho, ho!
It mus' be now de kingdom comin',
An' de year of Jubilo!

He six foot one way, two foot tudder,
An' he weigh tree hundred pound,
His coat so big, he couldn't pay de tailor,
An' it won't go half way round.
He drill so much they call him Cap'an,
An' he get so drefful tann'd,
I spec he try an' fool dem Yankees
For to tink he's contraband.

De darkey's feel so lonesome libing
in de loghouse on de lawn,
Dey move dar things to massa's parlor
For to keep it while he's gone.
Dar's wine an' cider in de kitchen,
An' de darkey's dey'll hab some;
I spose dey'll all be cornfiscated
When de Linkum sojers come.

De oberseer he make us trouble,
An' he dribe us round a spell;
We lock him up in de smokehouse cellar,
Wid de key trown in de well.
De whip is lost, de han'cuff broken,
But de massa'll hab his pay;
He's ole enough, big enough, ought to known better

Dan to went an' run away.

Henry Clay Work

Lillie Of The Snowstorm

To his home, his once white, once lov'd cottage,
Late at night, a poor inebriate came;
To his wife, the waiting wife and daughter
Who for him had fann'd the midnight flame.
Rudely met, they answer'd him with kindness --
Gave him all their own untasted store;
'Twas but small, and he with awful curses,
Spurn'd the gift, and drove them from the door.

While the storm, the wild wild wintry tempest,
Swept across the prairies cold and white;

What a shame that Lillie and her mother
Were abroad on such a fearful night!

Far across the prairie stood a dwelling,
Where from harm they oft had found retreat;
Thither now, all brave and uncomplaining,
Did they urge their weary, wayworn feet.
But their strength, unequal to their courage,
Fail'd them as they wander'd to and fro;
Till at last, the feeble, fainting mother,
Speechless sank upon the drifted snow.

Lillie prays -- the harps are hush'd in Heaven --
Angels poise them midway in the sky;
Up from earth there comes a wail of sorrow,
Such a wail as must be heard on High.
"Father dear! my other, better Father!
Won't you hear your daughter Lillie pray?
Won't you send some strong and careful angel,
Who will help my mother on her way?"

Morning dawns -- the husband and the father,
Sober'd now, to seek his flock has come;
Lillie dear is living, but her mother --
Hours ago, an angel bore her home.
Ah, poor man! how bitter is his anguish,
As he now repents his punish'd sins,

Bending o'er the child, who, half unconscious,
Sadly cries, "Please father, let us in!"

Henry Clay Work

Lilly-Willy-Woken

Bill Vining had a sorrel colt
Some two years old or more,
But the colt was wild as a mountain deer
And a bridle never wore;
And so one day,
Bill took his colt
named Lilly Willy Woken,
And whipp'd him till his stubborn will
And the whiplash both were broken!

Broke! Broke! Broken!
Your stubborn will is broken
You will dance no more on the sable floor,
O Lilly Willy Woken!

Bill Vining was a banker --
He had a bag of gold;
And not only uncurrent coin,
But customers he sold,
But while he went to break his colt
Young Lilly Willy Woken
His teller told, with his bag of gold
And thus the bank was broken.

Broke! Broke! Broken
Your master's bank is broken!
He will count no more his profits o'er
O Lilly Willy Woken!

Bill Vining was a lover --
He had a lady fair,
Who had said thro' life she'd be his wife
And his bag of gold would share;
But when she saw that all was lost,
Save Lilly Willy Woken,
She felt inclined to change her mind
And so his heart was broken.

Broke! Broke! Broken

Your master's heart is broken!
He will sing no more at his lady's door,
O Lilly Willy Woken!

Bill Vining was a mourner --
He had a host of woes,
And grave despair was pictured where
A smile did once repose.
And so he took the halter off
From Lilly Willy Woken,
And from a shelf he hung himself
And thus his neck was broken!

Broke! Broke! Broken
Your master's neck is broken!
And you see what came of a stubborn frame
O Lilly Willy Woken!

Henry Clay Work

Little Major

At his post, the "Little Major"
Dropp'd his drum, that battle-day;
On the grass, all stain'd with crimson,
Through that battle-night he lay--
Crying "Oh! for love of Jesus,
Grant me but this little boon!
Can you, friend, refuse me water?
Can you, when I die so soon?"

Crying "Oh! for love of Jesus,
Grant me but this little boon!
Can you, friend, refuse me water?
Can you, when I die so soon?"

They are none to hear or help him--
All his friends were early fled,
Save the forms, outstretch'd around him,
Of the dying and the dead.
Hush--they come! there falls a footstep!
How it makes his heart rejoice!
They will help, Oh, they will save him,
When they hear his fainting voice--

Now the lights are flashing round him,
And he hears a loyal word,
Strangers they, whose lips pronounce it,
Yet he trusts his voice is heard.
It is heard--Oh, God forgive them!
They refuse his dying pray'r!
"Nothing but a wounded drummer,"
So they say, and leave him there--

See! the moon that shone above him,
Veils her face, as if in grief;
And the skies are sadly weeping--
Shielding teardrops of relief.
Yet to die, by friends forsaken,
With his last request denied--
This he felt his keenest anguish,

When at morn, he gasp'd and died--

Henry Clay Work

Lost On The Lady Elgin

Up from the poor man's cottage--
Forth from the mansion door;
Sweeping across the waters,
And echoing 'long the shore;
Caught by the morning breezes--
Borne on the evening gale;
Cometh a voice of mourning,
A sad and solemn wail.

Lost on the Lady Elgin!
Sleeping to wake no more!
Number'd in that three hundred,
Who fail'd to reach the shore!

Oh! 'tis the cry of children,
Weeping for parents gone;
Children who slept at evening,
But orphans woke at dawn.
Sisters for brothers weeping,
Husbands for missing wives--
Such are the ties dis-sever'd
With those three hundred live.

Staunch was the noble steamer--
Precious the freight she bore;
Gaily she loosed her cables,
A few short hours before.
Grandly she swept out harbor,
Joyfully ran her bell;
Little thought we, 'ere morning,
'Twould toll so sad a knell.

Henry Clay Work

Mac O'Macorkity

Plaze, Biddy! plaze have yez got soom cold vittles?
Yer dooar's badly 'tinded to; sure'n' I rang twice.
Doon't faitch me sthale bread; fill me baskits and kittles
With soomthing what's aitable-- soomthing what's noice.
One of our boorders is jist about lavin';
Of roast bafe and sich loike he can't git his fill.
But fruitcake is what me poor mither is cravin',
And there's our great fatten' pig squailin' for swill,--
There's our great fatten' pig squailin' for swill.

Some people manage to get through the world!
The Mac-O'Macorkities probably will;
Yet they have their trials, and they have their troubles--
Do hear that "great fatten' pig squailin' for swill!"

Come Biddy! come now, yer Missus is able
To sind soomthing better than lavin's and scraps;
We boordin'-house kapers must sit a foine table,
Or ilse we moight jist as well pack up our traps.
Faith! and we had to git mate from the butcher,
And he had the impernance to sind in his bill!
As if we'd spind cash that's laid up for the future,
While there's our great fatten' pig squailin' for swill,--
There's our great fatten' pig squailin' for swill.

Hush, Biddy, hush! git ye done with yer blarney;
An old Oi'rish family ours is, ye know.
Along the hoighway forninst Castle Killarney
We rode in our donkey vans ages ago.
Bad loock it is, with the loikes of us livin'
On soup-bones and praties--no chickens to kill,
No turkey at all--not since Thanksgivin',
And there's our great fatten' pig squailin' for swill,--
There's our great fatten' pig squailin' for swill.

Say, Biddy, say! wud ye kape dinner waitin'?
Today is the Barrelbung-makers' parade;
Me fayther is one, and it's him ye're belatin';
Be jabers! it's twilve o'clock now, I'm afraid.

Off on the stroike is he, thinkin' its risky
In such toimes as thase to kape at the mill;
He's nadin' tibbacky, he's noigh out o' whisky,
And there's out great faddin' pig squailin' for swill,--
There's our great faddin' pig squailin' for swill.

Henry Clay Work

Marching Through Georgia

Bring the good old bugle, boys! we'll sing another song --
Sing it with a spirit that will start the world along --
Sing it as we used to sing it fifty thousand strong,
While we were marching through Georgia.

"Hurrah! Hurrah! we bring the Jubile!
Hurrah! Hurrah! the flag that makes you free!"
So we sang the chorus from Atlanta to the sea,
While we were marching through Georgia.

How the darkeys shouted when they heard the joyful sound!
How the turkeys gobbled which our commissary found!
How the sweet potatoes even started from the ground,
While we were marching through Georgia.

"Hurrah! Hurrah! we bring the Jubile!
Hurrah! Hurrah! the flag that makes you free!"
So we sang the chorus from Atlanta to the sea,
While we were marching through Georgia.

Yes, and there were Union men who wept with joyful tears,
When they saw the honor'd flag they had not seen for years;
Hardly could they be restrained from breaking forth in cheers,
While we were marching through Georgia.

"Hurrah! Hurrah! we bring the Jubile!
Hurrah! Hurrah! the flag that makes you free!"
So we sang the chorus from Atlanta to the sea,
While we were marching through Georgia.

"Sherman's dashing Yankee boys will never reach the coast!"
So the saucy rebels said, and 'twas a hand some boast,
Had they not forgot, alas! to reckon with the host,
While we were marching through Georgia.

"Hurrah! Hurrah! we bring the Jubile!
Hurrah! Hurrah! the flag that makes you free!"
So we sang the chorus from Atlanta to the sea,
While we were marching through Georgia.

So we made a thoroughfare for Freedom and her train,
Sixty miles in latitude -- three hundred to the main;
Treason fled before us for resistance was in vain,
While we were marching through Georgia.

"Hurrah! Hurrah! we bring the Jubile!
Hurrah! Hurrah! the flag that makes you free!"
So we sang the chorus from Atlanta to the sea,
While we were marching through Georgia.

Henry Clay Work

Nellie Lost And Found

Ten o'clock! the rain begins to fall,
And Nellie still from home!
Vainly now, her loving name we call,
Oh whither does she roam!
Can it be she wanders from the street,
Thro' the wood to find her lonely way,
Bless the child! I fear her little feet
Have carried her astray.

Wake the boys to search for Nellie!
Stay not for the dawn;
Who shall sleep when from the mother's fold
One little lamb is gone.

Eleven of o'clock! the little brothers wait,
Still hoping her return;
Peeping through the lattice of the gate,
Their darling to discern.
Weary now they turn them to the door,
While their tears, for lips that now are dumb,
Ask the question often asked before,
Oh mother will she come!

Twelve o'clock! and in the forest wild,
What terrors rule the hour!
Who can tell what foe surround the child,
Or shield her from their power.
Storm face and torrents to be cross'd,
Beasts of prey that in the darkness roam;
Would to God that only I were lost,
And Nellie safe at home!

One o'clock! methinks I hear a voice,
With tidings in its tone!
Does it bid this trembling heart rejoice,
Or sorrow makes it known.
Still I heard that midnight echo stirr'd,
Surely too, it bears a joyful sound;
Praise the Lord! a mother's pray'r is heard,

The darling one is found!

Through the wood the midnight echoes
Bear a joyful sound;
Praise the Lord! a mother's pray'r is heard,
The darling one is found.

Henry Clay Work

No Letters From Home!

A stranger lies ill, in a distant city,
With no - - letters from home!
The glances that meet him, in lieu of pity,
Are querring, "Why does he roam?"
"Oh, heed my request," says he, "else 'twere better
I slept in this gold-dusted loam;
Dismiss the physician, and bring a letter--
A flock of kind letters from home."

"Oh, heed my request," says he, "else 'twere better I
I slept in this gold-dusted loam;
Dismiss the physician, and bring a letter--
A flock of kind letters from home."

Like messenger doves, from across the mountains,
Cream tinted and golden and white?
Like the clouds that have sipp'd at the Eastern fountains
For thirsty land to take flight;
So come the dear missives--but ah! the stranger
Receives none to lighten his gloom;
In this time of sickness, this hour of danger,
Not ever one letter from home!

He moans in his slumber "Why did I ever
So far - - westwardly roam;
Oh, must I lie down must I sleep forever
With no loving letters from home?
My bones you may bury where winds are lifting
Pacific's broad billows in foam;
Or there on Lone Mountain, where sands are drifting,
But first, bring a letter from home."

"From the 'Golden' up to the portals pearly,"
He murmurs, "Oh can it be far?
On the sunset domain, in the morn how early
Will glimmer the Orient Star?
What light is the melting my shade like fetters?
What birds are those circling the dome?
Those messenger doves are my long sought letters

My flock of kind letters from home."

"They heed my request," says he, "best of debtors,
Their favors are whitening the dome!
Sweet messenger doves are my long sought letters,
My flock of kind letters from home."

Henry Clay Work

Now Moses

Now Moses, what makes you so strange and forgetful?
How is it you heed what I tell you no more?
Just look at your picture -- who would not be fretful?
Your great muddy boots on my clean kitchen floor.
And there you are smoking -- Oh dear, 'tis provoking!
To tease and torment me it is your desire;
I'll throw your old-- no sir! indeed I'm not joking --
I'll throw your old meerschaum right into the fire!

Now Moses, you'll catch it! Now Moses, don't touch it!
Now Moses, don't you hear what I say? (don't you hear it?)
'Tis thus without stopping, the music keeps dropping,
For night after night, and for day after day.

Now Moses, do tell me now what are you doing
Off there in the pantry so still and so sly?
I know very well there is some mischief brewing --
Ha! that's what you're after, a whole cherry pie,
Stop! stop! you are taking the last of my baking,
The very last pie that was left on the shelf;
If ever one did, you deserve a good shaking,
And I've a great notion to try it myself.

Now Moses, come let us be pleasant and clever!
We must not in future lead such a sad life;
Come, you be my dear noble husband forever,
And I'll be forever your sweet loving wife.
Of course, some supposes that life is all roses,
But really I think that -- well now I declare!
You rascal! you villain! you stupid thing, Moses!
You laid your old currycomb right in my chair!

Henry Clay Work

Our Captain's Last Words

Where the foremost flag was flying,
Pierce'd by many a shot and shell,
Where the bravest men were dying,
There our gallant captain fell.

"Boys! you follow now another;
Follow till the foe shall yield;"
Then he whisper'd, "Tell my mother
Stephen died upon the field."

"Mother!"

"Mother!"

"Stephen died upon the field."

Through the battle they bore him,
But his words were growing wild;
Heeding not the scenes before him,
Stephen was once more a child.

"Ah, she comes! there is no other
Speaks my name with such a joy;
Press me to your bosom, mother,
Call my still your darling joy."

"Mother!"

"Mother!"

"Call my still your darling joy."

Men who were not used to weeping,
Turn'd aside to hide a tear,
When they saw the pallor creeping,
That assured them death was near.

Kindly as he were a brother,
Strangers caught his parting breath,
Laden with the mumur "mother"
Last upon his lips in death.

"Mother!"

"Mother!"

Last upon his lips in death.

Henry Clay Work

Our Last Grand Camping Ground

On a pebly shore, where forevermore
Gently creeps a music laden wave --
In the meadows green, which beyond are seen,
Camps a conq'ring army, true and brave.
Shining are the weapons of this martial throng --
Crimson died their banner, battleworn so long;
But now they cast them down, and each receives a crown,
Whye they chant their never ending song:

"Our Saviour and our King!
His victories shall ring!
His conquests thro' eternity shall sound!
(And war shall be no)
War (more) shall be no more --
we have reach'd the shore --
Safely reach'd our last grand camping ground."

While thro' lovely dells, grander music swells --
Richer chords from rarer harps of gold --
List that soft refrain, that sweet vocal strain,
Wherein now the victors' deeds are told:
How they toil'd in darkness, battling the wrong --
How, in hours of weakness, Jesus made them strong.
Acknowledg'd as his own he seats them on his throne,
While they join the never ending song.

Henry Clay Work

Phantom Footsteps

Childish footsteps, just behind her,
Softly patter on the green.
Back she glances; tears may blind her,
But no little one is seen.
Blanched, as by an ill appalling,
Home in terror hastens she,
While a baby voice is calling,
"Mother! mother! wait for me."

Phantom footsteps! hear them
falling (falling, falling),
falling (falling, falling)
Now, wherever she may be!
(hear footsteps falling!)
While a baby voice is
call- (calling, calling,)
-ing, (calling, calling,)
"Mother! mother! wait for me."

Sobbing still, but never lagging,
Soon she enters the gate,
And before her, on the flagging,
Sees the symbols of her fate:
Tiny shoeprints, plainly speaking
Of the salt and foamy sea.
Hark! was that the doorhinge creaking?
"Mother! mother! wait for me."

Half her night is spent in weeping,
Ere she can forget her cares:
Is there not an infant creeping--
Creeping slowly up the stairs?
Venturing thither in her yearning,
Only shadows can she see;
But she hears the cry while turning,
"Mother! mother! wait for me."

Henry Clay Work

Pity Me, Loo!

On the sunset borders of the mountains I stray,
Of a dear home dreaming 'yond the snow peaks far away,
While the bubbling brook beside me goes dancing along,
As it seeks the "Golden Gate" of the ocean blue;
And a lone bird murmurs in the bush-top his song--
"Pity me, Loo!" "Pity me, Loo!" "Pity me, Loo!"

Tra la la la, la la la la
From mate to mate the carol rings:
Tra la la la, la la la la!
la la la la
A thousand valleys through;
Yet the lone bird sorrows as he plaintively sings--
"Pity me, Loo!" "Pity me, Loo!" "Pity me, Loo!"

'Neath the rocks I'm treading there are treasures of gold,
But by far more precious is my own native mold.
Nevermore, in search of Beauty need Fancy take wings:
Here is beauty, here is grandeur, at ev'ry view;
Yet my heart grows heavy, and the lone bird still sings--
"Pity me, Loo!" "Pity me, Loo!" "Pity me, Loo!"

In the green-clad valley where the wayward brook mends
There are homes most charming--there are warmhearted friends.
Lovely dell! it seems an Eden, afloat in mid-air,
As if God had sent from Heaven a creation new;
But its charm is broken, for my heart is not there--
"Pity me, Loo!" "Pity me, Loo!" "Pity me, Loo!"

Henry Clay Work

Poor Kitty Popcorn

Did you ever hear the story of the loyal cat? Meyow!
Who was faithful to the flag, and ever follow'd that? Meyow!
Oh, she had a happy home beneath a southern sky,
But she pack'd her goods and left it when our troup's came nigh,
And she fell into the column with a low glad cry, Meyow!

Poor Kitty Popcorn!
Buried in a snow drift now
Never more shall ring the music of your charming song, Meyow!
Never more shall ring the music of your charming song, Meyow!

Round her neck she wore a ribbon -- she was black as jet -- Meyow!
And at once a gallant claim'd her for a soldier's pet -- Meyow!
All the perils of the battle and the march she bore,
Climbing on her master's shoulder when her feet were sore,
Whisp'ring in his with wonder at the cannon's roar, Meyow!

Now the "cruel war is over," and the troup's disband -- Meyow!
Kitty follows as a pilgrim in the northern land -- Meyow!
Ah! but sorrow overtakes her, and her master dies,
While she sadly sits a gazing in his dim blue eyes,
Till by strangers driven rudely from the door, she cries, Meyow!

So she wanders on the prairie till she sees his form -- Meyow!
Carried forth and buried roughly 'mid the driving storm -- Meyow!
Oh! her slender frame, it shivers in the northern blast,
As she seeks the sandy mound on which the snow falls fast,
And alone amid the darkness there she breathes her last Meyow!

Henry Clay Work

Ring The Bell, Watchman!

High is the belfry the old sexton stands,
Grasping the rope with his thin bony hands;
Fix'd is his gaze, as by some magic spell,
Till he hears the distant murmur,
Ring, ring the bell.

"Ring the bell, watchman! ring! ring! ring!
Yes, yes! the good news is now on the wing;
Yes, yes! they come, and with tidings to tell --
Glorious and blessed tidings --
Ring, ring the bell!"

Baring his long silver locks to the breeze,
First for a moment he drops on his knees;
Then with a rigor that few could excel,
Answers the welcome bidding,
Ring, ring the bell.

Hear! from the hilltop, the first signal gun
Thunders the word that some great deed is done;
Hear! thru' the valley the long echoes swell,
Ever and anon repeating,
Ring, ring the bell.

Bonfires are blazing and rockets ascend --
No meager triumphs such tokens portend;
Shout, shout! my brothers, for "all, all is well!"
'Tis the universal chorus,
Ring, ring the bell.

Henry Clay Work

Sequel To Grandfather's Clock

Once again have I roamed thro' the old-fashioned house,
Where my grandfather spent his ninety years.
There are strangers in charge, and the change they have wrought--
Oh! it saddens me, even to tears.
Dear old clock! when they found you were speechless from grief,
Then they went and swapped you off, case and all.
For that vain, stuck-up thing
(tick, tick, tick, tick, tick, tick, tick, tick),
For that vain, stuck-up thing on the wall.

Grandfather sleeps in his grave;
Strange steps resound in the hall!
And there's that vain, stuck-up thing
(tick, tick, tick, tick, tick, tick, tick, tick),
There's that vain, stuck-up thing on the wall.

While we talked of the old clock they all ran it down.
Tho' they claimed that it couldn't be made to run.
It was useless they said-- it was quite out of style;
Built, no doubt, just about the year One.
And the words echoed round, with a faint, mocking sound,
As if some one gave assent to it all;
'Twas that vain, stuck-up thing
(tick, tick, tick, tick, tick, tick, tick, tick),
'Twas that vain, stuck-up thing on the wall.

From the clock-peddler's cart in the junk-shop it went,
Where its cog-wheels were sundered one by one;
And the brass-founder joked as they writhed in the flames--
"Melt'em up," says he; "then they will run."
There is grief in my heart, there are tears in my eyes.
Yet indignantly the sight I recall
Of that vain, stuck-up thing
(tick, tick, tick, tick, tick, tick, tick, tick),
For that vain, stuck-up thing on the wall.

"An extremely hard case!" said the junk-dealer's wife,
As she carried it for kindling wood and sighed--
That mahogany case, with its quaint, figured face,

Which so long was my grandfather's pride.
"There is hope for the small; there's a change for us all;
For the mighty ones of Time, they must fall!"
Says that vain, stuck-up thing
(tick, tick, tick, tick, tick, tick, tick, tick),
Says that vain, stuck-up thing on the wall.

Henry Clay Work

Shadows On The Floor

Saturday night! Saturday night!
The hope that lingered has taken to flight;
From morning till evening, the weary week through,
In vain has he battled for something to do.
Poor man! emptyhanded, how can he return
To those whose fate hangs on the pence he may earn?
How can he reply to his questioner sweet --
"Did Papa bring Papa's girl somethin' to eat?"

Out of employ! out of employ!
Distress in the cottage where once there was joy;
How frightful the shadows that fall on the floor
When Want and Starvation appear at the door!

Wasting away! Wasting away!
His poor wife grows paler each sorrowful day,
Yet suffers in silence, and never complains, --
Reserving for others the crust that remains.
His fearful forebodings he seeks to disguise;
But now the child's prattle brings tears to his eyes;
"If Ma doze to Heaven den I mus' do, too;
But Pa, I'll frow down bread and butter for you."

Struggling for life! Struggling for life!
In spite of his courage bourne down in the strife;
Had not he the wife and the baby to save,
How willingly would be he down in the grave!
Reflections more later creep into his mind --
The promise is false, "If ye seek ye shall find."
What was it his dear little innocent said?
"Does Dod fordits us when He takes daily bread!"

Henry Clay Work

Sleeping For The Flag

When our boys come home in triumph, brother,
With the laurels they shall gain;
When we go to give them welcome, brother,
We shall look for you in vain.
We shall wait for your returning, brother,
Though we know it cannot be;
For your comrades left you sleeping, brother,
Underneath a southern tree.

Sleeping to waken
In this weary world no more;
Sleeping for your true-lov'd country, brother,
Sleeping for the flag you bore.

You were the first on duty, brother,
When "to arms" your leader cried--
You have left the ranks forever, brother,
You have laid your armies aside.
From the awful scenes of battle, brother,
You were set forever free,
When your comrades left you sleeping, brother,
Underneath that southern tree.

You have cross'd the clouded river, brother,
To the mansions of the best,
"When the wicked cease from troubling," brother,
"And the weary are at rest."
Surely we would not recall you, brother,
But the tears flow fast and free,
When we think of you sleeping, brother,
Underneath a southern tree.

Henry Clay Work

Song Of A Thousand Years

Lift up your eyes desponding freemen!
Fling to the winds your needless fears!
He who unfurl'd your beauteous banner,
Says it shall wave a thousand years!

"A thousand years!" my own Columbia!
'Tis the glad day so long foretold!
'Tis the glad morn whose early twilight
Washington saw in times of old.

What if the clouds, one little moment,
Hide the blue sky where morn appears --
When the bright sun, that tints them crimson,
Rises to shine a thousand years?

Tell the great world those bless-ed tidings!
Yes, and be sure the bondman hears;
Tell the oppress'd of ev'ry nation,
Jubilee lasts a thousand years!

Fearless foes, beyond the ocean!
Little we heed your threat'ning sneers;
Little will they -- our children's children --
When you are gone a thousand years.

Rebels at home! go hide your faces --
Weep for your crimes with bitter tears;
You could not bind the blessed daylight,
Though you should strive a thousand years.

Back to your dens, ye secret traitors!
Down to your own degraded spheres!
Ere the first blaze of dazzling sunshine
Shortens your lives a thousand years.

Haste thee along, this glorious Noonday!
Oh, for the eyes of ancient seers!
Oh, for the faith of Him who reckons
Each of his days a thousand years.

Henry Clay Work

Sweet Echo Dell

"Three there were that left my cot;
Two are here, and one is not;
Why does Willie linger? Say, can you tell?"

"He was weary by the way;
When we came he could but stay
In the shady grove at Sweet Echo Dell."

Echo Dell! (Echo Dell!) Echo Dell! (Echo Dell!)
It was there we softly said "Farewell!" ("Farewell!")
And the towering granite crest
Nobly guards his place rest,
Near the lovely lake of Sweet Echo Dell.

"Is he laden well with gold?
Does he bring me wealth untold?
Why then does he linger? Say can you tell?"

"All his treasures are above;
All he sent you was his love,
With a whispered prayer from Sweet Echo Dell."

Coming homeward, does he sing
Like a lark upon the wing?
Why then does he linger? Say, can you tell?"

Naught is heard but rippling waves,
Warbling birds, and shouting braves;
Silent is his voice in Sweet Echo Dell."

"Is he coming by-and-by?
May I bless him ere I die?
Why then does he linger? Say, can you tell?"

"Mirrored in that mountain lake,
Heaven is near, and he will wake
Never elsewhere than in Sweet Echo Dell."

"Would you crush my only joy?"

Surely I shall meet my boy;
When then does he linger? Say, can you tell?"

"Never will his weary feet
Travel more, yet may soon meet
When your soul floats over Sweet Echo Dell."

Henry Clay Work

Take Them Away! They'LI Drive Me Crazy

Riding in the Park, or down town shopping
At the Matinee, or singing in the choir
Everywhere a dazzling blaze of beauty
Blinds my eyes and sets my soul afire

How my heart thumps and how my head whirls!
Don't you look this way, beautiful girls!
Oh, take them away, they'll drive me crazy!
Oh! the saucy, pretty, winning, witty, mischief-loving girls!

How my heart thumps and how my head whirls!
Don't you look this way, beautiful girls!
Oh, take them away, they'll drive me crazy!
Oh! the saucy, pretty, winning, witty, mischief-loving girls!

As I sit beside them, charming creatures,
Little do they know how I tempted to
Throw my arms around their necks, and kiss them!
Though, of course, I know it wouldn't do.

Gliding through the gateway, there they go! there they go!
Don't they make you think of broken string of pearls?
Tripping up the stairway, here they come! here they come!
While the zephyrs frolic in their curls.

Every day so near, and yet so distant--
Everywhere so plenty, yet so little mine--
Doubtless they are angels wrongly labelled,
Angels made in other spheres to shine.

Henry Clay Work

The Buckskin Bag Of Gold

Last night I met him on the train--
A man with lovely eyes;
And he gave me a searching glance
Of sweet charm'd surprise!
I knew 'twas he the lady meant,
Who once my fortune told,
By his jet black eyes, his grand moustache,
And his buckskin bag of gold.

Yes! (Ha! ha!) Yes! (ha! ha!) his is the man
Who does your fortune hold!
He has jet black eyes, a grand moustache,
And a buckskin bag of gold.
Tall! (Ha! ha!) slim! (ha! ha!) quick as a flash!
And twenty two years old;
He has jet black eyes, his grand moustache,
And his buckskin bag of gold.

The dearest man you ever saw
How much I love him now!
And if I should live a thousand years,
No other hears my vow.
Like Judas--no, like Jupiter,
He look'd so brave and bold,
With his jet black eyes, his grand moustache,
And his buckskin bag of gold.

Sweet boy bring me the "Morning Call"
Perchance I'll find his name;
At the "Grand Hotel" he must have stopp'd,
I wonder when he came!
He must have charm'd those Lumpkin girls,
So haughty, proud and cold,
By his jet black eyes, his grand moustache,
And his buckskin bag of gold.

How can I seek a name unknown?
Oh, tell me where he went!
What is this I read! why Papa's bank

Is robb'd of ev'ry cent!
The thief, it seems, left town last night,
Well, well! I'm nicely sold!
He had jet black eyes, his grand mousetache,
And his buckskin bag of gold.

Henry Clay Work

The Days When We Were Young

Sister! Sister! don't you remember
The days when we were young?
The long, long days, with a light and a shade
Like the pearls of a necklace strung,
Like the pearls of a necklace strung?
They are gone, with all our yesterdays --
We seek their like in vain;
But we will shed no tears for them
While the bright todays remain,
While the bright todays remain.

Sister! Sister! don't you remember
The days when we were young?
The homely house in the fat, far away,
Where the love of our childhood clung,
Where the love of our childhood clung?
There is naught to mark that sacred spot,
Save now the beaten loam;
Yet distant altars have we rear'd
In the bless-ed name of home,
In the bless-ed name of home.

Sister! Sister! don't you remember
The days when we were young?
The mates of childhood -- the friend of our youth --
We companion'd and lov'd among,
We companion'd and lov'd among?
Some are wand'ring far, and some in death
Have closed their weary eyes;
But we rejoice in new found friends,
While we weep for broken ties,
While we weep for broken ties.

Henry Clay Work

The Fire Bells Are Ringing

One, two, three--hark, hark, boys!
One, two, three, four!
The fire-bells are ringing, this wild wintry night;
They ask aid from District Thirty-four,
There somebody's riches are now taking flight;
On flame-wings away, away they soar.
But hark!
With shriek and wail,
How raves the gale!
Like demon steeds it speeds--
like galloping gangs from Pandemonium hurl'd.
Yes, firemen, take courage! did valiant deeds avail,
Then you were the victors of the world.

Ring the bells again!
Wake the electric wire!
And flash abroad the warning words--
"FIRE! FIRE!"
God save the city! for man's devices fail
When fierce flames with wintry winds conspire,
But hark!
With shriek and wail (With shriek and wail!)
How raves the gale! (How raves the gale!)
Like demon steeds it speeds--
like galloping gangs from Pandemonium hurl'd.
Yes, firemen, take courage! did valiant deeds avail,
Then your were the victors of the world.

One, two, three--hark, hark, boys!
One, two, three, four!
The fire-bells are ringing, an urgent appeal;
The engines go dashing by the door,
All safe here, children, no fear need we feel;
But God help in District Thirty-four,
What's that?
Look there! look there!
A lurid glare
Lights up the sky--aye, aye!
and columns of red, devouring flame appear.

And see! for departure our neighbors prepare;
Perchance there is danger even here.

One, two, three--hark, hark, boys!
One, two, three, four!
The fire-bells are ringing, a last grand alarm;
How vast must the conflagration be!
Our own roof is blazing! yet where, free from harm,
Oh! where shall we our treasures flee?
Let's haste!
'Twill fall! 'Twill fall--
That granite wall;
I see it crumbling, tumbling!
Fly for your lives, from out this fiery grave!
Laid low, crush'd, buried are some beyond recall;
But thank God! my little flock I save.

Henry Clay Work

The First Love Dream

Last night, mother, he told me so,
As we walked by the pebbly stream;
And I wake so happy--so wild with joy,
It seems like a fairy dream.
But his charming voice is ringing in my ear,
As a dream voice should not be--
He's the best man, you know, in the whole wide world,
And he loves--he only love me.

Kiss me, mother, and share the joy
That has on my fortune smiled;
You have shared myu sorrows when e'er I wept,
Since I was a little child
Do you chide me now? what could your darling do,
When he pleads with bended knee?
He's the best man, you know, in the whole wide world,
And he loves--he only loves me.

Leave you, mother, it brings a pang
To this light and bounding heart;
But if he were calling, the bride would go,
Tho' you and the daughter part.
At a word from him, a beckon of his hand,
I would cross the rolling sea--
He's the best man, you know, in the whole wide world,
And he loves--he only loves me.

Henry Clay Work

The Girls At Home

When the daylight fades on the tented field,
And the campfire cheerfully burns,
Then the Soldier's thought, like a carrier dove,
To his own love home returns;
Like a carrier dove -- a carrier dove,
And gleams beyond the foam,
So a light springs up in the Soldier's heart,
As he thinks of the Girls at Home.

When the shadows dance on the canvas walls,
And the camp with melody rings,
'Tis the good old song of the Stars and Stripes,
That the fireside circle sings;
Of the Stars and Stripes -- the Stars and Stripes --
For love of which they roam;
But the final song and the sweetest one,
Is the song of the Girls at Home.

Now the silver rays of a setting moon,
Thru' the lofty sycamores creep,
And the fires burn low, and the sentries watch
O'er the arm-ed host a-sleep;
And the sentries watch -- the sentries watch --
Till morning gilds the dome;
Till the rattling drum shall the sleepers rouse
From the dream of the Girls at Home.

Henry Clay Work

The Lost Letter

In the postoffice window was one broken pane;
In the wainscot there was one loosen'd board;
And conveniently near was the broad oaken table,
Where the mail from the bag had been pour'd,
'Twas a morning in May, with a sweet odor'd breeze;
And it happen'd unnotic'd by all,
That a most precious missive, that love laden letter,
Flutter'd down thro' the gap in the wall.

Two lives wreck'd by a zephyr!
Two hearts crush'd by the fall,
When that most precious missive, that love laden letter,
Flutter'd down thro' the gap in the wall.

Both were faithful and true, 'Twas a gossip's remark,
that had clouded loving hearts with concern.
Then, alas! came a quarrel; and she, in her anger,
Bade him go, nevermore to return.
Oh, how soon she repented! how great was her grief,
And how humbly she penn'd her recall!
But that most precious missive, that love laden letter,
Flutter'd down thro' the gap in the wall.

It was just on the morrow the carpenter came,
Such defections in that wall to repair;
And he hammer'd and sang, and departed unmindful
Of the hearts he had thus burried there.
And in heaps on the table, all safe and secure,
There lay many a valueless scrawl,
Where that most precious missive, that love laden letter,
Flutter'd down thro' the gap in the wall.

"When she learns how she wrongs me, my darling will write!"
Mus'd the lover, as he watch'd for the mail;
But his letter came not, and, dishearten'd and hopeless,
For a land far away he set sail.
Oh! the long weary years of suspense and regret,
And of presage perplexing withal,
Since that most precious missive, that love laden letter,

Flutter'd down thro' the gap in the wall.

From the time-crumbled pile came the time-faded sheet,
With its ancient superscription and date;
And from exile the lover, the yet faithful lover,
Hasten'd home, to seal his fate.
'Twas his most cruel pang that he might not explain
To the sleeper beneath her black pall,
How that most precious missive, that love laden letter
Flutter'd down thro' the gap in the wall.

Henry Clay Work

The Mystic Veil

When the shadows take their nightly places,
When departing light is faint and pale,
Then in my chamber gather phantom faces,
Gazing thro' the mystic veil.

One there is with features so familiar,
Glimpse of her give[s] my pulse a start;
Oh! tell me truly is it you, love,
Come to cheer my lonely heart?

Come one step nearer! (One step nearer!)
one shade clearer? (one shade clearer!)
Breath on word before we part; (before we part;)
And tell me--truly it is you, love,
Come to cheer my lonely heart?

When my song, in lonely notes ascending,
Vainly bids my sadden'd soul rejoin [rejoice?],
Methinks I hear a murmur'd alto blending:
Is it really your sweet voice?
Answer now, if only by a whisper;
Rend the veil, the mystic veil, apart:
And tell me truly is it you, love,
Come to cheer my lonely heart?

Waking while the denser darkness lingers,
Some one seems to stand beside my bed;
I can but think I feel your fairy fingers,
Softly laid upon my head.
Silently why does the vision vanish?
Dream I yet, or is it magic art?
Now tell me truly is it you, love,
Come to cheer my lonely heart?

Henry Clay Work

The Old Village Doctor

In the village where he married,
Doctor Eldebury tarried;
And for fourty years our people knew him well.
How he listered us and bled us,
How with calomel he fed us,
Only I am living now to tell.
Though his drugs were deadly, yet his heart was kind,
And with voice tuned cheerily and high,
It was "Up, now, my little fellow! livly's can be!
Come, take your medicine like a little man,
And you'll feel better by-and-by."

Count the mossy marbles in the graveyard!
Our old doctor and his patients, there they lie.
All regradless of the weather,
They are waiting there together,
For that long-sought "better by-and-by."

Some physicians talk in Latin;
Some array their wives in satin;
As for our old doctor, such was not his way.
Gleaning fees of half a dollar,
Would you find a learn-ed scholar
'Mong the mountains, riding night and day?
Saddle-bags behind him, on his "pale white horse,"
To his far off patient see him fly,
Saying "Up, now, my little fellow! livly's can be!
Come, take your medicine like a little man,
And you'll feel better by-and-by."

Oh! the doses he invented!
Us in youth he tormented
With his plasters, and his powders, and his pills;
Water for our thirst denying,
Fevered though we were and dying,
While the cool springs wasted from the hills!
Yet he thought no evil, and he meant no harm:
We had faith--yes, hope when he came nigh
With his "Up, now, my little fellow! livly's can be!

Come, take your medicine like a little man,
And you'll feel better by-and-by."

Henry Clay Work

The Parrot And The Billy-Goat

There were no romping children at Doctor Quibble's door;
Long past the silver wedding, no toys lay on the floor,
But to relieve her longings, to soothe her vain regrets,
His good wife had contrived to raise a family of pets.

What! a family of pets?

Yes! a family of pets;

His good wife had contrived to raise a family of pets.

A Spanish alto, Polly, who sang from early morn;
A bearded actor, Billy, who play'd the double horn;
A mimic man, Falsetto, who scaled the treble staff,
And climb'd the ledger lines above, and made the people laugh.

What! and made the people laugh?

Yes! and made the people laugh;

And climb'd the ledger lines above, and made the people laugh.

Remark'd the joking Doctor: "My dear, you ought to get
Another one -- a basso -- and have a full quartette."
She took his words in earnest, nor thought of ridicule;
She bargain'd from a circus man a educated mule.

What! an educated mule?

Yes! an educated mule;

She bargain'd from a circus man a educated mule.

Then said the Doctor gravely: "My dear, you should engage
That circus man as tutor, to fit them for the stage;
To cultivate their voices, and train them up by rule --
The parrot and the billy goat, the monkey and the mule."

What! the monkey and the mule?

Yes! the monkey and the mule;

The parrot and the billy goat, the monkey and the mule.

Three weary weeks she waited, and then the job was done;
Their education finish'd, their tutor's fortune won.
Tho' some folks thought she carried her husband's joke too far,

She organized a trav'ling troupe, each pet to be a star.

What! each pet to be a star?

Yes! each pet to be a star;

She organized a trav'ling troupe, each pet to be a star.

She sold a thousand tickets upon the opening night;

But when the curtain lifted, 'twas on a sorry sight:

The bearded actor Billy devoured a music roll;

Then burst the big bass drum, and went headforemost thro' the hole.

What! headforemost through the hole?

Yes! headforemost through the hole;

He burst the big bass drum, and went headforemost thro' the hole!

Falsetto snatched the turban which Madame Polly wore;

Its green and scarlet feathers he scattered on the floor.

The Madame swore in Spanish, her eyes suffused with tears;

And, flying to the basso's head, she hid behind his ears.

What! she hid behind his ears?

Yes! she hid behind his ears;

And flying to the basso's head, she hid behind his ears.

Began then B. Profundo his great fantastic dance;

The footlights flew like rockets, the audience in advance.

And so they changed the programme, and broke the golden rule

The parrot and the billy-goat, the monkey and the mule.

What! the monkey and he mule?

Yes! the monkey and he mule;

The parrot and the billy-goat, the monkey and the mule.

Henry Clay Work

The Picture On The Wall

'Tis noon of night; the sable clouds,
Hang weeping in the sky;
Alone I sit, where fancies flit
Like spectral shadows by.
Me thinks I see familiar forms,
And on before them all--
So fair, so calm, so wondrous like, wondrous like
The picture on the wall.

Among the brave and loyal,
How many lov'd ones fall!
Whose friends bereft,
Have only left, only left
A picture on the wall.

I hear the press of eager feet,
Upon my parlor floor;
A moment, and my willing arms
Enclasp my boy once more.
I feel his warm breath on my cheek,
But when his name I call
A shadowy finger points to me, points me to
His picture on the wall.

The moon's full radiance struggles through,
And lights my room once more;
And thus shall heav'n O heart of mine,
Thy seeming loss restore.
Its light shall gild the present gloom,
And sweeter spells enthral,
Than that which binds me to this sweet, to this sweet
True picture on the wall.

Henry Clay Work

The Prayer On The Pier

Proudly foats the ocean steamer,--
Throngs aboard and on the pier;
With orders, oaths, and farewells mingled,
What a medley greats the ear!
Off are cast the slack'ning cables;
Eager bells their signals ring!
While there on shore a group is kneeling;
Looking upward, now they sing:

O Thou who holdest,
In the hollow of thy hand,
All this vast ocean,
Unto this far off land;
Guard well, we pray thee,
When angry billows foam--
Guard well our lov'd ones,
And safely bring them home.

What a wondrous transformation!
What a magic change of scene!
The parted throngs transfix'd are gazing
'Cross the gulf that grows between.
Heads are bared, and knees are bended;
Voices all are silent there,
Save but the throbbing of the engine,
And that solemn choral prayer:

Rapidly the distance lenghens;
We have looked our last adieu,--
For each familiar form and feature
Now is fading from our view.
Glimpses yet of 'kerchiefs waving;
Watching still our friends remain;
And, waft by fresh'ning seaward breezes,
Faintly, sweetly comes the strain.

Henry Clay Work

The Ship That Never Returned

On a summer's day while the waves were rippling, with a quiet and a gentle breeze;

A ship set sail with a cargo laden for a port beyond the sea.

Did she ever return? No, she never returned, and her fate is still unlearned,
But a last poor man set sail commander, on a ship that never returned.

There were sad farewells, there were friends forsaken, and her fate is still unlearned,

But a last poor man set sail commander on a ship that never returned.

Did she ever return? No, she never returned, and her fate is still unlearned,
But a last poor man set sail commander, on a ship that never returned.

Said a feeble lad to his aged mother, I must cross that deep blue sea,
For I hear of a land in the far off country, where there's health and strength for me.

Did she ever return? No, she never returned, and her fate is still unlearned,
But a last poor man set sail commander, on a ship that never returned.

'Tis a gleam of hope and a maze of danger, and our fate is still to learn,
And a last poor man set sail commander, on a ship that never returned.

Did she ever return? No, she never returned, and her fate is still unlearned,
But a last poor man set sail commander, on a ship that never returned.

Said this feeble lad to his aged mother, as he kissed his weeping wife,
"Just one more purse of that golden treasure, it will last us all through life.

Did she ever return? No, she never returned, and her fate is still unlearned,
But a last poor man set sail commander, on a ship that never returned.

"Then we'll live in peace and joy together and enjoy all I have earned."
So they sent him forth with a smile and blessing on a ship that never returned.

Did she ever return? No, she never returned, and her fate is still unlearned,
But a last poor man set sail commander, on a ship that never returned.

Henry Clay Work

The Silver Horn

"Come, rest with me now, my silver horn!
My melodious joy, my silver horn!
These many long years my constant friend,
Together let our toiling end.
Yet fain would I ask (were mine the choice)
For a moment of strength to give thee voice--
One silvery peal ere life shall cease;
But not for war--for blessed peace."

Yes! once again ring, sweet silver horn
That long ago rang on battle morn--
From vale and glen that summon'd then
To arms! to arms! a thousand men.
For peace ring now! for peace ring high!
Ring a welcoming peal that shall not die
Till mountain and mound, the earth around,
Responsive songs in echo sound.

"Thy whispers I hear, my silver horn!
My melodious joy, my silver horn!
They comfort me oft with such control,
Methinks thou hast a living soul.
Then cherish we both one calm content;
For the land that we love our powers were spent;
And o're the turf that greens our grave,
For ages may her banner wave."

"I kiss thee adieu, my silver horn!
My melodious joy, my silver horn!"
Then suddenly loos'd the bugler's clasp;
His kiss was but a dying gasp.
Yet marvels of power can love evoke:
At the touch of his lips the bugle spoke!
And wondrously sweet, and clear, and strong,
From thence outrang a silver song.

Henry Clay Work

The Song Of The Red Man

When the palefaces came in their whitewing'd canoes,
Long ago, from the sun-rising sea
When they ask'd for a lodge, and we did not refuse
Happy then was the red man, and free.
He could then choose a spot for his wigwam to stand,
Where the forest was crowded with game;
For the blue-rolling lake and the ever smiling land
Were his own till the palefaces came
For the broad grassy plains and the forests deep and grand,
Were his own till the palefaces came.

They came! they came! like the fierce prairie flame,
Sweeping on to the sun-setting shore:
Gazing now on its waves, but a handful of braves,
We shall join in the the chase nevermore
Till we camp on the plains where the Great Spirit reigns,
We shall join in the chase nevermore.

We receiv'd them with gladness, as Sons of the Sky
We believ'd them of heavenly birth;
But alas! to our sorrow we found by and by,
That like us they were born of the earth.
By their false traders wrong'd, by their firewater craz'd,
There was no one our braves to restrain;
So the swift flew, and the tomahawk was raise'd
While we both mourn'd the blood of our slain;
So the smoke-wreath did cease from the calumet of peace,
While we both mourn'd the blood of our slain.

When the oaks, pines and cedars were fell'd to the ground,
'Twas a sight that with sorrow we saw;
For the game fled affrighted, and no food was found
For the old chief, the papoose and squaw.
Driven westward we came, but the paleface was here,
With his sharp axe and death-flashing gun;
And his great iron horse is rumbling in the rear
"O, my brave men!" your journey is done.
Like the beaver and elk like the buffalo and deer
"O, my brave men!" your journey is done.

Henry Clay Work

There Is A River We All Must Cross

There is a river we all must cross,
Thousands will pass it tomorrow;
Some will go down to its waters with joy,
Others with anguish and sorrow.

Some will be welcom'd by angel bands,
Coming from over the river;
Others be borne by the current adown,
Where there is none to deliver.

These shall land safely in Eden's bow'rs,
Wearing the white robes of pardon;
Those shall be cast on a desolate shore,
Far from the gates of the garden.

These shall have voices to join the song
Ever from Eden ascending;
Those shall unite in the wailings of woe
Woe, that hath never an ending.

Over the river we all must cross,
Jesus may call us tomorrow;
Shall we go down to its waters with joy?
Shall we with anguish and sorrow?

Henry Clay Work

Tie The Knot Tightly

"Launching our from the ship--
ha, ha! courtship--
Oh the misty matrimonial sea,
Let the cable hang lightly,
but tie the knot tightly."
So the hoary sailors tell me.
As we are just launching our nuptial canoes,
Enroute for some haven, we know not what,
Old mariner' views
'twere wrong to refuse;
So oblige us with a workmanlike knot.

And tie the knot tightly, good pastor!
Invent one that will not come loose;
For tho' sad, it is true that people slip thro',
Or squirm and wriggle out of the noose.
"To love and to cherish"
"We will!" they reply.
"Till vital pow'rs perish"
"Of course, or course;
Until we di-- until we di--
Until we divorce."

With that ever firm cord--
ha, ha! concord--
We may reckon on a tie that will last
Till the joys and the sorrows
of earthly tomorrows
Lie forgotten in the grave of the Past.
But we are not convicts, so spare us that joke
Of "welding the chain while the iron is hot;"
And we are not oxen; so make us no yoke;
Just a good and honest old fashioned knot.

If there must be a lock--
ha, ha! wedlock--
Hang the key up where it will not found;
Yet be sure and not loose it,
we may want to use it

When our jolly golden wedding comes round,
Tho's here's a stray husband, and ther's a stray wife,
Who once just as fondly combined their lot,
Determin'd are we on union for life,
And we want at least a fifty-year knot.

I must lay off my hood--ha,ha! girlhood--
As I robe me in my bridal array;
I'm a little bit frightened!
my features thus whitened,
Pearly powder I'll dispense with today.
Yet, why should I tremble! He suits, to a T;
And I, so he tells me, suit him to a dot.
So, now, as you see our notions agree,
We will that you for a true-lover's knot.

On attaining this age--ha, ha! marriage--
Single blessedness! I bid thee adieu;
While dividing each trouble,
my joys I shall double
If the half of what he tells me is true.
Though men are uncertain, take men as they go,
I'm bent on retaining the one I've got:
There's a proverb, you know--"two strings to one beau;"
So, suppose we try a double beau-knot!

Henry Clay Work

Tis Finished

'Tis finished! 'tis ended!
The dread and awful task is done;
Tho' wounded and bleeding,
'tis ours to sing the vict'ry won,
Our nation is ransom'd--our enemies are overthrown
And now, now commoners, the brightest era ever known.

Then sing hallelujah! sing hallelujah!
Glory be to God on high!
For the old flag with the high white flag
is hanging in the azure sky.

Ye joy bells! ye peace-bells!
Oh never, never music rang,
So sweetly, so grandly, since angels in the advent sang,
Your message is gladness to myriads of waiting souls,
As onward and world-ward the happy, happy echo rolls.

Come patriots! come freedom!
Come join your every heart and voice;
We've wept with the weeping--now let us wish the blest rejoice,
With armies of victors who round about the white throne stand--
With Lincoln, the Martyr and Liberator of his land.

Henry Clay Work

Touch The Sleeping Strings Again

Say not, O say not, we are strangers,
By freak chance together brought;
Remind me not of lurking dangers
In wreaths of friendship quickly wrought.
Some sweet attraction draws me to you;
From Memory's harp strange murmurs flow;
And something makes me think I knew you
Beyond the sea of Long Ago.

Touch the sleeping strings and
tell me, tell me whether,
Thence comes music sweet and low:
Did not we walk some shore together
Beyond the sea of Long Ago?

Your eyes, in bashful glances falling,
Light up a landscape far away;
Your voice-- to hear it is recalling
A sweet but long forgotten lay.
When all the year was pleasant weather,
And none had heard of pain or woe,
Did not we sing this tune together
Beyond the sea of Long Ago?

Think not, although I speak so boldly,
That idle words are on my tongue;
Receive my greeting not so coldly,
Nor hush the harp that would have sung;
For lightly touched, as by a feather,
The sleeping strings will thrill, I know:
Were not our sprights linked together
Beyond the sea of Long Ago?

Henry Clay Work

Uncle Joe's Hail Columbia

Uncle Joe comes home a singing,
Hail, Columby!
Glorious times de Lord is bringin' --
Now let me die.
Fling the chains into the ribber --
Lay de burden by;
Dar is one who will delibber --
Now let me die.

Ring de Bells in eb'ry steeple!
Raise the Flag on high!
De Lord has come to Sabe the people --
Now let me die.

Bressed days, I lib to see dem,
Hail Columby!
I hab drawn a breff of freedom --
Now let me die.
Ninety years I bore the burden,
Den he heard me cry;
Standin' on de banks ob Jordan --
Now let me die.

Dis is what the war was brought for,
Hail, Columby!
Dis is what our faders fought for --
Now let me die.
Dar's an end to all dis sorrow,
Comin' by and by;
Prayin' for dat bressed morrow --
Now let me die.

I hab seen de rebels beaten,
Hail Columby!
I Hab seen dar boots retreatin', --
Now let me die.
O! dis Union can't be broken,
Dar's no use to try;
No sech thing the Lord has spoken --

Now let me die.

I'll go home a singing "Glory!"

Hail Columby!

Since I heard dis bressed story --

Now let me die.

'Tis de ransom ob de nation,

Drawing' now so nigh;

'Tis de day ob full salbation, --

Now let me die.

Henry Clay Work

Used-Up Joe

I'm de only one left ob de Colony niggers;
How things do meander away!
When dey count my yeahs dey break down on de figgers,--
Fer things will meander away.
I was heah when Columbus discubbered Ohio;
I'm dyin' wid hunger today.
Lock me up in a pantry day's filled wid mince-pie--
Oh! how things would meander away.

Brudder Gabriel, blow! I am ready to go;
I am tired ob dis long delay.
You've de wicked to warn; better look for yer horn,--
Fer things will meander away.

I's as poor as de turkey dat Job was its owner;
How things do meander away!
I'm as sick as de whale when he landed up Jonar,--
Fer things will meander away.
I'm in debt for my day before yesterday's dinner,
An' can't find de cash fer to pay:
In dat Savin's Band game some one else was de winner,--
Fer things will meander away.

I'm a gnarly ole tree, wid a hurricane fightin';
How things do meander away!
All de limbs are torn off, an' de leabes gone akittin',--
Fer things will meander away.
Send me home for repairs when de hurricane ceases;
Remember de words dat I say!
Tie me up in a bag, an' don't stop for de pieces,--
Fer things will meander away.

Had my right eye knocked out by a word dat I hollered;
How things do meander away!
Called a white man a fool, an' an axerdent follered,--
Fer things will meander away.
Den a railroad collusion run ober some cattle,
An' one ob my limbs went astray;
An' anudder I left on de cornfield ob battle,--

Fer things will meander away.

Nitro-glycerum cans are not safe to unsodder;
How things do meander away!
An' wid circular saws 't isn't wise fer to bodder,--
Fer things will meander away.
Dis ere top-lock was lifted by red Injun debils;
'Twas den de black wool become gray;
An' my last wooder leg was shot off by de rebels,--
For things will meander away.

Nicodemus, my son-in-law, long ago started;
How things do meander away!
An' dey say, from de gum-tree his bones hab departed,--
Fer things will meander away.
He will nebber come back, let me tell ye--no, nebber!
To pick up his burden of clay:
Gib a mud-turtle wings an' a free pass forebber,--
Ob course he'll meander away.

Henry Clay Work

Wake Nicodemus!

Nicodemus, the slave was of African birth,
And was bought for a bagful of gold;
He was reckon'd as part of the salt of the earth,
But he died years ago, very old.
'Twas his last sad request as we laid him away
In the trunk of an old hollow tree;
"Wake me up!" was his charge, "at the first break of day --
Wake me up for the great Jubilee!"

The "Good Time Coming" is almost here!
It was long, long, long on the way!
Now run and tell Elijah to hurry up Pump,
And meet me at the gumtree in the swamp
To wake Nicodemus today.

He was known as a prophet -- at least was as wise --
For he told of the battles to come;
And we trembled with dread when he roll'd up his eyes,
And we heeded the shake of his thumb.
Though he clothed us with fear, yet the garments he wore
Were in patches at elbow and knees;
And he still wears the suit that he used to of yore,
As he sleeps in the old hollow tree.

Nicodemus was never the sport of the lash,
Though the bullet has oft cross'd his path;
There were none of his masters so brave or so rash
As to face such a man in his wrath.
Yet his great heart with kindness was filled to the brim --
He obeyed who was born to command;
But he long'd for the morning which then was so dim --
For the morning which now is at hand.

'Twas a long weary night -- we were almost in fear
That the future was more than he knew;
'Twas a long weary night -- but the morning is near,
And the words of our prophet are true.
There are signs in the sky that the darkness is gone --
There are tokens in endless array;

While the storm which had seemingly banished the dawn,
Only hastens the advent of day.

Henry Clay Work

Washington And Lincoln

Come, happy people! Oh come let us tell
The story of Washinton and Lincoln!
History's pages can never excel
The story of Washington and Lincoln.
Down through the ages an anthem shall go,
Bearing the honors we gladly bestow--
Till every nation and language shall know
The story of Washington and Lincoln:

Who gave us independence,
On our continent and sea
Who saved the glorious Union!
And set a people free!
This is the story--
Oh happy are we--
The story of Washington and Lincoln.

Parents to children shall tell with delight,
The story of Washington and Lincoln;
Free born and freed men together recite
The story of Washinton and Lincoln.
Earth's weary bond men shall listen with cheer--
Tyrants shall tremble, and traitors shall fear--
When, in it's fullness of glory, they hear
The story of Washington and Lincoln:

Though on the war cloud recorded with steel,
The story of Washington and Lincoln;
Peace only Peace, can completely reveal
The story of Washington and Lincoln.
Thanks to the Lord for the days we behold!
Thanks for the unsullied flag we unfold!
Thanks to us, and in our time, was told
The story of Washington and Lincoln.

Henry Clay Work

Watching For Pa

Three little forms in the twilight gray,
Searching the shadows across the way;
Two pair of black eyes, and one of blue --
Brimful of love, and of mischief too;
Watching for Pa!
Watching for Pa!
Sitting by the window,
Watching for Pa!

Watching for Pa!
Watching for Pa!
Sitting by the window,
Watching for Pa!

May, with her placid and thoughtful brow,
Beaming with kindness and love just now;
Willie the youngest, in anguish did lay,
Stealing sly kisses from sister May,
Watching for Pa!
Watching for Pa!
Sitting by the window,
Watching for Pa!

Watching for Pa!
Watching for Pa!
Sitting by the window,
Watching for Pa!

Nellie, with ringlets of sunny hue,
Cosily nested between the two;
Pressing her cheeks to the window pane,
Wishing the absent one home again.
Watching for Pa!
Watching for Pa!
Sitting by the window,
Watching for Pa!

Watching for Pa!
Watching for Pa!

Sitting by the window,
Watching for Pa!

Now there are shouts from the window seat;
There is a patter of childish feet;
Gaily they rush through the lighted hall --
"Coming at last" is the joyful call.

Watching for Pa!

Watching for Pa!

Standing on the doorstep,

Watching for Pa!

Watching for Pa!

Watching for Pa!

Standing on the doorstep,

Watching for Pa!

Henry Clay Work

We Are Coming, Sister Mary

On a stormy night in winter,
When the winds blew cold and wet,
I heard some strains of music
That I never can forget.

I was sleeping in the cabin,
Where liv'd Mary fair and young,
When a light shone in the window,
And a band of singers sung.

We are coming sister Mary,
We are coming bye and bye,
Be ready sister Mary,
For the time is drawing nigh.

I tried to tell my Mary,
But my tongue would not obey,
When the song so strange had ended,
And the singers flown away,
As I watch'd I heard a rustling,
Like the rustling of a wing,
And beside my Mary's pillow
Very soon I heard them sing.

Then again I called my Mary,
But my sorrow was complete
For I found her heart of kindness
Had forever ceas'd to beat
And I still am very lonely
From summer round to spring
And I oft in midnight slumber
Think I hear the same ones sing.

Henry Clay Work

We'LI Go Down Ourselves

"What shall we do, as years go by,
And Peace remains a stranger --
With Richmond yet in rebel hands,
And Washington in danger?
What shall we do for leaders, when
Old Age this race is cropping?"
I asked whom I met --
And didn't it set them hopping!

"What shall we do? What shall we do?
Why, lay them on the shelves,
And we'll go down ourselves,
And teach the rebels something new,
And teach the rebels something new."

"What shall we do when armies march
To storm the rebel quarters --
If as of yore, their marches end
Beside Potomac's waters?
May not we call our soldiers home?
May not we think of stopping?"
I strove to frame the question fair --
But didn't it set them hopping!

"What shall we do when all the men
For battle have enlisted --
And yet the rebels hold their ground,
And law is yet resisted?"
Instead of doing as I should --
The theme politely dropping,
I ventured yet one question more --
Oh didn't it get them hopping!

Henry Clay Work

When The Evening Star Went Down

The morning was fearful at sea--
The voyagers weary and pale;
Their steamer a wreck, from keel to deck,
Before an Autumnal gale.
Old Neptune came forth in power--
He wore on his features a frown;
And many a guest he took to rest,
When the "Evening Star" went down.

They sleep in a fathomless grave,
The guest and the mariner brave;
They pillow their heads on coral beds,
Beneath the blue ocean waves,
Beneath the blue ocean waves.

Sail'd ever a ship from her quay,
So heavily laden as she,
With folly and fame, with hope and shame,
With vanity, mirth and glee?
But in the dark moment that came,
How useless were rank and renown!
And honors of earth, what were they worth,
When the "Evening Star" went down.

The treacherous ocean is calm--
No longer in storm billows toss's;
Yet darkness and cloud will long enshroud
The hearts that were link'd with the lost.
In how many, how many homes,
Far distant, in country or town,
A light was put out, in dread, in doubt,
When the "Evening Star" when down.

Henry Clay Work

When You Get Home, Remember Me

Lieutenant De Long, commanding the Jeannette Arctic Expedition, having seen his vessel crushed by the ice, undertook a perilous journey through the ice and snow toward the coast of Siberia. With a part of his command he finally reached the wilderness near the mouth of the River Lena. Disabled by sickness, hunger and cold, the little band was compelled to halt, while two of their number went forward. When the pathetic parting was over, and after the two seaman had begun their battle with the snowdrifts, they heard a call, and on turning, recognized the voice of one of their officers feebly shouting: "When you get to New York, remember me!" From that group of brave men, these were the last words that ever reached human ears.

Starving beside the frozen Lena!
Perishing in a snow blockade!
From a lone group of shipwrecked seamen
Two are sent forth to seek for aid.
'Tis a sad, a solemn parting;
Life or death! who can foresee?
Hark! on the wind floats this last message:
"When you get home, remember me!"

Gallant and brave! together clinging,
True to the last! with but this plea;
Still in our ears its words are ringing,
"When you get home, remember me!"

Ready to sink, yet persevering,
Southward and helpward toil the twain;
Close in the rear an Arctic winter
Binding the land with icy chain.
Weary wait the suff'ring comrades;
Help they ask on bended knee;
But to their friends come these words only:
"When you get home, remember me!"

Succor at last! the twain find helpers;
Shrieks the fierce gale, "Too late! too late!"
Valiant De Long and brave companions,
Manfully, calmly meet their fate.
One by one, they lie down dying;
All obey that stern decree---
Last on their lips this plaintive whisper:
"When you get home, remember me!"

Starving beside the frozen Lena!
Perishing in a snow blockade!
Had we but known their need, what thousands
Would have rejoiced to render aid!
There was want, while here abundance;
Naught had they, while plenty we.
Shall we not heed their last entreaty:
"When you get home, remember me!"

Henry Clay Work

Where's My Billy Goat Gone To?

'Twas a birthday gift Miss Posie had
When she was nine, and twenty:
Not of gold -- Oh, no! -- nor gem, nor pearl,
Tho' he who gave had plenty.
'Twas a gift she took so much to heart,
Her neighbors thought her silly;
'Twas a B-A-B-Y (Baby) Goat,
A snow-white Baby Billy!
Pretty little Billy, Billy -- Oh!
Where's my Billy Goat gone to?

Take my home! Take my farm!
Yes, me too (if you want to);
But tell me! tell me!
Where's my Billy Goat gone to?
Pretty little Billy, Billy -- Oh!
Where's my Billy Goat gone to?

When she tried to teach him how to read,
Twas only "baa" he'd utter;
As she coaxed him then with cake and cream,
He'd slyly turn to butt her.
Yet he taught himself a thousand tricks,
And many a curious caper;
He would clamber to her chimney top,
And dine there on brown paper.

When the winter came she bought him shoes,
And flannel red she ordered
For a Sunday suit, with trousers cut
Four-legged and embroidered
On the steeple soon in tatters hung,
They set the parson snarling;
And he called that goat Be-el-ze-bub --
The one that she called Darling.
Pretty little Billy, Billy -- Oh!
Where's my Billy Goat gone to?

He was fond of roaming on the rocks,

With workmen in the quarry;
And if there he found their luncheon pails,
Not he but they were sorry.
For he raised aloft his iron brow,
Despite the foreman's clamor;
And the pails, he crushed them one by one,
As with a blacksmith's hammer.
Pretty little Billy, Billy -- Oh!
Where's my Billy Goat gone to?

Then for pails replaced and pails concealed
Each morning he went searching,
Till at last he found a shining prize,
Upon a boulder perching.
Had he read its label, "Dynamite!"
He might have known his blunder;
But he gave it one tremendous blow,
And then came peals of thunder!
Pretty little Billy, Billy -- Oh!
Where's my Billy Goat gone to?

Henry Clay Work

Who Shall Rule This American Nation?

Who shall rule this American Nation?

Say, boys, say!

Who shall sit in the loftiest station?

Say, boys, say!

Shall the men who trampled on the banner?

They who now their country would betray?

They who murder the innocent freedmen?

Say, boys, say!

"No, never! no, never!"

The loyal millions say;

And 'tis they who rule this American Nation!

They, boys, they!

Who shall rank as the family royal?

Say, boys, say!

If not those who are honest and loyal?

Say, boys, say!

Then shall one elected as our servant,

In his pride, assume a regal sway?

Must we bend to a human Dictator?

Say, boys, say!

Shall we tarnish our national glory?

Say, boys, say!

Blot one line from the wonderful story?

Say, boys, say!

Did we vainly shed our blood in battle?

Did our troops resultless win the day?

Was our time and our treasure all squander'd?

Say, boys, say!

Henry Clay Work