Songs of the Sea

BY

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Truly yours,

CHAS. L. GANT
Bill Brandon's Baby Boy

I feel so very sorry for a little boy I know,
    Just the dearest, cutest, sweetest, little man,
Who recently came smiling to this weary world below,
    To live out life's uncertain, troubled span.
But it's not because of troubles that I sympathize with him,
    I'm sure his life will be all bright and glad;
But I worry that his brightness may become a trifle dim,
    Just because he'll have to call Bill Brandon "dad."

He has a good, sweet mother, and his uncles and his aunts,
    Are as good as any people in the land;
But his dad's a sawed off sinner like a toad in leather pants,
    And five foot is the highest he can stand.
Soon the little baby, bless him, will be larger than his pa,
    And when he views this homely little shad,
He will thank the Lord and bless Him that he has a handsome ma,
    But, poor boy, he'll have to call Bill Brandon "dad."

But, fill your glass, you fellows 'til it's sparkling to the brim,
    Let's toast to him a life of lasting joy;
A pleasant vale of purity and honor bright for him,
    Bill Brandon's pretty, bouncing baby boy.
Here is hopes he'll have a brother, a sister, and another,
That life may be one pleasant path of flowers;
That he will be a comfort and a standby for his mother,
When she shall reach this life's declining hours.

But until the sharpened arrow shall cease life's pain or sorrow,
I will feel quite sad for Billie's little boy;
Though his proud dad will caress him, and his mamma she will bless him,
And he'll be the family pet and only joy,
Yet to think so fine a baby who'll some day be governor maybe,
Or president, and make the nation glad,
Must go through life repining, though the sun is brightly shining,
Just because he has to call Bill Brandon "dad."

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Sing Happy Day

Sing happy day, and plod along,
No use to grieve 'cause skies are gray,
There's heaps o' comfort in a song,
When fortune turns the other way.
Grief only robs the heart of smiles,
And makes November out of May,
While cheerfulness makes green the isles
Of human life, sing happy day.
Sing happy day, and let no tear
    Of grief bedim life’s pleasant scenes,
For time is wasting, year by year,
    And soon the veil that intervenes
Will pull aside and we shall see
    The mysteries hidden o’er the way.
So banish sorrow, live life free,
    As best you can, sing happy day.

Sing happy day, if skies are dark,
    Love makes a fond heart ever warm;
The robin, jay and meadow lark,
    Sing sweetest just before a storm.
Just whistle as you plod along,
    Drop your anchor in the bay,
If storms arise and winds blow strong,
    Just face them and sing happy day.

Is There a God?
Is there a God? I need not answer you.
Just go and gaze into the vaulted blue,
Or look upon the ocean’s wide expanse,
And watch the waves, retreat but to advance.
Look at the countless stars which twinkle bright
The moon, which helps emparadise the night,
The stately trees which in the breezes nod,
Then ask yourself for once, “Is there a God?”
Is there a God? List to the birds that sing,  
And watch the eagle on his pinioned wing.  
Stand by the brook and hear its lullaby,  
And watch the fleecy clouds which race the sky.  
Feel the warm rays of the resplendent sun,  
Or watch the raindrops falling, one by one.  
Gaze on the Gallilee where once He trod,  
Then ask yourself again. "Is there a God."

Is there a God? List to the moaning wind,  
Whose requiem is sung o'er all of human kind.  
Watch Seasons as in turn they come and go,  
The sun, the rain, the cloud, the cold, the snow,  
We're only leaves upon life's monarch tree,  
And one by one are falling, you and me,  
And in our turn will camp beneath the sod,  
Then we shall see and know if there's a God.

Is there a God? Who is it that unrolled  
The centuries, which for centuries were scrolled?  
Behind this veil, mysterious and intense,  
Somehow I see a smiling providence.  
I see the forest and the fruit and vine,  
I find at hand the gracious oil and wine,  
And as I trace the paths His feet have trod,  
I am content to say, "There is a God."
A Measuring Social

Last night to a measuring the people all turned out,
Oh, it was very pleasing to see them run about;
The parson and the deacons were as happy as could be,
And pretty girls with bonnie curls said "Come and measure me."

There were pretty girls, and witty girls,
And sour girls, and sweet,
Girls with beaux and pigeon toes,
And number 11 feet;
Fat girls and flat girls,
In 'skeeter bar and shawl,
Were lead up to the door frame or measured on the wall.

The choir got to singing and the band began to play,
The parson cut the pigeon wing, the deacon, he got gay;
The women went to gossiping, the girls began to flirt,
A fat girl sat right down on me, but say, it didn't hurt.

There were flat girls, fat girls,
Buxom girls and slim,
Lean girls, green girls,
Pleasant girls and grim.
Giggling girls and wiggling girls,
And girls with lots of gall,
Who led us to the measuring against the parlor wall.
The deacon measured sister Jones, the parson sister Brown,
The elder picked a dozen bones with gossips in the town;
A fat man measured 94 and then refused to pay,
And there was never such a measuring since Noah sailed away.
There were Woolley girls and bully girls,
And girls who had the cash,
Shy girls, and fly girls,
Who were always on the mash;
Yearnin' girls, Mt. Vernon girls,
And girls from Burlington,
Who came up to the measuring to see how it was done.

I've been to lots of social fads, but this one took the cake,
They made a fellow taller just for what else they could make;
They made a fellow bigger than the outside of his clothes,
At the pleasant measuring social fad where everybody goes.
There were homely girls and comely girls,
And girls from Bellingham;
Blonde girls and fond girls,
Like Mary's little lamb,
Longing girls, ding-donging girls
For every cent we had,
And we spent our money freely at the comic social fad.
Some Politics

The pool begins to simmer, and she'll soon begin to boil,
The waters are all troubled, and we hain't got any oil
To pour upon the surface, to reduce the turbulence.
There's a vacancy, we feel it, in the pockets of our pants,
The folks are all a fighting over patronage and "pap,"
They're all of one great party, but forever in a scrap,
And somethings been a doing, one can notice here of late,
Both sides are sorter swinging on the Democratic gate.

There's one side and tother side, each claiming to be right,
They meet to talk on harmony, but all they do is fight.
They scourge each other's candidates in language mighty rough,
And sometime's stretch the blanket with a lot of lying stuff.
The one is after prestige, while the other is in power,
They grease their throats with mountain dew and mashes sweet and sour,
They get up bright and early and stay up good and late,
To catch each other swinging on the Democratic gate.

I've been a watching both sides as close as any hawk,
And both are in the business with the marbles and the chalk,
And about the warmest meeting that any one can mention, 
Will be when all the delegates go up to the convention. 
Tacoma's lovely solitude will be a lively scene, 
Some folks will see the workings of a wonderful machine, 
When the henchmen and the heelers of light and heavy weight, 
Shall battle, after swinging on the Democratic gate.

I have read of sin stained Soddom and her sister town, 
Gomorrah, 
Passed through all the trouble that a wicked soul could borrow, 
Been a pup of partisan, in county politics, 
And, only for the party, have done many dirty tricks, 
But I've never met the equal of the fight that's raging here, 
Where the barleycorn is flowing and the foam is on the beer, 
And big curse words, come adorning, like an amen after prayer, 
And we always have next morning, rheumatism in our hair.

There's lots of funny politics in Washington today, 
From the dust of Walla Walla to the waters of the bay;
And the tricks which men are playing for the purpose of success,
Are sterling in their nature and it makes a fellow guess,
For the heeler and the henchmen, the tody and the dupe,
Are seen upon the corner in a sort of family group,
Fishing after fellows with a shining silver bait,
And a watchin' who's a swinging on the Democratic gate.

Boiling Out

Did you ever get that feeling,
    Like you read about in ads,
With that tired feeling stealing,
    In, with aches and pains by scads?
With a flutter in your gizzard,
    Like you'd swallowed up a lizard,
And the doctor's diagnosis,
    Proved conclusively you had?

I have had a siege of flutters,
    In my bosom and my eye,
And the solemn deacon mutters,
    "It's an overdose of rye;"
And they sent me off a boiling,
    Just to keep my soul from spoiling,
And to save me from a journey,
    To the mansions in the sky.
Did you ever have the flickers,
    And your gizzard jump about,
Just from draining social bickers,
    And then go boiling out,
'Till the ocean it got dusty,
    And the bath looked red and rusty,
With the odor of a brewery,
    Where they manufacture stout?

It's an exquisite sensation,
    To be laundered in a spring,
Where the blood of every nation,
    Round the waters seems to cling;
And I felt a little skittish,
    While bathing with the British,
But the jag I had was equal,
    To the crown of any king.

Now the nicotine has vanished,
    And my breath is like perfume,
And the alcohol is banished,
    To its everlasting doom;
And girls are not afrighted,
    Bless their hearts, they seem delighted,
When the fragrance of my breather,
    Sorter sweetens up the room.

So, boys, you rumsoaked roosters,
    Who were singing in my choir,
All ye knockers, boozers, boosters,
    Who atoned the day.

Had better go a boiling,
   For there is no such toiling,
To taking heated water,
   Like a roasting in the fire.

A Political Funeral

Put away the little donkey,
   Which the Demmies used to ride,
Wrap him up in Minnetonka,
   Pickled in formalgahide.
Put a bracer into Gable,
   Sing a song to Joseph Stitt,
Pat McCoy was still not able,
   Ferris, he was forced to quit.
Sing a little song to Shrauger,
   He was such a handy man,
Cheer him up with lots of lager,
   Let Ed Million rush the can.
Let Judge Houser have no foeman,
   Put George Chapman on the shelf,
Close beside our William Lowman,
   Storrs can look about himself.
Take Steve Temple to repentance,
   He is in an awful scrape,
Give John Wheappler early sentence,
   Likewise deal with Freddie Pape.
Give Tom Look the party spy glass,
Let him take another squint,
Soon he'll hide amid the high grass,
With the Dewey, Mr. Quint.

Let the poll books tell the story,
How Nick Bessner missed his plan,
Cover up the mangled gory,
Sad remains of George Moran.
Put a tombstone up for Turner,
And a marker for the mule,
Miss Democracy, O, learn her,
Teach her, she's a party fool.

Let the parrots prate of Parker,
Or let Bryan tell the tale;
Skies are growing slowly darker,
Sad oblivion starts to wail.
Don't forget our good friend Bowmer,
For we know he did his best,
For the party of misnomer,
Bury him amid the rest.

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Under the Willow

Just over there under the willow,
I know you are there, my dear,
With your head on an earthen pillow,
Put your ear to the tree and hear.
But my heart is ever with you,
   Far under the sod and snow,
For it never has ceased to love you,
   Since the day they laid you low.

Just over there under the willow,
   My very soul lies dead,
And I’ll laugh when the stormy billow
   Of life has forever fled.
And I shall know that you love,
   Sweet one, with bluest eyes,
In the mystic land of true love,
   After the mortal dies.

Just over there under the willow,
   In a beautiful paradise,
With never a raging billow,
   And never a storm to rise,
I think I shall meet some morning,
   When life has been made anew,
That heart with true love adorning,
   Those beautiful eyes of blue.

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The Man from Maine

We showed him our mountains, our valleys and hills,
   Showed him our acres of grain,
Took him through fish traps and log booms and mills,
   Showed him dead oodles of grain;
But he was not content with our forests and farms,
He hated our winter of rain,
And 'lowed as this country was not filled with charms,
Like valleys they have down in Maine.

We showed him how labor is paid for its toil,
Where gold in abundance is found,
Pictured the wealth of the wine and the oil,
And the wonders which round us abound;
But he looked far away o'er the hills every day,
Half homesick, his heart filled with pain,
No matter how brightly the sun shone, he'd say,
"We've a brighter one down East, in Maine."

The winter came on and sunshine was here,
But zero was calling back there,
So he put on his great coat and made it appear,
He was cold, and I really declare,
When violets bloomed in the winter, he'd sigh,
And then he'd begin to explain,
How prettier flowers would grow by and by,
All winter back yonder in Maine.

He looked on our beautiful ocean of blue,
He walked by the light of the moon,
He looked at our wonder ships gallant and true,
He lived through our winter, like June,
But somehow or other he longed to go back,
So he boarded the overland train,
And left for a pleasanter scene, ah, alack,
Back yonder in easy old Maine.
He wrote me a letter, I got it today,
    And he says, "Maine's a pokerish place;"
Cold, chilly breezes and skies clouded gray,
    And he's thinking of changing his base.
He will follow the breeze of the wave rippled seas,
    He will cross over mountain and plain,
Away from the snow drifting up to his knees,
    And the chilly, cold winters of Maine.

On the Banks of Roubedeaux*

There's a quiet little homestead on the banks of Roubedeaux,
    There's a pretty field of clover near at hand;
There's a blue grass vale of beauty which a brooklet trickles thro',
    There's the singing darkies basking on the sand;
I see them all in vision in the distant long ago,
    Hear the trinkling waters as so peacefully they flow;
I look upon the picture and I see a face I know,
    It's my mother on the banks of Roubedeaux.

There's a lowing herd a resting 'neath the willow by the stream,
    And a snowy flock a grazing on the hill,
There's a pond of placid water where I used to fish and dream,
    As I slumbered to the singing of the mill.

*The Roubedeaux is a mountain stream in South Missouri in the midst of the Ozark mountains.
Just a backward glance at boyhood, I recall each pleasant place,
In memory every pathway of the old home I can trace,
And I kiss the phantom picture when I see a smiling face,
It’s my mother’s on the banks of Roubedeaux.

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In fancy I am sitting by a little garden gate,
Where the fragrant honeysuckles gently twine,
And I whisper low, “I love you,” to my little sweetheart Kate,
And I kiss her ’neath the honeysuckle vine.
I can see the fields of cotton as they blossom as the snow,
See the cornfields waving in the breezes as they blow;
And I hear a voice that’s calling, sweet, and soft, and low,
It’s my mother on the banks of Roubedeaux.
How many of you mortals as you read this little rhyme,
Recall this self same picture into view?
The home you knew in childhood, in some enchanted clime,
Like the cabin on the bonnie Roubedeaux.
Can’t you pick on memory’s banjo all the melodies of years,
And pick out every pathway which in memory appears,
'Till your eyes are blinded slightly with a wave of loving tears,
For your mother on the banks of Roubedeaux?

A Place With God

She played that her little dolly was dead,
   My little one sweet and fair,
And listening, I heard the words that she said,
   As she played on the winding stair.
"Poor little dolly, you soon must go,
   And leave your mamma, who loves you so,
Way under the grass, in a grave so deep,
   And I will be lonesome, and weep and weep,
For my little dolly, way under the sod,
   But I reckon you'll find you a home with God."

* * * * * * * * *

All, all alone by the stair today,
   I sit as I did long ago,
Where she with her dolly was wont to play,
   But gone is the treasure that loved me so.
Under the willow, just down the lane,
   Flowers are blooming o'er little Jane.
Under the grasses and under the dew,
   Gone from my vision, those eyes of blue,
Only the roses and lilies nod,
   And I know she has found her a place with God.
A Ship on the Milky Way

There's a man with a ship on the milky way,
    With a castle in the air,
And he climbs his castle day by day,
    To the station of Don't-Know-Where.
Here he takes his ship for a pirate cruise,
    Over the starlit sea;
He has money to spend and time to lose,
    But he never whacks up with me.

There's a man with his hand in the golden sack,
    And he fingers the campaign coin,
Waiting for people to turn their back,
    That he may again purloin.
It is true, I know, that he needs the dough,
    For it soon will be sailing day,
When up the castle again he'll go,
    To his ship on the milky way.

There's a man who is pledging himself to vote,
    For the Democratic hosts;
There's a fellow who often has turned his coat,
    To the golden guinead ghosts;
He once stood pat as a Democrat,
    When he labored across the bay,
E'er he climbed his castle to once get at,
    His ship on the milky way.

A storm is brewing adown the west.
    There's coming a spell of weather,
When every ship must stand the test,
Of a turbulent wave and ether;
His castle high in the vaulted sky,
In the wind will quake and sway,
And the whole concern will killapy,
On the waves of the milky way.

A crash! and his castle will tumble down;
A roll, and his ship will sink,
And some other king will don the crown,
And rule for a term, I think.
There are too many tricks in politics,
The people will soon say nay,
And the king and his crown will tumble down,
From his ship on the milky way.

With Mother in Maine

As I sit here and gaze on the waves of the sea,
And the islands of nature so grand,
There comes o'er the hilltops a picture to me,
Of a home in a far away land.
I can hear so distinctly the sough of the wind,
Through the boughs of the pines on the hill,
And the scenes of the country are fresh in my mind,
And the dear ones who linger there still.
Silver topped mountains rear up in the west,
And form in a glittering chain,
But the hills and the valleys my heart loves the best,
Are way back with my mother, in Maine.
I look on the snow-mantled mountains with pride,
   And the hills of the evergreen State:
I gaze on the ships of the sea as they ride,
   On the waves of the waters so great;
View woodland, and valley, and river, and brook,
   And gazing I ever behold,
The fields and the forests wherever I look,
   And the flurry and glitter of gold;
The sunshine which lingers on mountains of snow,
   The clouds and the tear drops of rain,
But a vision appears o'er the landscape, and lo,
   I am back with my mother, in Maine.

Gold has a glitter and diamonds a shine,
   And God gave a charm to the west,
There is grace in the seagull which floats on the brine,
   And there's love with the dove in her nest.
Grand are the scenes of this far away slope,
   By nature so bountifully blest,
With seas and fair scenes in a wonderful scope,
   Where the sun says "good night," in the west,
But my heart wanders back to the homestead of yore,
   Far over the mountain and plain,
And I long just to kiss and caress her once more,
   Sweet mother, back yonder in Maine.
By the Harvest Moon.

I met you first by the light of the moon,
   In the days of long ago,
'Twas an evening rare in the flowery June,
   When I learned to love you so.
I would always rejoice just to hear your voice,
   Like the nightingale's in tune,
And I waited there for you, my fair,
   By the light of the harvest moon.

I courted you by the light of the moon,
   When life was bright and new;
'Twas a silent court, but we did commune,
   By the beat of our hearts, my true,
While the whippoorwill sang over the hill,
   The parting came too soon,
For I loved to linger, my love, at will,
   By the light of the harvest moon.

I married you, dear, by the light of the moon,
   Where the Shenandoah rolls,
And the mocking bird with his voice atune.
   Sang with the humming shoals:
And you look the same in the mid day sun,
   As we halt here at life's noon,
As you did to me, my only one,
   By the light of the harvest moon.

Then 'till the last sweet light of the moon,
   Shall greet us here below,
'Till we say good night in our last commune,  
That life on earth shall know,  
And whither we go, I shall not know,  
But eternity has a June,  
And we may meet there, my dear, and lo,  
By the light of the harvest moon.

Jim Jones

Jim Jones, he was a feller as a feller couldn't trust,  
Away down in the cellar with the cider 'cause he'd bust;  
He would eat up all the ginger bread,  
And just leave you the crust,  
For Jim was after boodle every morning.

Jim, he got to monkeying in county politics,  
He learned it from a fellow who was very full of tricks,  
Who also wanted boodle,  
And he sold the people bricks,  
Which showed up to be golden in the morning.

Jim got to be the chairman of a big committee, too;  
Now Jim was green about it for the thing was rather new;  
But a string was on his collar,  
And a fellow pulled him through,  
And they went out after boodle in the morning.
Now Jim was short on intellect, but very long on gall;  
He scarcely knew a silver from a sockeye, "flat or tall,"
And it wasn't very distant, just between him and the wall,
So he went out after boodle in the morning.

Now Jim had a confederate whose other name was Tom,
Who dealt in dirty politics, the very meanest glom,
Who says, "We'll start a journal,  
And we'll use it as a bomb,
Which will jar out lots of boodle in the morning."

So they ate some cloves and sen sen, and polished up their boots.
And bought them half a dozen of these Georgia made cheroots,
And they went unto Democracy, to try their fancy loot,
And secure a little boodle in the morning.

They left the grand old party with which they long had stood,
Tom says to Jim, "My hearty, we are striking quite a pud,"
And they "laid up" with Democracy and said that she was good,
And searched her sock for boodle in the morning.
When Tom found that the stocking was very cold and dry,
He looked at Jim and whispered, then he winked the other eye,
And murmured, "Keep up courage,
We will find it by and by,
We'll go back to our party in the morning."

So they took their little journal and gave the thing a flop,
Jim turned a double header, while Tom he took a drop,
And they came home to the party, but they never lit on top,
'Cause they fell off after boodle in the morning.

The Golden Gate.
I stood one night as the sun went down,
On the rocks by the Golden Gate,
While the sun sent down a radiant crown,
To the restless waves so great.
I gazed afar on the sun kissed sea,
And thought of my loved, lost mate.
And I sighed alone on a sad sea stone,
On the rocks by the Golden Gate.
The chill of the wind blew over the deep,
And the waves made ceaseless roar,
Tossing their heads where the sailors sleep,
And breaking upon the shore;
Then I sighed for you, sweet eyes of blue,
Then I longed for you, my mate,
'Till the sunshine fled and my soul lay dead,
On the rocks by the Golden Gate.

Since then I weep with the moaning tide,
And waves with crests of frost,
And I liken my life. I liken my rhymes,
To a sea-weed tempest tossed;
Somewhere in the blue as I voyaged through.
I lost my ship and mate,
But I'll find some day both ship and crew,
Up there by the Golden Gate.

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Deacon and Dollar.

A deacon and a dollar,
Were a sitting side by side,
And the deacon, he was reading,
From the Master's friendly guide;
But coming to a period the silver piece he spied,
And the deacon was a very worthy scholar.

Now that dollar was a widow's,
Which unluckily she lost,
And the deacon found the money,—
In his words, he said it stood.
Then he went on with his reading, but the widow paid the cost,
Hence the story of the deacon and the widow.

Now the deacon and the dollar,
Are two elements below,
In the dark infernal regions,
Where they never have a snow.
For the deacon robbed the widow and the dollar made it so.
And old Satan’s got the deacon and the dollar.

The deacon once was pious,
And he seemed a man of God;
But he spied the mighty dollar,
And he grabbed it like a Prod,
And he started out for heaven, but he missed the gate a rod,
For the deacon he was tempted with the dollar.

The Cigarette Dude.

My girl, let me give you a little advice,
For I’m old and acquainted with sin;
Your life is too valuable just for the price,
Which is paid in tobacco and gin.
Your own pure soul has a nobler goal,
Your love has a wholesomer food,
So use a new art and lock up your heart.
Safe from the cigarette dude.
Through country and city I've traveled the land,
And passed through the alleys of vice,
I've seen truth and evil with hand clasped in hand,
And the devils who scattered the rice;
But I never have met in my travels as yet,
The fellow as brainless and rude—
Though he drank, stole and lied, he's an angel beside—
The spindle legged cigarette dude.

It is nature I know, and you must have a beau—
And love is no subject for shame—
But in choosing a mate you had better be late,
Than to take anything for your game.
Make no haste to choose, you've a whole lot to lose,
And your life will be one burning feud,
If you lose your control and sell out your soul,
To a spindle legged cigarette dude.

I have wasted my days with the night prowling throng,
And quaffed from the goblet of death;
I have thrown away right for the folly of wrong,
With the fumes of real hell on my breath;
But with all, I declare, and I'm telling you square,
That none were as bad as the brood,
Which hang on the gate with a nonsenseless prate,
And are known as the cigarette dude.
A Very Long While.

I can’t say I’ll love you forever,
   For that is a long, long while,
But living I’ll leave you, no, never,
   For I live in the sun of your smile.
I ask for no happier dwelling,
   I sigh for no prettier cove,
But after this life there’s no telling,
   What wonderful changes may prove.

I think I could love you forever,
   And on great eternity’s shore,
Stroll along with you by the river—
   The one which I ever adore.
But if all of the girls up in glory,
   Wear the robes of eternity’s fad,
It might be a different story,
   And they might get me off to the bad.

I know that while life’s light is burning,
   No other will ever arise,
To keep me from longing and yearning,
   For the love light which beams in your eyes.
On earth you’re my moonlight and sunlight,
   My jewel, my gem and my prize,
But I can’t say I’ll only see one light,
   When flirting up there in the skies.
I can’t say my love is eternal,
   But I know it is deep as the earth,
And sometimes I think it supernal,
When I dwell on your goodness and worth;
But up where the sidewalks are golden,
And you wear just a thin muslin gown,
I might after days of beholding,
Find another one turning you down.

I can’t say I’ll love you forever,
But I’ll love you as long as I live,
There’s no earthly creature can sever,
My soul from the love it will give
Just to you, and no other shall share it,
But I’ll tell you, my dear, on the square,
I might not be able to bear it,
When I got with the beauties up there.

——

Marie.

There is sunshine in her coming,
There is fragrance in each bloom,
It’s like honey bees a humming,
When she enters in the room,
And I think life is worth living,
As I look and I behold,
It is flowers she is giving,
To a poet grim and old.
It is nice while one is living,  
To receive the fragrant peas—  
Makes me say a fond thanksgiving,  
For such precious gifts as these—  
And a king in all his glory,  
Not so happy quite could be,  
And I write this little story.  
Just to thank you, Miss Marie.

“If a living lovelit light house,  
E’er illumed life’s lonely shore,”
Then I know I’ve struck the right house  
When I reach your open door,  
Where the many blooms of beauty,  
Nod their fragrant heads at me,  
As if in the path of duty,  
As you taught them, Miss Marie.

If I should cease my toiling,  
And be tucked away to rest;  
Quit building and quit spoiling,  
Seek my everlasting nest,  
I want no costly casket,  
Want no vault to cover me—  
But a favor, let me ask it—  
Just a bunch of flowers, Marie.
Write Just Below.

Write just below when I am through
Life's letter, and beneath the dew
I slumber, and shall never wake
To know life's sorrow, pain or ache,
When I have laid away the pen,
Which one time pleased my fellowmen,
And my last line is jotted down,
Don't say, "Here rests one of renown;"
And if you chance to see it so,
I ask you to write just below
The truth, that only common clay
Within this mound is laid away.

And so the poet died at last,
And after many moons had passed,
Friends came and stood about his bier,
And dropped a flower and a tear.
There came a bard, who took his reed,
And wrote about some noble deed
That he had done when life was new,
And seemed as fresh as morning dew.
He wrote about his noble name,
Which e'er should live in halls of fame;—
"Tell me, ye winds, where did he go?"
And someone else wrote, "Just below."
Baby That Santa Forgot.

I sat as the twilight was falling,
   At the close of a bright Christmas day,
While jubilant children were calling
   Each other, just over the way.
But one little baby was lonely,
   Who lived in a board covered cot,
As sweet as the others, but only
   A baby which Santa forgot.

A sweet voice came laughingly calling,
   From a mansion just over the way,
To the sad child whose tear drops were falling,
   At the close of that bright Christmas day.
"I got a dolly so pretty,
   Her eyes are the brightest of blue,
It is one Santa brought from the city,
   "Say, what did he bring to you?"

From the cottage there came no replying,
   For sad was the heart at the door;
I could see from her eyes she was crying—
   Knew that her parents were poor.
She was neglected and lonely,
   Poor little innocent tot,
Sweet as the others, but only
   The baby which Santa forgot.

Oh rich, with your diamonds which glitter,
    What you have done have you done for her?
Some day every draught will turn bitter
As wormwood and gall, when you dine,
And you'll hear as the shadows are falling,
A voice from the chill and the dew,
Near the board covered cottage come calling,
"Say; what did he bring to you?"

Just over the hills is a city,
Whose Keeper is richer than these,
Whose heart is of love and of pity,
Whose eyes, every little one sees.
"Come unto me," He is calling,
"And ye shall forbid them not,"
And first in His arms He will gather
The babies that Santa forgot.

The Clam.

The clam never gossips, while other folks do,
And the clam never monkeys with cider and brew,
And he stays in his bed just as snug as a yam,
He's a quiet and peaceful, harmonious clam.
Clams never stay out with Bacchus at night,
Clams never dissipate, clams never fight;
They partake of the mudflat, they drink the salt chuck.
And never complaining—just think they're in luck.
The clam never hustles, for silver and gold,
The clam never growls at the wet and the cold;
Cloudy or sunshine he never complains,
Proving that happiness comes without brains.
Politics never entangles the clam,
He stays on the sand beach and don’t give—ahem!
In actions like Parker, like Parker in speech,
To business like Parker, he sticks like a leach.

The clam never argues baptism or prayer,
Just worships his Maker with never a care,
Has no ill feelings concerning the pews,
With nothing to long for and nothing to lose.
Clams never speculate, clams never lie—
Except in their beds—and we never know why
Clams are so happy, until we behold
That silence is full of the finest of gold.

Clams never boodle throughout the campaign.
Clams never pilfer your friendship for gain.
The tide may run high or the tide may run low,
The clam and his family continues to grow,
I look on humanity’s grasping and greed.
On the wealthy, the wasteful, the pauper in need.
The true and the faithful, the false and the sham,
And I envy the silent and solaceful clam.
New Year Resolution.

I have made a resolution,
    And I’m going to quit my faults,
For there’s surely desolation,
    In the polka and the waltz.
There is downfall in the party,
    Where you “buss” each little miss,
And you never feel so hearty,—
    There are microbes in the kiss.

I’ve made a resolution,
    ’Cause I promised that I would,
It’s a New Year contribution,
    To the really truly good;
No more I’ll “frog” or solo,
    No more I’ll Flinch or Pitt,
And my drink will just be kolo,
    ’Cause it’s New Year’s and I’ve quit.

I’ll go no more to lodges,
    To the banquet or the ball,
I will stay away from frogges,
    Where they tipple, wine and brawl,
For I’ve made a resolution,
    And now I’m going to try.
To rebuild my constitution,
    And prepare myself to die.

I have made a resolution,
    It’s the kind that always wins;
I have had a retribution,
And I'm getting sick of sins,
So I'll play no pool or billiards,
And I'll prowl no more at night,
For I'm on repentance steelyards,
And I know my wright is right.

I've made a resolution,
And I'm going to change my ways;
What, you can't find the solution?
Why, they gave me ninety days,
For a goose for Christmas dinner—
'Twas the feathers told the tale,
And I've changed my way of living,
For I'm living in the jail.

____________________________

Keep It Stilll.

If you've got one on your brother,
Keep it still;
Shouldn't squeal on one another,
Keep it still;
Man's a fool who goes a sailing,
But there ain't no use in wailing,
When a fellers sick and ailing.
If the shoe your foot is pinching,
   Keep it still;
Folks can always see you flinching,
   Keep it still;
Hold your tongue about a feller,
Keep your gossip in the cellar,
What’s the use to be a teller,
   Keep it still.

If there’s scandal in the city,
   Keep it still;
Those who fall deserve your pity,
   Keep it still;
Life is only just a blubber,
What’s the use to stand and rubber,
Then go squealing like a chubber,
   Keep it still.

If a girl has made a blunder,
   Keep it still.
If her heart is rent asunder,
   Keep it still;
If you’ll quietly advise her,
You will find that it is wiser,
Than to try and advertise her,
   Keep it still.
A Rose.

I would give you a rose, my lady,
A beautiful rose of grace,
But the flower would die, my lady,
When compared with your sweet face,
For the rose on your cheek so glowing,
Is far more sweet and fair,
Than the dainty rose here growing,
Which I pluck for your golden hair.

I would bring this rose, my lady,
This rose of incense sweet,
But the petals would soon die, lady,
And fall down at your feet,
For there never has bloomed a flower,
As fair as your own sweet face,
There never was seen a bower,
So polished with nature’s grace.

I promised a rose of passion,
A rose of love’s deep red.
But a rose would be out of fashion,
And droop and die instead,
For only a diamond’s glowing,
Could match with your eyes and hair,
And I’d bring you that—but knowing,
I haven’t the rose.
Where the May Apples Bloom.

Glorious sunshine, beautiful sea,
    Green mantled hills and the plains,
From over you, gently come whispering to me,
    Some beautiful lullaby strains;
Music I knew in the sweet long ago,
    A breath of the rarest perfume,
Wafted to me from a valley I know,
    In the land where the May apples bloom.

Gardens of grandeur, landscapes of wealth,
    Fields ripe with clover and flower,
Region of plenty and fountain of health,
    Land where we live every hour;
I'd like to exchange you just for tonight,
    And once more in the old cabin room,
Enhale with a pleasure and youthful delight,
    The fumes of the May apple bloom.

Roses of blushing and beautiful red,
    Lillies of purity white,
Fair blooming pansies now lifting each head,
    To be kissed by the rays of the light,
I'd exchange you tonight for the beautiful spot,
    Just to be in the wildwood perfume,
Which floats through the door of an old fashioned cot,
    In the land where the May apples bloom.
Snowy robed mountains, majestic and white,
Seas of pure sapphire and gold,
Sun, which in glory is saying good night,
As the mantle of eve is unrolled,
Wonderful charms you infold in your arms,
Yet I list for the click of the loom,
And long for the mother, O grandest of charms,
In the land where the May apples bloom.

———

Harp of the South.

The harp of the South is dear to me,
And I love its plankineg tune,
As I heard it once 'neath the cypress tree,
By the light of the silver moon.
Down where the Shenandoah rolls,
Midst sighing boughs and singing shoals,
Harp of the South of long ago,
Quaint and tuneful old banjo.

Harp of the South, so dear to me,
What would I give if I were there
To listen again to your melody,
In the silvery moonlight fair.
Down where the darkies used to sing,
Down by the meadow and the spring,
Hand in hand with sweetheart Chloe,
Listening to you, old banjo.
Harp of the South, each chord and string,
    Fills my heart with sweet, sad pain,
Sweet the memories you bring,
    Of youthful hopes which were in vain.
Vanished hopes, I long thought dead,
    Loves and scenes which long have fled,
Come again in golden glow,
    With thy plankings, dear banjo.

Harp of the South, a willow shade,
    Covers a mound of grassy green,
Down by the stream where sunbeams played,
    When life and love were both serene.
Play her your sweetest tune for me,
    Play her a song of Tennessee,
Play her a melody soft and low,
    Mother’s asleep there, dear banjo.

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Easter.

It’s Easter and I’m busted,
    Just as flat as any clam:
All my hopes are sadly rusted,
    And I don’t know who I am,
Since I bought that Easter bonnet,
    With the fluffs and ribbons on it,
And she’s on the street a gadding,
    Like a coon from Alabam’.
It is Easter and I’m looking,
With an eye as sad as fate,
And new misery I’m brooking.
For the dinner’s rather late.
She is on the street a gadding,
Crowned with ribbon puffs and padding,
And when she comes I’ll catch it,
With a broomstick on my pate.

It is Easter and I’m rocking
Of the cradle as I sweat;
In my soul there’s quite a knocking,
And I’m trembling, you can bet,
For she’s got her Easter trimmin’,
And she’s out among the women;
She’s as proud as any rabbit,
And on exhibition yet.

It’s Easter and I’m sighing
To be out among the men,
But here I sit a dying,
In a hot domestic pen;
All my coin is in a bonnet,
But I’ll take the thing and pawn it.
For I never will be peoned
By the pecking of a hen.

It is Easter and I’m cooking,
And a trying for to scrub.
Through the window I am looking.
And I feel just like a cub.
My lady comes in strutting,
   And she says I am a brute,
I am feeling quite domestic,
   But the business doesn’t suit.


Love Song.

Bright blue eyes which seem as blue
As heaven’s own skies, I’m loving you,
I would not roam, I would not change
This earthly home for heaven strange.
I want no other paradise
When you are near me. bright blue eyes.

Golden hair, like silken skein,
Divinely fair, while you remain,
I only ask to catch the gleam—
A pleasant task, a poet’s dream—
Of your bright face and curls of gold,
A wealth of golden fringe untold.

Let no one have a jealous rage
About my song, for I’m a sage,
And Genevieve is only three;
A little sister sweet to me.
She’s all the world, and paradise
Is living in her hair and eyes.
The Man from Michigan.

He didn’t like our sunshine and he didn’t like our rain,
He didn’t like our vegetables, our apples or our grain.
The “taters” didn’t suit him, and the cabbage was not sweet,
And the bread had something lacking when ’twas made from native wheat.
The turnips tasted woody and the radishes were strong,
The beans and peas and such as these were on the vines too long,
He didn’t like the berries and he made a rueful scan,
Of everything we had to show, this man from Michigan.

He found fault with our apples and didn’t like the pears,
He went one day to meeting and he criticized our prayers.
He thought the deacon naughty and the elder too astute,
And nothing in the “meeting house” it seemed was made to suit.
He didn’t like the pulpit and he didn’t like the pew,
He went out to a social and he didn’t like the stew.
He went out with some sinners and helped them rush the can,
But he didn’t like our lager beer, this man from Michigan.
He criticized our horses, our cattle, sheep and goats,
He went among the farmers and he didn’t like their oats,
We fed him sockeye salmon and he cried and wanted shad.
He said that we had nothing like the Michiganders had.
He looked out on our ocean and said it was too blue,
He didn’t like our roses, on account of morning dew;
He didn’t like our breezes just because they made him tan,
He was awfully entertaining, this man from Michigan,
We showed him all our forests, each river, brook and lake,
We showed him fat and juicy cows from which we get our steak;
We tried him once on venison, on pheasants and on grouse,
But he kicked and said he’d rather have a dish of home made souce.
He didn’t like our winter, ’cause it seemed to him like spring,
But still he kept a staying and not liking anything,
He didn’t like our gold mines, with 20 to the pan.
He was a funny creature,—was this man from Michigan.

He left us one bright morning and went back to Saginaw,
Where the winds are blowing chilly and they have the freeze and thaw;
Then he kicked and told his people that he would just be bound,
If Michigan was in it with the land of Puget Sound:
So he emigrated hither and settled down for good,
And now he has a building, from the native stone and wood,
And he blesses the Creator, who gave him such a plan,
And now he's pleased with everything, this man from Michigan.

Old Fashioned Folks.
Just to live once again with the old fashioned folks,
Would seem like a heaven to me;
Just to throw off the weight of the new fangled yokes,
And be for a little while free.
There's a codfishy smell on the new fangled belle,
There's a farce in society's whirl,
There is dirt on the stairs where the upper tens dwell,
And the swine seem to corner the pearl.
Some poor kin now ape aristocracy's lead,
Poor foolish and fad ridden bloaks.
And the world of today is sure badly in need,
Of the good, common, old fashioned folks.
It's breakfast set, dinner set, tea set, and lunch,
Away in advance of one's means:
It's ice cream, and claret, and fruit cake and punch,
But I want the old fashioned beans.
Brown bread of Boston and pork on the side,
Beats all of the French on the tray;
Just an old fashioned mother, who takes a great pride,
In providing the old fashioned way.
I weary in watching the poor folks of fad,
As they wear aristocracy's cloaks,
And I long for the time when I lived as a lad,
In the home of the old fashioned folks.

The old fashioned preacher, the old fashioned church,
The old fashioned teacher and school,
The lessons once taught by the old fashioned birch,
When we busted the old fashioned rule.
The old fashioned song and the old fashioned prayer,
The old fashioned loom and the wheel,
The old fashioned welcome we met everywhere,
And ye gods, one good old fashioned meal.
So when I shall cease this laborious tread,
And shall fall as the leaves from the oaks,
I will rest if I know I am tucked into bed,
By the hands of some old fashioned folks.
The Whole Concern.

You can meet him on the highway,
You can meet him on the byway,
You can find him any place that you may turn;
And you know him when you meet him,
By the way the people greet him,
The man who wants to be the whole concern.

In each church you always find him,
Nothing seems to daunt or blind him,
He poses as the Lord of every Urn:
Though his ways are quite erroneous,
He apes the sanctimonious,
The man who wants to be the whole concern.

You can well tell where his face is—
In the foremost public places—
In each business he aspires to run it all.
He's the It in every feature,
He's the only living creature,
To him the whole creation looks so small.

Uninvited he will pose in.
Everywhere he'll stick his nose in,
Enter business just as green as any fern;
Finds the mine he bought was "salted."
Yet he feels elate, exalted,
This man who wants to be the whole concern.

Up in politics he'll bristle,
Finds himself a little whistle,
Then he figures on the millions he can burn;
But at last he ceases fussing,
And we find he's really nothing,
This man who wants to be the whole concern.

In his last sad ambulation,
To that hot brimstonic nation,
When he faces Mr. Satan, fierce and stern,
On that hot eternal trolley,
He will realize his folly,
The man who wants to be the whole concern.

A Fellow from Maine.

We showed him our mountains, our valleys and hills,
Showed him our acres of grain,
Took him through fish traps and log booms and mills,
Showed him dead oodles of gain,
But he was not content with our forests and farms,
He hated our winter of rain,
And 'lowed as this country was not filled with charms,
Like valleys they have down in Maine.

We showed him how labor is paid for its toil,
Where gold in abundance is found,
Pictured the wealth of the wine and the oil,
And the wonders which round us abound,
But he looked far away o'er the hills every day,
Half homesick, his heart filled with pain,
No matter how brightly the sun shone, he’d say,  
   “We’ve a brighter one down East, in Maine.”

The winter came on and sunshine was here,  
   But zero was calling back there,  
But he put on his great coat and made it appear,  
   He was cold, and I really declare,  
When violets bloomed in the winter, he’d sigh,  
   And then he’d begin to explain,  
How prettier flowers would grow by and by,  
   All winter back yonder in Maine.

He looked on our beautiful ocean of blue,  
   He walked by the light of the moon,  
He looked at our wonder ships gallant and true,  
   He lived through our winter, like June,  
But somehow or other he longed to go back,  
   So he boarded the overland train,  
And left for a pleasanter scene, ah, alack,  
   Back yonder in easy old Maine.

He wrote me a letter, I got it today,  
   And he says, “Maine’s a pokerish place;  
Cold, chilly breezes and skies clouded gray,”  
   And he’s thinking of changing his base.  
He will follow the breeze of the wave rippled seas,  
   He will cross over mountain and plain,  
Away from the snow drifting up to his knees.  
   And then...
A Beacon Light.

The tide may ebb and the tide may flow,
And the breakers roll and spray,
But wherever I drift, wherever I go,
Let come whatever may,
I shall breast the gale and set my sail,
With a hand that’s firm and true,
And my heart will come, ’twill never fail,
To you, sweetheart, to you.

The billows may toss on the briney deep.
And the storms may rage on land,
Yet ever will I a vigil keep,
Yet shall I understand,
That a heart is waiting my voyage home,
Just as it used to do,
As a beacon to light me across the foam,
’Twas you, sweetheart, ’twas you.

Though I sail to the isle of enchanted songs,
Or over the sapphire seas,
My eyes ever watch, my heart ever longs,
For the blissful homeward breeze,
To fill the sails and speed my ship,
For the mate and his brawny crew,
As the good ship kisses the briney dip,
And carries me home to you.

I hope some day that a cozy cot,
Where clusters the virgin pine,
Will be my rest, will be my lot,
   My heaven for me and mine,
Where the odor blows from the climbing rose,
   Kissed by the honey dew,
Where the lilly fair in the orchard grows,
   And you, sweetheart, and you.

I Love You My Baby, So Dear.

You are my little maid and I love you,
   My own little queen, I declare,
No angel in heaven’s above you,
   No flower of the earth is more fair,
When away to my toil, ah, I miss you,
   And I long for the close of the day,
When out at the gate I can kiss you,
   My blossom of life’s sweetest May.

You are my little golden haired beauty,—
   My little princess of love,
And you guide me so close to my duty,
   Like a hand from the regions above.
I love you, my baby, I love you;
   I love you far better than gold,
You’re my pearl above price, and I love you,
   Without you this world would be cold.
I'm living for you, little lady,"
  I'll toil for you early and late;
You may pay me in kisses, my baby,
  When you meet me at night at the gate.
With arms round my old neck entwining,
  With lips pure as heaven's own bliss,
With eyes like the starlight a shining,—
  I want no more heaven than this.

I love you my own in the morning,
  Love you at noon and at night,
For you my whole life are adorning,
  Yes, you are my life and my light.
When away to my labors I miss you,
  And at evening, God bless you, I know
You will meet me and ask me to kiss you,
  My baby that's loving me so.

Kiss me good night, little maiden,
  Go to your pillow and sleep,
Your eyelids with slumber are laden,
  And above you the bright stars will keep
Watch till the morning is dawning,
  'Till the birds wake to welcome the light.
Good night till we meet in the morning,
  Good night, little sweetheart, good night.
When I Shall Rest.

I want no granite monument,
    When I am done life’s weary toil,
With kind farewells I’ll be content
    To rest within the mother soil.
The glitter we see on glory’s pearl,
    Is only happiness crucified,
For grief ever lingers in glory’s whirl,
    And aching hearts under jewels bide.

I want no grand parade and hearse,
    When I have made my farewell rhyme;
I want no show of wealthy purse,
    I want no band, no bells to chime,
The rich go to the gilded tomb,
    The poor beneath the willow lie,
Where song birds sing and flowers bloom,
    Beneath the fair ethereal sky.

When I shall pass beyond the pale,
    I want no tears to mark my bier,
Just loving words which will not fail,
    To show the world you held me dear.
True love lives in a gentle word,
    While grief dwells in the pomp and show;
There’s music in the singing bird,
    While fashion’s wake is one of woe.

When I am gone let fashion stay,
    Its ever faulty fickle hand:
Just see that I am laid away,
    Without a mock and flurry grand.
Just mark the slab about my head,
    In letters plain, "He's gone to rest,"
And say of me when I am dead,
    "He toiled and always did his best."

He Hummed.

His life was June, he had one tune,
And hummed it all the while,
By light of star, or sun, or moon,
He wore a pleasant smile;
You couldn't tell December
From the sunny days of June,
For he hummed and was contented
With the same old tune.

His care was brief, he had no grief,
A stranger to a tear;
He hummed his song the whole day long,
He hummed it all the year.
When things went wrong he hummed his song,
Until they all went right;
He was happy in the morning,
And he felt content at night.
The Better Way.

I never would live, just to live for myself.
For life’s not worth living that way.
What good are the millions piled up on the shelf?
What worth is the laurel or bay?
I live for the love of the mortals I meet,
For souls which have fallen by the way,
For the beggar I find in the midst of the street,
For the pitiful souls gone astray.

I live for the mortals who hunger and thirst,
For the sick and the weary and sad,
Though some call them fallen, forever accursed,
I don’t find them really so bad.
For man has forever been stepping aside,
And woman has drank of sin’s cup.
And I cannot alone in a mansion abide,
When I ought to be picking them up.

Christ in his goodness forgave and forgot—
"Ye sinless one cast the first stone—"
He welcomed the harlot, forbidding her not.
Nor leaving her helpless, alone.
Man is but mortal and weak are his ways,
If he strays, lead him back to the fold.
If you are his keeper, just watch where he strays.
Pick him up, ’tis a pleasure untold.

I never would live, just to live for myself,
When I see all around me the weak,
I never would live as a lover of pelf,
When my brother here scarcely can speak,
God give me the courage to do and to dare,
Just to lift up a head from a stone,
To live and to love and be willing to share,
With the mortal who’s weeping alone.

Livin’ at Home.

As I sit where the viands of fashion are spread,
’Midst the gold, with its glitter and glare,
And drink of the wine and eat of the bread,
In the gay land of Vanity Fair,
I miss the contentment and pleasure so sweet,
And while wealth has a palace and dome,
I long for the old fashioned gravy and meat,
Like I have when I’m livin’ at home.

I don’t care a durn for your beef, a la mode,
And the soup which they call consomme,
Or dishes of French, each name makes a load,
I want it the old fashioned way.
My wife has the menu that’s suited to me,
No frills made of froth and of foam,
It’s the genuine grub, and the coffee and tea,
Makes us know we are livin’ at home.

You may talk of your wealth and your new fangled frills,
And the little side dishes of fate;
It's nick-nacks of fashion and big doctor bills,
That's the fare of the wealthy and great,
But give me in mine, just an old fashioned dine,
It's the honey, just fresh from the comb,
I want none of fashion's dyspepsia in mine,
And I'm glad I am livin' at home.

Let fancy French menus be made for the rich;
Let platters be garnished with leaves,
But here let me say, I'll be tarnation switched,
If ever again it deceives.
I care not a rap for a Dawson like wealth,
I crave not the riches of Nome,
But I'm glad to get back to that fountain of health,
Which is found in a livin' at home.

Some Folks.

Some folks are seeking glory, for they love much notoriety.
They seek it through position and through wealth;
They long to be the leaders of this measly, bum society,
Which gets its reputation all by stealth.
I never loved the odor of a codfish aristocracy,
I like the good old common sort of folks,
Who live and die for fellowship and void of all hypocrisy,
Don't try to weight down others with their yokes.
Some folks are seeking millions and they rob and steal to get it,
From the widow and the orphan take the crust;
And when they cry of poverty, wealth simply says, "forget it,"
While they, wealthy, lavish gold upon a lust.
I never loved the breathing of the man who wants a million,
For the more he gets the more he tries to steal;
When he has ten hundred thousand then he wants to get a billion,
And he robs the public slick as any eel.

Live by the Way.

Don't worry and hurry, all soon will be over,
You'd just as well smile as you pass by the way.
Man was not made just to revel in clover,
And trials were made for the testing of clay.
There is nothing in life that one need be afraid of,
Nothing in death, for its coming is sure;
Just brace up and show them the stuff you are made of,
The best part of life is to strive and endure.

A man who loves God will be kindly forgiving,—
Unlike the poor puppets of pious pretense;
The time to be true is the time we are living,
For falsehood is bought at the soul's own expense.
When you have enough give a chance to your neighbor,
What good is a million, you can’t use it all,
A kind word brings joy, though it costs little labor,
And a lift is found better by far than a fall.

There’s no use to seek all the wealth of creation,
It only can reach to the pall and the shroud;
Why sell all the pleasure of life’s fairest station,
Then hoarding our gold, live obscure, in a cloud?
Live in the sunshine and help it to scatter,
Put away worry, and hurry and woe;
Time is approaching when nothing will matter,
There’s only one road which we all have to go.

What is the use to be grasping and greedy,
Life is a thing which is short at the best,
And about us we see all the poor and the needy—
The weary with burdens, so longing to rest.
Put away hurry, and worry and battle,
Smile and be glad as you pass by the way;
It is better to live with the swine and the cattle,
Than worship a million that’s hoarded away.

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When We Shall Know.

Will life be always love, my dear?
Will flowers in our pathway grow?
Will you forever wish me near?
A day will dawn when I shall know.
I do not know how dear you are,
    I only know you’re all to me,
Within the sky, no other star
    As fair as you can ever be.

Will plenty always meet us love,
    As through this life we striving go?
Will He who guided Noah’s dove.
    Watch over us? How shall we know?
I only know that you are pure,
    And as we beat against the tide
I feel content, I feel secure
    When I am lingering near your side.

When to this mortal journey’s end,
    We come to sit at judgment bar;
Will we converse as friend with friend,
    Or will He know us as we are?
Will we be left to pass the gate,
    Beyond this wicked world of woe,
Or will the Master say “too late;”
    The day will come when we shall know.

Will friends who love us now prove true,
    And be in sickness as in health?
Will they, like me, still cling to you,
    Although they roll in gilded wealth?
I only know I don’t expect
    To meet beneath the golden bow
The cream of fashion’s swell elect.
    The day will come when we shall know.
And You Not Here.

The birds are full of song, the sun is shining,
The brook is babbling by, so cool and clear,
And still I sit beside the sea repining,
Though nature seems to bid me better cheer.
The flowers are blooming in the vale below me,
The winds are whispering gently in my ear,
The feathered throng above me, seems to know me.
But all in vain my own, with you not here.

Across the blue the balmy winds are singing,
The pansy lifts its head beside the gate,
Around my door the ivy vines are clinging.
The sunset seems to linger with me late.
The giant mountain leans against the blue skies,
And seems to say, "I'll guard you, never fear,"
But still I'm longing, wishing for those blue eyes,
I cannot cease to pine, with you not here.

The forest smiles, and through the branches wooing,
The wind comes kissing round my aching head,
The ring doves in the boughs above me cooing,
The robins, flying care free—fancy led,
A spirit seems to whisper, "cease your pining."
That spirit speaks with your loved voicee, my dear.
But there's no song, no wood, no sun that's shining,
Which I can ever love, with you not near.
Zeek Jones.

He didn’t pin his spirit to the way the book was readin’,
And he didn’t “swaller” Moses and the Lamb,
But he ’lowed there were religion which a feller kept a needin’,
But he balked about the new Jerusalem.
He ’lowed there would be trouble if the streets were really golden,
’Cause the angels they would all be millionaires;
Each would want a quarter section to himself to have and holden,
With a lawyer to look after his affairs.
No, Zeek, he wouldn’t listen to the stories told of David,
How he rubbered when the woman took the bath,
And of Lot, he thought the preacher man was surely bad behaved,
And he wasn’t struck on Sampson in his wrath.

He doesn’t go much pumpkins on the burning brimstone valley,
And he didn’t bank on General Joshua;
But he picked up all the orphans and the poor about the alley,
And he never turned a hungry man away.
He wouldn’t give to missions, but he stayed at home with charity,
You never heard him gossip any way;
He was true to all his neighbors, his religion was a rarity,
   But Zeek Jones seemed to live it every day.
I reckon when the knife of time shall cut his earthly stitches,
   And Zeek is called to answer, good or bad,
He'll find a bridge where he can walk across the crooked ditches,
   And the angels up in heaven, they'll be glad.

Zeek Jones was rough and ready and he swore some at his cattle,
   And he liked to take his bitters now and then,
But you always found him fightin' in the front ranks of the battle,
   Though at church he didn't beller out, "amen!"
He'd lift up all the fallen, and would help most any neighbor,
   And he never locked his door against the poor.
He never cut a heartstring with a scandalizing sabre,
   And you always found a welcome at his door.
When Gabriel blows his trumpet, I would rather take my chances,
   With Zeek Jones than any other man I know,
For the more he lives the more I know the cause of God advances,
   And I think I knew where Zeek is billed to go.
Back There.

Do you know of a spot just over the range,
   Which you left in the years long ago,
For a wilderness vast, for a country so strange,
   For a region of roses and snow?
I know of a cottage which stands by a stream,
   In the beautiful country back there,
Where life was a song, just a musical dream,
   And joy was the tune everywhere.

I was young, just a boy as I passed from the gate,
   And was kissed by my mother in tears,
And now that I’ve grown up to manhood’s estate,
   I gaze down the pathway of years,
And see that dear cottage, the gate and the stream,
   And mother with ringlets of gray;
Hear songs of the south, see the moon’s gentle gleam,
   Round the home of my youth, far away.

So musing, I long just to journey once more,
   To the regions of grasses so blue,
To greet dear old mother who stands at the door
   To give me a welcome, don’t you?
For soon ’neath the mantle of grasses will rest
   The form of the one at the gate,
And our longing to meet with the one we love best
   Will be, ah, forever too late.

Yes, I know of a cottage just over the hills,
   Where a silvery stream murmurs low,
Through a valley of beauty whose memory thrills
This heart with a longing to go.
A form bended low 'neath the burden of years,
A face time has furrowed, yet fair,
And eyes dim from watching through love's holy tears,
Are waiting my coming, back there.

The Grafter.

I will sing you a song of the grafter,
The fellow who wants the whole earth,
You will find in the blazing hereafter,
A rather warm place for his berth.
With his hand in the other man's pocket,
He fumbles to get every dime,
If a safe, he will surely unlock it,
For the grafter is always on time.

He wants all political prestige,
He wants to be It everywhere,
He seeks every vantage and vestige—
Would corner the sunshine and air.
Down deep in the sulphuric valley,
Where Satan most surely doth reign,
The long winded grafter must sally,
When he gets to the end of life's lane.
The grafter is narrow in feeling,
He lives but a life for himself,
Pilfering, coercing and stealing,
The goods from the other man’s shelf.
To the cry of the poor, he’ll ne’er harken,
He laughs at the pangs of distress,
He causes the sunlight to darken,
And continues his theft none the less.

Along with the kicker and croaker,
Along with the miser and fool,
Along with the robbers at poker,
To region’s not overly cool.
The grafter will go ambulating,
And should he complain of his fate,
Why, Satan will take up his rating,
And usher him in through the gate.

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By the River.

Memory calls me back again,
To pleasant scenes of yore,
By the river, by the Mississippi river;
When happy with my fellow men,
I basked along the shore,
Of the ever lovely Mississippi river.
There in youth I used to loiter with my fishing hook and line,
'Twas there I courted Katie 'neath the honeysuckle vine,
'Twas there I vowed I loved her and she promised to be mine,
Where the pawpaws shade the Mississippi river.

I'd like to linger on that shore,
Where bright suns used to shine,
On the river, on the Mississippi river;
Just be a barefoot boy once more,
Among the oak and pine,
Which grow along the Mississippi river.
I'd like to hear the coon dog 'mongst the oaks and sycamore,
Take the winding pathways which I've often trod before,
And dine there in a cabin on the bonnie river shore,
With the mother, on the Mississippi river.

I see a steamboat coming,
And I hear the darkies sing,
On the river, on the Mississippi river.
I hear the engine humming,
And I hear the banjo ring,
On a steamboat on the Mississippi river.
Gray hairs and wrinkled forehead cannot teach me to forget,
For looking back to boyhood I can see the visions yet. 
And I'd like to sleep forever, when my evening sun is set,
'Neath the pawpaws of the Mississippi river.

Empty Cradle.

I used to rock her cradle and caress her curly head,
And tell her funny stories by the hour;
I used to tuck her snugly in her little downy bed,
And send her to the dreamy land of flowers.
I've kissed her little cherry lips and watched the dreamy eyes,
Which were as blue and pretty as the azure of the skies,
And life was then worth living and my home a paradise,
And I loved alike the sunshine and the showers.

But now I sit a rocking at the empty cradle's side,
No sunny head is pillowed there today;
The chilly winds came soughing, and my little angel died.

And spirit folks have carried her away.
So I rock the empty cradle and weep here all alone,
And I sing to her in fancy in a sort of saddened tone,
And the world has lost its brightness since I read

"Come, children up to the window,"

upon the stone,
Man of Japan.

The big Russian bold,
From the region so cold,
Who thought he was making a feast,
Of the little brown cuss,
When he kicked up a muss,
Where the sun rises up in the east,
Has discovered the joke,
And he’s sorry he spoke,
And is seeking an easier plan.
For though he was great,
He soon met his fate,
With the little brown man of Japan.

On land and on sea,
Why, the bold Japaneese,
Just waded through blood to his chin,
And the Russian so bold,
Just coughed up his gold,—
The Mikado, he gathered it in,
At every drum beat,
See the Russians retreat.
They’re scattered from Moab to Dan,
And the world then appears,
With a hearty three cheers,
For the little brown men of Japan.
Fishin’ fer a Halibut.

Winter Winds have disappeared,
Skies of clouds are nicely cleared,
Wheels are hummin’ in the mills,
Axes echo in the hills,
And farmers busy at the plow,
Seems to somehow tell us how
Spring is here, in robes of green;
The water has a glittering sheen,
The doors of winter have been shut—
We’re fishin’ fer a halibut.

Lots of sun perch easy had,
Lots of cod and pike and shad,
Big spring salmon on the run,
And crabs are coming by the ton.
Seems as there’s no charm to them,
Water’s hiding just one gem,
And all the anglers, great and small,
Are sitting on the dock and wall,
Like a pebble in a rut,
Fishin’ after halibut.

Men have traveled all about,
Castin’ flies for sportive trout,
And batin’ fer the catfish bold,
For red bass and fer perch of gold.
Fer bass and suckers, carpe, and lo,
The cropple and the snappers blue,
The white fish and the herring too,
But all of them are in the smut,
When one is ketchin’ halibut.

Just a big long hook and line,
Made of strong and twisted twine,
And a plug of battle axe—
Better far than chewing wax—
With a sun which friendly glows,
And a gentle wind that blows,
Drinkin’ nature’s nectar fine.
Better far than costly wine,
Lettin’ times old cycle cut—
Fishin’ after halibut.

Want no travel, want no wealth,
All I want is bait and health,
And time to sit and while away,
Where the sapphire waters play.
Talk of business—not fer me,
While I’m sittin’ by the sea,
With a breeze upon my head,
Blowin’ calm and nectar fed,
Pleasure simply seems to glut,
Fishin’ after halibut.
Singin’ Low.

Clear and broad and singin’ low;
Gosh, I’d like to hear the flow
Of that old river once ag’in’
I used to go a swimmin’ in.

What a change in man’s career,
Just to think, I’m settin’ here,
Wrinkled some and turnin’ gray;
Why, it only seems a day
Since I was but a kid, and when
We only thought that we were men.

Gee, I’d like to go today
Down the river to the bay,
Where spreads the sparklin’ bar of sand,
And meet the old time swimmin’ band.

Bill’s in Congress, Jim and Joe,
They were buried long ago.
Tom is captain on a liner,
Zeb turned out to be a miner,
Harry went to war, and Sim,
Don’t know what become of him.

I know that I am here today,
Just a wearin’ life away,
A toilin’ midst the mire and tricks
Of ruinatin’ politics.

I thought when all us boys were there,
Life was all too infat and care.
And awful woe, but now I find
A splendid chance to change my mind.
Youth, "A youthful tear that flows
Is like a dew drop on a rose,"
While manhood is a thing forlorn.
And like a thistle or a thorn;
A road so rough could we but know,
We'd rather sleep like Jim and Joe.

When life was new, you bet, gee whiz,
A fellow don't know what it is
To be an urchin fancy free,
Just like a billow on the sea,
To toss at will, until he's grown
And raisin' urchins of his own.
Then he turns back upon the scroll,
And sees the old time swimmin' hole,
Beside youth's river long ago,
And hears the waters singin' low.

Say, old fellows turning gray,
Go back there with me today
And take a plunge within the pool
You used to visit after school.
You with feeble steps and slow,
You with looks of grief and woe,
You with snowy flowing hair,
You with marks of grief and care,
Come and let us tell the end.
Golden Shore.

There are men in lofty places,
    Who will roll a cigarette,
One of Satan’s worst disgraces,
    Though the smoke is good and sweet:
And they get the yellow finger,
    With the nails just like a knave,
And they smoke and cough and linger,
    On the threshold of the grave.

But there’s been a change in smoking,
    Since the cigarette was made,
’Tis a thing too good for joking,
    For it’s made for mortal aid,
’Tis tobacco bright and golden,
    Which they pass from door to door;
Like the smokers had in olden
    Times, they call it “Golden Shore.”

I bought a pipe the other night,
    A fine Missouri cob,
I thought that I would take delight,
    In smoking at my job,
For tobacco to a poet,
    Is a tonic for his spleen,
And for half their thoughts, they owe it,
    To the taste of nicotine.
So I sat me down to smoking,
Blowing fancy rings and curls,
Laughing some and joking,
With the happy boys and girls;
And I blew my cares asunder,
Threw off oppression’s yoke,
For there’s truly works of wonder,
In the solace of a smoke.

Still over pipe a dreaming—
Call it pipe dream if you will—
But the happy thoughts come teeming,
Like the springs from out the hill,
’Till my head went out a whirling,
With a dim and distant roar,
And the smoke clouds kept a curling,
From my burning “Golden Shore.”

Then a very sad sensation,
Dawned upon me rather quick,
Holy smoke, and thunderation!
I had smoked ’til I was sick,
And I cast my pipe asunder,
From my open cottage door,
And today I sit and wonder,
What they put in “Golden Shore.”
Just Over the Way.

Just over the way is a sun ever gleaming,
    The road may look toilsome and weary today,
But it leads to that Eden of which we are dreaming,
    That rest for the weary just over the way.
Toiling and tears are not found on that Eden,
    Sickness and sorrow are ever suppressed;
The weak are made strong, the fatigued, heavy laden,
    Are freed of their burdens and bidden to rest.

Just over the way is a song that's worth singing,
    And each has a voice which is ever atune;
The joy bells forever and ever are ringing,
    To gladden the hills of eternity's June
No toil without recompense, nothing but pleasure,
    No weary form bended, no hair turning gray;
'Tis the fullness of love in a bountiful measure,
    Which gladdens the Eden just over the way.

Toil without murmuring, time will be healing,
    Life here is fleeting and brief at its best;
The veil will soon lift and be plainly revealing
    To us all the joys of the Eden of rest.
What if our flesh falls to sickness and sorrow,
    What if our feet go in weakness astray,
There's a hand which will guide us aright on the
    morrow,
To life's lasting fountain, just over the way.
Just over the way there's a hope ever springing,
   Eternal and green in the breast of us all;
There's a something unknown, but to which we are clinging,
   There's a star ever shining which marketh our fall.
Moment by moment we're nearing the landing,
   We're reaching the twilight, the close of the day;
We shall sleep, but awake, to find somebody standing,
   To welcome our coming, just over the way.

When You Are Near.

When you are near, my feet will never stray,
   For I'm content to love you day by day,
And only you, I need no other love,
   For thine is pure as heaven's blue above,
Just all day long, I labor and I know
   There waits for me a heart that loves me so,
To welcome my return with smile, caress,
   And all a woman's loving tenderness.
My heart grows light, the world has better cheer,
   And I am living in delight when you are near.

When you are near no other paradise
   Is half so sweet as gazing in your eyes.
The fairest world, the sweetest, mildest zone
   I see within your face, and in the loving tone
Of your sweet voice, I hear a siren song
Which makes my labor light, my heart grow strong.
The world seems brighter when I'm by your side,
I do not fear the storm, I breast the tide,
And clouded skies soon sparkle bright and clear,
And life is love when you are with me dear.

When you are near, I seek no mansion grand,
I crave no hoarded flocks, no broad expanse of land,
For just a modest cot in comfort all arrayed,
For just a pleasant spot in sunshine and in shade;
A climbing rose to round the cottage twine,
A bed of pinks, a honeysuckle vine,
A mountain peak, a singing sapphire sea,
And you, my dear, that's wealth enough for me;
A place to toil, then troubles disappear,
For labor's love when it's without a tear.

When you are near, I want to breathe my last,
And feel your fond caress e'er life is past,
For well I know a soothing, fond caress
From you, will make the pain of passing less.
Your gentle touch will take away the sting,
For you're the cross to which I'll ever cling;
But we must fall, some day will come the end,
When o'er the casket you, or I, shall bend;
If I'm within, weep not, and never fear,
For even dead I'll be content if you are near.
Old Fashioned Mother,

Old fashioned mother, I long for your smile,
   For I’m weary of fashion’s deceit;
Though your speech is not proper, your dress out of style,
   Your voice is more homelike and sweet,
There’s the goodness of God in your prayer and amen,
   There is love in your heart ever true.
I have searched amid fashion, ah, time and again,
   But I find there’s no other like you.

Old fashioned mother, I’m weary of toil,
   ’Midst the puppets of wealth and deceit,
And I long for the old fashioned wine and the oil,
   And the old fashioned cottage so neat;
And to sleep once again in the old fashioned room,
   Under the old fashioned spread,
Just back by the side of the old fashioned loom,
   With its warp of the old fashioned thread.

Old fashioned mother, the secret of life
   Is still in old fashioned advice,
There’s a cut to the edge of the old fashioned knife,
   There’s a freeze to the old fashioned ice;
There’s a warmth and a glow to the old fashioned hearth,
   There is peace in the old fashioned way,
Ah, you were a child of the old fashioned earth,
   And born on an old fashioned day.
Today, as I sit where the viands are spread,
   In the halls of the rich and the great.
And drink of the wine and eat of the bread,
   I long for the old fashioned plate.
When I go to the church where the new fangled hats,
   Hide the new fangled preacher and pew,
I think of the old fashioned bonnet and slats,
   Of the old fashioned church, and of you.

Just Over the Way.

Bearing the burdens of life, and its toiling,
   Weary of grief which we find every day;
Spoiling and building and building and spoiling,
   And hoping for rest, that’s just over the way.
Sorrow and laughter and singing and crying,
   Weary and worn from the burdens we bear;
Struggling and striving, falling and dying,
   Yet hoping for rest which is just over there.

Such is man’s life, such is its ending,
   Peace only comes with the pall and the shroud;
And the rainbow of hope so beautifully blending,
   Comes forth at last from the threatening cloud.
Earth has but toils, for so small is its pleasure,
   We scarcely can call it the sunlight of day;
And the grave is the gate to that garden of treasure,
   Which hope has located, just over the way.
Just over the way, there endeth our pining,
The sod and the dew maketh saints of us all,
Where the bright sun of hope on a valley is shining,
Where grief never lingers and tears never fall.
Grief and despair mark the road to that city,
Toiling and tears are the price which we pay,
Rest will come sure in the valley so pretty,
Where hope springs eternal, just over the way.

Across the Big Divide.
There's a home ranch which is waiting,
Just across the big divide,
And we'll all give in our rating,
When we're on the other side.
Our accounts are kept correctly,
And our deeds are itemized,
And we'll have to face the music,
For we cannot go disguised.

There's a justice court in session,
In eternity's big corral,
Where we'll all go to confession—
I am pretty sure we shall,
And we'll not hide any sinning,
In the corner of the fence
With a scalely hope of winning,
Heaven's peace on false pretense.