



ALBERT FENNER KERCHEVAL

Dolores; and Other Poems

POEMS, PROSE, DOCUMENTS, AND RECEPTION

EXTREMES AND MODERATIONS:
EARLY SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA POETRY

A TEXT-TECH PAPERS PROJECT

Extremes and Moderations

Early Southern California Poetry

Extremes and Moderations is a Text-Tech Papers project devoted to recovering poetry written, published, and circulated in Los Angeles and Southern California. Each volume brings neglected books and poems back into view through carefully prepared texts, archival images, biographical context, and a clear record of the surviving sources.

Edited by Brian Kim Stefans

The Text-Tech Papers | Los Angeles, 2026

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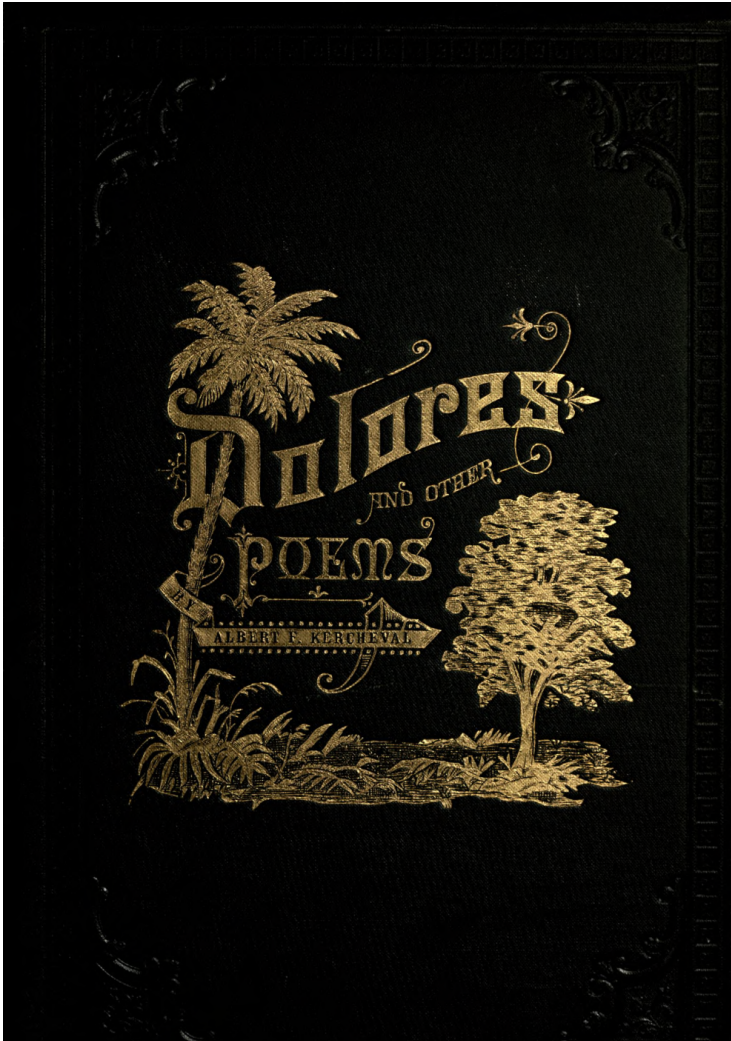
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ARCHIVAL IMAGES

A short visual record



The publisher's binding of Dolores; and Other Poems (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883).

INTRODUCTION

A poet of California settlement, spectacle, and memory

A California life

Albert Fenner Kercheval was born on March 16, 1829, in Preble County, Ohio. His family moved west to Will County, Illinois, and in 1849 he joined the overland migration from St. Joseph, Missouri, to California. The gold camps became one of his permanent imaginative territories: mining slang, camp names, comradeship, bravado, bereavement, and the memory of the Forty-Niners recur throughout his serious and comic verse.

Kercheval eventually settled in Los Angeles, where he became a farmer and horticulturist. He grew grapes and citrus, participated in the region's agricultural organizations, and wrote amid the transformation of Southern California from ranch and mission country into an increasingly urban, commercial landscape. In 1857 he married Sarah Adelaide Wilson. Their children included Rosalie, herself a poet whose work occupies a separate section of the original 1883 volume, as well as Leland and Venia.

His public life extended beyond farming and poetry. He represented Los Angeles's Third Ward on the Common Council in 1877–78 and served in horticultural work during the campaigns against destructive scale insects. His later prose account, *The Story of St. Vedalia*, documents the cooperative scientific and agricultural effort surrounding biological control; it should not be simplified into a claim that he alone introduced the insect. An official 1892 report identifies his Los Angeles orchard as an experimental site for imported predatory ladybirds and records the entomologists, commissioners, and growers who participated.

Poet of settlement, spectacle, and memory

Kercheval's poetry belongs to the civic and newspaper culture of nineteenth-century California. He wrote for commemorations, fairs, military reunions, political moments, deaths, public improvements, and local landscapes. The range is deliberately broad: long legends of mission and desert California stand beside hymns, elegies, satires, dialect monologues, topical verse, and poems about electricity, railroads, horticulture, and civic display.

The 1883 *Dolores; and Other Poems* presented this activity on an unusually large scale. Albert's portion runs from the preliminary Dedication through the serious and sentimental poems and the section labeled Roughness: Humorous and Semi-Humorous. A separately paginated authorial identity is not imposed on Rosalie Kercheval's poems: because the original volume names her and groups her work independently, her section is excluded from this edition of Albert's poetry.

The press notices printed in the 1883 book reveal the terms in which contemporaries received him: as a local or farmer-poet capable of sublimity, sweetness, patriotic force, humor, and vivid description. Such praise is also promotional evidence assembled by the author and publisher. The anonymous 1884 *Overland Monthly* review included here is more independent and discriminating: it praises his musical fluency, narrative command, and transformation of Southern California into poetic subject matter while arguing that the collection is overlong and uneven.

After the collected volume

The 1883 book neither contains every earlier poem nor marks the end of Kercheval's poetry. Horace Bell printed *The Padres of Old* in 1881, explicitly attributing it to Kercheval; it was omitted from *Dolores*. An agricultural-fair poem appeared in the Transactions of the Sixth District Agricultural Association in 1885. The *Los Angeles Herald* published *The Days of Forty-Nine* in 1890 and *Come Over, Dear Grover* in January 1893, days before Kercheval's death on January 24. These four located uncollected or later poems follow the 1883 collection.

A brief *Los Angeles Times* notice from January 1882—preserved in the editor's own Newspapers.com download—records Kercheval visiting

Riverside for poetic inspiration and returning with Washington navel oranges and Eureka lemons. The anecdote connects his horticultural practice directly to the landscape writing gathered in *Dolores* and is reproduced in the reception section.

Kercheval's verse contains period language, ethnic caricature, and racial slurs, especially in the comic section. They are retained because alteration would conceal the historical record and corrupt the source text. Their presence is not an editorial endorsement. Readers should understand them as part of the racial and political culture in which the poems circulated.

Editorial Note and Sources

This is a book-format reading edition of Albert Fenner Kercheval's complete portion of the 1883 volume, followed by four located uncollected or later poems, two prose writings, documentary context, the surviving Jim Blaine sheet-music plates, and contemporary reception. Poems retain their original order, stanza divisions, source italics, explanatory subtitles, authorial footnotes, and intentional verse-line indentation insofar as the witnesses permit. Continuations caused only by the original page width are reflowed without hanging indents. Each poem begins on a new page; the chapters of *Dolores* begin on new pages. Titles are regularized from display capitals, double hyphens become closed-up em dashes, and running furniture is omitted. Publication notes identify each textual witness; provenance notes appear only when they add source-specific information. The typography uses EB Garamond throughout; prose is fully justified and verse remains ragged right.

1. Albert F. Kercheval, *Dolores; and Other Poems* (San Francisco: A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), archive scan with OCR.
2. Corrected archive transcription, _albert kercheval FIXED.docx, checked against the 1883 scan and the Internet Archive / Library of Congress public-domain witnesses.
3. Horace Bell, *Reminiscences of a Ranger*; or, Early Times in Southern California (1881), pp. 125–126, original-page Internet Archive / UC Berkeley scan.
4. Transactions of the Sixth District Agricultural Association (1885), pp. 430–431.
5. *Los Angeles Herald*, April 22, 1890, p. 2, and January 15, 1893, p. 7, Library of Congress Chronicling America images and OCR.
6. Albert F. Kercheval, *The Story of St. Vedalia*, Historical Society of Southern California, vol. 1, no. 5 (1890), pp. 10–12, editor's JSTOR download.
7. *Garey's Tragedy Prune: A New Fruit of Wonderful Promise* (1890), including Kercheval's letter of June 30, 1890.
8. *Overland Monthly*, January 1884, pp. 110–111, anonymous review of *Dolores; and Other Poems*.
9. James J. Ayers, *Gold and Sunshine: Reminiscences of Early California* (1922), pp. 302–303.
10. *Los Angeles Times*, January 6, 1882, p. 3, editor's Newspapers.com download.
11. Alexander Craw, Report on the Condition of Parasitic and Predaceous Insects in California (1892), p. 13.
12. *Jim Blaine's Triumphal March-Song* (San Francisco: A. Waldteufel, ca. 1884), California Sheet Music Project, UC Berkeley Library.
13. *Southern California Horticulturist* archive issues containing A Poem, The Orange Tree, and Come Again, Gentle Rain; all three also appear in the 1883 collection.

14. *Los Angeles Herald* obituary, January 26, 1893, preserved in the archive's Albert Fenner Kercheval memorial PDF.

DEDICATION

To the Grand Army of California Pioneers

Dedication

Comrades, we have won the fight;
Lies the Promised Land before us!
Gently fall the shades of night,
Softly, slowly fades the light,
Starry glory gleaming o'er us.

It is well! O, Comrades, sleep—
Weary with the toilsome marching!
Whispering zephyrs sigh and creep
But a little, yet we keep
Still our way 'mid deserts parching.

Comrades, Brothers gone before,
Weary with life's mockery hollow,
Camping on the other shore,
Waked from slumber nevermore,
Sleep, O, sleep!—we soon shall follow!

Ye lie where the gleaming snows
Flash far in their chilly splendor;
Ye rest where the drooping rose
Bends low in its glory tender;
Ye sleep in the lonely lands
Where the mirages gleam and glitter
In the glare of the desert sands,
Where the alkali lakes are bitter—
In the gloom of the solemn hush
Where the canyon's dim shadows darkle;
In the track of the snow-slide's rush,
Where the treasure veins gleam and sparkle—
Ye lie as the harvest sheaves

O'er the field by the reaper gathered—
Thick, thick as the autumn leaves,
The breath of the frost hath withered—
Where the valleys spread far and wide,
By margin of brook and river;
By the murmurous ocean's tide
Ye slumber in peace forever!

Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), unnumbered preliminary pages.

SERIOUS AND SENTIMENTAL

The first division of Dolores; and Other Poems (1883)

Dolores

A Legend of the Mission San Gabriel

Ye who are tired of the world, weary of ways of cities,
Dizzy with Life's swift whirl, sweeping in mazy circle,
Sick at heart with the empty, frivolous freaks of Fashion,
Tired of gilded show, loathing Earth's vanities fleeting,
Leave for a while its cares, hollowness and heartburnings;
Know what it is to live free from frail folly's trammels;
Wander with me to the vale, softest of earth's and fairest,
Where restful Nature dreams, slumbers and smiles the sweetest:
Here in San Gabriel's vale, bitterness, strife, forgetting,
Look on a vision fair, bright as the dream of Eden;
Look on its trees of life, wisdom and strength, free-giving;
Pluck of the golden fruits, tempting and unforbidden;
Eat and ye shall not die;—fear not the curse primeval,
Here stands no angel dread, guarding the flowery portal,
Threatening with sword of flame, they that may long to enter.

This is the Mission gray, tottering with age and hoary;
Here cluster round its door, round its quaint altar mouldy,
Many a tale of the past, many a dim tradition;
Many a tender dream, many a memory holy—
All that to human heart is purified, high and sacred;
Still call its silvery bells, waking the slumbering echoes,
Telling the tale of Faith, childlike, trustful and simple,
Kept through dim Time's mutations, kept through a century's changes;
Here in its churchyard quaint, slumber a century's dreamers;
Dreamers of fond romance, dreamers of pride, ambition;
Dreamers of gorgeous dreams, blissful and ever-changing,
Even as ours to-day. Lo! from the memory fading,

As the deep sunset glows into the misty twilight,
Dreamless, oblivious, still, passionless dust and ashes.
Tenderly, softly step, here are the graves of sleepers
Long ago mourned and wept; long ago all forgotten—
Patriarchs of the past, matrons and youths and maidens,
Children that laughed in glee, infants that lisped and prattled,
Here in this quiet spot sleeping the last deep slumber.

Here are two crosses dim; these are the graves of lovers,
Constant to each through life; here, but in death united—
Noble and brave Gonzales; sorrowful, sweet *Dolores*.
Ye that may wonder here ever came sin and sorrow
Blasting the flowers of love, sweet in their spring-time blooming;
Ye that would fain forget earth and its fretful chafing,
Turn from life's cares a space; this is the story—listen:

Backward, O memory! turn over a century's pages;
Gaze on a virgin scene, dim through the mists and hazes;
Land of unclouded skies, kissed by the south sea zephyr,
As with a dreamy spell of magic the soul entrancing;
Breath of perpetual Spring, murmur of crystal fountains
Glory of myriad flowers, carpet-like, far, wide-spreading,
League upon league of splendor; year after year bright fleeting,
Lulling the soul to sleep with pastoral sounds inviting,
Vision by vision chased, dream after dream succeeding;
Peace with soft folded wings; Plenty dark Care far chasing;
Cattle-clothed all thy plains, steeds like hosts battle-marshaled;
Happy the countless herds; all thy sweet bowers and woodlands
Thrilled with the songster's notes, meadow-lark's and the linnet's,
Glad with their hymns of praise, the musical mock-bird's measure;
Gem of the queenly West, gleaming in golden setting,
Laved by the Occident seas, girt by the tall Sierras—
This was the picture framed—the Land of the early Missions.

Patriarchs watching their flocks, clouding their leagues wide-spreading;
Year after year waxing richer in herds and in blooming children.
Sweetly the Mission bells calling to prayer at vesper;
Happy the primitive life of the people trustful and simple,
Year after year going by, peace and contentment filling,
Watching their blooming bowers, orange and bending olive,
Bright-flushed pomegranate's glow, purple of trailing vineyards;

Life gliding by as a dream; somnolent at the noontide,
Quickened at morn and eve by the sweet dewy freshness;
Nought to disturb the dream, save when some daring trader
Braving the countless leagues and loneliness of boundless ocean,
Came with white wings outspread, like a sea bird's gleaming and flashing
Over the trackless waste, and folding his pinions weary,
Rested and rode in peace, in the slumbering bay of San Pedro;

Or when the heathen hordes, the treacherous tribes of the desert
Came from the lonely wastes, their unknown haunts far eastward,
Over the seas of sand, over the drear Mohave,
Over the deathly plains of desolate Amargosa,
Down through the lone Cajon, or slumber-rapt San Fernando,
Raiding the peaceful lands, despoiling the rich rancheros;
Coming with serpent-stealth, and passing away like the whirlwind,
Back to their gloomy dens in the desolate heart of the desert,
Bearing rich booty of steeds, maidens and children captive.
Here in the Mission shades, pure as the dew-drop sparkling,
Here lived and loved a maid, sorrowful, sweet *Dolores*,
Beautiful as a dream, fair as our mother primal,
Ere the false serpent came, ere to his tale she listened;
Blest by the young and old, blest by the holy padres,
Shedding on all her love, shedding o'er all a sunshine.
Hither from vales afar, many an ardent wooer,
Pleading his passion's suit, many a caballero
Came in hope's pomp and pride, boasting his birth and riches;
Whispered his tale of love, went on his way in sorrow;
One with a wrathful heart, full of revenge and anger,
Fierce as the grizzly roused, Lopez, of San Diego.
Only one gallant, bold, noblest of all, Gonzales,
Lord of a wide domain, bursting with generous fullness,
Spurring his glossy steed, gentle, yet proud and daring,
Came in the flush of hope, rode not away despairing;
Back to his countless herds clothing the plain in fatness,
Back to his sylvan home, the valley of San Fernando,
Bearing with him a heart true as the word eternal,
Taking with him a love priceless above all treasure;
So like a dream the days passed to the blissful lovers;
Over the flowery leagues spreading like gorgeous carpet,
Day after day like the wind came he with haste impatient.

Spurring his noble steed came he with ardent longing.

Chapter II

Sweet is thy wine, O love, to the lips that once have tasted!
Sad is thy heart, O dove, when Springtime's flush is wasted!
Sunshine and smile and May, how should we dream of sorrow!
Bluest of skies to day, darkest of storm to-morrow.
Spring in the sun-kissed land, fanned by the softest zephyrs;
Is o'er the flowery leagues, wheeling like war's battalions;
Stallions tossing their manes, marshaling sleek mañadas,
Proud as imperious sultans, jealously guarding their harems;
Picturesque, swift vaqueros, sweeping the plain like whirlwind,
Proud in their gay attire, silver-gilt all their trappings,
Saddles, and bridles, and spurs; gorgeous in calzoneros
Flashing with silvery gleams, shadowed by broad sombreros;
Hurling with circling sweep the coil of the deadly lasso.

Twilight and hush of eve! forth in the whispering shadow,
Under the sighing trees, wandered the blissful maiden,
Dreaming the old, sweet dream, dreamed through the countless ages;
Dreaming of naught but love, soon would her lover claim her,
Soon would to-morrow's sun look on two hearts united;
Blest be their happy love, by the priest at the holy altar.
Noiseless and swift, a form gliding from out the darkness
Sprang, as the panther springs, suddenly on his victim;
Seizing her trembling form, fierce in his cruel talons,
Stifled her cries for help, grasping her fair throat rudely;
Muffled her shrieks and moans in the folds of her own rebosa;
Fastened her slender wrists each to the other firmly—
So bore her swooning form forth to a steed in waiting,
Guarded by comrades twain, shrouded in gloom and shadow.
Swift on his steed he sprang, snatching her form unconscious,
Fierce from his henchmen's arms, bidding them quickly follow;
Madly the hoof-strokes rang out on the stilly darkness,
Slackening not their speed till wild San Gabriel's torrent,
Savage and boulder-strewn, muttered and moaned before them.
Hard by the canyon's mouth other fresh steeds awaited—
One for the captive maid, led by her cruel captors;
Then at a brief command, muttered and stern, by the leader,
Onward and upward they pressed, onward mid fear and danger.
On through the canyon's jaws, threatening with death and terror,

Riven in ages past in the throes of the earth's convulsions;
Breasting the torrent's wrath, over the treacherous bowlders,
Through the dark chaparral wastes, thorny and thick and cruel;
Up over dizzy steeps, scaling precipitous faces,
Pallid and white with awe, blanched as in fear forever;
On through the moaning pines, over the jagged ranges,
Till on the second day, weary and faint, exhausted,
Ceased they their fearful flight, resting where none might follow;
Hard by a limpid lake, deep in the wild desolation
Halted they in their ride, freeing their trembling captive,
Here mid the splintered peaks—the heart of Sierra Madre.

Quickly a couch they made under a pine-tree spreading,
Matted and thick with boughs fresh from the fir-tree taken,
Spreading o'er all with care, gorgeous and bright scrapes;
Soon brought they forth and spread store of provisions ample—
Wine of the Mission rare, wine in quaint leathern bottles;
Then to his comrades, low whispered their swarthy leader,
Waved them away with signs, with an impatient gesture;
Quickly they strode their steeds, taking their way in silence,
Over the crested range, vanishing dim as phantoms.
“*Mi Querida*,” then soft spoke the villain Lopez,
“Cease from your sighs and tears, smile on your own true lover;
This is our bridal bed; this is our bridal banquet.
What though no priest is nigh? all is the same to-morrow;
Then will we homeward ride, go to confession meekly,
Telling the oft told tale, asking the padre's blessing—
Presents to sleek fat priests, renders the Church compliant
So let us cat and drink making a merry bridal,
Night with her shadowy wings, soon o'er our couch will hover—
Sweet be your dreams of love, here in our bridal chamber.”

“Eat will I not, nor drink! why have you brought me hither?
Is it a lover's part thus to insult the helpless?
Take me back to my home, back to the holy Mission,
Back to my own true friends, they that will mourn and miss me;
So shall my heart forgive truly your sin and madness,
Praying that Christ himself, even may so forgive you!”
Saying, the maiden turned, soft with her eyes imploring,
Unto the villain's gaze, seeking remorse and pity.

Yet sought she vainly there, hoping at last contrition;
Fiercely and deep he drank, eagerly with the viands,
Like a long famished wolf sated his brutal hunger,
Making no more reply to the sad tearful maiden,
Prayerfully, trembling, upward lifting her eyes beseeching.

Night, with her crown of stars, came in her regal glory,
Slow climbed the moon the east, over the spectral ranges,
Gilding each lofty peak, gilding the heights supernal,
Everywhere seemed to reign stillness and awe eternal;
Never a night-bird's call, never an insect's quaver,
Silence like hush of death, solitude deep and utter,
Broken rudely at last by the treacherous wily villain:
"Yield to my fond desires, scornful and proud *Dolores*,
Twice have I humbly sued, twice have you spurned my offer;
Yet if you still refuse, who shall prevent my triumph?
Here rule I this lone realm, here am I lord and master;
Mine shall you only be, willingly or unwilling—
This my determined will, heaven nor hell shall frustrate;
Here are no eyes to see; here are no ears to listen;
Vain will your outcry be, vain all your weak resistance;
Far from all human aid, hope not my strength to baffle,
Spite of your puny will, mine shall you be forever!"

Swift as the lightning's flash fades from the dark horizon,
Fled from her cheeks the crimson, white was her face and pallid;
White as the seas with awe, when earthquake tremors trouble.
"Coward and wretch," she said, "tearing defenseless maidens
Thus from their homes at night; have you no feelings human?
Renegade from the Faith, mocking at all things holy,
Why do you treat me thus, why do you persecute me,
Knowing full well my heart long ago was another's?
Beasts of the field have hearts, lions and wolves have pity!
Yet if you have no heart, yet if you have no mercy,
Christ and the angels all, surely will not desert me—
Mary, mother of Christ, she will protect and shield me;
Yet will I with her aid, yield to your foul lust never!"

"Cease pretty fool this show; cease all this idle nonsense,
Mummery old and stale!" spake he in accents sneering.
"Call on your useless Saints, call on your Virgin Mary,

Powerless to help you now—mine shall you be, *caramba!*”
Saying, he seized her waist—delicate, lithe and slender—
As the fierce, cruel hawk seizes the ring-dove tender;
Yet slipped she from his grasp, forth into darkness fleeing,
Fleeing in wild despair, blindly, she knew not whither,
Through the dark chaparral line, into its refuge thorny;
Vain was her flight, his hands outstretching reached to grasp her,
Shrinking, she tripped and fell in the thick maze entangled;
Stumbling in headlong haste, fell her pursuer over—
Only an instant more felt she his arms embrace her;
Felt his hot fevered breath, hot as the breath of Satan,
Scorching her check and lips, scorching her throbbing bosom;
Then of a sudden heard crashing of thorn and jungle,
Heard a despairing shriek, struggle and roar appalling,
Crashing and combat fierce, crunching of bone and muscle;
Caught but an instant glimpse of a monster huge and grizzly
Holding in death’s embrace the form of the villain Lopez.
Groping, she blindly rose, dizzy her tottering senses,
Dragging her trembling limbs faint, from that scene of horror,
Listening for sounds of fear, steps of pursuit that came not;
Then in the cool night air, quickly her strength reviving,
Fled from that pall of death—the chaparral’s awful shadow—
Into the shimmering light, into the moonlit open;
Wildly in fear she fled, looking not round or backward,
Fleeing in desperate haste onward, she knew not whither.

On through the deep, lone night, through the thick, thorny jungle,
’Neath the tall sighing pines, ’neath the dark, shadowy cedars,
Startled by every sound, startled at every shadow,
Till at the break of day, torn by the thorns and bleeding,
Paused she in shrinking awe, on the brink of a mighty canyon.

Swift fled the shades of night, up rose the sun in splendor,
Flashing afar his beams, bathing the peaks in glory,
Lower and lower still, shadows of blue and purple,
Clothed the precipitous sides, fading in indistinctness,
Down into fathomless depths—the beds of the awful canyons,
Shrouded in fears unknown, vague and mysterious terrors;
Yet must she venture down into that gloomy terror;
Only might thus her path lead from those heights eternal,
Downward to home and friends, down to the smiling valley,
Nestling in dreamful bliss, quietness, peace and plenty.

Down sank her dizzy way, through the thick, thorny tangle,
Down over shelving steeps, splintered, shuddering, swooning,
Downward, mid trembling awe, sinking and ever sinking;
Danger and death behind, danger and death before her,
Till reached her fearful feet safety and rest at bottom;
Here mid the depths profound, loneliness and desolation,
Faint peeped the mid-day sun, peering with trembling glances,
Into that gloomy gorge, savage and wild Tehunga!

Chapter III

What of her lover true, waiting with heart impatient?
What of her anxious friends, waiting the dawn of morning;
Fearing, yet knowing not the mystery of her absence?
Still dreaming not of treachery, capture and abduction—
Who could harbor thought of hatred for sweet *Dolores*?
Vainly they searched the groves, vainly they searched the vineyard,
Every sequestered nook, every deep shadowy arbor—
Never a trace found they there of the missing maiden;
Then with an anxious heart, up spoke the good, old padre—
“This is some hellish plot—this is the work of Satan,
Let the blest holy bells call all the people hither,
That we may seek to question, that we may meet for counsel.”

Forth rang the silvery call over the vale far floating,
Far through the canyons deep, echoing, fainting, dying;
Over the mesas wide, dying away in cadence,
Faint in the trembling blue, soft as an angel’s whisper.

Swift from afar and near, gathered the bold rancheros;
Maidens timorous, shy; dark-eyed women and children;
Neophytes from the fields; hardy and bronzed vaqueros,
Lasso at saddle-bow, picturesque in their trappings,
Curbing their headlong steeds, sudden in swift careering,
Till within call of bell never a human tarried,
Hastened they every one; all at the church were gathered.
Question to one and all, answer of all unvaried;
Never the sligh[est] trace, no one had seen the maiden.
Then said the padre, gray: “Surely, our well-loved daughter,
Unto our sacred fold doubtless is lost forever,
Else if we make delay, else if we search not quickly,
Meanwhile His holy aid, constantly still imploring.”

Then at the altar, kneeling lowly, a prayer he offered,
Prayer to the Throne of Grace, craving a special blessing,
Prayer to the Holy Son, help at His hands beseeching,
Prayer to the Holy Virgin, help at her hands imploring;
Then when the prayer was o’er, blest and dismissed them, saying,
“Seek ye our white lamb lost, seek ye the gentle maiden.”

Over the plains outspread, galloped the swift vaqueros,

Darting away like bees seeking their nectar-treasure;
Everywhere, cast and south, sweeping the far horizon;
Everywhere to the west, down to the sighing ocean,
Searching with eagle glance, every lone nook and corner;
Pausing not in their search through the long sunshine dazzle,
Save for a moment's rest under some lone aliso,
Or where some glossy oak wide spread his cloak umbrageous.
Searched they the reedy marge of each lone, still laguna,
Where, as in awe and fear, quivered the tufted tule;
Everywhere to the north, through the tall giant mountains,
(1 as in war's array—footmen through all the canyons,
Sought with incessant zeal—never a trace discovered—
All coming back at last, weary and disappointed,
Save only one, Gonzales; he to the north and eastward,
Spurring with frenzied speed, came to San Gabriel's canyon;
Saw where the hoof-marks entered, plunged in its bed and followed;
Yet made but progress slow; lost was the trail, and often
Over the gravelly capes, mid the smooth slippery boulders
Paving the torrent's bed, chaparral thickets thorny;
Here found he proof at last, absolute and convincing,
She, that his true heart sought, still was before him, captive;
In a dark tangled maze, held by a manzanita,
Muttered a silken floss, frayed from her scarf of crimson,
One that himself had tied round her fair waist at parting.
So kept he on his way, longing with heart impatient;
So wound the canyon deep into the heart of the mountains,
Everywhere, right and left, gashed by the gloomy gorges,
Followed he on and on, up o'er the lofty ranges,
Reaching at last the camp of the treacherous villain Lopez;
Found not that fearful spot the scene of the deadly conflict—
Knew not the one he sought, wandered e'en then so near him;
Followed the trail fresh made by the villain's companions recent,
Eastward with tortuous way, winding mid awe and danger;
Followed impetuous on, seeking the maiden's traces,
Lost mid the mazes deep, of the savage and lonely mountains.

Down from that dizzy height, down from the eagle's eyrie;
Out on the plain at last, out on the drear Mohave;
Onward o'er lonely wastes, onward mid deathly silence;
Over the burning sands glaring eternal, eastward

Kept he his fearful way, mocked by the changeful mirage;
Rivers that flashed afar, lakes glancing soft, wide-spreading;
Cities that gleamed and blazed bright in their gorgeous splendor;
Forms that continued not, shifting and evanescent,
Evermore fleeing far, taunting as in derision;
Melting as melts the mist, fading as fades a vision;
So day and night he rode, so night and day he wandered
Over the death-hushed wastes, reached the lone ghostly mountains,
Blasted as by the breath blown from hell's inmost centre;
Dried were earth's shriveled veins, never a spring's glad, pulsing
Bubble of crystal brook, never a fountain's murmur
Gave to that desert life, hope to a bud or blossom.

Down dropped his noble steed, dying of thirst and hunger;
Pitiless glared the sun, pitiless glared the desert;
Fever and frenzy came, thirst with its fancies thronging,
Haunting like nightmare dream, only a quenchless longing,
Only a fierce desire, longing for water—water
Held all his senses thrall'd, everything else forgotten,
Till in a death-deep swoon, sank his dim reason's glimmer.

Consciousness faint at last, strength and returning reason;
What was this moving throng, whose were the forms surrounding.
Shadowy as a dream, quivered the past before him,—
Was all the past a dream, faded and gone forever?
Here were but faces strange, hideous, fierce and dusky—
Was he but one of these—child of the lonely desert,
Evermore doomed to change, evermore doomed to wander?
Still kept they on and on, evermore north and eastward,
Over the desert sands, over the alkali mirrors,
Scaling the mountain chains, threading the savage passes;
On past the Wahsatch range, looming mid desolation;
White as a sheeted ghost, bearing the snowy burden
Piled by the centuries' wrath high on his mighty shoulders.

Deep yawned a canyon's jaws, gloomy and black as Hades;
Into its depths they plunged, into that awful shadow
Never the sun's bright smile gladdening the summer solstice,
Quickening earth's sluggish veins, ever had kissed or lighted;
Evermore toward the east followed its labyrinth mazes,
League after league, its jaws threatening to close in meeting
Till from the sullen gloom, sudden to light emerging,
Broke on their dazzled sight, glory as of a vision.

Far to the right and left, grandly the walls receded,
Stretching their mighty lines, curving around unbroken,
Till in the front they met, closing the mighty circle.
Ringing with mighty awe, flashed the far walls in splendor,
Clothed in their snowy robes, white in their hush eternal.
Here like a golden-ringed emerald in its setting,
Slumbered a peaceful vale, bright as a fairy's dreaming;
Bordered with fringe of firs, fragrant with breath of balsam,
Waving their lances keen, dark in their glossy glory;
Whispering groups of pine dotting the sylvan valley,
Clustering closely, stood, as of some secret telling;
Gleaming like silver threads, rivulets danced and sparkled,
Kissed by the drooping flowers, kissed by the bending lilies,
Babbling perchance the tales mystery-locked for ages—
Stories of genii hordes, stories of treasures hidden,
Only their eyes had seen, deep in the mountain shadows;
Here in this sylvan spot, known to no human mortal,
Save but his savage friends, jealously guarding the secret
Kept immemorial locked, halted Gonzales' captors.
Here in the hidden vale, only at entrance guarded,
Heeding not much his ways, or of his going or coming,
Deep in the lonely lands, here set they free their captive.
Slowly the months passed by in their unending circle;
Slowly returning health came with its tide of vigor,
Thrilling his wasted frame, flushing his cheeks with color.
Gentle and sad his mien; dark-eyed and dusky maidens
Timidly sought his glance, tenderly looked upon him;
Trustful they were and kind, trusting him as a brother,
Cherishing shy, perchance, yet a more tender feeling.

Dreaming, forever dreaming, wandered he through the valley—
Memories of the past thronging his soul forever—

Dreams of San Gabriel's groves, vineyards and fields low lying
Nestled beneath the hills, kissed by the zephyr's sighing;
Dreams of the loved and lost;—was it, indeed, forever?
Wandering, pondering thus, idly and aimless straying
On through the hermit vale kept he. his way in sorrow;
On by the crystal stream, mirroring sky and mountain,
Flower, and cloud, and tree, or where the rock-rent canyon
Piercing the mountain walls, slept in its gloom of shadow.
Was this a dream as well—but a bright midnight vision
Fading before the dawn, fleeing as flees the shadow?
What is this in the sands, gleaming with yellow lustre
Vainly the crystal stream strives with its veil to cover?
Like some bright maiden's charms partly revealed, half-hidden.
Gold! the all-mystic charm, gold for the soul's perdition!
Gold for a miser's greed, gold for a world's swift purchase!
Gold for a kingly bribe, gold for an empire's ransom!
Glittering, gleaming, bright—beckoning, taunting, mocking!

What are these rays of light flashing amid the pebbles;
Scintillant, sparkling, pure, bright as the eyes of fairies,
Everywhere 'neath the feet blazing, incessant gleaming;
Thickly sown as stars over the vault of heaven?
Diamonds! a treasure each priceless, a queen might envy;
Gems for ten thousand crowns—blazing, unset, unheeded;
Flashing back ray to ray, flaming, unseen, ungathered;
Fit for a Nourmahal's glittering, gem-decked bridal.
Paven with gold and gems, every clear, crystal streamlet,
Over its gleaming way, down to the vale came glancing;
Here was great Nature's vault, guarded by barriers mighty;
Stored with a treasure vaster far than the world had gathered,
Since from Time's earliest dawn, souls for its blaze were bartered

Chapter IV

Turn we to other scenes; back to the lonely maiden
Lost in the gloomy depths of savage and wild Tehunga
Downward as if in fear, thundered the rushing torrent;
Leaping from rocky heights, plunging to danger headlong;
Shrieking as one that flees, white-lipped in awe and fearing,
Swift from a fell pursuit, frenzied with mortal terror.
Skirting the torrent's bed, downward in fear incessant,
Flanking the rocky falls, clinging to dizzy faces;
Halting and baffled oft, often her steps retracing;
Valleyward, westward still, struggled the weary maiden,
Till when the night-shades fell, hiding in utter darkness
Danger and hope alike, torrent, and fall and canyon,
Sank she beside a rock weary with toil, yet thankful,
Breathing a trustful prayer, heavenly aid imploring;
I Tearing but sounds of night, zephyrs around her sighing,
Call of the lonely owl, solemn and ghostly hooting;
Or of the far away scream of the prowling puma,
Or the coyote's cry, weird as a spirit's wailing;
So sank she to her sleep; trustful, and deep, and dreamless,
Till the soft grey-eyed morn woke her, refreshed from slumber.
So passed another day wearily, and another,
But when the sunset rays, flooded the west with glory,
Safely her feet emerged, forth from that fearful shadow
Into the welcome plain the valley of San Fernando.
After a truant herd, thundered a bold vaquero
Launching his willing steed swiftly as flies the arrow,
After the wayward band tossing their manes in scorning;
Instant he saw and knew, greeting the long-lost maiden,
Reined his impetuous steed sudden in swift careering;
Gallantly stooping down, lifted her form before him,
Bearing his precious charge tenderly to the Mission,
Watching the peaceful vale, olive-crowned San Fernando.
But when the morning came, led by the padres holy,
Forth from its guarded gate issued a glad procession,
Bearing their precious charge back to her home triumphant.

Joy in San Gabriel's fold! Joy in the holy precincts!
Joyfully the silvery bells, called to the sleeping echoes,
Telling to earth and sky, the story of tender gladness—
"Joy for the gentle lamb, lost and again recovered,
She that was lost is found, safe to the blest fold gathered!"

Yet mingled grief's alloy with their fond, sweet rejoicing;
Where was her lover true, where was the brave Gonzales?
Many had seen him go, none knew of his returning.
Saddles, and boots and spurs, quickly a party mounted,
Followed his fearful trail up mid the slippery bowlders;
Through the dark chaparral, through the deep, rock-ribbed canyons,
Under the splintered peaks, over the lofty ranges;
Followed him down and on, followed far to the eastward,
Till mid the drifting dunes, vanished his traces wholly,
Faded his footsteps faint, lost in the wastes of danger
Where spread the desert sands over the dim Mohave.
So came they back at last, weary and heavy-hearted—
Bringing their tale of woe, "He that we sought has perished."
Tremble of sighs on lips; quiver of drooping lashes,
Weary and long the days passed at the prayerful Mission;
Tearful and sleepless nights; aching of hearts despairing;
Sadness and gloom o'er all weighed like a nightmare brooding,
As with the maiden's smiles, sunshine and light departed.
Slow passed the Spring's sweet days, drearily at the Mission;
Slow dragged the heavy months; wearily sighed *Dolores*;
What though gay suitors thronged eager to win her favor?
He that her fond heart craved, came not to chase her sorrow;
Smiled she again on none; only she wept and waited,
Ever when day was done, moaning like dove unmated;
So passed the Summer days, so bloomed the flowers and faded.
Autumn with mystic haze, veiling with trembling shimmer
Mountain and vale and plain, came with her crowning glory,
Gorgeous as fairy dream, haunting like youth's bright halo—
Came with her vines low-bending under their purple burdens,
Bearing in generous arms plenty and sweet fruition—
Lingered as loth to go, passed as a gorgeous vision.

Only the one her heart longed for incessant, came not;
Came not when gentle clouds over the earth's parched bosom,
Bending in sadness low, wept their soft tears of pity;

Not when o'er all the land, myriad germs unnumbered
Sprang into quickened life, thrusting their tiny lances
Thick through the drouth-seared mould, carpeting all the landscape
Softly with fabric fine, fresh from the loom of Nature—
Carpet of cloth-of-gold, flame-hearted, golden poppies
Hiding the sloping lawns, oceanward, westward stretching;
Then came the long bright days, buoyant with hopeful promise,
Strong in their life-throbs swift, sweet in their thrill of gladness;
Spring, with her wealth of flowers, bowers and birds, and sunshine.

Hope in all happy hearts—all save the lonely maiden's—
Ever when fell the eve's deepening, lengthening shadows
Over the peaceful vale, over the sleeping meadows,
Wandering forth, she strayed in the dear paths familiar,
Dreaming the old sweet dreams, over again and over,
Living again the past, humming some sweet, sad ditty.
“He will not come,” she said, “never again, O never!
When the soft shades at eve, tremble and dance and quiver;
Nevermore when the dews, under the stars are falling;
Nevermore when the dove unto her mate is calling;
Not when the sunset sleeps, rocked on the swaying billow;
Not when the moonbeam creeps, soft through the sighing willow;
Parted, we meet no more, under the starlight quiver;
Severed, to meet on earth, never again, O, never! “
Even while on her lips trembled the sweet, sad cadence,
Thrilling the listening air, forth sprang her long-lost lover;
Clasping her swooning form close to his heart swift throbbing;
Holding her long and fast, tenderly, unresisting,
Leaning upon his breast like some fair lily drooping,
Till from her sense obscured back rolled the mists enthralling,
As from the landscape's face, lifts the dark mist at sunrise.

Mutual story told; mutual explanation.
Told she, her thrilling tale; told she about her capture;
Miracle-like escape from the dark villain Lopez;
Wandering and return safe to the holy Mission.

He, of his fruitless search, through the lone, savage mountains,
Over the desert sands, pitiless, hot and glaring,
Maddened by heat and thirst, lost mid the wastes of danger,
Found by a wandering band, back to their haunts returning;
Of the deep hidden vale—store-house of Nature's treasure.
Seen by no mortal eyes; never by footsteps trodden,
Save but his own, and those of his late savage captors;
Told of its treasures vast, never might be computed;
Never Aladdin's cave glowed with such gorgeous splendor;
Everywhere gleam of gold, glitter and blaze of diamonds!

What was this gleaming gold, what were these countless riches,
Unto the lonely heart longing for other treasure?—
Dross as the rayless lead is to the pearl's soft lustre;
Mockery of the heart, weary with long, long waiting.
What were these blazing gems, flashing and iridescent?—
Only a mirage gleam- mocking the heart's fierce longing.
Longing escape return these were the day-dreams haunting
Ever his longing soul, ever his weary vigil;
Till through the shades, one night, fleeing, the lonely captive
Baffled the sentries guard, keeping the entrance narrow;
Treaded the gloomy gorge, gaining the awful desert.
Day after day he kept wearily onward, westward;
On through the savage lands, week after week he wandered,
Still by the star of Hope, evermore cheered and guided;
On through the desert's glare, on through the blasted ranges,
Till from a lofty crest, looking afar to westward
'Neath the dim trembling haze, shimmered the slumbering ocean
Downward, and down, and down! what is it greets his vision?
Glint of the sun-kissed vale, glimpses of grove and vineyard;
Homesteads nestling low beneath shelter of oaks umbrageous,
And like a star's soft light, beckoned the holy Mission.

Listen! what music sweet floats on the hushed air's stillness?
I't comes the sound of bells up from the shadowy Mission,
Telling of prayer and faith; calling to evening vesper;
Bidding the faithful, come haste to the altar holy;
Then a sad, plaintive song, as of a dove complaining,
Torn from her loving mate in the sweet Springtime's promise,
Floats on the twilight hush and—the now blushing maiden
Knows all the rest and weeps, happy and blest and thankful.

So mid the night's soft hush, loitered they slowly homeward,
Under the quiet stars, blazing with tender lustre,
'Neath the soft silvery moon smiling as in approval;
Dew-drops on leaf and flower, sparkled and flashed like diamonds,
Pendulous from the ears of some rapt, dreamy beauty;
Everywhere peace and love, tenderness, hush and quiet,
Everywhere blest repose, infinite rest and glory.
Soft came the trembling morn, sweet in its dewy freshness,
Joyfully pealed the bells telling their tale of gladness—
Bidding the people come, come to the grand fiesta;
Hasted the young and old, swift at the silvery summons;
Hastened to welcome home, him they had mourned as buried—
As a lost sheep long missed, back to the fold returning;
Revel and feast and prayer, feast and prayer and revel!
Three thankful days and nights, kept they the grand fiesta,
Heedless of toil or care, and at the close, the padre
Softly proclaimed the bans of the long-faithful lovers,
Blessing their holy love, blest and dismissed the people;
All to their happy homes, quickly in peace returning.
Only a flowery month, rose-tinted, intervening,
Ere the two trustful hearts, longing, should be united
Sealed in their holy love, sealed by the Church's blessing.

Chapter V

Morn in the beautiful vale; glitter and glow of dew-drop;
Flashing of wings mid bowers; mocking-bird's trill ecstatic;
Fragrance of orange blooms borne on the loitering zephyr;
Herds spreading far and wide, cropping the dewy grasses,
Clouding afar the plains, sleek in their wanton fatness;
Gleaming of silvery founts; mountains in sky uplifting,
Clothed in their strength eternal, rapt in their purple glory—
Rainbow of hope o'er all; friends round the altar gathered
Parents, and priest, and guests—why linger bride and bridegroom?

Forth at the early dawn joyously they had ridden,
Mounted on glossy steeds, out o'er the flowery vista,
Fleet as the soft west-wind over the mesa speeding,
Little of time or space, little of danger heeding,
On toward the mountain-walled valley of San Fernando;
Through the low-nestling hills, through the thick-serried cactus
Marshaled like battle-ranks bristling with pikes repellent,
When from their covert dark, hurtled a hail of arrows,
Thick as the icy spheres vengefully by Boreas
Hurled in his spiteful wrath, down on the smiling landscape;
Up rose a hundred hideous, painted and savage demons,
Piercing with many a shaft deeply the helpless lover,
Then like the wind away, taking the maiden captive.
Hour after hour went by, slow, at the waiting Mission;
Wondering, watched the throng waiting the lovers coming;
Solemnly to and fro, paced the grave, patient padre;
Why lingered thus the pair—naught could have surely happened?

Jangle and clang of spurs, steed flecked with foam and quivering;
Rider afaint and pale; dappled with blood his clothing;
Piercing himself and steed, the shaft of many an arrow,
Shot from the vengeful bows of the treacherous red marauders,
Hither on spoil intent, coming from out the desert.
Quickly he told the tale—robbery, lust and murder—
Told of a heathen horde raiding the lonely ranches,
Wreaking their savage hate on the valley of San Fernando.
Instant a dozen men sprang to their saddles, quickly
Dashed o'er the flowery plain, came to the scene of outrage;
Found but Gonzales there, senseless and almost lifeless;

Never a trace of her, torn from her wounded lover;
Meanwhile her captors passed swiftly away like a whirlwind,
Bearing away their spoil—booty from raided ranchos,
Through the dark, frowning pass, over the tall Sierras,
O'er the dread danger-trails, dared not a soul to follow;
Bearing from hope and love, swift, the despairing maiden,
Lashed to a frantic steed, helpless, bound, and a captive.

Out thro' the frowning pass, out through the black-lipped canyon,
Over the wastes of sand, glowing with furnace fierceness—
Ghost-like, watching the way, the hosts of the spiny cactus.
Wearily pressing still onward and eastward ever,
Over the alkali beds, level and smooth as mirrors,
Flashing with gleam afar, white with their efflorescence;
Skirting the lifeless lakes, poisonous, deadly, bitter,
Where the gray ashen wastes, dimly gleaming and ghastly,
Over dead Nature's face spread like a pall forever;
Holding their homeward way over precipitous ranges,
Black with volcanic wrath, strewn with the wreck of upheaval,
Belched from earth's bowels deep, in tremulous throes of the ages;
So after days of thirst, weary and worn with travel.
Came they at last to halt—their lair by a rushing river,
Shaded by cottonwood trees, fringed by the drooping willow.
While as in fear, hard by whispered the trembling aspen;
Here on the farther side, deep in the wild desolation,
Deep in the arid lands, savage and wild, forbidding,
Guarded by deserts vast, mountains and mighty canyons,
Never a foe might dare, rose the rude circle of lodges;
Here was their journey's end—the heart of the Navajo nation.

Night, and a captive lone, bound to a sighing aspen;
Far from San Gabriel's vale, soft in its beauty sleeping;
Far from its holy spell, tenderness, love and pity;
Here were but death and hate, savageness all pervading.
Only the stars looked down, merciful as imploring,
Pleadingly, tremblingly, sad, far through the measureless spaces,
Camp-fires casting their gleam, lighting the shadows weirdly;
Warriors savage and wild, gathered around in council,
Parting of captured spoils—booty of goods and horses;
Share and division fair, equal, exact, impartial,
Till not a thing remained—naught but the captive maiden;

Then broke the storm's pent wrath, outbursts of demon passions,
Tumult as waves in strife, voices in high contention.
Hellish and lustful looks, gestures jeering and threatening
Bade her for worst prepare; outrage or death to-morrow.

Chapter VI

One by one, weary at last, slumbered and slept her captors;
Flickered the fitful camp-fire, faded the dying embers;
Stillness and hush profound, save the low fretful murmur,
Like some pent soul's complaining of the dark river chafing;
Or the long boding wail of the prowling, unseen coyote.
Slow passed the hours away; morn with her flush of crimson
Tinted the trembling East faint with a tender glory.
Softly a shadow stole forth from the lodges circle
Lightly amid the sleepers, shadow-like, noiseless glided,
Then a dark maiden tall, stood by the side of tile captive;
Placing her finger-tips on her dusky lips in warning,
Severed the cruel bonds that held her in durance chafing,
Motioned toward the stream, murmured a word of parting,
Shrank in the trembling gloom and vanished away like a phantom.

Quick to the river's brink noiselessly hurried the captive;
There a frail, light canoe quivered and danced on the current,
Seeming to chafe as a steed, curbed for the race impatient;
In it was store of food, weapons of war and hunting,
Blankets of costly worth,—gorgeous and bright scrapes
Woven with dexterous skill by fingers of Navajo maidens;
But a brief moment more, downward to unknown dangers
Boatman and boat were swept by the turbulent Colorado,
Yet not a moment too soon; shrill on the bank rose the war-whoops,
Hurtled the arrowy hail, cleaving the water around her—
Then of a sudden, rush and roar, as of seas contending;
Cliff leaning o'er to cliff, raging of floods imprisoned,
: -r and death behind, while the ravenous deep-jawed canyon
Yawned like the gates of hell, threatening and dark before her.
On through the seething foam onward with arrowy swiftmess,
Guiding her lightning course with watchful swift-plying paddle,
Grazing the jagged rocks, whirling in dizzy whirlpools,
Swept her frail, fragile bark, tossed about like a feather,
Guarded as by a charm from imminent, swift destruction.

Hour on hour passed by, league after league flew madly;
Still the black sullen jaws, evermore grim and threatening
Never a line relaxed, seemed to compress more tightly;
But as the night shades fell, sudden from gloom emerging
Widened the gloomy rift, slept the wild, maddened waters
Calm as a tired pulse after the fitful fever.
Over the trembling flood, cottonwoods waved and quivered,
Whispered and murmured low, as of some secret fearful;
Telling perchance their tale of hopeless ages imprisoned—
Buried forevermore in that adamant heart of marble.

Loneliness! not a sound of life woke the awful stillness;
Never a robin's chirp, never a squirrel's chatter,
Never an insect's hum faint, or cicada's quaver—
Here in her chamber dwelt Solitude, deep and utter!
Here was no danger of beast, reptile, or savage human;
Only a loneliness vast, voiceless, void, eternal.
So lay she 'neath the trees, pondered, and thought of the morrow,
So wearied, faint, she dreamed, slumbered and slept till morning.
Walls without slope or break, perpendicular, springing
Skyward through half a league, dizzied the vision gazing;
Walls that the eagle's wing only might scale defiant;
Battlements chafing the dome of heaven's blue arch faint-gleaming;
Only a single way out of that awful prison;
Only a hope forlorn glimmered and sank before her;
On through the jaws of death, through that dread tomb of marble;
Trust in her frail canoe, trust in a Saviour's mercy;
Prayer to the throne of Grace, prayer to the Virgin Mary,
Still her all-helpful love, still her blest aid invoking—
Then with a strength renewed, faith in her holy pleading,
Launched she her bark once more, drifting to unknown dangers.

Southward the torrent plunged, white-lipped in terror, fleeing
Down through the awful gorge, shrieking like ghost despairing.
Ever the marble walls, dizzy with dread down-looking,
Seemed as in trembling swoon, ready to fall upon her,
Ever the raging floods, mad with their cramped confining,
Torn by the ragged rocks, threatened of swift destruction.
All day long, till the sunset lit the far heights with glory,
Death like a bloodhound fell, tracked her with haunting terror;
Then at last issuing forth, pale from that tomb of marble,

Out of the jaws of death, weary, and faint, and thankful,
Softly she drifted free, on a peaceful and placid current;
A hundred terrible leagues between herself and her captors.

Chapter VII

Far spread the savage lands, desolate and forbidding,
Glaring with fevered gaze, fierce with a thirst eternal,
Scared in the ages past by a passionate wrath almighty.
Only the cactus dared, raising his palms defiant,
Guarding his succulent fruit, mail-clad with spikes repellant;
Only the scorpion braved, with fiery dart envenomed,
Kept with the rattlesnake watch over that deathly loneliness.
So on the widened flood, rapid, and safe, and peaceful,
Drifted the maiden lone, day after day, till a vision
Gladdened her longing eyes; floated the Spanish standard
Lazily in the breeze, over a near encampment;
Saddled and bridled steeds; cattle, and rude carretas
Tired with rawhide bands, laden with household treasures;
Soldiers and bearded men, weary women and children,
Bearing the sacred Cross, led by their warrior padre,
Bound for the heathen lands—emigrants from Sonora.
Here crossed the lonely trail, piercing the heart of the desert
Wastes, whence the seas had fled, ages long past, in terror.

Welcome and aid they gave, then on their westward journey,
Wearily o'er the sands, glaring with furnace-fervor,
Kept they their martyr-way, till on the faint horizon,
Seen through the shimmering haze, vaguely, like looming giants
Guarding Gorgonio's gate, rose the twin sentries, grimly
Gazing through space afar, hoary with watch of ages,
San Bernardino tall, and dream-nodding San Jacinto;
Looking down upon death—death without resurrection,
Over the hopeless wastes, dim to the eastward spreading;
Looking down upon life, life blooming, bright, eternal—
Mesas and vales, unrolled, pastures and flowery vistas,
Westward stretching afar to the strand of the limitless ocean.
Fanned by the spicy breath of the queenly Orient islands,
Blown over tropic seas, from the uttermost east's dim chambers.

So through the pleasant lands, over soft flowery carpets,
Wandered their weary feet, till 'neath her oaks, far-spreading,
Saw they San Gabriel's vale, peaceful, in hush reclining
Soft at the restful feet of the Sierra Madre,
Gazing as mother rapt, down on her slumbering infant—
Heard the sweet Mission bells calling to holy vesper,
Bidding surcease from care, hearts chasing earth's vain shadows—
Bidding them heavenward turn, unto the Rock Eternal.

Joy in the fold once more, yet mingled deep with sadness;
Joy for the lost, returned; sorrow o'er hope deputing—
Over a soul long held faint in life's trembling balance—
Waiting as loth to go; held by some mystic thralling—
Over a spirit loved, stricken to death with arrows,
Sudden, ere noon of life—knightly and true Gonzales.
Parted and sundered oft, yet once again united,
Long in love's tender clasp, lingered their hands fate-severed,
Clung the fond loving lips, laden with garnered kisses;
Through the hushed awe of eve, into the deepening twilight,
Through the dim midnight watch, till the soft blush of morning
Tinted the mountain* chain guarding the slumbering valley,
Then mid the tender glow, soft came love's dream-rapt ending;
Faintly life's ebbing tide throbbed in his veins, retreating
Back to the silent sea veiled in death's mystic shadow;
Ebbing and ebbing still, fainter, and faint, and fainter,
Drifting and drifting out, till the last feeble flutter
Ceased, and a holy calm slept on his face forever.
Thenceforth a tender hush, as when the sunset, dying,
Halos the hill-tops soft, chastened her gentle spirit;
Evermore in her eyes lingered a quiet shadow,
Like the soft fleecy clouds in the clear stream reflected;
Ever to charity's needs all her sweet life devoting,
Watching beside the sick, helping the poor and needy,
With her blest words of hope cheering the sore afflicted;
Placid forevermore, gentle and uncomplaining,
Drooping and drooping still, fading and fading ever,
Like the sweet fragrant rose, after the short, bright summer;
And when again came Spring strewing her flowery garlands
Over the valley soft, over the hills and mesas,
Passed she from earthly gloom, into the light unending—

Passed like a dream away, into the day Eternal.

Change of the changeful years! change on all things is written!
Mould of the misty past, dust of a century gathered,
Clings to the crumbling walls, round the quaint altar hoary.
Here let us linger not where the sad memories darkle—
Onward mid fragrant bowers, groves ever green and glossy,
Upward o'er sunny slopes bathed in a purple glory,
Wander we to the feet of the grand Mother Mountains;
Here sit we down and gaze on a glorified panorama,
Such as hath earth not elsewhere vouchsafed to human vision,
Here let us gaze entranced; here let us pause and listen.
Here, far beneath us, lie groves might the fairies envy,
Called into being swift as by enchanter's magic;
Homesteads nestling low, mid their green and gold half hidden,
Smiling from out their wreaths of evergreens bright and fadeless,
Flower-crowned all the years, fragrant with breath of roses,
Everywhere, right and left, spreading beyond the vision;
Songs of the happy birds; songs of the happy children;
Lullaby's low and sweet, chanted by happy mothers
Lulling their weary babes, soft, on their gentle bosoms;
Labor's faint busy hum, drifting up from the vineyards;
These are the sights and sounds ever the soul entrancing—
This is the spot of all earth's fondest dreams of Eden,
Best by the fairies loved, still by the fairies haunted.

Other fond lovers sigh, where sighed the faithful lovers,
Whisper their tales of love, where the sweet tales were whispered
By the fond lips long cold, mouldering in dust and ashes;
Strangers, "and stranger feet wander where once they wandered;
Round their forgotten graves, surges the human eddy;
Rushes the tide of life swift o'er the iron highway;
Still o'er the scenes they loved lingers a dreamy glamour;
And the tried, trustful hearts, faithful through joy and sorrow,
Side by side rest in peace; slumber, and know no waking.

Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. 15.

Day

Through the hushed air, a thousand tender shivers,
All tremulous with expectation play;
Lo! how the curtain of the faint east quivers
Before the trembling fingers of the day.

The crimson face of wakened nature flushes,
Released from Night's embracing, viewless fears.
And like a risen bride suffused with blushes,
The rosy Day, in glory robed, appears.

Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. 40.

Hesperia

A Winter-Day Idyl of Los Angeles Valley

In restful, tender, rapt repose,
Sweet Nature, softly dreaming, lies;
Afar, the slumbering Ocean glows,
Above, the snowy heights disclose
Their glittering banners in the skies.
Soft at their everlasting feet,
In green and gold with incense sweet,
Queen of the bright Hesperian lands;
In royal splendor lovelier far
Than man's vain glittering pageants are,
The gracious Orange proudly stands.

How grandly lift the walls of gray
To guard the dreamy, sighing Vale!
On shadowy pinions, far away,
The vulture circles o'er his prey,
Where clings the dizzy mountain trail.
Hew soft the purple shadows sleep
On every cloud-kissed solemn steep!
Sweet fairy Vale! O, not more dear
To tender thought and lover's dream,
To muse's song and poet's theme,
The dreamy vale of sweet Cachmere!

Thy gaze o'ersweeps the western wave,
Where white wings cleave their trackless way;
And softly come thy feet to lave,
The crystal tides from far Cathay.
O, scarce might Adam's soul regret,
Had here his feet a refuge found!
And here might sighing Eve forget,
Again with silken fetters bound.

Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. 41.

Reveries at Eve

Once more on youth's fond scenes, I dream, I soar on fancy's wing,
And hear as in the days gone by, the clear, sweet voices ring;
I sit beside the old, old hearth, and hear the crickets sing.

A picture bright of vanished years dawns on my yearning sight;
A vision of the past appears; a fireside warm and bright;
A happy circle gathered round upon a winter's night

The merry sleighride-song we sang, floats back like mystic rune;
I hear the chime of voices ring in silvery sweet attune;
The dreamy jangle of the bells, beneath the midnight moon.

I sit within the furnace glow in March's thaw and damp,
And hear the tread of youthful feet that come with eager tramp,
To take the stores of nectar sweet within the maple camp.

I see the buds from thralldom burst, as in the smile of God,
And modest daisies lift their eyes above the emerald sod,
And in the balmy breath of Spring, the dreamy bluebells nod.

I see the waving meadows toss like billows on the seas,
When playful zephyrs sweep across; I hear the song of bees
Float dreamily above the moss, beneath the linden trees.

Sweet insect songs! I hear them all, in wood, on plain and hill,
And when the night shades softly fall, and all around is still,
Like some lost spirit's, comes the call of lonely whip-poor-will.

The drowsy tinkle of the bells comes through the evening gloam,
Of tardy cows from meadow sweet within a western home;
O, music sweet, ere wayward feet have learned afar to roam!

I see amid the thick'ning gloom the firefly's fitful gleam,
And feel the solemn hush that falls o'er field and wood and stream;
I hear the katydid's weird call—is it a fading dream?
I see the fields of golden grain, beneath the shimmering blaze,
And hear the reaper's glad refrain of long, sweet harvest days,
Faint floating far o'er hill and plain, a hymn of thankful praise.

I hear the pheasant's drum afar; the whistling of the quail;
I see the withered leaves drift by upon the autumn gale,
And softly trembling over all, the Indian-summer's veil.

All sudden as the lightning's leap, the visions bright forsake,
As imaged forms, when clouds o'ersweep the mirror of the lake;
The bugle of the Present calls—I startle and awake.

O, sweet delirious dreams of youth! O, days forever fled!
But tearfully I backward gaze with bowed and weary head;
I call, and only hear, alas! the echoes of the dead.

Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. 42.

Sutter's Fort

What dazzling dreams and memories 'round thee throng!
What glories o'er thy walls of crumbling clay!
Dim, fading landmark—deathless theme of song!
Soon shall thy crumbling bastions pass away.
Thy doom is written. Ruin and decay
Have stamped thee with their melancholy sign;
I see thee still, as on that autumn day
We came like pilgrims to thy holy shrine,
O, sacred relic of the days of "Forty-Nine!"

I look upon thy wasted, ruined walls;
I look far back upon the faded years;
And thy deep, mournful spirit to me calls,
Like some sad mourner through her blinding tears.
The buried past, with all its hopes and fears,
Rises all spectral on my soul's dim sight,
Like the vague, beck'ning phantom that appears
In the dim watches of the lonely night,
When disembodied, weary souls take flight.
How changed is all! What magic wand has swept
Across the scene? How changed sweet Nature's face!
Time, with his slimy track, o'er all has crept;
The great sun, in his ever-tireless race—
The bright stars, wheeling still through boundless space,
Unchangeable alone, still look on thee!
We live and die, and leave no more a trace
Than the swift vessel on the shimmering sea,
O, boundless, soundless, waveless, vague Eternity!

Upon thy wasted face the grand Sierra
Still gazes downward through the summer skies,
As when I first beheld, a wanderer weary,
On the low plain, thy outline dimly rise.
And memory, smiling through her tears and sighs,
Recalls the past the camp, the whisp ring pine,
The weary toil, the long-sought, golden prize,
"Wrung from the rock-barred, giant-guarded mine—
O, gilded, glittering, glorious "Forty-Nine!"

Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. 43.

Evanescence

Life is but a changeful dream,
Evanescent as the gleam
Of the lightning's dazzling flash,
As the bright Aurora's beam;

As the trembling zephyrs sigh,
As the crimson flames that dye
With their more than Tyrian glow,
Deep, the western sunset sky;

As the rainbow's gorgeous hue,
As the glitter of the dew,
Leaving not a trace behind
Neath the summer skies of blue;

As the fearful, trembling fawn
Listening at the hush of dawn
Startling, fleeing in affright,
Disappearing, seen and gone.

Changeful as a midnight dream,
As the desert's mirage gleam,
As the mist by morn dispelled,
Swallowed in the grand supreme.

Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. 44.

A Midsummer Night's Dream

The dew is on the grass,
And the moonbeam on the billows;
And the zephyrs sigh and pass,
And the night winds shake the willows;
And the lilies sigh and nod,
In the murmur of the fountain,
And a glory, as of God,
Halos plain, and hill, and mountain.

There is music, soft and low,
And bright fairy feet are tripping,
And the shadows come and go,
And the elves are madly skipping;
And the cold and palsied earth
Has of Paradise a seeming;
There is gladness, joy and mirth,
While the world is wrapped in dreaming.

But the revels fade and cease
When the morning softly waketh;
And the sylvan dream of peace,
Like a lute-string sadly breaketh;
And the planets blaze and burn
Till they fade before the morrow,
And the weary hearts return
To their sin, and care, and sorrow.

Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. 45.

Moonlight in Los Angeles

Slow the moon, with glances tender,
Rises in the cast;
Like an empress in her splendor,
To some royal feast;
Like some queen of fabled story,
Rising up in trembling glory,
Like a soul released.

Now the radiant moonlight streaming,
Bathes each lofty hill;
And in murm'rous rapture dreaming,
Sleeps each stream and rill;
Now the trembling dew-drops quiver,
And the zephyrs sigh and shiver,
Shiver and are still.

Now o'er bower and fount is lying
Silence like the tomb;
And each flower in stillness sighing
Sheds its sweet perfume;
Shadowy shapes come swift advancing,
And bright fairy forms are glancing
Through the trembling gloom.

O'er soft scenes thy bright smiles hover,
Silvering hill and glade;
Lingering, longing, where the lover
And the gentle maid,
'Neath thy rays of dazzling splendor,
Whisper secrets, low and tender,
In the olive shade.

Myriad rays like diamonds sparkling,
Shed a radiance round;
Where the orange groves lie darkling
In the hush profound;
Soft and low a spell is creeping
Over weary nature, sleeping,
In sweet slumber drowned.

Now the hush of midnight stilly,
Deep and deeper grows;
And the drooping listless lily,
Sleeps beside the rose;
Now the feathery pampa, streaming
In the trembling moonlight, gleaming,
White and ghostly glows.

Now the silvery palm is waving,
Like some magic wand,
Shaken by bright ripples laving
Ocean's gleaming strand;
Comes the west wind, softly singing,
Like some message gently winging,
From the spirit land.

Now the pallid rays are streaming
O'er the grave-yard lone;
Like a ghostly phantom gleaming
Each sepulchral stone;
Now the air grows crisp and crisper,
And the murm'ring night winds whisper,
Whisper and are gone.

Now the sounds of mirth and riot,
Faintly dying, cease;
And the restless hearts, disquiet,
Find from care release;
Resting still from weary fretting,
Every care and pain forgetting
In sweet dreams of peace.

Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. 46.

Sunrise

A tender thrill the silence breaks,
A little tremor—she awakes;
Through night's dark curtains, half in doubt,
The meek-eyed Morn peeps shyly out,
As if with modest gaze to spy
If bold intruding steps are nigh;
Then softly folds, with blushes warm,
Her crimson drapery round her form,
And steps abroad with brow serene,
Earth's peerless, radiant, glorious Queen.

Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. 48.

Sierra

Afar the glittering chain in splendor shines—
A dazzling gleam where snow and sky have met,
Like white-lipped, stern, determined, moveless lines
The vaulted skies thy piercing summits fret—
They chafe the dome; below, the moaning pines
Forever sigh, like hearts that ne'er forget
The haunting memory, that intertwines
With the dead glories of the golden mines.

In pallid hush, like solemn, sheeted ghosts,
In still array the snowy summits stand;
In scornful pride, like conquering, serried hosts,
They gaze upon the prostrate pleading land;
They stretch afar in pomp on either hand;
Down to the plain they push their sentried posts,
Like marshalled columns—still, determined, grand—
They look far down upon the dim, low coasts,
And mock proud man's vain, puny, idle boasts.
Ye gaze far down o'er each soft, slumbering scene—
Down through the trembling, dreamy, summer haze,
That veils the plain with fairy, silvery sheen
Still, as in earliest time's dim, dawning days.
When Sacramento's vale is all ablaze
With spring's soft splendor, high o'er all ye lean,
And like rapt dreamers, musing, ever gaze,
When summer clothes the plain in vernal green,
O'er the far valley of the San Joaquin.

Thy crystal fountains fall like snowy lace,
Down o'er thy gleaming bosom, pure and white;
Like beauteous maiden, clothed in queenly grace
And bridal veil—a glorious dream of light;
Or, leaping downward from their dizzy height,
The foaming torrents in their giddy race,
That vainly backward strive to shrink in fright,
One moment clinging to thy pallid face,
Go plunging headlong into awful space.

Far piercing through the deep cerulean skies
Thy summits gleam, by mortal man untrod;
Unheard by thee, weak man's vain moans and sighs—
White and eternal as the Throne of God!
The years go by, and still ye gaze and nod,
Unheeding of our sobs, and tears, and cries;
Man's generations sleep beneath the sod;
His marble pomp in dust and ruin lies,
And cities proud, where seas have rolled, arise.

O, awful height! to thee the sea and land
Bow prostrate at thy feet, prone, suppliant slaves;
To thy high praise along Pacific's strand,
Swells the grand anthem of his mighty waves.
We dream and die, and dot the earth with graves,
Thick as the desert-drifting grains of sand;
Lo! long as earth's wide shore the ocean laves,
Up stand, as first ye came from His right hand—
Awful! mysterious! lone! eternal! grand!

Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. 48.

Burriel

Written Upon Reception of News of the "Virginius" Massacre

There are sounds of fearful warning,
Whispers in the air.
Borne upon the wings of morning,
From the tropics fair—
Borne by zephyrs sad and tearful,
O'er the ocean's swell,
And the night-winds, low and fearful,
Whisper, "Burriel."

Where fair Cuba flings her tresses
To the balmy breeze,
Lulled to rest by soft caresses
Of the tropic seas;
Where but erst her glories flaunted
In the flashing sun,
Lo! an Eden horror-haunted,
Red with murder done.

Like the wife of murdered Hector,
Mad by horror driven,
Ever stalks a bloody spectre,
Crying still to Heaven;
Still it broods o'er hill and river
Like some fearful spell,
And the palms, with silent shiver,
Whisper, "Burriel."

In thy lair of Santiago,
Safe thy fiends among,
Worse than treacherous, damned Iago,
By the poet sung;
How shall words describe thee fully,
Foulest fiend of Hell?
Demon! murderer! coward! bully!
butcher!—Burriel.

Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. 50.

The Phantom City

A Legend of the Mohave Desert

Where the desert's face lies glaring,
Like a corpse forever staring,
And the zephyrs moan, despairing,
Wandering o'er the deathly waste,
Came a padre meek and lowly,
Hasting onward, blindly, slowly,
Seeking with his emblem holy,
Dying souls, with zealous haste.

Far away with quivering shimmer,
Sank the mountains dim and dimmer,
Shone the sunset's dying glimmer,
With a faint, expiring glance;
Came no earthquake's voice to mutter,
Not a trembling zephyr's flutter,
Slept a silence deep and utter,
O'er the lonely, dread expanse.

On, o'er ghastly wastes and dreary,
Thro the night's long watches weary,
Journeyed stout, old Padre Serra,
Till the ghostly shadows fled,
And the morn came silent wending—
Still before him vague extending,
Stretched the level waste unending,
Lifeless, soundless, boundless spread.

Neath the dim horizon's circle,
Where the shadows crouch and darkle,
What is that the sun's bright sparkle
Gilds as with a flash of fire?
Lo! a city vast and hoary,
Dazzling as some fairy story,
Clothed as with celestial glory,
Dome, and battlement, and spire.

Like the swelling tides of ocean,
Thrilled the padre with emotion;
In his soul a grand commotion,
Thankfulness and glad surprise
Stirred his holy spirit greatly;
Waving palm trees tall and stately,
Towering in their pride sedately,
Rose beneath the desert skies.

Was it but a mocking seeming?
Was the holy padre dreaming?
Rose a city tall and gleaming,
Queenly mid the desert lands;
Temples proud and princely places,
Terraced heights and fount-kissed spaces,
Like some hidden, blest oasis
Mid Sahara's burning sands.

Then of dangers naught regretting
Heedless of the toil and sweating.
All the thirst and heat forgetting.
Spake the padre stout and brave
"Though the way hath worn and spent me.
Surely Heaven its aid hath lent me,
Surely Christ himself hath sent me
Forth these heathen hosts to save!"

Gleamed the city clear and clearer,
Seemed it near, yet never nearer,
Almost might the listening hearer
Seeming catch its busy din.
But there smote no clang of sabre,
Rose no song of flute or tabor,
And no pulsing tides of labor
Drifted out or entered in.

Yet in vain his weary toiling,
'Neath that glowing furnace broiling,
Ever some curs'd spell seemed foiling
All his efforts in the chase;
Shrank the phantom ever fleeting,
Ever from his grasp retreating,
Where the dim horizon meeting,
Kissed the desert's deathly face.

Still the holy father wandered
Ever on and ever pondered—
“Here the heathen hosts have squandered
All the world's bright golden store;
In this vast and lonely centre,
With the Cross, their faithful mentor,
I will be the first to enter
At their desert-guarded door.

“If my weak endurance fail not,
Satan's wiles shall him avail not;
Here the holy Cross shall trail not
Longer in the sighing dust;
Here with zealous, brave endeavor,
Error's head His sword shall sever,
And His kingdom reign forever,
Conquering over sin and lust.”

Still more gorgeous glowed the splendor
From each column, tall and slender;
Slept a glory soft and tender,
With its far o'er-arching light,
Countless rays of glory flinging,
From each temple skyward springing,
Dazzling, flashing, trembling, clinging
Round each spire's far-piercing height

Fiercer gleamed that furnace, glowing
Like the lava-tide o'erflowing,
Ever hot and hotter growing,
Withering as some demon's spites;
Deadly as the path of error;
Though no mute lips made demurrer,
Fell a vague, despairing terror
On his trembling neophytes.

Long with fruitless, vain endeavor,
Followed he the phantom ever,
On and onward, nearing never;
Till at eve, ere fell the night,
Like some fairy's bright creation,
Like some dazzling exhalation,
Dome and turret and foundation,
Melted from his longing sight.

Then spake Padre Serra, grieving,
"This is some cursed spell, deceiving—
But a charm of Satan's weaving,
Luring souls to death," he said,
"With some cunning incantation,
From the pastures of salvation,
To this deadly desolation," —
Then he crossed himself and fled.

Still the traveler, worn and weary,
Wandering o'er the deserts dreary,
Sees that phantom dim and eerie,
Gleaming, beckoning far away;
But it flees his longing vision
Like a spectre in derision;
Fades its gorgeous gleam elysian,
As a dream at break of day.

Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. 51.

Dreaming by the Sea

I sat beside the sobbing sea,
The throbbing sea, the moaning sea,
And gazed as o'er eternity,
With eager eyes and yearning wist,
To pierce the trembling veil of mist
That curtained close the awful sea.

Faint through the veil a vision crept,
A glory slept, a halo slept
O'er coral sweeps where stately palms
Waved soft o'er everlasting calms;
But endless seas between us swept.

White-coasted lands there seemed to be
Beyond the sea, beyond the sea;
Pale phantoms stretched their arms to me—
Faint shadowy isles—if isles they were—
Rose indistinct and dim afar;
Far o'er the sea, the boundless sea.

No forms substantial met my gaze,
My longing gaze, my trembling gaze,
But glimpses faint of shadowy things,
Some instant flash of gleaming wings,
Far through the haze, the quivering haze.

I lingered long and dreamily
Beside the sea, the mocking sea,
And saw the trembling phantoms flee,
As o'er the hollow-sounding main
I stretched my longing arms in vain—
O, awful sea! O, cruel sea!

Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. 55.

Via Panama

From San Francisco's busy quays
We parted with our human freight,
And mid September's dreamy haze
We drifted through the Golden Gate.

We sat upon the crowded deck,
And watched the silvery night's advance—
Our mighty steamer but a speck
Upon the watery, wide expanse.

And gliding through the flashing foam,
Our thoughts went back through all the years—
To each far, happy, childhood home,
That we had left mid smiles and tears.

And oh! the happy, tender dreams
That hovered round each sleeper's bed,
As over all, the mirage gleams
Of hope, a glittering halo shed.

Night after night, but dreams of bliss—
The land almost within our reach;
And every morn a warmer kiss
The tropic zephyrs gave to each.

Day after day we coasted down,
And saw the sunset flame and glow
Upon the heights that crown
The- slumbering land of Mexico.

Like waving plumes of funeral hearse
The smoke-wreaths hovered o'er sublime,
And hung like Montezuma's curse,
O'er that dark land of blood and crime.

And then the stars in silence came
With glittering eyes; and looking back,
We saw the seething seas aflame,
Along our phosphorescent track.

The dim volcano's glare we saw
Wave like a torch o'er Aztec graves,
And came at last where Panama
Her feet in coral waters laves.

We wandered through the tangled wood
Of that luxuriant tropic land,
And stood as old Balboa stood,
With boundless seas on either hand,

Outspread like God's eternal scrolls,
That tell of Life, and Death, and Fate,
An awful mystery on our souls,
That none might lift, or penetrate.

Through tangled wilds, in languor lost,
Mid dark-eyed maids and dark-browed men,
We made our way, and so we crossed
The narrow land of Darien.

Once more upon the trackless deep,
When fell the shades of twilight gray,
O'er sparkling waves, and seas asleep,
We took our eager homeward way.

And fanned by aromatic breeze,
We dreamed of other vanished years;
When o'er the Caribbean Seas,
Swept the fierce, bloody buccaneers.

And crimson morn with smiles of love,
Came with her bright celestial glow;
And not more soft the blue above,
Than slept the tender blue below.

Vague, shadowy dream-lands far away,
To isles of light and glory grew;
The bright Antilles, slumbering, lay
Mid softest seas of trembling blue.

And Cuba, like some maiden fair,
Imploring, stretched her jewelled hand,
And tossed her bright dishevelled hair
Above the sighing, sea-beat strand.

We saw far o'er the shimmering plain,
The low Bahamas nod and drowse,
And plowed the same, soft, sleeping main,
First parted by Columbus prow.

And nightly still, we dreamed and slept,
And onward kept our northward course,
And ever on, resistless swept,
Urged by the Gulf Stream's mighty force

Until one morn, with eager look,
Through the dim night shades gazing far,
We saw the light of Sandy Hook,
Gleam like the risen morning star.

On, like a sea-bird to her nest—
By frowning batteries gliding past—
We skimmed the harbor's placid breast,
And homeward came at last, at last!

And so we parted on the shore—
Some to the North, some to the East;
To enter soon the smiling door
Of pit -azure's hall, or marriage-feast.

Some to the South, some to the West—
Each to his own long-waiting hearth,
And childhood home, beloved the best—
No more to meet again on earth.

Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. 56.

La Jornada De La Muerte

The Journey of Death

A Legend of the Great Colorado Desert

They had journeyed long and far,
Toward the sinking evening star,
From the far Missouri's shore,
With their cherished household store;
Turning from the Eastern gloam,
Dreaming of a brighter home,
Where the Western ocean laves
Fairest land with softest waves.

Manhood strong in hopeful years,
Woman with her smiles and tears,
Youths and maidens in the flush
Of life's morning, crimson blush,
Childhood in its joyous glee,
Heedless of the years to be,
Silvery age and beauty fair,
Strength and weakness—all were there;
Father, mother, husband, wife
All that tell of hope and life.

Leaving home's soft hallowed gleam,
For a brighter, golden dream,
Snapping all the ties that bind,
Turning, leaving all behind.
Loosing all love's links at last—
Garnered memories of the past,
Of the consecrated years,
Altars reared mid smiles and tears,
Tender voices, pleading eyes,
Graves of loved ones—all the ties
Fond and tender round us cast,
That may bind us to the past.
Where the savage bands hold sway,
Onward, westward, journeyed they,
Through the land of lance and bow,

Of the fierce Arapaho;
O'er the lonely, lonely miles,
Through the treacherous defiles,
Shrouded, dark, and murder-dyed,
Death and danger, side by side;
Through the dread Apache lands,
Through the Gila's weary sands,
'Neat its sighing cottonwood,
Westward, till at last they stood
Weary-worn and travel-sore,
On the Colorado's shore.

Hazy dimness like a pall,
Quivering, overshadowed all;
On the river's farther shore,
Desolation spread before.
There the desert's fiery breath,
Furnace-fanned and fraught with death,
Ever casts its withering spell,
Dark as sin and hot as hell.
There the shriveled zephyr flees
O'er the grave of perished seas;
'Neath the glow of fiery skies,
Hopeless, moaning, faints and dies.

Where the blasted levels lay,
Slow they took their weary way
Through that awful desert sea,
Hopeful of the days to be.
But a little, they should rest
At the portal of the West,
Of the earthly paradise
Over-arched by softest skies.
Hour by hour they strove and toiled,
Thirst-beset and furnace-broiled,
All a-night and all a-day,
Toiling on their weary way;
Still another cruel night,
O'er that awful desert blight,
Every vein a stream of fire,
Burning with a hot desire;

Strength and courage almost spent,
Saddened by some dread portent
Of a dark and direful end
That they might not comprehend;
Slow their drooping beasts they urge
Toward the dim horizon's verge,
Till each black and swollen tongue
From the fevered lips outhung.

Slowly sank the fervid sun
When that day was almost done;
But a darker, deathlier pall
Gathered, threatening, over all.
Sudden swept the whirlwind's breath,
O'er the dread expanse of death,
And the burning sands arose,
Drifting like the wintry snows,
With their smothering, blinding wrack,
Over fading trail and track,
Like the mad waves tempest-tossed,
Till all things were hid and lost.

Utter woe with ruin blent,
When that blast of hell was spent,
Beasts lay dead and dying there;
Death, and horror, and despair,
Like an awful nightmare pressed
Dark and heavy on each breast.
Slowly passed the night away,
And another burning day
Found them of all hope bereft—
Not a drop of water left,
Not a beast to give them aid,
Not a shrub to give them shade;
All around a dazzling gleam,
Death and horror reigned supreme.
Long they wandered where the sands
Scorched and scared like burning brands;
Where the zephyrs faint and die,
On the plains of alkali;
But no crystal fount or stream

Gladdened with its silvery gleam—
Scarce a hope its glimmer lent,
Strength and courage almost spent.

Sudden cried a drooping child,
Starting with a gesture wild,
As her face despair forsook,
“There is water, mother—look!
Sec! a lake spreads far and wide,
And the green trees fringe its side.”
Lo! before their longing eyes
Spread a dream of Paradise;
Stretching brightly far away,
Mirror-like the waters lay.
Never fell the sun’s hot kiss
On a fairer oasis
Mid the burning wastes of sand
Of swart Afric’s lonely land.
Glancing in the sun’s bright beams,
Flashing far their dazzling gleams,
Like a diamond’s radiant light,
Lay the waters pure and bright,
And encircling, close and fond,
Rose the emerald hills beyond.
Swiftly o’er each burning brain,
Rushed the flood of hope again.
Soon their weary steps should rest
In that Eden of the West,
And their burning feet might lave
In the cooling, crystal wave.
Long that gleam their steps pursued
O’er the awful solitude,
Still evading with its glow
Every footstep, fast or slow,
Ever mocked their longing eyes
With its glint of Paradise;
Like the glitter of a star,
Seeming never near nor far.

Ever from their burning feet
Seemed that vision to retreat
From their ardent, longing haste,
Till it vanished o'er the waste,
Melted into dimness gray,
Faded, fled, and passed away.

Still they struggled, staggering, blind,
Doubt before and death behind;
Still pursued each mirage bright,
Till it faded from their sight,
Baseless as a midnight dream,
Or the gorgeous rainbow's gleam.

Years and years had sped and gone,
Gloom of eve and flush of dawn,
Silent each succeeding each,
Never woke by human speech;
Never human footsteps fell
Faint to break that ghastly spell;
In the desert's fiery breath,
Silence, mystery, awe and death,
Brooding ever, still the same,
When the mighty builders came,
Laying down their iron track
O'er the desolation black,
With resistless Titan tread,
Heedless of the wastes outspread,
Clasping firm the iron bands,
Linking lands to sister lands—
When they paused at what they saw,
With a mute and trembling awe:

Ringed around in circle white,
Holding each to other tight,
Bleaching skeletons lay there
With their empty sockets glare,
Vacant staring, westward turned
Still, as when the eyeballs burned
With that last despairing look,
When life's quivering pulse forsook.

Not a ravening beast or bird
Fleshless limb or trunk had stirred;
Not a hungry wolf might dare
Thus to brave the desert's glare
In that waste of terror wide—
Thus they lay as thus they died.

O'er those men of iron, fell
Tearful pity's tender spell,
As they gazed with halting breath
On that circle dread of death,
And they left them to their sleep
In that stillness lone and deep;
Awed and fearful turned away,
Turned, and left them as they lay;
With a whispered, trembling prayer,
In that awful silence there—
Left them with a shuddering thrill,
Firm in death, united still.

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Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. 59.

Illusion

Life is but a phantom seeming, but a vision and a dreaming,
Mirage mockings of the future, rainbow memories of the past;
Joy and mirth succeeding sorrow, night shades dim the bright tomorrow,
And the sunshine, and the shadow, follows each the other fast.

Fitful slumbering, fitful waking, but a little, lo! the breaking
Of the fleecy clouds of morning into storms of tears and sighs;
Fled the bright illusion tender, evanescent as the splendor
Of the rainbow's haloed glories, tinted on the eastern skies.

We are but as spectres fearing, dimly seen and disappearing
As the quick electric currents, swift that sudden flash and dart—
But a mist our transient being, ever fading, ever fleeing,
We are but as dreams unstable, “come like shadows, so depart;”

As the fainting, lost prospector, longing for the fountain's nectar,
Wandering on o'er thirsty deserts, chasing every mirage gleam,
Following still with footsteps weary, o'er the dim expanses dreary,
Resting never, and we ever dream to wake, and wake to dream.

So the mystic visions quiver o'er life's desert sands forever,
And we know not clearly, truly, which is dreaming, which is sight;
Which the oldest, which the newest; which the falsest, which the truest;
Which the saddest, which the maddest—dreamings of the day, or night.

Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. 65.

The Children of the Sun

A Tale of the Land of the Incas

Long ere the conquering Saracen
Had come to rule with sword and pen,
Ere yet the light Alhambra's gleam
Rose like a magic fairy dream,
Their country matters not—perchance
'Twas smiling Spain or sunny France—
The old, old story told again,
A youth and maiden loved in vain.

Vain, vain their hopes of love's desires;
A deadly feud between their sires
Raged like the red volcano's wrath,
That swallows cities in its path—
As seas by fretful storms displeased
That will not sleep, or be appeased
What use to plead with sighing breath?
To brave that storm of hate, was death;
And worse than death e'er held in store,
The fiat, "Ye shall meet no more!"
But never yet hath bolt or bar
Obscured the light of love's soft star,
When true hearts, fond and trustful, meet
Responsive each to other's beat,
Save for the brief and passing hour,
When love asserts her conquering power
O'er hate's dark machinations vain,
And joy and sunshine smile again.
To sigh, to weep, to dream, to plan,
To meet once more, despite that ban,
When fall the moonbeams cold and pale—
This is the old familiar tale,
And will be ever neath the sun
While zephyrs waft, or waters run.
Oh, that they might to some lone isle,
Far from the cruel world remote,
Where summer skies forever smile,

On spicy breezes drift and float!
To live and love by silvery streams
That laugh and sing, the sweet years through,
Where heart to heart throbs ever true!
(This was the burden of their dreams.)
Still would they speed before the breeze,
And in the hush of crimson dawn,
Neath tropic skies, o'er sleeping seas,
Forever love and wander on,
To some lone island far away,
And they would tarry on some shore
Where human passions never more,
Save love and faith, should hold their sway.

His father's bark lay at the shore,
Full -freighted with a precious store
Of all that greedy tribes might crave
The Algerine, the dusky Moor—
Beyond Gibraltar's frowning door,
Of food and drink for lord and slave.
Slow tolled the solemn midnight bell,
To sigh a trembling, fond farewell
To home and country, friend and foe,
And all the ties the heart may know,
Save love; to cast the moorings free
Was but a moment, and the sea
Spread dim before them, vague and vast,
And they were free to love, at last.

The sweet-breathed morning softly came
And lit the slumbering seas with flame;
Naught came to break their trance of love—
No tumult as when billows sweep,
No riot on the boundless deep—
But seas around and sky above.
Soon, soon they left their country's shore
Upon the far horizon's brink,
And saw their mountains fade and sink
To greet their vision nevermore.

The favoring zephyrs westward blew
And fast before, their vessel Hew;
They watched the blue Azores fade,
As fades a fairy midnight dream,
Then saw the sunset's dying gleam
Slow pale and mellow into shade.

Still further on their westward way
The sweet winds bore them, day by day,
And not an adverse storm arose
To bend their mast, or flap their sail—
No seas made mad by shrieking gale,
To break their love's complete repose,
Still wafted soft by favoring breeze,
They drifted o'er the dreamy seas,
Until they woke one purple morn
Beside a fairy, flowery land,
Where soft waves kissed the sleeping strand,
As mothers kiss their newly-born.
Spell-bound in wondering trance they stood,
By mingled awe and hope possessed,
Where on the ocean's balmy breast,
A mighty river poured its flood,
Impetuous in its sweeping force;
As ocean wide it seemed to be,
And in its broad majestic course
As endless as eternity.

By fair winds borne still on and on,
They stemmed the queenly Amazon;
The sweet vanilla's rich perfumes
Came on the heavy-laden breeze,
And gorgeous birds, with rainbow plumes
Sang low and dreamy mid the trees.

And they might rest beneath those skies
Mid bloom of sweet perpetual flowers,
But savage men, with savage eyes,
Glared fiercely through the tangled bowers.
Upon the river's farther banks,
Majestic in their dusky charms,
Strange women ranged in martial ranks,
Defiant, shook their threatening arms.

Still on toward the setting sun,
Their course through vine-wreathed vistas lay,
Nor when the day's bright course was run,
For tide or pilot tarried they—
Still westward swept at eve and dawn,
Where never fell the frost's breath chill,
Through mazes on, and ever on,
Vast and interminable still.

O, sloth-ruled waste! O, spell-bound land!
Where wasteful nature revel keeps
And sows her gifts with lavish hand,
But never lazy reaper reaps;
That dreamest still as at the dawn
Of Time's dim morning, old and gray—
When wilt thou stand erect in brawn?
When shall thy languor pass away?

At last, beyond that tangled wild,
In snowy grandeur towering high,
They saw tall, glittering steeps up-piled,
Like giants looming in the sky;
Far thro' the depths of sapphire skies
They gleamed like glittering jewels set—
A magic dream, a world's surprise—
Within some queenly coronet,
And yet so far, so far away!
They drifted onward day by day,
Until at last the mountain wall
Rose just before them, sheer and steep,
And from the skies, with dizzy leap,
Down plunged a mighty waterfall,

Immeasurable in its height,
Born in some far ethereal zone,
It seemed a flood of liquid light
Down-poured from heaven's eternal throne.
O'er-arching, like a fairy dream,
The flashing spray, the trembling wood,
A gorgeous rainbow o'er the flood
Soft shed its bright prismatic gleam.
Gay-plumaged birds and brilliant flowers,
Beneath the flush of tropic skies,
Mid summer's ever leafy bowers,
Vied with the rainbow's gorgeous dyes.

And here beneath this Eden ray,
But for the serpent's deadly hiss,
The soul might dream itself away,
And die with surfeit of its bliss.

And here, perforce, an end was made
Of that romance of sea and stream—
As of some tender fairy dream—
And hand in hand they sought the shade.

Beside the torrent's rushing sweep,
A winding trail led up the steep,
Close hidden neath the bright festoons
Of interwoven vines and flowers—
Dim leafy shades and mazy bowers,
Fond tropic nature's sweetest boons.
Some power unseen, some vague desire
Still led them upward, higher, higher,
Through tangled ways, and mazy turns,
Until they rested in a seat
Embowered in vines and giant ferns—
A tropic empire neath their feet.

Far, far beneath, away, away,
They saw the boundless forest spread,
And through its heart the river's ray,
Gleam like an endless silver thread.

Bright visions like soft clouds of air,
O'er heart and soul went drifting fast;
They slept, and dreamed that even there,
Love's Eden-home was found at last.

A savage, wild, unearthly yell,
That treachery and death bespoke,
As bursts from demons loosed from hell,
The dreamy solitude awoke;
Dark, naked forms with lance and bow,
Emerging from the tangled wood,
In savage, threatening, ceaseless flow,
Between them and their vessel stood;
They saw her plundered of their stores,
And then mid dance and savage games,
And shout, and yell, and riot wide,
Their vessel drifted down the tide,
Enwrapt in fierce, consuming flames.

Not long they mourned within their bower,
O'er love's bright, perished visions, sweet,
Not here might rest their weary feet,
Where treachery and hate held power;
And they would scale that mighty wall
That loomed across their westward course,
And view the dim, mysterious source
Of that far, dizzy waterfall.

Long, long they toiled through awful space,
Where fear the reeling senses steeped,
To gain the summit of that face,
From whence the giddy waters leaped.

They stood upon a precipice
So vast, so vague, so tall, so lone,
A spot within that gleaming zone,
The first and last the sun might kiss.

A rushing river, deep and clear,
Born in the white, eternal snow,
Impetuous urged, white-lipped with fear,
Went madly plunging down below—
So deep, so far, no sound came back
Upon the shrinking, trembling air,
And swooning vision in despair,
Turned shuddering from its fearful track.

But other scenes of glory bright,
And free from terror's fettering chain,
Broke on the wondering lovers' sight,
And claimed their senses back again;
Afar the sunset's dying rays
In gorgeous splendor quivered down,
And every snowy dome and crown
With flashing fire was all ablaze;
And other sights as strange, as new,
As spell-entranced, they silent gazed
As dreamers sudden wake amazed,
Burst on their wondering, raptured view.
Strange beings, shy, as half ashamed,
That seemed to gaze in awe and fear,
As those that may not venture near
To sacred things, their vision claimed;
Stone-still they stood, erect and tall,
As still as sentries at their post,
As men whose senses sleep in thrall,
In adoration all engrossed,
Until by gracious signs assured;
They came as birds that venture near
The charmer, half in doubt and fear,
By fascination's spell allured—
As Israel's host received the law,
When God in Sinai's thunders spoke,
Deep veiled in shuddering clouds of smoke—
They came in mute and trembling awe.

Dark-skinned, soft-eyed, lute-voiced, and sweet
Their accents, low each gentle tone
As zephyr's breath through wind-harp blown,

They came and kissed their idols feet,
And evermore with doting eyes
They gazed and gazed in silence deep
As those that priceless jewels keep—
As misers on their golden prize—
Then ever still, and still again,
As men with wonder never done,
They pointed to the lovers twain,
Then westward to the setting sun.
And others still with stealthy creep,
As creeps the puma soft and low
To watch the footsteps of its foe,
Close crouching, gazed adown the steep;
As men by secret dread oppressed,
They pointed downward as in fear,
As those that dream of danger near,
Then motioned onward to the west.
Long, long that upward trail they kept
With quickening breath and footsteps fleet,
Nor weary paused, nor resting slept,
Until the snowfields kissed their feet.
Above the wide, wan, wastes of snow,
Like mourner o'er her lifeless clay,
Whence life and warmth have passed away,
The moon hung tremulous and low;
Thick blazed the stars as diamonds sown;
All, all above was cold and white,
The shuddering heights stood tall and lone,
And all beneath was black as night.
And here within a friendly cave,
That warmth and shelter kindly gave,
While watchful eyes their vigil kept
Beneath the moon's cold dazzling rays,
Beside the watch-fire's softened blaze,
The Idol-Children sweetly slept.

O'er every dome in flashing gleams,
The sun in blaze effulgent broke,
As from their fairy tender dreams,
The slumbering lovers softly woke;

Sweet wondering glances met their gaze,
Soft waiting footsteps lingered near,
Low murmurs thrilled upon the ear,
As pious pilgrims offer praise;
They came and bowed them at their feet
And “Manco Capac” murmured low,
And “Mama,” and “Oella” sweet,
Her name with liquid tender flow.

They stood upon a crater’s rim
So vast, so wide, so dark, so deep,
Eternal shadow seemed to sleep
Forever in its caverns dim;
Down, down they plunged from that vast height.
That shuddered o’er the black abyss,
Whose depths the sunbeams never kiss,
From dazzling day, to blackest night.
Before them spread a dream of death—
A glimpse of hell—a blasted plain
Where never spring’s soft, fairy breath
Brought life or verdure in its train.
But late from fiery thrall released,
The cindery path their footsteps pressed,
Scarce yet the earthquake throes had ceased,
To heave sad earth’s unquiet breast;
Deep, black-lipped fissures gaped and yawned
Whence late the fiery surges leapt,
And chaos in his cradle slept
As when creation’s morning dawned.
No life, no flower, no song-bird’s tune
Above that wrath-swept blasted crust;
Dead, dead, sweet nature’s ashes strewn,
As perished Sodom’s dreamless dust.

Nor rest, nor pause, but on and on
Neath frowning crags, through blackened chasms,
Deep rent and rifted years ago
In nature’s fierce convulsive spasms,
Still westward lay their toilsome course,
O’er lifeless wastes of ashen wrath,
Where nature’s vast gigantic force

Had swept the mountains from her path;
Great condors, throned like mighty kings
That gaze afar and ponder deep,
Sat brooding o'er some awful steep,
Or swept through space on shadowy wings;
And so for weary days and days,
Their narrow pathway onward led
O'er ghastly wastes and cinders dead,
Through rocky rifts, o'er ashen ways.
At last! at last! the welcome end!
Soft sleeping vales and silvery streams,
And all love's fond romantic dreams
In one bright ray of glory blend.
A waking dream, such glorious morn
As only comes to lovers true,
Such morns as Eve and Adam knew,
Ere sorrow came, or death was born.

Close clung the trembling veil of white
To shadowy Misti's awful height;
Like giants in their stern repose,
Calm, still, and terrible and deep—
Like weary sentries fast asleep,
Vague steeps through vaguer deeps up-rose.
High o'er the land like conquering hosts
Dim looking down o'er sea and plain,
Above the dreamy slumbering coasts,
Far stretched the Andes glittering chain.
Afar, like banners half unfurled,
High o'er each snowy crater's crown,
Where solitude looks ever down,
The drifting smoke wreaths writhed and curled.
The march of morning, scarce begun,
Fell o'er the world with wakening tread,
And Titicaca's mighty spread,
Flashed like a mirror in the sun.
By sparkling waters bright, caressed,
Illumed by virgin nature's smile,
Like babe upon its mother's breast,
Soft dreaming, slept the Sacred Isle.

Another world lay calm and true,
Reflected in the trembling surge,
And many an isle rose faint and blue,
On the dim horizon's verge.
Far o'er the tide, in darkening crowds,
That spread as they would end no more
Swift boats, like water-fowl, in clouds
Came sweeping onward to the shore.

And trembling all the coasts along
The listening air with hymn and song—
A loving people's simple art—
And prayerful praise with music blent,
To welcome to a Nation's heart
The sacred pair their Sun-God sent.

A song of welcome, full and free,
A people sang, sweet tender-voiced;
From snow-crowned height to tropic sea,
A nation in its heart rejoiced.

From every side, from east to west,
In deep, expectant, swift advance,
They came as eager, laden ants,
That bear their treasures to their nest.

Of station high, and low degree,
They gathered round in mighty rings,
As those that to earth's mightiest kings
Would render homage full and free.

Then venturing shyly, one by one,
Gazed with a childish awe, complete,
Upon the "Children of the Sun,"
And prostrate, worshipped at their feet.

Then trembling, kissed their garment-hems,
As lovers trembling, kiss the bride;
And cast before them gold and gems
A king might envy in his pride.
How to the lovers shone the earth!
What gorgeous dreams their tints disclose!
What hopes within their souls had birth!
What visions of the future rose!

Spell-rapt they stood, long gazing, he—
His dream, a dream of glory's dower,
Of kingly crown, and fame and power,
And mighty empires yet to be;

Where love and duty still should sway,
A nation's weal, a people's good;
Not born to crumble in a day—
An empire peaceful, not of blood

And fair Oella, what of all
That fairy-land by nature nursed,
That glorious scene that sudden burst,
And speechless held her soul in thrall?

A tender light like heaven's own gleam,
Lay in her glorious spell-tranced gaze,
And in lu-r vision slept a dream
Of fruitful lands, and happy days;

Of love and loving free from guile,
In that bright Eden of the west,
And happy babes that, sleeping, smile
And dream upon their mothers' breast,
Of all wherewith fond earth may bless
Her children in her tenderness;
And o'er her soul bright visions swept
Like fleecy cloud-wreaths idly blown,
The fondest dreams the soul hath known,
Since maiden smiled or woman wept.
And so with hymn and joyful song,
Amid a nation's grand acclaim,
Borne by a mighty fleet along,

The lovers to their island came.

And mid the waters calm repose,
Watched by the bright, Aymara lands,
As reared by loving fairy-hands,
A magic temple softly rose.

And here, enthroned mid smiling bowers,
Where heights eternal pierce the sky,
They dreamed, encrowned with love and flowers,
And watched the peaceful years go by.

Long slept the isle in tender thrall,
And temples rose on every hand,
And there was fruitful love for all,
And peace and plenty in the land.

As some long day that lights the west,
Till twilight comes with tints of gray,
So sank the Children to their rest,
As sinks the sun at eve, away.

And through the long, sweet centuries,
O'er all that sun-kissed empire wide,
As fruitful queens o'er happy bees,
Their children loving, ruled and died.

Calm where the waters flashed and gleamed,
The Incas slept in nature's smile,
Still dreaming, loved, and loving, dreamed,
Forever in the Sacred Isle.

And peaceful in their days, and just,
Beneath the rulers Heaven had sent,
Sweet in their simple, childish trust,
The generations came and went

What Strange wild savage shouts are these,
Borne southward on the startled breeze?
The Christian comes with sword and cross,
And bigot hate, as dark and fell
As ever stirred the depths of hell,
And soul athirst for yellow dross.
And damning treachery as deep

As earth may know, or hell may keep,
Came in his boastful blighting train;
And all her gorgeous halls, and towers,
And temples wreathed in smiling flowers,
Sweet Love had builded all in vain.
Down-trodden in the sighing dust,
Beneath the heel of robber lust;
Thy sacred children captive, dead,
O'erthrown thy temples vast and grand,
Thy sun hath set, O, Inca-Land!
Thy dream of empire ended, fled!

On all the treasures of the land,
Bold rapine laid his gory hand;
A glorious line but lived in name,
That once had ruled where plenty teemed—
That o'er the darkness Hashed and gleamed,
And all that love had wrought or dreamed,
Sank in a sea of blood and flame.

O land of ruin, sighing, lone!
O land of temples overthrown!
Hushed is thy song of Ollantay,
Thy glorious race of empire run;
Stripped of thy jewels every one,
They sleep—thy “Children of the Sun”—
Love's dream of ages, passed away.

For “Song of Ollantay,” see Prescott's “Peru.”

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Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. 66.

What Is the Soul?

“What is the Soul?” Go! ask the wind
That wanders far and free
In chainless freedom, unconfined,
Through sky, o’er earth, and sea,
Then murmurs sadly o’er the lawn
With dying cadence, and is gone.

“What is the Soul?” Go! ask the rose
That sheds her sweet perfume
In dreamy, tender, soft repose
Amid her fading bloom,
Then gives her petals to the blast,
Borne to oblivion, far and fast.

Go! ask the rainbow in the skies
Aglow with gorgeous rays;
Go! ask the mist that swiftly flies
Before the sun’s bright blaze;
Go! ask the dew-drop at the dawn,
That gleams and sparkles, and is gone.

Ask of the desert’s mirage gleam,
The feathery falling flake;
Ask of the bubble on the stream,
The dimple on the lake;
Ask of the shadow in the glass—
Of all things brief, that come and pass.

Ask of the zephyr’s breath that sighs
The flowery meadows o’er;
Go! ask the meteors of the skies,
That flee and are no more,
That flame an instant on the sight,
Then vanish mid the gloom of night.

Ask of the ever-changing moon,
Of sunshine and of shade;
Ask of all things that; vanish soon—
Ask of all things that fade—
Of bubble, rainbow, dew and wind,
That go and leave no trace behind.

Go! wrest their secrets from the stars,
The mysteries from the deep;
Of all within her iron bars,
Earth's darkest dungeons keep;
Go! find the Arctic's mystic pole,
Then question thou, "What is the Soul?"

Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. 81.

Hope

Beautiful hope in the heart ever springing,
Like a bright fountain in desert lands lone;
Like the fond ivy caressingly clinging,
To the dim ruins of castle o'erthrown,

Cling to me, cling to me fondly, forever,
As the dark years ever ceaselessly roll;
Hide thy glad radiance, never, O, never!
Beautiful, beautiful star of the soul.

Calm and serene, in thy glory and shimmer—
Not as the comets, that glare and depart;
Evermore shed thy bright glitter and glimmer,
Through the dark gloom of the night of the heart

Shed thy soft brilliance and brightness forever—
Not as the phantoms that dazzle and flee;
Lighting me still in the path of endeavor,
Linger, Oh! linger forever with me.

Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. 82.

Dotage

His faded life is all behind,
His step is faint and slow;
His voice is like the sighing wind,
His hair is white as snow.

And like an infant once again,
His wondering vision sees
The earth's wide-spreading boundless plain,
With all its mysteries.

In childish awe he looks on life
Its throbbing, rushing tide,
Its toys, its littleness, its strife,
Its gorgeous, tinseled pride.

And standing on its darkling shore.
With weak and trembling eyes,
He babbles like a babe once more,
In foolish, fond surprise.

Back from life's quivering sunset ray,
He turns to view the past,
That haunts his trembling, downward way,
Like shadow backward cast.

Dim, through oblivion's veil he sees
As through some mystic haze,
Faint lifted by some ghostly breeze,
The forms of other days.

They beckon to him far away,
And near and nearer still,
He sees them in the twilight gray,
He feels their touches thrill.

And groping mid the trembling gloom,
For phantoms that are not,
He totters downward to the tomb,
Forgetting and forgot.

The Bridal Veil

Lovely as the smiling morning, bright as queen of fairy tale,
As the stars the night adorning, in her mystic bridal veil,
Wavering as the twilight shadow, trembling as the mist
Floating o'er the slumbering meadow, ere by ardent sunshine kissed,
Stands the lovely dreaming maiden, in her beauty sweet and pure,
Innocent as Eve in Eden, ere the tempter came to lure.

Love's bright visions, fond and tender, all her pulses sweetly thrill,
And life's mystery veiled in splendor, steps before her soft and still.
Does the web of filmy weaving, o'er life's future cast a spell,
As the mirage gleam deceiving o'er the desert? It is well—
Well it veils the coming morrow, with its cares and sighs and tears,
Well it veils the heart's dark sorrow, in the coming, hidden years.

There are draughts of wormwood bitter for the sweetest lips to quaff,
Darkness follows sunlight glitter—mournful sighs, the merry laugh;
There are tempting fruits forbidden, gleaming bright on glorious trees,
There are rocks of danger hidden, sailing o'er life's mirrored seas.
May no storms in wrath and riot, bow in dust thy maiden pride!
May no phantom shades unquiet, haunt thy dreams, O, blissful bride!

Will thy footsteps from the altar, seek the smiling peaceful isles,
Or thy young feet faint and falter, o'er life's dreary desert miles?
Will the zephyrs idly playing, ever waft thee spicy balms,
And the gentle footsteps straying, rest beneath the waving palms?
He that watcheth, only, knoweth of thy future; day or night,
Whitherto thy pathway goeth—unto darkness, or to light.
Dream, O, bride! of rose-wreathed arbors, slumbering seas, and coral strands,
Summer skies and peaceful harbors, in the far-off tropic lands!
Dream, O, bride! of love's bark freighted, wafted soft with silken sail;
Dream! nor haste to pierce the future, hidden by the Bridal Veil.

Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. 84.

Old John Brown.

John Brown's body lies mouldering in the grave,
But his soul goes marching on.—Old Refrain.

O, the quivering, shuddering haze
Of those smoke-palled, gloomy days!
Through the country up and down,
Stalked the soul of "Old John Brown,"
Ever "marching on" and on,
Shrieking, sobbing, sighing, gone.
Startling with its quaint refrain,
Drooping hope, to life again.

How it stirred a Nation's heart
With a pulsing, mighty start!
How the farmer left his plow
In the furrow, half-way through,
As he heard the martial strain
Of that mystic weird refrain!
How the workmen left their tools,
And the pedagogues the schools!
How the merchant left his store!
How the clerk his colors bore,
With a loftier, prouder mien
Than the counter e'er had seen!
How the lawyer left his brief
To avenge his country's grief!
How the priest laid down the Word
For the all-convincing sword!
How the peaceful Quaker grave,
Swift his country's life to save,
To his soul's deep instincts true,
Dropped the drab, and donned the blue!

How it filled with quenchless fire
Maid and matron, son and sire,
Quickening sluggish blood of age
With a noble, burning rage!
How the student ceased to pore
O'er the past's forgotten lore,
Thrilled as by a magic spell,
Bidding home and books farewell,
When the summons deep and grand
Like an earthquake, shook the land!

How its echoes throbbed and rang,
When a million heroes sprang
At the cannon's awful call,
With its tale of Sumter's fall!
How it rose, and sank, and wailed,
Where the camp-fires blazed and paled!
How the swelling anthem pealed,
O'er each battle-tented field!
How it cheered the weary slave,
Stirred the coward and the brave—
When mid serried hosts of blue,
Thrilled its cadence through and through

Glory, glory! it is done!
Freedom's battle, fought and won,
Hallelujah! not a scar
Now remains of hate and war!
Peaceful are our nation's days—
God of Right, we give Thee praise!

Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. 85.

Mount San Bernardino

In solemn awe I gaze; O, thou,
That stand'st eternal as the days!
Low at thy lordly feet I bow;
My feeble tongue shall give thee praise.
A little space our days fulfill;
Thy strength endures, eternal still!

Here hast thou stood and kept thy trust,
And watched earth's glories bloom and fade,
Ere Abram laid his sacred dust
Within Machpelah's hallowed shade,
Whose footsteps sought His righteous ways,
And walked with God through all his days!

Here have ye watched, O, sentried rocks,
Fast by the everlasting hills,
Ere Jacob watched his father's flocks
By dreamy Midian's murmuring rills;
Or felt love's spring impetuous swell
For beauteous Rachael at the well!

The seal of time was on thy heights,
Ere God in Sinai's thunder spoke;
Or Druids neath the sacred oak
Performed their dark mysterious rites;
Ere Persia saw her conqueror come;
Or David mourned for Absalom.

Afar, thy glory flashed and gleamed,
Ere rolled proud Rome's triumphal cars,
Or Chaldea's shepherds watched and dreamed,
Beneath Assyria's shining stars;
Ere rose in pride vain Babel's tower,
Or Greece had fame, or Egypt power.

Here gazed thou o'er the sleeping coast,
And watched the darkling ages flee,
Ere Xerxes led his glittering host
To perish at Thermopylae;
Ere Freedom's holiest sacrifice,
Beneath the glorious Attic skies!

Here lookedst thou down ere Caesar stood
To put away Rome's diadem,
And bathed the marble shaft with blood;
Or rose the Star of Bethlehem
Like blazoned banner, wide unfurled,
To light a dark and sinful world!

Here sawest thou bloom earth's budding Spring,
Ere faithless Helen's glorious charms
Enthralled the heart of prince and king,
And roused a world to wrath and arms;
Or Homer thrilled with touch of fire
The sweet strings of his deathless lyre!

Ere satraps at a tyrant's frown,
In terror bent the slavish knee;
Ere Tyre in purple sat her down
To rule the cities by the sea;
Thou watch'dst with calm and peaceful brow,
O'er the soft landscape e'en as now.

When sinks our day in dreamless night,
And stills each throb of joy or pain,
Will others gaze upon thy height,
And others dream their dreams as vain,
To fade as figures traced in sand
On ocean's beach; but thou shalt stand!

Here shalt thou stand with moveless eyes,
And watch as thou hast watched alway,
Through the soft depths of summer skies,
Earth's kingdoms crumble and decay;
As murmuring, wandering zephyrs we,
To sigh and pass, and cease to be!

When all our works have disappeared,
Our dreams of glory, pride and lust,
When all that puny man hath reared,
Has crumbled in forgotten dust,
Still shalt thou mark the flight of time
Immovable, in strength sublime!

Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. 87.

Dreams of Youth

O, the gleams of fields elysian,
O, the dreams of happy youth!
Bright as Eden's glorious vision,
In its trustful love and truth!
When the earth was bright with glory;
Ere the years with care were hoary—
O, the heart's sweet, tender story,
Trustful in its love and truth!

O, the glory and the glitter,
O, the sunshine and the gold!
Ere life's cup was dashed with bitter,
Ere the heart grew hard and cold;
Proud in flush of strength unaided,
Ere dark clouds the skies o'ershaded;
Ere the bloom of springtime faded,
Ere its tale of hope was told.
Hopes may dawn, and hopes may perish,
Stars may rise, and stars may set.
Treasures vanish that we cherish.
But the heart may ne'er forget—
Ne'er forget youth's tender dreaming,
Hope's bright beckoning mirage gleaming,
Not mid all ambition's scheming,
May the yearning soul forget!

Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. 89.

Nevermore

When the twilight shades are falling,
All the senses soft enthralling,
Comes a mystic whisper calling,
Thrilling through my spirit's core;
Sad and plaining, ne'er increasing,
Ne'er its ghostly spell releasing.
With a monotone unceasing,
Ceaseless whispering, "Nevermore!"
"Nevermore!"

Kvct at the hour of vesper,
When the air grows crisp and crisper,
Ask I of this phantom whisper:
"Tell me truly, I implore
Shall I not in more than seeming,
Realize my soul's fond dreaming
All my youth's bright visions gleaming?" —
Sad the whisper, "Nevermore!"
"Nevermore!"

When sleep's mystic folds encircle,
And the night-shades pall and darkle,
And the planets blaze and sparkle,
Comes the whisper round my door,
Soft and low as zephyr sighing,
Sad as love's sweet cadence dying
O'er the grave of hope low lying—
Whispers sadly, "Nevermore!"
"Nevermore!"

Still forever weirdly haunting,
With a spell the spirit daunting,
Ever comes that mystic chaunting
Low and dirge-like o'er and o'er;
And when night-winds sigh and shiver,
And the moonbeams dance and quiver
On the mirror of the river,
Whispers ever, "Nevermore!"
"Nevermore!"

Ever when my life is dreary,
And my heart is sad and weary,
Ask I of this phantom eerie:
“Cease to mock me, I implore!”
Still it haunts me with its crooning—
Not for all my importuning,
Will it cease its mystic running—
Still it whispers, “Nevermore!”
“Nevermore!”

Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. 90.

To a Butterfly

Gaudy trifler of an hour,
Drifting on from flower to flower;
Clinging to fond nectar lips,
Tasting but with instant sips,
Leaving sweets for fresher sweets,
As the truant lover greets;
Still inconstant, never true
To the lips thy kisses woo,
Frail thy life as frail thy vow,
Type of passing glory, thou!
Foolish, fluttering, gilded thing,
Born of kisses of the spring;
Spirit borne on breath of balm,
Wafted through the dreamy calm;
When the summer smiles no more,
Soon thy triumphs shrill be o'er,
And thy gilded life shall pass
As the shadow o'er the glass.
Evanescence is thy dower,
Gilded trifler of an hour!
Soon shall pale thy gorgeous gleam,
Like a swiftly fading dream.

Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. 91.

Song of Sighs

Roses are fading and passing away,
Twilight, dark shading, shall veil the bright day,
Youth's transient glory dissolve as a dream—
After the summer the winter holds sway.

Bright is sweet springtime, and swift are her feet,
Glancing and fleeting, and summer is sweet;
Grateful the haze of the autumn's soft gleam,
After the days of the harvest and heat.

Fair is bright youth, with its myrtle-twined wreath,
Sweet the perfume of the summer-time's breath,
Pleading and plaintive the autumn's low sigh—
After the autumn is winter and death.

Sad sigh the zephyrs, despairing and low,
Mute the procession, and solemn and slow;
All the sweet flowers must wither and lie
Under the pall and chill of the snow.

Yet after winter has ended his reign,
Daisies and dewdrops shall deck all the plain,
Swift when the footsteps of April are nigh,
Bursting in glory and splendor again.

Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. 92.

The Song of the Queen

On my golden throne, I rule alone,
With a magic spell complete;
And my subjects sing, and their treasures bring
To lay them at my feet,
O, never a queen, mid such tender sheen,
Dreamed ever a dream so sweet!

My armies spread o'er the valley's bed,
O'er the mountain's shimmering side;
They come and go, like the ebb and flow
Of the ocean's ceaseless tide;
And toiling sing, as their way they wing,
O'er my flowery kingdom wide.

With a flash and gleam, in the morn's soft beam,
They go to the fields afar,
Where the Yucca bright, in her robe of white,
Soft beckons like a star;
Nor toil, nor heat, from the nectar sweet,
May ever my hosts debar.

O, the proudest queen, that was ever seen,
On my happy throne am I!
For me, my hosts search the flowery coasts,
And scale the mountains high;
And sing and toil, with a sweet turmoil,
For me they live and die.

O, sweeter bliss than Semiramis
Knew ever, have I, I ween;
Nor so proud a power, in her grandest hour,
Had ever Palmyra's queen
To rule all hearts; or such ready darts
To guard with their lances keen.

I sip and cat of each priceless sweet,
The gift of the flowery zone;
No empress grand, of an Orient land,
So firm on her golden throne;
In my waxen cell, adored, I dwell.
And rule by love alone!

Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. 93.

Song of the Sabre

Jangle and clash,
Glitter and Hash,
Hear the sharp voice of the keen steel ringing!
Tremble and sink,
Shudder and shrink;
List to the song of the sabre, singing*

“Clatter and clink—
Blood is my drink,
Give me to cat of the flesh that quivers—
Sate me with gore;
Give me some more—
Pour it in streams as the floods of rivers.

“Circle and flash,
Thunder and crash,
Sudden and fell as the bolt of thunder;
Quiver and leap,
Shiver and sweep,
Cleaving the ranks of the foe asunder.

“Bright as a dream,
Glitter and gleam,
When the rent ranks in defeat are flying;
Circle and sweep,
Quiver and leap
Over the forms of the dead and dying.

Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. 94.

Riverside

Soft veiled in splendor, like some jeweled bride,
Far gazing down the future, dim and wide,
A glorious vision of enchantment gleams,
And lo! before us, queenly Riverside.

Bright in the flush of balmy southern skies,
Clothed in her robes of gorgeous Tyrian dyes,
She sits upon her purple mountain throne,
A dream of glory in her tender eyes.

What geni here hath waved his magic wand
Above the silence of a lonely land?
Lo! spreading far beyond the vision's sweep,
The wealth of green and gold on every hand!

Not from their snow-crowned, shivering Alpine posts,
Down gazing on the soft Italian coasts,
On fairer land oft bright entrancing bloom,
In longing, gazed the Carthaginian hosts.

Oh, not beside the storied, castled Rhine,
Such home of plenty hath the trailing vine,
Low-bending neath its clustering burdens sweet,
To lure the weary wanderer's feet, as thine.

Not where Sorrento's golden glories gleam,
Or soft Sicilia's dark-eyed daughters dream,
Beneath the shade of slumbering Etna's bowers,
Spread fairer groves, beside a brighter stream.

Upspringing thickly from the sleeping plain,
As sprang the hosts from proud Minerva's brain,
In marshaled ranks, dim fading 'neath the gaze,
Thy golden glories gleam—a fairy train.

Not in time's early, dim, uncertain shade,
When freedom's light blazed instant but to fade
And perish mid the deep Cimmerian gloom,
The firm foundations of thy strength were laid.

No wolf-nursed robbers on thy virgin soil,
With stores of treasure wrung from honest toil,
Within thy shelter kept their early lair,
To gorge and fatten on their bloody spoil.

No captives torn from rapine-wasted lands,
To feed the lust of lawless robber-bands,
Have helped to swell thy pulsing tides of life,
Nor stain of blood is on thy conqueror-hands.

Not as the olden, grim Conquistadors,
With sword and flame thy conquerors sought thy shores
To wring unwilling, through the weary years,
The sweat and blood of ages from thy pores.

Lone deserts made to blossom as the rose,
Hesperian fruits and bowers of soft repose,
Perpetual clothed in robes of emerald sheen—
These are the triumphs that thy years disclose.

No fever-laden, damp, malarial air
Creeps through the tresses of thy golden hair,
Nor scaly monsters waiting for their prey
Within thy leafy coverts make their lair.

Queen-ruler proud, beneath the burnished blaze
Of lordly, rapt San Bernardino's gaze,
Thou retest sweet beneath his sheltering love,
And drest of the fruits of coming days.

No piles of marble moulder in decay
In tottering swoon, along thy Appian Way; *
Nor in sad mockery of thy fallen pride,
Through kingly courts thy beggar-princes stray.

Lo! more eternal than the boasts of Rome,
Her piles of marble, or St. Peter's dome,
Thy everlasting watch-towers looming o'er
To guard the treasures of thy fairy home.

Groves, fairy-bowers extending far and wide,
Where knowledge, virtue, wander side by side,
Schools, churches pointing heavenward with their spires,
These are the jewels of thy conscious pride.

Still keep, O, Queen! from strife and fierce turmoil
Thy eager children; let no lust for spoil
Their ways divide; give merit justest meed,
And honor Labor's earnest, honest toil.

So shalt thou, changeless as thy glorious clime,
Go on, and onward in thy march sublime,
A sceptered Queen, unrivaled, golden-crowned,
Conquering and still to conquer through all time.

* Magnolia Avenue, a magnificent drive, 130 feet in width, extending in a straight line several miles parallel with the river and through the heart of the settlement.

Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. 95.

Dirge

Close the dreamless eyes that stare
With their vacant, rayless glare;
They are free from pain and care.

Lowly, gently o'er him bow,
Smooth the hair upon his brow;
He is resting, sleeping now.

Cross the hands upon the breast,
Let the weary fingers rest
Idle now; so, it were best,

Resting from earth's ceaseless wear,
Resting from their weary care,
In the cold, white stillness there.
Passed away life's fleeting sands,
Bear the clay with reverent hands,
Resting far in stranger lands.

Breathe a prayer to Him to save
While the funeral banners wave,
Bear him gently to the grave.

Softly, gently, lay him low,
Circling sadly, come and go,
In, the spray of cypress throw.

In Thy love, O, God! we trust;
Here we lay thee with the just
"Earth to earth, and dust to dust."

Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. 97.

Decoration Poem

[Written for Frank Bartlett Post, G. A. R., Los Angeles, and read by Prof. S. H. Butterfield, May 30, 1880.]

Over the shrines where our heroes repose,
Sweet in the breath of the balm-laden May,
Strew we the garlands of lily and rose,
Wreath we their tombs with the evergreen spray;
Over each relic of patriot clay,
Thrilling no more 'mid the battle's fierce throes,
Thankfully, tearfully, bend we to-day,
Strewing our garlands of myrtle and rose.

Gone is the glitter of war as a dream—
Armies that stood in the strength of their pride,
Flashing of sabre and bayonet gleam,
Melted the legions that danger defied,
Staid the red torrent that swept with full tide;
Onward to death with the turbulent stream—
War with its woe and its wreck and its pride,
Gone as the mirage that mocks with its gleam.

Not for the true hearts at rest may we grieve
Heroes immortal in glory's last sleep—
Proudly we smile as the garlands we weave,
Even in triumph give thanks as we weep.
Calm be your slumber, and quiet and deep,
Perfect your rest as the ages may give,
Soft be your pillows and sweet be your sleep,
Soldiers who died that a nation might live.

Hither the feet of our children shall turn,
Long as the star-blazoned banner shall wave;
Hence, from these precincts of holiness spurn
Sternly, forever, the dastard and slave.
Pride of proud Liberty, peerless as brave,
Long as the passionless planets shall burn,
Still shall a nation ye perished to save
Cherish your ashes in Freedom's grand urn.

Here shall your comrades with reverent tread
Evermore turn in unselfishness true,
Guarding forever the nation's proud dead,
Still wave the folds of the Red, White and Blue.
Soft fall the glitter of starlight and dew
Over each slumbering hero's lone bed;
Soft be the quiver and tender the hue
Veiling the eyes that their offerings shed.

Hushed is the thunder of mortar and gun,
Shrieking of schrapnel [sic] and whistle of ball;
Peace gilds the land with her life-giving sun,
Shedding her glory and splendor o'er all.
Gone is the gloom of the war's awful pall;
Resting in peace when the battle is done,
Sleep, soldiers, sleep till the last bugle call;
Sweet be your sleep after victory won.

Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. 98.

In Los Angeles Valley

O, glorious gem! rare jewel set
Upon earth's bosom! I would sing,
Had I the gift, in measures yet
Undreamed by poet-king,
Till pilgrims to the worn-out lands
And musty shrines beyond the sea,
Should hither turn with outstretched hands,
And songs, to worship thee.

They tell us of the Fatherland—
In legends wild, of storied Rhine;
Of fairy bowers, in Eastern land,
And scenes almost divine.
They tell us of the groves of Spain,
The Pyrenees, the peasant dance,
The vineyards of thy fair Champagne
O, land of sunny France!
They tell us of Italian skies,
And moonlit seas, where Naples stands—
O, beauteous vale! thy gifts comprise
The glories of all lands.

Tis noontide, and the sun's fierce blaze
Is mellowed in the dreamy haze!
A mirage, like a bridal veil,
Hangs trembling over hill and dale.
Beyond, when purple vineyards swell,
The mountains of San Gabriel
Loom like gigantic spectres dim,
To guard the valley's outer rim,
Like sentinels of the most High,
Or souls of patriots when they die,
Still guard the land they love so well,
All hallowed by their mystic spell;
Around their towering- summits high,
Where silence reigns, the tender sky
Bends low to kiss the whispering pines,
And look upon their golden mines.

Around us like a giant band,
The everlasting mountains stand;
In crescent grand they stretch away,
Like armies set in war's array,
With flanks, far reaching, black as night,
To battle with the sea's vast might;
As grim and rugged as the day,
When anchored in San Pedro's bay
The conquerors of Spain unfurled
Their banner o'er the western world;
As wild and free the billows toss
As when they came, with Sword and Cross,
The limbs of heathen to enslave,
The souls of pagan men to save.

A hundred years have come and gone,
The mountains stand, the seas roll on;
A century with its dust and moss,
Hath gathered over Priest and Cross;
And all who crossed the stormy main,
And wandered far from sunny Spain,
Long since have rendered up their trust—
Earth sleeps with earth, and dust, with dust.
As sweet and far, at evening, swells
The music of the Mission bells,
As when the holy fathers trod
First in their sound, and bowed to God.

Tremendous wall by earthquakes riven
Seas kiss thy feet; thy head in heaven
Looks far below, on cloud, and mist,
Looks far around, on fair fields kissed
By every breeze, at night and morn
Across the far Pacific borne,
From isles where spicy breezes blow,
From lands that never winter know;
Looks down where fair Azusa smiles,
Looks on El Monte's willowy miles,
And on San Gabriel's fragrant grove—
Looks with a lingering, longing love.
And far toward the ocean strand,

The Egypt of the southern land,
Lo! Ceres from her golden horn
Has emptied all her store of corn
On Los Nietos, favored spot,
And corn, and horn, alike forgot.

And farther still toward tropic clime,
Looks down on lovely Anaheim,
No fairer scene, by rainbow spanned,
Or sweeter grapes hath Fatherland.
Here plenty dwells; and mirth and wine
Are mingled with the songs of Rhine,
And silvery patriarchs recline
Beneath the olive and the vine;
Looks far where slumbering seas beguile,
To where lone Catalina's Isle
From main the narrow seas divide;
While o'er the intervening tide
White sails with pleasure-seekers go,
And fishermen ply to and fro.

Los Angeles, like some fair queen,
The central figure in the scene,
Sits bride-like in her dreamy bowers,
All crowned with wreaths of orange flowers,
And all the sweets that earth can know,
To make a Paradise below.
Anon, her lap with fruit o'erflows,
The citron gleams, the orange glows;
She smiles when limes with olives blend^
And blushes red when vineyards bend
All heavy laden with the store
Of luscious fruit her bosom bore.

Land of the olive and the vine!
Whose feet the mighty waters lave,
Where day's last rosy rays decline
Upon the sunset wave;
Land of soft breeze and azure skies,
In matchless beauty, lo, she stands!
O, beauteous vale! thy gifts comprise
The glories of all lands.

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Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. 100.

Custer

Written Upon the Massacre of Custer and His Gallant Band

Bold knight of sword and pen!
Bright spirit quickly fled!
Brave leader of brave men—
Contending one to ten—
Rest in thy gory bed.

Thy star has set in night,
Its dazzling radiance flown;
But not more full nor bright
O'er Balaklava's height
Fame's star immortal shone.

As comet swift you came,
And fled as bright and fast;
Long as the stars shall flame,
Or men shall dream of fame,
Shall glory chant thy name,
With heroes of the past

Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. 103.

The Maiden

Her smile was like the morning light,
Her life was like a dream;
As gently shone her spirit bright,
As moonlight on the stream,
When hushed to rest, the sighing night
Sleeps in the mellow gleam.

Her raiment flowed in sweet release—
As gracious all her ways,
As full of promise of sweet peace,
As glorious summer days,
Of ripened, fruitful, full increase,
In autumn's mellow haze.

Her song was like the linnet's trill,
Her voice was soft and low;
Her touch was like the zephyr's thrill,
That lingers, loth to go;
Her thoughts, like some pure crystal rill,
Welled soft in murmurous flow.

Her laugh was like the silvery gush
Of some sweet fountain's rune;
Her lips were like the crimson flush
Of cherries ripe in June;
Her cheeks were dyed with Nature's blush—
Twin roses in attune.

In fickle Folly's arts unskilled,
Unspoiled by Fashion's whim,
Her sparkling cup of life was filled
With sweetness to the brim—
So even-toned and sweetly willed,
Her life was like a hymn.

Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. 104.

Egyptia

Written Upon Reception of News of the Bombardment of Alexandria

Spell-bound Queen, will nothing wake thee—
Thrill with fire thy languid mien?
Must rude strangers roughly shake thee?
Shame upon thee, slothful Queen!

Rouse, O, Egypt! now or never,
Strike the blow that sets thee free;
Gird thee for the high endeavor—
Resurrection! liberty!

Where beside thy sacred river,
Lotos and papyrus laves,
Must thy pyramids forever
Look upon a land of slaves?

Do but fear and slavish wonder
Thrill thy long down-trodden sons,
At the echo of the thunder
Of the mighty English guns?

Wilt thou rouse to meet thy danger
With a proud, heroic mien?
Or with kisses greet the stranger,
As thy wanton, harlot Queen

Welcomed Rome's all-conquering legions,
Purple-clothed, with siren-guile,
To the soft voluptuous regions
Of the soul-enthraling Nile?

Aliens reap the harvests growing
O'er thy fair domains outspread,
And mid plenty overflowing,
Lo! thy children beg for bread!

Looks thy stony Sphynx in sadness,
In stern, lip-scaled, mute amaze,
On thy sloth and crime and madness
With his cold, reproachful gaze;

On thy Sodom-like pollution
With a scorn he may not speak,
Hiding time's slow revolution,
Waiting for thy spell to break.

Art thou lost to all salvation
Groveling in thy filth and lust?
Lo! thy harlot degradation
Quickens e'en thy mummied dust!

Shades of Apis and of Isis,
Thrilling with electric fires,
Of Sesostris and Cambyzes
All thy glorious warrior sires

Rise to threaten and upbraid thee
By thy sacred river's shore,
For the sins that low degrade thee—
Wake, O, dreamer, sleep no more!

Hollow-eyed and sad and solemn,
Lo! the hoary centuries gaze
Down from pyramid and column,
On thy foul, dishonored days.

Lo! the floods of battle gory,
Threaten swift thy sighing vale;
Bursts upon thy ruins hoary,
List! the tread of armies shaking!
Dreamy indolence forsake!
In the cast the day is breaking—
Rouse! O, Egypt, and awake!

Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. 105.

Decoration Poem

[Written for Frank Bartlett Post, G. A. R., on the occasion of their Annual Ceremonial, May 30th, 1882. Read by S. H. Butterfield.]

Once more to Freedom's sacred shrine
We come, in serried, solemn line,
To friendship's memory true;
Once more beneath the skies of May,
We come in tearful, hushed array,
To deck each comrade's peaceful clay
With rose, and violet blue.

Sleep on! by peaceful zephyrs fanned,
Soft hush o'er all the slumbrous land,
Illumed by glory's rays;
War's wrathful storm of death is o'er,
The bugle calls to arms no more,
One banner waves from shore to shore,
With clustering stars ablaze.

When Sumter's thunders throbbed and thrilled,
And nerved each soldier, iron-willed,
For Freedom's holy fight—
When called the drum's deep-stirring roll,
True as the needle to the pole,
Each noble, ardent, patriot soul
Turned toward its beacon light

By every murmuring stream ye sleep!
On every fortified, frowning steep,
On every battle-plain;
In every vale, in every land,
From broad Potomac's silvery strand
To sighing, sun-kissed Rio Grande,
Your blood was shed like rain.
Thick, as the fallen autumn leaves,
Or ripened harvest's golden sheaves,
Beneath the summer skies,
Ye rest in sunshine, and in shade,
In deadly swamp and everglade,

Upon your country's altar laid—
Nor vain the sacrifice.

Pale is the camp-fire's boding blaze,
Fled death's dark, gloomy, bloody days.
Hate's battle pennons furled;
The heat of conflict passed away,
And side by side, the Blue and Gray
Together stand again to-day,
Against a hostile world.

Still waves our banner broad and bright
O'er every vale, o'er every height—
Forever Freedom's shield;
And brighter, thicker, year by year,
Its constellated stars appear,
And deeper still, the azure clear
Upon its glorious field.

Indissoluble as the sun,
In peace and war, in purpose one,
In Union firm and grand;
We stand to-day a people free,
United for all time to be,
One flag, one heart, from sea to sea—
Proud Freedom's peerless land.

O, not till Freedom's sun hath set
Shall patriot hearts and hands forget
Their tribute to renew;
Forever past the toil and heat,
Where storms no more of battle beat,
'Neath laurel wreath, and garland sweet,
Rest, Comrades of the Blue!

Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. 107.

Mississippi

Let Germans sing, "The German Rhine,"
Its castled shores and wealth of vine,
Its crystal tide, its ruby wine,
But ever give to me
The Mississippi's mighty sweep,
A Nation's heart-throb pulsing deep,
Swift-springing far with lion-leap
Upon the Southern sea.

From Minnesota's flashing snows,
Through western gleams, and southern glows.
Thy floods sweep downward to repose
Where tropic zephyrs sleep;
Born in the shade of northern pines,
O, mighty flood! a thousand Rhines
Are blended in thy vast confines
In one resistless sweep.

O, Mississippi! proud and free!
Swift-pulsing flood of Liberty!
Bride of the isle-gemmed tropic sea,
Still chainless be thy tide!
Thy mighty flood still downward pour,
Upon the smiling tropic shore,
Roll on, roll on forevermore,
A mighty Nation's pride!

Hushed are the vengeful blasts that pealed;
Thy wounds, the balm of Peace hath healed;
War's deadly discords sullen yield
Unto thy magic sway.
The echoes of the cannon's roar,
Have died away upon thy shore,
And strife and tumult vex no more
Thy glorious, queenly way.

Let but a puny despot dream
To fetter-bind thy glorious stream,
A million swords shall flash and gleam,
A million Freemen leap;
Grand in thy freedom! unconfined,
Free as the rushing chainless wind,
No tyrant-wile nor might may bind
Thy strength's resistless sweep.

Gem of the World! Queen of the West
The fleets of Empire kiss thy breast!
The fair, proud, purple cities rest
Beside thy smiling shore;
Roll on, roll on, O, peerless tide!
An Empire grand on either side,
Pearl of a mighty Nation's pride,
Roll on forevermore!

Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. 109.

Miserere Domine

Mercy, Master, King of all,
On Thy mighty name we call;
Thou by saints and sinners praised.
Hear our fainting voices raised,
Like the drowning sailors cry,
“Help us, Master, or we die! “
Wafted o’er the moaning sea,
“Miserere Domine.”

When the summer day is gone,
And the darkness cometh on,
Leave us not to shrink afraid,
From the night’s deep silent shade.
Thou that rulest in the skies,
Hear our feeble prayers and sighs,
When the day’s last footsteps flee,
“Miserere Domine.”
Gracious King of Heaven, Most High!
Hear thy erring children’s cry,
Cheer us with thy pitying smiles,
Keep us from the tempter’s wiles;
Still to sin and error prone,
Guard us ever, as thine own;
Thou that rulest earth and air.
Have us in thy holy care;
Save us through eternity,
“Miserere Domine.”

Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. 110.

Snow-Storm in the Sierra

What fearful, mystic, boding signs!
How the wind sobs amongst the pines!
Like some sad, sorrowing soul in pain—
Then sinks in fitful sighs again,
Or lulls to ghastly silence deep,
As broods o'er death's eternal sleep;
How like a death-pall overhead,
The sky with leaden hue o'erspread!
Sound, sight, and silence, omens all,
Well might the stoutest heart appall,
And still the life-blood's pulsing flow—
Presaging danger, wrath and woe!

As autumn leaves in eddying flight,
Down fall the feathery flakes of white,
As countless as the grains of sand
That strew the ocean's boundless strand;
As thick as fell the Parthian hail
On Crassus Roman legions mail.
Woe, woe to him whose strength may fail,
Or footsteps tarry on the trail;
With wreaths of white it strews his way
As if his weary feet to stay,
Soft as the maiden's loosened coils,
But deadly as Medusa's toils.
No sound comes to the listening ear,
To break the awful spell of fear,
Save when a mystic tremor stirs
The lances of the listening firs,
And universal terror broods
O'er all the muffled solitudes

A day, a night, a week go by,
Dead-white the earth, steel-blue the sky
Bends o'er a silence dread and deep
As pallid death's eternal sleep.

The storm-king's revel ended, o'er,
The sunshine gilds the scene once more,

O'erburdened with its fleecy freight,
And cold and pitiless as fate.
Afar it dazzles dim and wide,
O'er shimmering dome and tall divide;
Not all an army's serried strength
Might force that barrier's gleaming length;
All sights, all objects, far and near,
Seem burdened with a spell of fear
That Nature - face will not forsake,
A spell no earthly force may break,
Save spring's soft breath, and summer sun,
When winter's ruthless race is run.

Each tottering steep, each towering height,
Is shrouded with a mantle white;
High upward, eastward, dim it spreads
Where shimmering peaks with shivering heads,
Like corpses risen from the bier,
White-blanced with everlasting fear.
All solemn stand like sheeted ghosts
Or spectre-sentries at their posts—
O, mighty, snowy solitudes!
What awful spell of mystery broods
Rapt in the coldness of despair,
Eternal! endless! everywhere!

Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. III.

Midnight Musings

Night had drawn her sombre curtain
O'er the landscape's form uncertain—
Low and faint the midnight echoes from the belfry, ghostly toll;
Came the shadows thick and thicker,
In the lamp's low, dying flicker,
And a feeling, deep and solemn, sat upon my inmost soul.

So, I mutely mused and pondered
On this life, and sadly wandered
Forth into the midnight stillness, and I saw the countless stars
Glittering as the visions human,
Bright and fair as dreams of woman,
Happy in the love of true man—shining through their heavenly bars.

Far Uranus, solitary,
Like some wanderer, lone and weary,
In the deserts, dim and dreary, wandering, lost forevermore—
Faintly glimmered; and the Pleiads,
Like lost, wandering, shivering Naiads,
Trembled on the mystic confines of the everlasting shore.

And the moon, like wayward maiden,
With her smiles of promise laden,
Went with brothers, sisters, circling—Jupiter, with smiling face.
Mars, with glow like warrior gory,
Venus, bright with love's sweet story,
Saturn, with his rings of glory—sweeping on through silent space.

And I said unto my spirit,
We will heaven's deep mysteries ferret—
We will ponder, we will wander nigh unto the Throne of God,
Where no eye of mortal gazes
Through the star-mist curtain hazes,
Through bright, labyrinthine mazes, ne'er by mortal footstep trod.

Like a glory o'er me streaming,
Shone the stars soft radiance beaming—
Orbs with silvery lustre gleaming, beaming through the vault of night—
Suns to other worlds belonging,
Starry constellations thronging,
And my soul was filled with longing—longing for the Infinite.

Joyous as the sky-lark singing,
Forth we fled from earth, upspringing,
On the plumes of fancy winging, through ethereal depths and clear—
Past lost worlds in darkness sleeping,
Past the sun's vast orbit sweeping,
Past fierce fiery meteors leaping, onward in our swift career.

So we wandered on and onward,
Forward, outward, upward, sunward—
Other suns and other systems met our dazzled, wondering view—
Each bright, radiant, guardian mother
But precursor of another
Mother of a starry family, in the universe of blue.

On we swept by planets sighing,
Lone and vast, in darkness lying—
Onward, toward the centre flying, like an arrow to its aim;
Still undaunted, still untiring
Visions bright my fancy firing,
And the sun went out, expiring like the candle's flickering flame.

Onward, past each heavenly station,
Swept we by each bright creation—
By each clustering constellation, by each lonely, truant star;
Fiery comets madly lashing,
Swift through space went sudden, flashing,
Bearers of some awful message to the trembling worlds afar.

Still we saw, as in a vision,
Faintly through the depths elysian,
Struggling light from distant planets, that no mortal eye may view—
One faint glow of starry glory,
Like the fame of warrior gory—
Like some dim-remembered story—struggling vain to wander through.

And these glories all transcending,
Past all human comprehending,
But beginning of an ending, never ending, never done,
Terrified my soul exceeding,
Hitherto unawed, unheeding;
And my faint feet weak and bleeding, turned from labor scarce begun.

Who shall dare to dream or reckon
All the countless orbs that thicken—
Myriad millions blazing, burning, far beyond our mortal sight,
Wheeling spheres and worlds in motion,
Countless as the sands of ocean,
Wheeling, flashing, blazing, burning, through the awful Infinite.

E'en should we by dire convulsion,
With resistless dread propulsion,
Onward, onward, downward rushing, from our orbit swift be hurled,
When the sun had ceased to kiss us,
Who but God, would ever miss us—
Miss this atom, though we perished from the universe of worlds?

And I cried with voice of anguish,
“Why is it that we should languish—
Longing for this rayless atom, with its strife, and-sin, and lust?
But a speck on God’s creation!”
And in dark humiliation,
Lo! I bowed my humbled spirit, prone in agony and dust.

“Oh!” I cried, “Ye silvery planets
Free and soft as wandering gannets,
How I long to wander with you—from this darkness to emerge!”
But the stars swept onward, shining,
Heedless of my vain repining,
And the moon went down, declining, to the dark horizon’s verge.

Then I heard the voice of water,
Glad as song of Jephthah’s daughter—
Heard the sighing of the zephyrs to the listening orange tree,
Saw the heavens soft, starry glitter,
Heard the dreaming bird’s low twitter,
And the fancies dark and bitter, fled and left my spirit free.

Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. 113.

Autumn

Amid the bowers, in sad unrest,
The autumn winds are sighing;
Upon the mountain's lofty crest
The fleecy clouds are lying;
In faded robes of russet dressed,
The sombre year is dying.

Through dreamy grove and woodland fair,
The winds go sadly wailing,
The weeping vines, with branches bare,
Low on the ground are trailing;
Upon the sad October air,
The withered leaves are sailing.

Faintly the echoes come and go,
Like weary hearts low sighing,
Sadly the gentle breezes blow,
Where withered leaves are lying,
And zephyrs whisper, soft and low,
"Another year is dying."

Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. 116.

Thermopylae

The tyrant's hosts o'erspread the land,
His ships o'erspread the sea,
Where kept their watch the Spartan band
Beside Thermopylae,
To guard with stern, determined hand,
The birthright of the free.

No soft, luxurious curtains swept
About those heroes bold;
No eunuchs fanned them as they slept
Upon a couch of gold—
Nor slaves in trembling terror kept
Their watch o'er wealth untold.

They stood within that narrow path,
Like lion whelps at bay,
To brave the glittering tyrant's wrath
And bar his boastful way—
To hurl the bolt of Freedom's scath [sic]
Upon his proud array.

How could they live and see their land,
Their fathers sacred graves,
Their glorious mounts, their sighing strand
Kissed by the murmuring waves,
Their plains, their groves, their temples grand,
The heritage of slaves?

The christening of baptismal blood,
Came with the flush of morn—
Immovable as rocks they stood,
In hate's unmeasured scorn,
To yield their spirits for the good
Of ages yet unborn.

Firm as the Grecian hills they stood
To meet the Persian foe,
Whose banners like a leafy wood
Spread boundless far below—
As boundless as the Egean flood,
Outspread in gleaming flow.

A sea of spears; a glittering flash;
A low, tumultuous hum;
A deafening, wild, barbaric crash
Of trumpet and of drum,
As when mad storms the billows lash—
And lo! they come! they come!

From Asia's farthest, darkest lands,
The glittering legions pour,
As countless as the myriad sands
That strew the ocean shore—
Bands surging madly upon bands,
Upiled in wreck before!

With faces stern, that would not pale,
With hearts that knew not fear,
They faced full well that deadly hail
Of javelin and spear,
That beat upon their coats of mail
With ringing echoes clear.

With fearless hearts they met their doom,
Rejoicing in their pride,
As joyous as the hopeful groom
Goes forth to meet his bride;
In manhood's strength, in glory's bloom,
They met the foe, and died!

What spoil had Persia's might to show,
When lulled the deadly strife?
When tide of battle ceased to flow,
Where discord late was rife,
No captive freeman grovelled low
To plead, for slavish life;

To kiss in trembling- awe and fear,
His conqueror's garment hems—
To supplicate with sigh and tear;
No gleam of costly gems,
Nor store of glittering gold was here.
Nor blaze of diadems.

The tyrant's haughty bosom heaves
With impotent despair;
Like swelling heaps of harvest sheaves
His dead are everywhere—
Like countless drifted autumn leaves;
But not -a captive there!

O, noblest souls of any age,
Of any land or clime!
Ye left on history's burnished page
A lesson to all Time—
Of Freeman's scorn, of patriot rage,
Of sacrifice sublime—

The lesson that a tyrant's power
Fell-massed, may seek to chain,
To hold in thrall for one brief hour,
One Freeman's soul in vain—
To make him lowly, prostrate, cower
Before his slavish train.

Came hush of eve at close of day,
And rest for weary feet;
The noise of battle passed away,
And Freedom's offering sweet,
Upon her holy altar lay—
Her sacrifice complete!

Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. 117.

By the Sea

Roll! roll! roll!
O, vague, mysterious scroll!
O, awful page of history,
Writ by the Almighty hand!
Oh! that thy dreadful mystery
My mind might solve, my soul might see!
Oh! longing vain! it may not be—
We may not understand.

Sigh! sigh! sigh!
Like weary heart; Oh, why
Forever sad and sorrowful,
Oh, wherefore sigh, O, sea?
Upon earth's quiet breast,
Why canst thou never rest?
O, mournful, restless sea!

Moan! moan! moan!
Like weeper sad and lone!
What crimes lie heavy on thy soul,
Why dost thou moan, O, sea?
For gallant ships gone down,
Wrecked hopes, or ruined town?
Soon, soon o'er all, the seas shall roll
Of vast eternity.

Roar! roar! roar!
Why dost thou seek the shore
In anger, that thy ruthless inarch
Is stopped and stayed at last?
Why dost thou lift thy hand
Against the peaceful land—
Like maniac in thy frenzy hurl
Thy giant forces vast?

Fret! fret! fret!
Like souls that ne'er forget!
What hidden sorrow hast thou known,
What cross has come to thee?
The stars their passion tell,
The moon still loves thee well;
What canst thou know of blighted hopes,
O, mournful, fretful sea?

Break! break! break!
Like hearts when friends forsake!
No more thy sparkling waves shall play
Amid bright tropic isles;
They break upon the strand,
Like hearts upon the land—
Like human hearts, when Hope no more
Upon their altar smiles.

Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. 120.

Illinois

Land of childhood's vanished dream,
Land of lake and boundless prairie,
Land of murmuring brook and stream,
I have wandered, and am weary!

I have wandered far from thee,
Where my kindred dust reposes,
And beside the Western sea,
Dream amid perennial roses.

Yet to-day thy memories rise,
Trooping sadly, coming, going;
In my heart and in my eyes,
Tender springs of thought o'erflowing.

I have seen thy shrouding snows.
Flashing in their chilly splendor,
Holding in their white repose,
Nature's hidden darlings tender

I have wandered rapt and oft,
In thy woodlands thick and mazy,
When the south-winds murmuring soft,
Whispered to the peeping daisy:

"Hide no more thy face in fear,
Linger not in listless languor;
Hasten, love, the spring is here—
Fled the snow-king's bitter anger."

I have seen earth's flowery bed,
Laden with its tender blisses,
And the bluebell bend her head,
Coyly to the zephyr's kisses.

I have lingered by the side
Of thy lakelets, hushed and stilly,
When the dreamy crystal tide
Kissed the sleeping water lily.

I have watched thy glories pale,
Fading like a dying ember,
Sighs on every passing gale,
In thy dreamy, sad September,

I have seen thy green leaves wave,
And when autumn's footsteps follow,
Borne by north winds to their grave,
Heaped in many a lonely hollow.

Days of April smiles and tears,
Days of licet fleeting sighs and gladness,
Days of mingled hopes and fears,
Days of mingled joy and sadness,

Nevermore, oh, nevermore,
Time may yield such full completeness,
Holding in its mystic store,
For my soul, such perfect sweetness!

Rainbow hope again may shed
O'er my soul such brightness, never!
Summer past, and springtime fled,
Perished, vanished, gone forever!

Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. 121.

The Song of the Drum

I have stirred the blood of ages,
I have roused their hates and rages,
I have maddened priests and sages,
With my Drum! Drum! Drum!
Listen to my thrilling story—
To the combat fierce and gory,
To the field of death and glory.
Haste to Come! Come! Come!

Where the death-lights dance and quiver,
Over war's dark-flowing river,
Let the faint-heart shrink and shiver.
With his white lips dumb;
Let the coward hide and burrow,
Leave the plowshare in the furrow,
As the swift and eager arrow
Haste to Come! Come! Come!

From the scenes of childhood's prattle,
To the thunder-storm of battle,
Where the death-bolts crash and rattle,
And the swift balls hum;
Where the riven ranks are falling
Mid the smoke-wreaths writhing, palling,
I am ever calling, calling,
With my "Come! Come! Come!"

Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. 123.

A Requiem for the Old Year

Mourn not the old year departing,
Press back the bitter tears starting,
Watch round his pillow till dawn;
With the past, dusty and rotten,
Leave him to slumber forgotten
With the dim centuries gone.

Life is but short and uncertain,
Veiled by time's dark, misty curtain,
Changeful and false as the moon;
Checkered with pleasure and sorrow,
Dark clouds or sunshine to-morrow
Fading and vanishing soon.

Weep not for bright hopes departed,
Sigh not in grief, broken-hearted,
Dream not of memories fled;
Bury the dead with his treasures,
Bright dreams and quick-fleeting pleasures
Summer flowers withered and dead.

Other years, blooming above us,
Come like the children that love us,
Burdened with bright hopes and fears;
Bringing sweet pleasure and gladness,
Sunshine, and joy, and sadness,
Darkness, and sorrow, and tears.

Softly! the old year is dying;
Faintly and slowly his sighing
Breaks through the stillness and gloom;
Gather around, ye that love him,
Scatter the roses above him,
Lay him to rest in his tomb.

Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. 124.

Decoration Poem

Written for Frank Bartlett Post, G. a. R., Los Angeles. Read by Major Geo. E. Gard, May 30, 1879

Comrades, rest; your march is done!
Written Fame's immortal story;
Fought the fight, the victory won,
Dream no more of death and glory.
Not again at day's dim break,
Shall the trumpet bid you wake;
Nevermore in war's red track,
Face the bullet's deadly rattle,
Nor from weary bivouac
Leap to meet the storm of battle.

Here no deep artillery swell,
Sabre-clang or bayonet gleaming,
Hiss of shot, or screech of shell
Break your placid midnight-dreaming.
Here, with gentle heart and hand,
Come the daughters of the land,
O'er each hero's noble breast
Fragrant flowers of beauty strewing;—
Every hallowed place of rest,
Tears from tender eyes bedewing.

Free from base, polluting slaves,
With a soldier's high endeavor,
Comrades, we will keep your graves
Holy shrines of glory ever.
Here we gather one and all,
Standing forth at duty's call;
Honor we our heroes dead,
Valiant in their country's quarrel,
And each soldier's honored bed
Proudly wreath with rose and laurel.
In life's column, breaking ranks,
From the call that brought us hither,
Dropping from our serried flanks,
Ye have wandered, comrades, whither?

To that starry esplanade,
Than earth's mightiest, broader, grander,
Standing in the grand parade
Marshalled by the Great Commander,
Answering at the call of roll
Read from Fame's immortal scroll,
Gone from life's dark sentry-tramp,
O'er the dim eternal river,
Resting in the heavenly camp,
Comrades, sleep in peace, forever!

Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. 125.

Welcome from Los Angeles to San Francisco

[Written upon the driving of the last spike in the S. P. K. R., connecting Los Angeles with San Francisco.]

Welcome to our bowers of roses,
Welcome, lover, strong and true,
Where sweet Summer's breath reposes
All the long, bright season through!

Lo! a maiden, coy to greet you,
Orange-crowned, with rosy mouth,
Hither come our steps to meet you,
Daughter of the sunny South.

Follow swift your welcome letters,
Come in glory and in pride;
Bind us with the willing fetters,
As the bridegroom binds the bride.

Hold us firmly bound forever,
Fold us with your iron bands
In embrace that none may sever,
With our sighing sister lands.

Leave awhile your wind-vexed billows,
Let the tide ebb to and fro;
Sleep beneath our sighing willows,
While your white sails come and go.

Storms of sea-birds fiercely driven,
Fleeing from the icy zones,
Like the drifting cloud-rack riven,
Shriek around your Farallones.

Here, the breath of rose and myrtle
Soft and sweet the sleepers kiss,
And the humming-bird and turtle
Lull to dreams of love and bliss.

Leave dark care's corroding canker—
Come with smiles about your mouth;
Let your galleons ride at anchor,
While you dally with the South.

Standing by the stormy ocean,
With thy will to do and dare,
Placid mid the wild commotion,
Thou art strong, as we are fair.

Still thy strong arm, never weary,
Thrusting far its iron hand,
Reaching o'er the white Sierra,
Grasps the wealth of every land.

All the sprites of earth and ocean
Bow them at thy footstool low;
And thy ships, with stately motion,
At thy bidding come and go.

White sails, like some pure orison
In the sunset's dying gleam,
O'er the ocean's dim horizon
Vanish like some fading dream.

Lo! thine car doth lean and listen
At the East's faint opened doors,
And thy white sails gleam and glisten
O'er the sea's remotest shores.

Where the swift keels vex the waters,
Murmuring round the Golden Gate,
Come the East's proud, jeweled daughters,
Queenly in their gorgeous state.

Not so soft and sweet and tender
Sleeps love's dreaming in their eyes;
Not so dazzling in their splendor
As the glories of our skies.

We have mountains, hoar and olden,
Flowery vales and murmuring seas;
We have fruits as rare and golden
As the bright Hesperides.

We have vineyards purple laden,
Wreathing every hill and vale;
Blushing as the trembling maiden,
When she lists to love's fond tale.

To thy marts with treasure teeming,
Wing we as the laden bees,
Wakened from our maiden dreaming,
By the sleeping, peaceful seas.

Cheer us in our high endeavor,
Viking of the mighty sea;
So shall faith and love forever
Hind us fondly unto thee.

Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. 126.

October

Slow and stately, sad and sober,
Come the footsteps of October—
Trembling echoes faintly dying,
Sighing zephyrs all around;
Fading flowers for respite suing,
Withered leaves her pathway strewing,
All the woodland glories lying
Prone upon the dreamless ground.

Slow the ripened nuts are falling,
Low the plaintive quail is calling;
Now the maize with rustling tingle,
All its golden wealth unfolds;
And the grape, with purple flushing,
Drooping low, awaits the crushing,
Ere its soul shall intermingle
With the flow of other souls.

Now the air is crisp and crisper,
With the white-lipped frost's faint whisper,
And the starry legions fastly
Bright begem the sleeping waves;
And the weeping willows quiver
With a faint and fearful shiver,
As the moonlight weird and ghastly
Falls upon forgotten graves.

Nature for her darlings grieving,
Sits as mourner unbelieving,
Like some listless weeper crooning,
With sad palms together pressed;
All the earth is full of sighing,
For her loved ones fading, dying,
Lying in a deathly swooning,
On their lonely mother's breast.

All the days are full of sadness;
Fled the Summer's flush of gladness;
Hazes veil the trembling mountains,
Like a phantom glides the sun;
Dreamy, dreamy, sad October,
Nun-like in thy habit, sober;
Hush of death is on thy fountains;
Summer's race of glory run.

Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. 129.

Welcome, Gentle Rain

Welcome, welcome, gentle rain,
Softly tripping o'er the plain,
With thy moistened finger-tips
Cooling nature's fevered lips;
Showering kisses on her face,
Resting in her fierce embrace;
Joy and blessings in thy train—
Welcome, welcome, gentle rain!

Where thy fairy footsteps pass,
Soon shall spring the tender grass,
Soon shall toss the waving grain,
Like the storm-vexed billowy main;
Winds shall whisper in the tree,
And the wandering, dreamy bee
Drift from flower to flower along,
Singing still her drowsy song;
Sad and sweet, the plaintive dove
To her mate shall sing of love;
Nature burst her silent tomb—
Birds shall warble—earth shall bloom
Like lost Paradise again!
Welcome, welcome, gentle rain.
Welcome, welcome, gentle rain,
Singing still thy soft refrain!
Soon shall leap the sparkling rills,
Living glory crown the hills;
Tender lambs shall skip and play
Where the shepherds idly stray;
Happy birds shall warbling sing,
Leafy bowers shall throb and ring,
Fields shall flush with brighter hue,
Skies shall melt to deeper blue,
Nature wake from still repose,
Deserts blossom as the rose,
Flowers shall shed their sweet perfume
O'er bright vales of Eden-bloom,
Zephyrs sing a softer strain—

Welcome, welcome, gentle rain!

Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. 130.

Los Angeles

Standing by the western main,
In thy queen-like, fairy train,
Like a maiden, bright and fair,
With the roses in thy hair,

With a dream of summer skies,
In thy tender love-lit eyes,
Like Titania, fairy queen,
In thy robes of gold and green.

Round thy feet the roses cling;
In thy smile, perpetual Spring;
Leaning on the hoary mountain,
At thy feet the silvery fountain.
Where the drowsy song of bees
Mingles with the sighing seas,
Odors sweet, o'er countless miles
Wafted from the spicy isles.

With a flush thy brow upon,
Like the purple skies at dawn,
Like some maiden, sweet and fair,
In the sighing twilight air,
When the summer day is done,
Waiting to be wooed and won.

Gallants soon shall wander to thee,
Suitors soon shall come to woo thee
From the East and from the West,
Yearning, longing to be blest,
From the North and from the South,
Stealing kisses from thy mouth

O'er the land and o'er the sea,
Suitors soon shall come to thee—
They will seek thee in thy bowers,
Crowned with wreaths of orange flowers,

They will trace thee to thy seat,
Where the zephyrs murmur sweet—
Where the fairy footsteps wander
'Neath the purple oleander;
Where the lily, tall and slender,
Bows her head in dreamy splendor.

In the twilight's tender gloom,
Where the sweet moss-roses bloom
Like some maiden, coy, at last
They will find, and hold thee fast

They will whisper tales of love
When the stars look from above;
Lay their treasures at thy feet,
They will woo thee well, my sweet.
Haply, thou their lives shalt bless
With thy tender fond caress.
From thy vine-wreathed, fairy home,
Restless ones no more shall roam;
On thy loving, gentle breast,
Weary ones shall dream and rest.

Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. 131.

The Vaquero

Woe, woe to the wretch that his lariat's coils,
Fell-tightened, may wreath in its terrible toils!
Where dark, surging hosts, like the mad, rushing wind,
Flee wildly, what spectre rides weirdly behind,
With eyes flaming red, like the meteor's glare,
That sheds its fierce rays o'er the way of despair?
He rides on their path like the angel of death,
That rides on the wrath of the hurricane's breath;
He comes, and the terrified refugees flee,
Like petrels that skim o'er the storm-troubled sea;
They flee from the sweep of the lasso's dread thralls;
Woe, woe to the wretch when the thunderbolt falls!

On, onward with roar like the storm-troubled deep,
They come like the rush of the hurricane's sweep;
The sheen of the spears of the dew-laden grass
Is ground into powder and melts as they pass;
And vanish all things in the path where they run,
As swiftly as mists in the track of the sun;
Like fierce, zig-zag lightning, the lariat sweeps
Through space, ere its pitiless thunderbolt leaps;
Now swaying, and sweeping, and circling, it swings,
Then swift as the coils of the cobra it springs!
Like oak by the shaft of the lightning o'erthrown,
The victim falls stricken, a captive, alone!
What doom-singled form may escape from its thralls?
Woe, woe to the herd when the thunderbolt falls!

Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. 133.

Never Go Back on a Friend

Never go back on a friend!
When his life with dark mist is enshrouded;
Ever be true to the end,
When his sky with misfortune is clouded;
Add not one bitter pang more,
To a soul that already is aching;
Help not to render more sore,
A heart that is bleeding and breaking.

His sun all resplendent may shine,
And thine may be shrouded in sorrow;
The roses around him may twine,
And thine may be withered to-morrow.
The quick, lurid lightnings may leap—
All thy gorgeous possessions may perish;
And the waves of adversity sweep
Over all thou dost value and cherish.

The rust and the mildew may creep
O'er the fanes thou hast lovingly gilded.
And the fierce, rushing avalanche sweep
O'er the spot, where thy castle is builded.
The earthquake may level thy pride,
The crater may rend its thin crust,
And the red lava whirl in its tide,
And the hurricane humble in dust.

Together, at last, ye may stand,
When the body surrenders its breath,
And journey alone, hand in hand,
Through the shades of the valley of death.
Let the stars wander madly through space,
And time with eternity blend,
And the fast, or the slow, win the race,
But "never go back on a friend."

Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. 134.

Murder

A whisper soft and low,
A face, with angry glow,
A start, a word, a blow,

A ringing shot, a cry,
A quivering form, a sigh,
A fixed and glazing eye.

A song, a prayer to save,
A coffin rude, a grave
Where pine-trees sigh and wave,

Made deep by stranger hand,
Where mountains, white and grand,
Like ghosts, eternal stand.

No muttering thunder deep,
Shall ever wake thy sleep,
Or mourners come to weep;

Nor bitter tears be shed,
When skies are purpling red,
Above thy lowly bed.

Weep, weep, ye night dews o'er,
Deep, deep, ye wild winds roar,
Sleep, sleep, to wake no more.

Remorse, and sorrow vain—
A brow all dark with pain—
A brand—another Cain!

*

Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. 135.

Northland and Southland

Said the Southland to the North,
“Life in thee is little worth,
With thy bitter breath that blows,
With thy chilling- ice and snows,
With thy frozen lakes and streams
Spellbound fast with nightmare dreams;
Blasted by the wintry breath,
Roses pale and droop in death,
Leafy flush and flowery bloom
Fade at fiat of their doom;
Songsters plume their wings and flee
From the wrath of days to be
With a shivering, hopeless sigh,
All thy darlings droop and die;
All thy glories bright and brave
Sleep and moulder in the grave,
While above my bosom calm
Broods eternal breath of balm.”

Said the Northland to the South,
“Thou art parched with heat and drouth;
Fevers scorch thy veins in youth,
Serpents haunt thy fadeless bowers,
Death thy ever-blooming flowers;
Quenchless longings, fierce desires
Thrill thy veins with maddening fires;
Everlasting languor broods
O’er thy flowery solitudes;
Pale malaria lurks unseen,
In thy tangled tresses sheen,
Where the drooping cypress waves,
Sighing o’er forgotten graves;
But from out my winter’s strife
Springs renewed a fresher life.
Myriad germs of fruit and flower
Quickened by the mystic power,
Thrill and throb, and swell and burst
Bright as in earth’s morning first.

As awaking from a dream,
Every slumbering brook and stream
Bursts its brittle icy bound,
With a gladsome murmurous sound,
And with tender glow and gleam,
New-born glory reigns supreme.”

Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. 136.

Morton

Dead lion of the land!
Proud, kingly head, laid low!
Strong of the heart and hand,
Great leader in command,
Immortal patriot, grand!

Low o'er thy bier we bow.
Beneath the war's dark pall,
Thy words of ringing cheer
Roused armies with their call;
High, looming over all,
Thy spirit, grand and tall,
Still lingers with us here.

On fields of blood and gore
Thy mighty voice was heard;
The echoes of its roar
Still ring from shore to shore,
And shall forevermore,
While Freedom's pulse is stirred.

* Written upon receipt of news of the death of Indiana's great "War Governor."

Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. 137.

Signs

Lo! in the skies a mighty angel tall!
A sword of flame far-flashing through the gloom!
From time's far depths a mighty trumpet call,
Warning of wrath, and woe, and death, and doom.
Dim, shadowy spectres through the darkness loom,
And war's dark shadows gather like a pall,
Shrouding a tottering empire's yawning tomb;
Lo! the handwriting on time's awful wall,
Foretelling blood, and overthrow, and fall.

Signs in the skies! The starry hosts engage
O'er doomed Byzantium's tomb enshrined in moss;
Swift meteors blaze, and spectral warriors wage
Fierce battle for the Crescent and the Cross.
Madly the hosts contending heave and toss,
As wave meets wave when storms have rent their cage;
Down sinks the Crescent's crimsoned, silken floss;
No more the bigot Moslem's dotard rage
Shall blot with gore bright Europe's glorious page.

No more thy trembling form shall quake and lean
O'er the bright Bosphorus, with reeking hands,
Tainting with death each bright and golden scene,
O, loathsome leper of the western lands!
Soon, soon shall rend thy rusted iron bands,
The sighing land of glorious Constantine;
Back! to old Asia's wilds and desert sands!
Hide thy marred face, and bow thy alien mien—
Crying, afar, "Unclean! unclean! unclean!"

No longer shall thy withering footsteps haunt
The classic shores by sage and poet sung,
Nor vile oppression's throttling clutches daunt
The thrilling accents of sweet Freedom's tongue;

From Saint Sophia's glittering dome outflung,
Soon shall the Cross the waning Crescent taunt,
As in the days when chivalry was young;
No more thy pirate banners flame and flaunt
O'er the bright pathway of the Hellespont.

Signs in the East! Swift lightning sudden flashing
From unsheathed sabres, thick as forest leaves—
Wild tumult, as of billows madly lashing
When ocean's deep-stirred bosom wildly heaves.
The wind that o'er sad Servia moans and grieves
Shall hush in awe when steel on steel is clashing
In war's fierce storm, and warriors lie like sheaves
Where squadrons o'er red fields are madly dashing
Mid cannon flame, and thunderbolt fierce crashing.

* Written just preceding the commencement of hostilities between Russia and Turkey.

Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. 138.

To the Comet

Written on the Appearance of Coggia's Comet, in 1874

Weird, wayward wanderer! no one knoweth
From whence thou cometh, whither goeth,
What cause impels thy eager race
Through the lost depths of boundless space,
What fear impels thy headlong flight
Through the lone watches of the night,
What dread impulse hath made thee leap
Into the vague, eternal deep,
Why forth thy lurid flashes stream.
When weary mortals sleep and dream?
Perchance, on thee some curse hath been
Pronounced by mighty power unseen,
Beyond the dim eternal shore,
And thou art doomed forevermore,
And banished from the heavenly train,
To wander forth, like branded Cain.

From whence you come, or whither go,
Are secrets we may never know;
Your future, what your present mission,
Your name or previous condition,
Are mysteries as darkly hid
As those of Egypt's pyramid,
Or that dread memory that shrinks
Within the lips of sullen Sphynx—
More vague than fabled dreams that cling
Around old Nile's mysterious spring.

In headlong flight on fiery wing,
Fast-fleeing, like a guilty thing,
Upon thy lonely felon path
In fear, before avenging wrath,
At dewy eve, and purple dawn,
Thy course is ever on and on;
When shades are stealing o'er the West,
Thou mayst not pause, thou mayst not rest
On, ever on, without repose,

Through starry archipelagoes,
Where constellations wheel and turn,
And fiery planets blaze and burn,
A dazzling flash across each face—
Away, away, through viewless space,
Through glooming night, and gleaming day,
Through the bright star-gemmed milky way,
Through space ethereal, vast, unknown,
Thy course is onward, still alone.
Through soundless depths, and waveless seas,
Past the lone, trembling Pleiades,
Through tideless deep and starry zone,
By flaming suns and worlds unknown,
On which proud science ne'er hath gleamed,
No Newton gazed, nor Herschel dreamed;
Still shalt thou keep thy tireless race
Thro' the long years; where awful space
Is measured not by slow degrees—
Through lost infinity's lone seas.

When murmuring night-winds softly creep,
To kiss the folded flowers asleep,
We gaze upon thy flaming path,
As on some fearful thing of wrath.
We sleep, we start, we gasp for breath,
And dream of dangers, wars, and death.

When night looks down through mantling fears,
And bathes the world with dewy tears,
We see thy trailing banner stream,
Like mad ambition's fevered dream;
As conqueror fierce in frenzied mood,
Goes onward in his path of blood;
Like some rash monarch's hasty flight,
When suffering nations rise in might,
And hurl him from usurping throne,
Thou fleest on, alone, alone.

The ocean's tide may ebb and flow,
And circling centuries come and go;
Still shalt thou journey as at first,
And wander on—a thing accursed.
We see thee in the silent night,
But what thy purpose—why thy flight—
We cannot tell; we only know
Thy doom is written: "Thou must go!"

Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. 139.

The Orange Tree

In duteous love to thee,
We humble heart and knee,
O, beauteous orange tree,
With glory girt around!
Bright in thy glittering sheen,
Enrobed in gold and green,
O, matchless, glorious queen!
With regal splendor crowned!

O, not so soft the wile
Of Cleopatra's smile,
Beside the slumbering Nile,
Nor half so sweet her kiss;
Nor half so bright and grand,
Waved o'er Assyria's land
The jewel-sceptered hand,
Of proud Semiramis!

Arrayed in bridal veil,
Thy breath perfumes the gale,
When lovers breathe their tale,
Thy listening boughs beneath;
Thy bright form bending down,
Shall sighs and murmurs drown;
And blushing beauty crown
With love's own bridal wreath.

Through Summer's ardent blaze,
Through dreamy, purple haze
Of Autumn's saddened days,
Thou wearest thy robe of green;
But when the Spring's soft light
Gleams o'er the mountain height,
Through leafy arbors bright,
Thy golden globes are seen.

By glistening lake and stream,
Thy dazzling glories gleam
Bright as the poet's dream,
When stars flame bright above;
By crystal fount and sea,
Like pious devotee,
We tender unto thee
Sweet tribute of our love.

When haply far from home,
Our wayward children roam,
Thy gleaming golden dome
Shall beckon like a star;
Thy form shall haunt their dreams,
As willows haunt the streams—
As dying sunset beams,
The mountain top afar.

Still in each perfumed gale,
Still o'er each hill and dale,
Still o'er each sleeper pale,
Forever sigh and wave;
Still whisper unto me,
O, mystic orange tree!
Of immortality
And hope beyond the grave.

Fair queen of fairy land!
Beside the western strand,
Wave still thy magic wand,
In spotless robe and clear;
While time the years assure,
Thy glory shall endure
And deck with fragrance pure
The altar and the bier.

Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. 142.

To the Moon

Pale, pallid, pulseless, lifeless, spectral sphere!
Vague wreck of matter mid eternal space;
Changeful, yet changeless ever, year by year,
What nameless horror haunts thy ghastly face?
Did some mad comet, in his reckless race
Through space infinite, in thy path uprear,
And, shriveling all thy being, leave no trace
Of joyous life to evermore appear—
Nought but a void of everlasting fear?

What wrath almighty, sudden smote thee sore,
Or what fell fires of fury scorched thy plains?
What fierce convulsions shook thy inmost core,
And dried thy life-blood in thy pulsing veins?
What fevered thirst, what fiery throes and pains
Drank all thy seas, from shriveled shore to shore—
Or spasms volcanic rent thy mountain chains,
Then left thee cold, their fitful tremors o'er,
A lifeless phantom-waste forevermore?

Cold spectre, gazing with thy vacant stare,
What awful memory of the mighty past
Hath stamped its terror in thy swooning glare—
What nightmare dream of horror holds thee fast?
What everlasting fear its reflex cast
O'er thy cold face its shadow of despair,
To brood o'er all thy confines dim and vast—
Thy caverned depths, thy shuddering summits bare—
Thou lifeless phantom of the soundless air?

Of God's grand system seeming scarce a part,
Yet moving in obedience to His will,
Like some crushed spirit in life's busy mart,
In ghostly hush, pale, spiritless, and still,
In whose dead soul no sudden, gladsome thrill
E'er stirs the life-blood with a quickening start—
Oblivious of earth's dreams, of good or ill,
How like some hopeless, pulseless human heart
Where passion's fires are dead and cold, thou art!

Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. 144.

Memorial Poem

[Written for Frank Bartlett Post, G. A. R., Los Angeles, on occasion of their annual ceremonial exercises, May 30, 1883. Read by Miss Nellie Thornton.]

Sleep, comrades, sleep! No hostile tread
To-day invades your peaceful camp;
No more is heard war's thunders dread,
Or serried legions martial tramp.
No more the bugle's reveille
Awakes from slumber blest and deep,
To bid love's tender visions flee
At danger's call. Sleep, comrades, sleep!

Rest, noble heroes of the Blue!
No more to arms the trumpet calls,
Where banners wave, O, tried, and true!
Here but love's rain in pity falls:
Here, once again, we come to-day,
With grateful hearts and reverent feet,
Upon your sacred graves to lay
Our floral tributes soft and sweet.

The cannon rusts lip-sealed and dumb
Upon the mountain and the plain;
Nor bugle-call nor roll of drum
Shall ever wake to arms again;
Nor thunder peals of combat deep,
Shall ever stir your calm repose;
Soft be your beds and sweet your sleep
Beneath the laurel and the rose.

The scars are fading from the earth,
The bastions crumble to decay;
All, save your deeds of deathless worth,
Is passing like a dream away.
The terrors of the gloomy night,
Are buried in the past's deep grave,
And glory's halo sheds its light
O'er all the land ye died to save.

No more death's bitter, pelting storm,
Each soldier-heart may boldly dare;
No more in pride each manly form
Shall face death's hail with bosom bare.
Now only Peace with gentle hands,
With flowers the warrior camps bestrew,
And daughters of a grateful land,
With crystal tears your graves bedew.

Ye answer not at call of roll,
Stand no more in serried line;
On deathless Fame's immortal scroll
Your deeds, like stars, in silence shine.
On earthly fields we meet no more,
No more on mountain height and plain,
Until upon the other shore
We form our broken ranks again.

Sleep, comrades, sleep! The skies are blue,
The clouds of danger passed away;
Our flag floats free, our hearts are true,
Our country basks in Glory's ray.
Here, o'er your hallowed, graves
Shall Honor still her vigil keep
Forever, while her banner waves
O'er Freedom's land. Sleep, comrades, sleep!

Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. 145.

Montecito

The Legend of the Big Grapevine

[The “Legend of the Montecito Grapevine” runs briefly thus: A century ago a grape-cutting was presented to a Spanish señorita, by her lover, as a riding whip, which she planted at his request, and this memento of love developed into the great vine.]

Where the billows gleam and glisten,
And the mountains o’er the main
Bow their solemn heads to listen
To the ocean’s grand refrain,

Where the sunset longest lingers
To caress the purple lands,
Planted by love’s fairy fingers,
Lo! the Monarch Grapevine stands.

Nestled neath the lofty mountains,
Canopied neath graceful oaks,
Lies the vale of Montecito,
Hidden by their glossy cloaks.

Long ago so runs the story—
When the Padres gave command,
And the Missions in their glory,
Ruled in peace the pleasant land,

In the peaceful Western Aiden *—
So the mystic legend goes—
Bloomed a young and lovely maiden,
Fairer than Castilian rose.

As the sparkling mountain torrent
Through the valley swiftly pours,
Through her veins the crimson current
Of the old Conquistadores.

And her lover true and tender,
Graceful as the mountain pine;
Like the olive dark and slender—
She the trusting, clinging vine.

And her love, like precious jewel,
All his life with glory crowned,
But her parents, cold and cruel,
On her lover sternly frowned.

Coldly looked they on her lover;
He was poor and they were proud,
And their loves were shrouded over
As the sky by threatening cloud.

Then it came—the lovers parting;
He in search of wealth to roam,
She with parents stern departing,
Seeking far another home.

Sad and tender was their parting
In the whispering twilight air;
She at fancied dangers starting,
Like the timid, startled hare.

One small branch his hand did sever,
From the trailing vine above,
Bidding her to keep it ever—
Emblem of undying love—

Bidding her to plant, and cherish
Ever while it lived and grew;
Constant still, though life should perish,
Vowing ever to be true.

Many days, past silver) fountains,
Many days where whispering seas
Kiss the feet of lordly mountains,
Fanned by ocean's gentle breeze,

Journeyed still the lovely maiden,
Burdened with love's hopes and fears;
And the vine was moistened ever
By her softly falling tears.

Many days of weary travel,
Many days of toil and sun,
Over sands and flinty gravel,
And the weary march was done.

While with love her bosom panted,
And the rosy day grew pale,
There the vine of love was planted,
In the Montecito Vale.

Here her prayers for lover given,
Mingled with love's tears divine,
I r ell like gentle dew from heaven,
On the budding, infant vine.

Every eve, when twilight faded,
Fleeing o'er the purple main,
Sat beneath her vine o'ershaded,
Sobbing like the wintry rain.

Days to weary months were lengthened,
Months were lengthened into years;
And the vine grew, ever strengthened
By the maiden's falling tears.

Forth it stretched its tendrils tender,
Reaching out on every hand,
And it grew in strength and splendor
Till it shadowed all the land.

Long the maiden watched and waited
When the stars looked from above,
Like the lonely dove unmated,
Mourning for her absent love;

And when dew-drops blazed and glistened,
Called her lover's name and sighed;
Bent her lovely head and listened,
But the moaning seas replied.

O'er her young life, cold and dreary,
Dark and still the shadows lay,
And her heart grew weary—wearied
Waiting for the promised day.

Still she watched, and wept in sorrow,
And her bloom was fading fast,
Yearning ever for the morrow—
And he came—at last, at last!

Came with golden treasures laden,
From the far Sierra lone,
To his vine, and constant maiden,
Came and claimed them for his own.

Four-score years have bloomed and faded,
Vanished with their hopes and fears,
Since the earth its leaves first shaded,
Watered by love's holy tears.

Now it stands in gleaming lustre,
Peerless in sweet Nature's plan,
Every tear a purple cluster,
Making glad the heart of man.

Side by side the constant lovers,
Long have slumbered with the just;
Mossy time their memory covers,
And the hearts that loved are dust.

Still the vine in beauty vernal,
O'er their ashes sheds its bloom,
Emblem meet of love eternal,
Living still beyond the tomb.

Ever spread, O, glorious token!
With thy clustering fruit above,
With thy promise still unbroken—
Emblem still of Faith and Love.

Ever live in song and story,
Spreading still thy branches o'er,
Like a martyr's crown of glory,
Gleaming bright forevermore.

* Western Aiden—Los Angeles.

*

Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. 147.

Mono

Stern, the giant mountains frown
On the deserts, looking clown,
Where the leagues of ashy brown
Stretch away;
Seared, and swept by fiery scath, [sic]
Shivered in the earthquake's path,
Relic of Almighty wrath
Passed away.

There, the wheeling column halts
In its spectral solemn waltz;
And the changeful mirage false,
Sheds its gleam,
O'er the desert's baleful glare,
Through the quivering, throbbing air;
Death and danger everywhere
Reign supreme.

There the lift es sleep,
Where no mourner comes to weep;
Silence utter, dread and deep,
Mocks the day;
And the sad winds moan at night,
In their dreary, lonely flight,
Lingering, pausing in affright,
As to pray.

There, stark nature, mid their sighs,
Dead and all unburied lies;
Staring wide, with stony eyes,
Far before:
Horror in their haunting glare,
Fixed as in death's last despair,
On the mirage-painted air,
Quivering o'er.

There the raven flaps his wings
O'er the noxious, deadly springs,
Where death's angel mutely flings
Wide his arms;
There, the phantom, silver-crowned,
Lures her votaries, fastly bound,
With her bugle's siren sound,
To her charms.

There, the dead volcanoes stand,
Leaning o'er the ghastly land,
Like grim conquerors, stern and grand,
Cold and ghaft;
Like ambition's lava flow,
Quenched their molten fiery glow,
Stilled each fierce convulsive throe,
Ages past.

There, the plains of alkali
Gleam, reflecting back the sky—
Mirror back each mountain high,
Peak and crag;
There, the sunset's dying gleams,
Flashing far its dazzling beams,
From each summit backward streams,
Like a flag.

Land of phantom mirage mocked,
Land of desert, earthquake rocked,
Land of treasure, mystery locked,
Dark and fell;
Land of fleeting smiles and tears,
Ever cheating manhood's years,
Swift repeating hopes and fears,
Fare-thee-well!

Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. 151.

The Captivity

Where the rivers of Babylon swept,
The captives, in loneliness, wept,
Their harps on the willows were hung;
With sobbing and choking of sighs,
With veiling of mists of the eyes—
The songs of their fathers unsung.

Before their fond memories rose
A vision of Lebanon's snows—
Her cedars wide-spreading and tall;
Of valley and olive-crowned height,
Of Canaan's fair fields of delight,
Of temple, and city and wall;

Of mountain, and valley, and plain,
Of wine-press, and vineyard, and grain,
Of reapers that sang in the morn,
In chorus full, hopeful and strong,
Far-ringing the harvest-time song—
And gleaners that gleaned in the corn.

Of Jordan's swift race to the sea,
Of mirror-like bright Gallilee,
Of pasture-lands smiling and wide,
Where Jacob had roamed with his flocks,
And Ephraim hail watched from his rocks,
And prophets had pondered and died.

How hungered their hearts with desires,
Again for the graves of their sires
Their altars and of cost;
For Judea humbled in dust.
Defiled by the conqueror's lust,
For Zion, the loved and the lost.

They thought of her, queenly and proud,
Ere prostrate, and humble, and bowed
Beneath the Assyrian's rod;
Ere trampled by rapine and ruth,
Ere torn from the home of their youth—
The land of their country and God.

Till over each famishing soul,
As waves of the ocean that roll,
The waters of bitterness swept;
Full chastened and meek were the proud;
With faces averted and bowed,
The children of Israel wept.

A mist-veil o'ershrouded their eyes,
As clouds overshadow the skies;
The dream of their childhood was o'er;
No song of thanksgiving- they sung,
Their harps on the willows were hung,
Their hearts were full heavy and sore.

Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. 153.

Such Is Life

As the dew upon the grass,
As the leaf upon the stream,
As the winds that sigh and pass,
As a swiftly fading dream;
As the flowers that bloom and fade,
Transient things that come and flee,
Phantoms pale, that seek the shade—
Such is life, and such are we.

As a ship upon the main,
Borne by prosperous, gentle gales,
Freighted full with precious gain,
Wide we spread our flowing sails;
Struggling mid the storm and dark,
Shipwrecked sailors on the sea,
Clinging to Hope's shattered bark—
Such is life, and such are we.

As the traceless arrow flies,
As the comet's fiery face
Glares upon the midnight skies,
Vanishes and leaves no trace;
Evanescent as the foam
On the restless troubled sea;
Dreamers vain of things to come—
Such is life, and such are we.

Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. 155.

May

Flowers will bloom, when we are gone,
In sweet May;
And the skies will flush at dawn,
And the soft winds kiss the lawn,
And the bright stream hurry on,
As to-day.

Some shall wander, some shall sleep,
Far away;
O'er bright skies dark storms shall sweep,
O'er warm hearts a chill shall creep,
Some shall smile and others weep,
As to-day.

Traitor hearts shall still forsake,
Still betray;
Trusting hearts in sorrow break,
Silent flowers the night winds shake,
Clouds be mirrored in the lake,
As to-day.

Soon death's night shall spread its gloom
O'er our clay;
And the flowers shall shed their bloom,
And the rose its sweet perfume
O'er each lowly sleeper's tomb,
As to-day.

With life's sweet shall mingle gall,
Grave with gay;
To her mate the dove shall call,
Joy and sorrow come to all;
Kingdoms rise and empires fall,
As to-day.

Still shall merry throngs serene
In their play,
Oft renew the fairy scene;
Feet shall patter on the green,
Happy voices hail their queen,
As to-day.

Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. 156.

Ode to the Sun

Whence is thine awful light,
Whence come thy dazzling beams,
Whence are thine everlasting rays, O, Sun?
Through realms of misty night
Thy glorious radiance streams,
E'en as when Time's grand march was first begun.

Thy smile is on the earth,
Thy glory gilds the seas,
Thy rising splendors halo all the shore,
As when the stars had birth;
Night's awful darkness flees;
Unchangeable thy light forevermore.

Thou lookest on the world,
On saints and sinners all;
On hill and valley, river, sea and lake,
Thy banners are unfurled;
Things hid in darkened thrall
Come forth from night's deep slumber and awake.

Thou smilest on the East,
Thou smilest on the West;
On time-worn sepulchres, and graves new-made;
On greatest and on least,
On wicked and on best,
On earth when daisies bloom and roses fade.

Thou lookest on the South,
Thou lookest on the North,
Where the dread Poles their awful secret keep;
Upon the burning mouth,
Whence madly issue forth
The crater-fires upon the plain to leap.

Thy banners are unfurled
At morn, at night, at noon,
Where the tall Himalayas raise their bars
Eternal as the world,
Up to the trembling moon,
To intercept the pathway of the stars.

Thy march is o'er the wave,
O'er icy polar floes,
Where round brave Franklin's rest the mirage plays,
Where Arctic tempests rave
O'er bitter frozen snows,
Draped with the bright Aurora's quivering rays.

O'er Amazon's wide shore,
Where tropic zephyrs sleep;
O'er scorched Sahara's wastes of burning sand;
Where Andean condors soar
O'er Chimborazo's steep,
Thy lace of glory flames o'er all the land.

All day from rosy dawn,
The Helianthus turns
In adoration mute, to watch thy course;
And when thy smile is gone,
The mosses and the ferns
Are wet with tears from gentle nature's source.

The glory of thy face,
The splendors of thy smiles
Flash far through deep unsounded seas of gloom;
Through boundless depths of space,
The countless starry isles,
The wheeling spheres thy dazzling rays illumine.

Great source of life and light!
Great lamp of God on high!
Great monarch of the realms of awful space!
Unto thy dazzling sight,
We may not come more nigh;
We bow in awe before thy flaming face.

Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. 157.

The Giving of the Commandments

“And it came to pass, on the third day, in the morning, that there were thunders and lightnings, and a thick cloud upon the Mount, and the voice of the trumpet exceeding loud; so that all the people that was in the camp trembled.

“And Moses brought forth the people, out of the camp, to meet with God; and they stood at the nether part of the Mount.

“And Mount Sinai was altogether on a smoke, because the Lord descended upon it in fire; and the smoke thereof, ascended as the smoke of the furnace, and the whole Mount quaked greatly.

“And when the voice of the trumpet sounded long, and waxed louder and louder, Moses spake, and God answered him by a voice.”—*Exodus, chap. xxx.*

Amid the waste and lonely lands,
In awe and silence bound,
Stood Israel's hushed expectant bands,
In circling hosts around—
Where heights eternal dream and nod,
In fear and awe, to meet with God.

Deep muttering thunders shook the base
Of Sinai's awful steep;
Around his cloud-wreathed hidden face
The fitful lightnings leap;
A dim mysterious terror broods
O'er all the awe-struck multitudes.

Dead hung the lifeless atmosphere;
No breath of ghostly gale
Crept tip-toe stealthily in fear
To lift the awful veil;
Dark, utter mystery, complete,
Reigned 'round Jehovah's judgment seat.

Thick darkness clothed the Mount about,
As midnight veils the tomb;
When fierce and sudden from without
The dread mysterious gloom,
With thrill, that shook the trembling crowd,
His trumpet pealed exceeding loud.

Down to its solid granite base,
The mountain rocked and reeled;
And far through shuddering murky space,
The awful thunders pealed—
From lurid depths of flame and smoke,
A voice His high commandments spoke.

A radiance soft o'er hearts long seared,
Blazed as the stars of night;
The tracings of His law appeared
Illumined as with light,
Deep graven as with burning pen,
Upon the darkened souls of men.

Unto His law, His holy hand
His awful seal had set;—
His feet in that dim lonely land
His erring children met;
And from His mighty throne in heaven
Fulfilled the words to Moses given.

Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. 159.

Vera

Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. 161.

A Russian Romance

Dark clouds obscured the blazing star
Of slumbering Russia's mighty Czar,
And rose the awful phantom form
Of grim, defiant, threatening war
Upon the Danube's banks afar,
That boded of the coming storm.
The murmur of each whispering gale
That swept from far Bulgaria's plain
Seemed burdened with a sigh of pain—
Seemed laden with a dying wail.
From Baltic shores to Caspian sands,
From faintest East to farthest West,
The slumbering pulse of mighty lands
Is burdened with a sad unrest.
As rushing torrent, eastward sweeps
A mighty empire's martial flow;
As crested waves from storm-roused deeps,
The war-stirred ranks toss to and fro;
As thundering billows that forsake
The bosom of the boundless main,
Sweep onward in their wrath to break
Upon the Balkan's iron chain.

Long years before, a fairer scene—
A maiden full of graces rare,
Unvexed by sorrow, sin, or care,
In beauty's spring-time smiled serene.
A dreamy splendor as of skies
When melts the soft, sweet, breath of spring,
And birds their sweetest matins sing,
Slept in her tender violet eyes.
And he, her lover, in his eye
No shadow dimmed the brightness now;
And stamped upon his noble brow
Were dreams and aspirations high.
Hope's gorgeous mirage dazzling shone
O'er glittering life's bright gilded scroll—

His love, his life, his heart and soul,
His Vera's, and his country's own.
His dreams were of a glorious hour—
Of comrades true, a noble band;
A country proud; a sighing land,
Freed from a tyrant's iron power.
A foolish dream, and that was all;
A thousand spirits owned his sway,
And Vera's, ready to obey
Their slightest wish or call.
With solemn oath at midnight scaled,
A thousand lips had sworn to die,
With "Vera!" for their battle-cry—
Their watchword on the field.

What need a reptile to portay, [sic]
A serpent in an Eden scene?
A man that walks God's earth serene,
A man of smiles and frowns, to-day
By fortune's harlot bold caressed,
He counted on his finger-tips
A score of ripe, red, rosy lips
His own in lawless lust had pressed.
His wiles, a thousand woes had wrought—
Pride and ambition still his aim—
A man who counted sin and shame
And woman's honor, virtue, naught.
And still his fascinating glare
Like deadly serpent's malice fell,
Afar that casts its fatal spell,
Hade innocence and hope despair.
Alas, fair Vera, for that day!
He saw her in her maiden dawn
Free as the soft-eyed, graceful fawn,
And marked her for his hellish prey.
In place and courtly favor high,
His sway a trembling people own,
A guardian of a tyrant's throne;
A villain, libertine, and spy.

Soft sighs and tender-waking dawns,
Bright skies and velvet-tinted lawns!
A dream of love's enchantment sweet,
Where Neva's glancing mirror lies;
Deep quiet of the earth and skies,
Deep rapture of the soul and eyes;
O! earthly paradise complete.

A serpent's trail within the bower;
A parting scene; a thrill, a kiss;
A gliding serpent's deadly hiss;
An Eden dream of love and bliss
Had perished in an hour.
Love's radiant sun went down in gloom;
A score of hands with ruffian grasp
Rude tore him from her trembling clasp,
And bore him to his awful doom.
Bound to the cruel post he stood;
Strong arms, with hellish knouts, assail,
As threshers, with resounding flail,
A mangled form of flesh and blood.
More cruel than the cruel Turk,
His tyrants washed their hands in gore
Till his numbed senses felt no more—
The lash had done its work.
The hellish swish of knout was hushed;
Long, long he lay as one that slept;
But death came not with pitying step,
To free the spirit bruised and crushed.
Vague, shadowy, phantom thought, at last
Came with slow strength's returning stream,
And, like an awful nightmare dream,
Seemed the dim memory of the past.
Scarce could his feeble sense unclasp
Oblivion's dark encircling fold,
And in its fearful, trembling hold
The awful present, dimly grasp.

Scarce felt the galling chains that bound
His form to other outraged forms,

Or heeded of the cruel storms
That raged their weary march around.
Scarce heeded he of storm or rain,
Amid that midnight darkness blind,
That wrapped his soul and heart and mind,
Of sighing Europe left behind,
Where stretched the far Uralian chain.
And listless as a feeble child's—
That wanders on, it knows not why,
To reach the confines of the sky
His footsteps pressed the Asian wilds.

Dim wastes and sighing solitudes,
Dark shadows, and Siberian woods,
An exile dreaming of a land
That lie might never see again;
Of noble aspirations vain,
Of hope deferred—a waiting band.
Oh! keener than a serpent's fang,
To whom hath felt the deadly pang
Of unavailing vain regret,
When on life's ocean tempest-tossed,
And all he loved on earth is lost,
And the bright sun of hope hath set.
Oh! silent sorrow, secret nursed!
Oh! hopeless brooding of despair!
With no kind, pitying heart to share,
With none to know, or feel, or care,
Of all earth's bitter, this is worst.

Alone! alone! The Arctic stars,
Like sparkling diamonds thickly sown,
Look downward through their heavenly bars
In pity on the exile lone.
Year after year—no words nor signs,
And day by day on Lena's banks,
He watched the tall, thick, darkening ranks
Of sombre, silent, gloomy pines.
Night after night saw Arctic skies,
Lit up by weird, electric fire;

Saw glorious forms like dreams arise,
Then pale their splendors and expire;
Vast, crimson curtains closing in,
Dim, shadowy, phantom shapes unfold
Bright, burnished draperies of gold,
As if to hide a world of sin.

And they together, side by side,
Might haply wander nevermore
By darkening Baltic's sighing shore,
Or dreamy Neva's silvery tide.
And brooding thus, into his soul,
Long shadowed by despair and gloom
Deep as the darkened, rayless tomb,
A wild, resistless longing stole.
Oh! that his dreamless dust might lie,
Of Russia's glorious dust a part;
That he might lay his weary heart
On Russia's sacred soil and die!
Resistless as the ocean's tide,
A swift o'ermastering impulse swept
His darkened soul that long had slept,
As waves o'er storm-swept waters wide.
And ere the night was chased by day,
Toward the boundless desert space,
And southward, westward, took his way.

That weary march, what boots to tell
The toils and dangers that befel?
O'er the dim desert's sandy floor,
By sighing Aral's lonely shore
His weary journey led him on,
At twilight dim, and purple dawn.
On many a strange and savage land,
In far Bokhara and Khokand,
On gilded dome and minaret.
Along the weary Caspian waste
With longing heart and toilsome basic,
Through wild Circassia's wildest glens,
Through lonely Azoff's loneliest fens

His weary footsteps onward pressed,
And when the sunset glories burned,
His pallid face was ever turned
With eager longing to the West.

Wayworn and weary, by a stream
Soft murmuring on, he paused to rest;—
A glint—a glance: Was it a dream?
His startled vision caught the gleam
Of flashing sabres in the West.
Bright glancing in the sunset ray,
A sea of bayonets heave and sway;
The serried columns drift away
Like clouds from thrall released;
Like billows toward the rock-ribbed coasts,
The bannered might of Russia's hosts
Roll onward toward the east.
Long, long he watched that martial sweep,
As rushing river broad and deep,
In surging might roll past,
And mingling with its rushing force,
He drifted with its torrent-course
Like leaf on river cast.
His country's tale of wrong he heard,
And patriot-rage his bosom stirred
As stirs the sea, the wind;
Forgotten were the years blank space,
Forgotten exile, wrong, disgrace,
The past was all behind.

He only heard his country's call
To break the bands of Moslem thrall,
Where Christian hands upreared
Imploring, beckoned Russia's aid
To free from burdens heavy laid—
From heavier burdens feared.

Beneath a green tree's shelt'ring shade
He seized a stricken soldier's blade—
A fire in heart and eye;
Henceforth to dare; a leader born,
As one who held his life in scorn,
He sought to lead each hope forlorn—
To conquer, and to die.

The persecutions, hopes and fears,
The woe and anguish that befel
The gentle Vera through those years
Of weary waiting, who shall tell?
The long, long watch through prison bars,
When daylight dawned, and twilight waned,
Where but a glint of sun or stars
Told yet of freedom uncnchained;
Still importuned by gilded lust,
To purchase freedom with her smiles,
She kept her soul's proud, sacred trust,
And spurned the tyrant-tempter's wiles;
And still with spirit unsubdued,
Through summer's bloom and winter's snow,
She watched in weary solitude
The waning seasons come and go.
From God's fair landscape barred and banned,
Within a cruel tyrant's power,
Deep mid the southern Cossack land
She waited freedom's coming hour,
Until one eve, within her room
She sat beside her prison bars,
And watched amid the deepening gloom
The tender glory of the stars;
And floating back on Fancy's wing,
She sang a lay, forgotten long,
A dreamy, simple, sweet, sad song,
In happier days she loved to sing.

Song

“Sighs are for brides new-made,
For fancies free, enchained,
For freedom on Love’s altar laid,
For cup of bliss half-drained;
For shadows bright, that flee
As bubbles o’er the tide;
For gilded bark launched full and free
Upon Life’s ocean wide.

“Tears are for memories dead,
For nuns and widows lone,
For joys and hopes forever fled,
For pleasures swiftly flown;
For hopes that flushed to die,
Sweet buds and withered flowers,
For wandering zephyrs soft, that sigh
No more amid Love’s bowers.

“Dreams are for maidens free,
That raptured, lean and gaze
And drift o’er Life’s enchanted sea
Soft veiled in mystic haze.
Blow, spicy, tropic gales!
Sing, sailor, free-heart song;
Unfurl Love’s crimson, silken sails,
And speed my bark along.”

Soft stirred by memories sad and sweet,
Of mingled hope, regret and pain,
As murmuring pines when zephyrs greet,
Her mother’s song she sang again—
A gentle, plaintive, mournful air
That in the trembling twilight deep,
When weary with the day’s long care
Had often lulled her soul to sleep.

Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. 168.

Song of the Rose

“Red Rose, in thy summer bloom,
Shedding soft thy sweet perfume,
Standing in the twilight hush
Peerless in thy crimson flush,
Queen of all the flowery train,
Sad imploring Time in vain,
Shrinking from the Frost-King’s breath
Shuddering at his kiss of death,
Clinging to the trembling bough—
How like fading beauty, thou!
“Violet, with thy soft blue eyes,
Smiling ’neath the azure skies,
Swooning in thy trembling bliss,
When the night-dews tender kiss,
Opeing [sic] soft thine eyes at dawn,
On the sparkling, dewy lawn;—
With the sweet, departing spring
Drooping, fading, withering;
Ashen-hued thy lips and brow—
How like perished beauty, thou!

“Lily bending o’er the stream,
Dreaming soft thy tender dream,
Sighing when the zephyr sighs,
Dying when the Summer dies;
Drooping, sadder day by day,
Mourning for thy perished May,
All thy sweetness soft exhaled,
All thy glory fled and paled;—
How like beauty’s fading flower;
How like maiden’s transient dower!”

E’en as she ceased the sweet, sad song,
The hated form of him she loathed
With jeweled orders decked and clothed,
Cast its fell shadow, dark and strong.
He spoke: “Fair Vera, even now
Love’s bark awaits with silken sail
Thy spicy breath’s soft-wafting gale

To cleave life's ocean with its prow.
Why sit with weary, folded hands,
Why sing like longing, captive bird,
By some sweet tropic memory stirred.
Of other days and other lands?
Sweet Vera, cease to dream and pine!
A sign, a smile, a word from thee
And I thy willing slave will be—
Speak but the word! go forth, be free!
And wealth and power and state are thine!”
“Cease, villain, cease thy suit!” she said,
“Full well I know your treacherous heart;
Dissembler! false to man and maid,
Why seek to swell the list betrayed?
Betrayed, serpent, spy—depart!”

Swift from his lips of flattery fled
The treacherous, sycophantic smile;
An ashen pallor overspread—
As palls the features of the dead—
His face, sin-masked with art and guile.

“Proud, scornful Vera, hark, beware!
All hope of rescue here is vain.
Since all my power you scorn and dare,
Dream on, and dreaming, reap despair!
I go, but I return again!”

He spoke, and lo! a sudden clang
Of sabres, clashing, smote his ear,
Swift-flashing pistol shots out-rang;
A dozen rescuers sudden sprang
The doorway through; the way was clear.
“Fly, Vera, fly!” the leader said,
“While night our swift escape may aid;
Full soon the hungry Cossack wolves,
Will scent the footprints of their prey;
Quick! quick, for freedom, mount and ride;
The night is dark, the world is wide;
Our hearts are filled with stern resolves;
Free curb and rein! away, away!”

Morn on a wide and boundless plain,
Before them stretched the dim Ukraine,
And in the gray, uncertain dawn
That half unclosed her curtain-blind,
Swift as the rushing, roaring wind,
Like phantoms weird a league behind,
A hundred Cossacks thundered on.

A mirror gleam; a river wide;
A shadowy wood beyond the tide;
An instant's halt; the leader cried
As pointing to the darkling west,
"Spare not your steed! away, away!
Wait not for us; we stay, we stay!
On, on! Halt not, until you may
Beyond the Truth in safety rest!"

A sudden peal of death rings out;
A sudden reel in wreck and rout,
And steeds all riderless and wild,
Wheel, rushing madly o'er the plain;
And fierce contending, hand to hand,
With shouts of hatred, band to band;
And banks with battle-wreck up-piled
Deep dyed the stream, with crimson stain.

Again they rally, quickly, all,
Obedient to their leader's call—
The charging troopers sudden fall
As fall from trees their ripened fruit—
As leaves before the autumn frost
Death-stricken, downward, shuddering, lost,
But not a baffled rider crossed
That fatal river in pursuit

League after league flies swiftly past,
Until a vision bursts at last
Upon her startled gaze;
Before her sweeps a glittering throng,
As mighty river deep and strong,

With burnished pomp ablaze.
Dim toward the distant Danube's coasts,
The banners of the gleaming hosts
In distance disappear;
Unnoticed, as they sweep along,
She mingles with the mighty throng
Of followers in the rear.

Unknowing each of other's fate,
Of late escape from tyrant hate,
The lovers drifted on,
Borne on that mighty battle-stream,
As in some gorgeous midnight dream,
Toward the Eastern dawn.

With holy Red Cross Sisterhood,
To nurse the sick, to staunch the blood
Of stricken ones she vied;
And where the battle-hail fell fast,
And war its gloomiest shadows cast,
Death's thunderbolts defied.

Where fevered lips were faint athirst,
Pier gentle hand was ever first
To give the water blessed;
And hers the last soft tender clasp,
Within his trembling, failing grasp,
The dying soldier pressed.

What boots to tell the tale once more,
Of Russia's deathless triumph, o'er;
Of how her dauntless hosts defied
The rushing might of Danube's tide?
Of gleaming steel, of sabre's glance,
The fierce attack, the swift advance;
How Saint Sophia's dome afar,
Still beckoned eastward like a star,
Until Istamboul's waters sweet,
Imploring laved the conqueror's teet:
The story of the deadly miles,
Of bloody Shipka's dread defiles;

To tell again the fearful tale
Of rifle-rain, and cannon-hail
That swept that gloomy, frowning path
With storm of death's full gathered wrath.
How Skoboleff, like whirlwind, swept
The land while its defenders slept,
Till like a lion turned at bay,
The Turk at Plevna barred the way.

The horrors of that giant fight,
What puny pen may dare to write!
I low through that awful sea of blood,
The gentle Red Cross Sisterhood
Mid thunder crash, and lightning flame,
Like pitying angels softly came.
What scene of terror meets their eyes!
Red flames illumine the midnight skies,
And dread the cannon's thunder peals
Deep mid the quivering smoke-pall's veil;
As earthquake shocked, the columns sway,
And reel and rock and melt away—
As ants beneath the chariot wheels
They perish in that deadly hail.
The decimated ranks are riven
As oaks by thunderbolts from heaven,
But through the sulphurous, ghostly haze,
That spreads its pall o'er earth and sky,
As men that Fair and Death defy,
They seek the batteries vengeful blaze.
Vain, vain their deeds, heroic all,
They melt and die like- flowers in Fall;
Like grass by harvest-sickle mown,
The ranks in mighty swaths are strown,
And soon o'er all that wreck supreme,
Dread silence, like a nightmare-dream,
Broods fearful, save when fitful stirred
By frenzied groan, or dying word
Of wounded warrior, stricken, slain,
Whose manly form might ne'er again
In line of battle proudly stand,

To guard the banner of his land.
Upon that death-plain Ivan lay,
While ebb'd life's crimson tide away;
The rifle-bullet's malice true,
Had pierced his bosom through and through,
And frenzied fancies, vague, unpent,
Like shadowy phantoms, came and went,
And over heart, and soul, and brain,
Death's mirage spread its gorgeous train.

And here the lovers met at last,
When all life's dreams for him were past.
She kissed his throbbing forehead hot
And called his name, he answered not;
His darkling vision did but seem
To see her in some tender dream
Of springtime flush, and flowery ways,
Mid other scenes, and other days.

Once more in youth's sweet, tender Spring
He heard Hope's beckoning siren sing;
Once more he stood by Neva's tide,
With gentle Vera by his side,
And love, with shining, silken thrall,
Bound each to each, and all in all,
As in youth's morn, when life was sweet,
And heart to heart in rapture beat,
And earth seemed tinted with the dyes
Of Eden's sinless Paradise—
Then sudden struggled pale and ghast,
As stirred by memories of the past,
When torn from tender love's embrace,
Like wretch bereft of heavenly grace,
And raved, as madly striving still
To thwart the tyrant's savage will.
Once more he felt the cruel knout,
While taunting demons mocked about;
And trod with fainting footsteps, slow,
Siberia's boundless wastes of snow,
Till through Death's pitying, opened door,
His spirit fled, and all was o'er.

In gentle Vera's soul that hour
Sweet pity died, and hate held power;
Her heart was buried with her dead,
And all of woman's weakness fled;
A quenchless thirst for tyrant blood
O'swept her soul with raging flood,
And burning vengeance from that day
O'er all her being held its sway.
Henceforth was hers to do and dare.
To hunt the tyrant in his lair;
To scheme and plot with high and low,
All despots rule to overthrow,
For weal or woe, and in all things.
To wage eternal war with kings;
By strength or stealth, by foul or fair,
In palace barred, in open air;
To haunt him with a constant fear
Of death unseen, and danger near,
And awful doom impending o'er,
Till life should seem a boon no more.

What needs to tell of hellish bomb,
Of mighty Alexander's doom;
Of murderous plottings thick and fast,
Each one more deadly than the last;
How, unrelenting, mocking Hate
Still sits at feast and palace gate;
A threatening monster, hungry-eyed,
Unmoved, unawed, unsatisfied,
That still its deadly vigil keeps,
And never falters, never sleeps.

Alas, sweet Vera, once so fair,
And tender in life's opening dawn!
The helpless tremor of despair,
With youth's soft flush and hope is gone.
Dead are love's tender, sweet desires,
Fell withered at life's springtime start;
But not the fierce consuming fires
Of quenchless hatred in her heart.

Like ocean surges heave and roll
The fever-throbbings through her blood;
And filled her thirsting tigress-soul
With hot revenge's lava flood.
Medusa-like, no love to kiss,
The ban of death upon her name;
Dread serpents round her writhe and hiss
And dart their fiery tongues of flame.

Through rifted storm-clouds, still her star
Gleams with a lurid, ghastly light,
Lone glimmering mid depths afar,
Through Anarchy's dark-shrouded night.
Unconquered, proud, defiant still
She wanders in a foreign land,
To rule with dread mysterious will,
Her deadly, sworn assassin band.

Nerved by unsated vengeance fell,
They keep their oath through good and ill,
As pitiless as Dante's Hell—
Their watchword, "Death to Tyrants!" still.
With deadly terror's threatening frown,
They awe the weak and trembling son,
Who dares not wear the kingly crown,
By warrior-sires so grandly won.

From hate's o'erflowing, garnered store,
They pay the son in blood and fire,
With interest thrice compounded o'er,
The awful debt they owed the sire.

What matters vigil, hunger, pain;
What matters exile, knout, disgrace?
For every sworn avenger slain,
A thousand others take his place.
What matters gallows-strangled breath—
Scourged, mangled forms that writhe and bleed?
What matter prisons, chains and death,
To those who sow the martyr-seed?

Woe, woe to sovereign, throne and crown!
Woe, woe to princes proud and vain!
Woe, woe to priestly iule and gown!
Woe, woe to Russia's wide domain!
The midnight torch's lurid gleam
O'erspreads her skies, a stain of blood
Deep crimsons Danube's silvery stream,
Ensanguines Volga's rushing flood.

O'er all her cities, hills and plains
An awful shuddering-horror broods,
From Moscow's sacred gilded fanes
To Asia's mighty solitudes.
Woe, woe! when everlasting hate
Invades the order of all things,
And haunts the palaces of State,
To hunt the lives of hated Kings!
Within his gilded prison walls,
A captive Czar in splendor pines,
More wretched than his banished thralls,
Lone hidden in Siberia's mines.
Still where the bat mid silence flits,
Skulks stealthy, Murder's prowling horde;
And Treachery beside him sits

At solemn fast, and festal board.
Vague Terror's ghastly, gloomy pall
O'erspreads his Empire far and wide;
In crowded street, and banquet hall
Dark spectral shadows flit and hide.

They haunt each lone, and busy place,
And every trembling zephyr's breath,

That kisses Russia's fevered face,
Is burdened with the whisper, "Death!"
A nightmare-horror broods above,
And nevermore her mighty Czar
Shall dream of peace, or joy, or love,
Neath blazing sun, or gleaming star.
And ne'er again shall peace abide,
Until his mighty land is free,
From Neva's wave, to Amoor's tide,
From Baltic's brine to Aral's sea.

Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. 169.

Sic Transit.

Where are the mighty ones,
The Cities of the Past,
That sat and ruled the Nations in their pride?
Their daughters and their sons,
Like leaves before the blast,
Through all the lands are scattered far and wide.

Their ashes strew the plain—
Their glory lies in dust—
Their bleaching bones bestrew the sighing coasts;
And nevermore again,
In pride and pomp and lint,
Shall march to war their serried, conquering hosts

The master and the slave
Beside each other sleep;
Their dust is mingled in a common lot,
In one forgotten grave,
And chaos dark and deep
Broods ever o'er the lone, deserted spot.

Proud Troy, and purple Tyre,
No more with regal sway
Rule the far prostrate nations of mankind;
Like stubble in the fire,
Consumed and swept away.
No sad memorial trace is left behind

Oblivion hath crept
O'er Babylon's proud walls,
Her palaces that rose like glory's dream;
Where Israel's children wept.
And mourned their captive thralls,
And hung their harps beside Euphrate's stream.

Low lying in the sand,
Proud Carthage dreamless sleeps,
Lone and forgotten by the sobbing sea;
No Dido waves her wand
And wrings her hands and weeps,
To bid her lover come again to thee.

Beside the sleeping Nile
The deadly aspic crawls,
Where dreamy languor soft the sense beguiles;
No Cleopatra's smile,
In Alexandria's halls,
Lures captive Antonys with its treacherous wiles.

The spider weaves her webs
Within Palmyra's halls;
O'er Karnak's palaces the sad winds sigh;
Persepolis to Thebes
And mighty Memphis calls,
And but Time's ghostly echoes give reply.

No Grecian warriors leap
To arms at glory's call;
Nor navies sweep the blue Egean Sea;
And Sparta's heroes sleep,
Unconscious of her fall,
Within the pass of red Thermopylae.

Thy pride, Jerusalem,
Is humbled in the dust;
Thou mourn'st in sorrow for thy children dead;
Rent is thy garment's hem—
Stained thy fair form with lust—
In sackcloth clothed, and ashes on thy head.

Thy Temple proud, laid low,
Thy Gentile foes deride;
Shorn of its glory, cedared Lebanon;
No queenly Shebas bow
Their heads of haughty pride,
To drink the wisdom of great Solomon.

'Neath architrave and dome,
The bat at twilight flits
Through sad Grenada's castles gray with age;
And withered, palsied Rome,
Beside the Tiber sits,
And mumbles harshly in her dotard rage.

Thy triumphs all are o'er;
Nor captive kings and queens
Shall grace again thy gilded pageants choice;
Thy Caesar are no more—
No more thy gorgeous scenes—
Nor suppliant nations tremble at thy voice.

And thus the cities rise,
And thus the cities fall;
Awhile they dazzle with their glories bright;
Then, pale as evening skies
O'ercast by twilight pall,
And fade as sunset splendors into night.

Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. 179.

Sir John

From England's shores in the crimson dawn
Over the waters sailed Sir John,

When the signal thunders the echoes woke,
With his staunch, tried ships, and his hearts of oak;

Forth from the sweet warm summer bright,
Into the gloom of the Arctic night;

Holding his course o'er the waters far,
Through the dark night to the Polar Star;

Holding his perilous ice-bound way,
Through the frozen channel of Baffin Bay;

Onward with white wings hurrying fast,
Where the icebergs graze the leaning mast:

Braving the Frost King's deadly wrath,
Cleaving asunder his icy path,

Till his staunch, tried ships, and his gallant crew,
Mid foe and darkness were lost to view.

His lady gazes, with rigid lips,
Watching in vain for his coming ships,

The icebergs drift on their southward track,
And melt from view, but he comes not back;

And the ceaseless years go on and on,
But they bring not to England's shores, Sir John.

Alas! for the graves we may never find,
Alas! for the true hearts left behind.

Not neath Westminster's fretted nave,
Rest all the ashes of England's brave,

Honored and crowned for victories won,
Resting in pomp when their work is done;

Not where the dust of dead ages clings,
Slumber the bones of her noblest kings

They sleep in the hush of the tropic zone
In the palm's soft shade; in the islands lone

That doze and nod o'er the coral deep,
Where the South Wind kisses the soul to sleep;

They sleep in the thunder of Arctic waves,
Where the ice-floes crash, and the tempest raves,

Curtained around with a halo bright,
Through the depths of the long, long polar night,
But their rest is sweet for their work is done,
And their slumber deep for the Crown is won.

The seasons come and the seasons go,
And the ice goes drifting to and fro;

Glimpses flash o'er us, and disappear,
Of frozen men on their icy bier

Cold and white in the Northland far,
Under the blaze of the Polar star;

The daylight fades, and the night comes on
But no tidings come of the brave Sir John.

But where he sleeps in his shroud of snow
Under his star we may never know;

Yet in the twilight at close of day,
Ye who supplicate, ye who pray,

Pray for the true hearts lost and gone,
Pray for the spirit of brave Sir John.

* Written in 1874, while Lady Franklin was prosecuting her unwearied search.

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Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. 182.

Come Again, Gentle Rain

Come again,
Gentle rain,
Bringing blessings in thy train;
Smiling flowers,
Rosy bowers,
Nature's bridal dowers.

Leaf of tree,
Hum of bee,
Song-birds gushing melody,
Butterfly,
Zephyr's sigh,
'Neath the tender, azure sky!

Days of hope,
Morns that ope
Like the soft, blue heliotrope;
Eves like this,
Full of bliss,
Tender as a maiden's kiss;

Far away,
Shadows play
O'er the mountain, stern and gray,
Sunset kissed,
Through the mist,
Like the purple amethyst.

Thick amass,
Tender grass
Springs to greet you as you pass;
Come again,
Gentle rain,
With thy fairy, flowery train.

Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. 184.

Sequoia Gigantea

Kissed into being by a smiling clime,
Rocked in thy cradle, grand Sierra's child,
Far from the haunts of hate, ambition, crime,
Reared mid the freedom of the forest wild,
In peerless beauty, pure and undefiled—
Most glorious poem of unfettered rhyme,
That ever soul of poet rapt beguiled—
Thou standest still, the sentry of all time,
Immeasurably grand! serene! unmoved! sublime!
The boom of thundering billows on Time's shore,
The crash of fall long forgot,
The throes that thrilled a world's deep, inmost core.
When mighty Caesar fell, disturbed thee not.
Deep peace and quiet brooded o'er the spot,
Blue Summer skies bent low and loving o'er,
Bright stars gazed out from Heaven's celestial grot,
As upward reached thy fingers to explore,
As if to grasp their mysteries evermore.

What won work of architect divine!
What skill, inspired, thy grand proportions drew?
No hair-breadth out of nicest plummet line.
No jot or tittle leaning out of true!
Far through the trembling depths of tender blue,
Thy kingly banners wave their mystic sign
O'er serried masses as in proud review—
Dense marshaled columns dark of fir and pine,
Like hosts embattled, crowding line on line.

The pigmy monuments of Egypt's pride,
The boasts of Thothmes and his courtier slaves,
How puny in their grandeur by thy side!—
As millpond's boast to mighty ocean's waves.
When sighing captives in Denderah's caves,
Slow-toiling hewed, and bent, and broke and died,
And dotted thick the weary way with graves,
Ye watched the silent centuries slowly glide,
In strength untasked, unfettered and untried.

Type of all grandeur, glory, strength and grace,
Of all-mysterious growth unseen, unheard,
No boastful lies your glorious shafts deface,
No groans were heard as day by day appeared
Each lofty dome, to pierce the sky, upreared,
To gaze afar through dimly fading space;
No burning brands the flesh of toilers scared
To mark with shame a captive alien race,
To rear ye all—triumphant in your place:
Eternal, lifting heavenward, mighty, grand,
The glorious columns keep their sacred trust!
Lo! groveling in the wastes of drifting sand,
Lie Egypt's wonders in oblivion's dust—
The scattered records of Assyria's lust,
They strew her solitudes on every hand
Blent in one common wreck, shaft, pillar, bust—
Tho' storms may sweep, and earthquakes rock the land,
And Empires perish, steadfast still ye stand!

Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. 185.

Relieved.—Burial Hymn

Written Upon the Occasion of the Funeral of President Garfield

Rest, O, weary spirit, rest!
Fold the hands upon the breast,
Now the last long watch is done,
Now the battle fought and won.

Not again thy dreams shall flee,
At the morning reveille;
Winter storm or summer rain
Waken not thy sleep again.

Gently bend, O, skies of blue,
Gently fall, O, rain and dew,
Softly sigh, O, drooping rose,
O'er the hero's deep repose!

Earth to earth, and dust to dust,
Take, O, grave, thy sacred trust!
Let the war-worn soldier sleep,
Fold him in thy slumber deep.

"It is finished!" It is well—
Drape the banner, toll the bell,
Love's last, lingering kiss is pressed—
Rest, O, weary warrior, rest!

Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. 187.

Evening

Sunset glories flush the sky,
Fade and die;
Come the fairy steps of eve
Noiseless from the darkening cast,
Labor's busy hum has ceased;
Crickets grieve.

Fades the day's expiring gleam
Like a dream;
Heralded by eve's bright star,
Night puts on her diadem,
Set with many a blazing gem
Flashing far.

Truant zephyrs wandering by,
Faintly sigh,
Whisper in the vine-clad bower,
Loiter soft with lingering kiss,
Bringing tender dreams of bliss,
To each flower.

Mystic trills of quavering sound
Moat around;
Like Prospero's magic isle,
Unseen forces fill the air;
Song and music everywhere,
Soft beguile.

Now earth's cares and labors cease,
Rest in peace;
Sinking on the night's soft breast
Weary hearts have ceased to fret
Slumber haunted—and forget,
Lulled to rest.

Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. 188.

Oblivion

We look around us and behold the doom
Of all things mortal held in earthly thrall;
Like ocean's surges with their thunderous boom,
The waves of human empire rise and fall.
The mighty heroes sleep within their tomb;
They heed us not, in vain we sigh and call,
And peer about us through the ghastly gloom;
Oblivion hath gathered over all,
And the dead Past lies cold 'neath Time's mould'ring pall.

Like mournful exiles on lone foreign strands,
We gaze oblivion's dark waters o'er;
And vainly strain to view the mighty bands,
Of Spirit-land, who once Life's livery wore,
Whose feet shall tread earth's highways nevermore;
The living dreamers—we may count their hands,
But who shall count the myriads gone before?
Lo! they are as the vast unnumbered sands
That drift and eddy o'er the Red Sea lands.

How are the mighty fallen and undone!
Their sun hath set as orb at close of day;
Their dazzling glories perished one by one,
Their palsied hands no more the sceptre sway.
All but their mouldering names have passed away—
Tyre in her purple, gorgeous Babylon,
And Nineveh, and Carthage,—where are they?
Their eager race of power and glory run—
Gone, as the morning mists, before the sun!

Imperial Rome! Proud mistress of the world!
Still through thy heart the classic Tiber pours;
Thy eagles grasped their prey with plumes unfurled,
From every nation, from all climes and shores.
And they in turn have preyed upon thy stores;
The Goths and Vandals in their fury hurled
Thy household gods forth from thy temple doors;
No more thy haughty Caesars, sleek and curled,
Shall tread in pride thy gorgeous palace floors;
The dogs alone in pity lick thy sores.

Like busy ants we throng the earth's wide shores—
Proudly they rear their tenements of clay,
And guard with jealous care their sacred doors,
Vain little toilers!—We are but as they!
Ferocious, petty creatures that do prey
Upon their weaker neighbor's precious stores;
The whirlwind bursts in fury, where are they?
Gone as the mite, when ocean smites the shores,
Swept as the dust from polished marble floors!

And ants are we: The proudest earthly throne
I - but an ant hill. Insects we do stand,
And we do ever tug and sweat and groan,
And strive to move great heavy grains of sand;
We rear our temples and our columns grand,
Nor dream of mighty Babel's towers o'erthrown,
And gaze with haughty pride: On every hand
Our lofty monuments of sculptured stone—
The earthquake topples them, and they are gone.

We toil and build, and reck not of the years
Swift circling ever through Time's ringing zones;
And plow the dust and ashes of our peers,
And reap our harvests over dead men's bones.
We build our cities of the sacred stones
That they have fashioned into sepulchres,
With solemn rites and sorrowing hearts, and groans,
And raised above their mighty kings and seers,
And consecrated with their sighs and tears.
And what, if in the lapse of countless years,

Amid the wreck of earth's forgotten thrones,
Another race should come with gibes and jeers,
And dig amongst our mouldering, crumbling bones,
And they should laugh, and they should take the stones
That we have piled aloft, mid sighs and tears,
Above our dead, with wringing hands, and groans,
And pull them down with cold, unfeeling sneers,
And rear their gilded palaces mid shouts and cheers?

And thus it shall be with us all. The swine
Shall some day spurn us and upturn our dust,
And we shall dreamless lie and give no sign—
Cold, cold, the fires of love and hate and lust.
The proud and meek, the wicked and the just,
Shall mingle in the chaos of Time's deep decline;
The purple grape its rooted fibres thrust
Through our cold clay, and men shall drink the wine,
And sing and dance and jest beneath the vine.

Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. 189.

Poem

*Written for Union Temperance Meeting; and Read by Rev. Mr. Hutchings,
at Los Angeles*

Launched in their strength and pride,
Brave flags and pennons streaming free aloft,
A gallant fleet, they seek life's ocean-tide,
From many a harbor soft.

With bulwarks high and strong,
Full-freighted deep, with many a precious store,
They list the murmur of Hope's siren song,
And leave the smiling shore.

Soft-lulled by Fortune's smile,
Alar swift-wafted by the favoring gales,
Adown bright coasts mid sleeping coral isles,
They drift with dreamy sails.

Some barks 'neath placid sky,
O'er ocean's wide expanses come and go,
And know no danger as the years go by,
In soft, perpetual flow.

Or safely reach a shore,
Where soft waves murmur on a sleeping strand;
But woe for others when the tempest's roar
Beats on a cruel land!

Some, helpless at their posts,
With flapping sails, the sport of spiteful Fate,
Drift rudderless toward the rock-bound coasts,
Where death lies full in wait.

Dark clouds and storm-torn waves!
Wrecked barks and signal guns that help implore
For rescue swift from cruel, yawning graves,
Call faintly to the shore.

Shrieks wild of dire distress,
A scene of horror, half concealed, half shewn,
A gloomy shore-line, long and limitless,
With wreck and ruin strewn.

Ho! rescuers brave and strong,
Launch swift your life-boats from the death-strewn shore;
Pull for your lives, with steady stroke and long,
As never yet before.

Pull for the shivered mast—
For those to Hope's weak, shattered spars may cling!
Pull for the helpless lives down-sinking fast
For weak souls perishing.

What matters that they slept,
And kept no watch when zephyrs breathed with balm!
Or careless song and midnight revel kept,
When sea and sky were calm?

Ho, watchers by the seas!
Let your loud danger-bells amid the gloom
Ring out their warning on the shuddering breeze,
With thunderous, mighty boom.

Ho, keepers of the light!
Flash far through gloom and storm the beacon-blaze!
Far through the tremors of the starless night
Send forth your cheering rays.

With steadfast strength and watch,
Weak sinking ones ye haply yet may save—
Full many a hopeless fainting soul may snatch
From dark oblivion's grave.

Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. 191.

Jack Van Dusen—In the Alta Level

Where the Alta's pulses beat,
With a burning, fevered heat,
Rushed the swelling tide of death,
Through the level's throbbing vein;
From the Comstock's bowels hot,
Boiling, bubbling, like a pot,
Came his hurried, labored breath,
Like a dying soul's, in pain.

Half a mile below the light,
In the everlasting night,
Where the deadly gases creep
Through the sweltering level still;
Toiling, boiling, heroes they,
Fighting inch by inch their way;
Mid the awful darkness deep,
Delved the knights of pick and drill.

"Death to all, without a hope,
In the lower level's scope!"
That was what the miners said,
White-lipped at the entrance all;
"Not a thing that breathes, may live,
Not a glimmer hope can give—
But to reach our comrades dead,
Why should other comrades fall?"

Then up spoke brave Callahan,
"Who will be the other man?
We will venture in a boat,
In the boiling, seething vein!"
"I," said Bennett, fear-unblanched,
And their tiny boat they launched,
Vanished in the depths remote;
But they came not back again.

Shuddering horror like a pall,
Hopeless settled over all,
Spell-bound, till Van Dusen stepped
Boldly to the front and said:
"I my helmet on will gird,
Breast the flood and bring you word
Of our men, alive or dead!"
And the promise well was kept

Through that shuddering veil of doom,
Broke no cannon's mighty boom,
As he onward silent strode,
Face to face with lonely death;
Rose no cheer or martial clang,
Not a bugle echo rang,
As he faced the scalding flood,
With its poisonous, fiery breath.

Through that seething way of wrath,
Through that death-damp, haunted path,
Where the shadow of the grave,
Wrapt in mystery, threatening lay;
Past the corpses of the dead,
Whence the spark of life had fled,
Onward went the hero brave,
Steadfast on his fearful way.

Not on Balaklava's field,
Where war's thunders crashed and pealed,
Shone such dauntless courage high,
Mid the battle's lurid blaze;
Not in charge so grandly made,
By the deathless Light Brigade,
When a band rode forth to die,
'Neath a world's applauding gaze.

His, a mission but to save
Comrades from a horrid grave—
Not of warrior-fame to win,
On ensanguined field of slaughter;
His, a charge unseen, alone,
Fame-unheralded, unknown—
Here no sound of battle-din,
Floated o'er the deadly water.

Deathless be his record grand,
Bravest, noblest of the land,
Breasting hell's infernal wrath,
Braving terror threatening-jawed;
Facing worse than battle storm;
Daring death's most horrid form,
On his solitary path,
Strode he on, alone, unawed.

On he struggles, staggering, blind,
Death before, and death behind;
Not a thing with life might breathe,
Not a glimmering light might burn,
In that awful, noisome cave,
Manhood's strength and glory's grave,
Where the waters boil and seethe,
Round his staggering feet's return.

'Neath the level's low-sprung arch,
On his slow uncertain march,
Faint his lamp shone mid the gloom.
Like a trembling star at dawn;
Then no more the watchers, cheering,
In the darkness disappearing,
Telling of their comrades doom,
Flickered, faded, and was gone.

Out from depths of deepest pause,
From Death's gaping, yawning jaws,
From a struggle deadlier far
Than the soldier ever braved;
Like a ghost, with clinging shroud,
Reeling, swooning, pallid-browed,
To the light's dim-beckoning star,
Came the hero—they were saved.

Write his name on glory's page,
Grandest hero of the age,
Blazoned bright on history's scroll,
Simple-, stalwart, great, sublime!
"Jack Van Dusen!" let the name
Echo down the aisles of fame;
Let the whispers throb and roll,
Through the corridors of Time.

*

Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. 193.

Fading Roses

Whither, when roses are fading,
Fleeth their mystic perfume?
Whither, when storms are o'ershading,
Fleeth their glory and bloom?
Fading and flying they scatter
Wide, when the autumn winds call,
Ruthlessly, what does it matter,
Where the pale petals may fall—
Over the mountain or meadow,
Over the desert or glade,
Into the glimmer or shadow,
Into the sunshine or shade?

Life is as rose-bloom that flashes
Through the thick gloom overhead;
Why should we weep o'er the ashes,
When the bright spirit is fled?
Parting and fleeing we scatter,
Over the land and the deep—
Vanishing, little the matter
Where our pale ashes may sleep—
Under the turf or the billow,
Under the lilies or snows,
Under the pine or the willow,
Under the cactus or rose.

Chasing life's bright, gleaming bubble,
Some in the East and the West,
Why should we sigh with a trouble
Where our cold ashes may rest—
Lulled by the soft-cooing turtle,
Watched by the sentries of God—
Under the cypress or myrtle,
Under the marble or sod?

Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. 197.

Aubrey's Ride

[At the time of F. X. Aubrey's celebrated ride, in 1848, from Santa Fe to Independence, Missouri, all the vast stretch of plain intervening was a solitary, grassy the home of countless millions of buffaloes, and savage and blood-thirsty hordes of Indians—Pawnees, Cheyennes, and Arapahoes. A few nomadic trappers and traders were located at the time at certain points on the "Santa Fe Trail," of which knowledge the bold rider availed himself, in order to exchange his tired steeds for fresh ones.]

There were doubts and fears, and a storm of cheers,
When a horseman, bold and free,
With a ringing shout, and a clang of spurs,
Rode forth from Santa Fe.
Through a gauntlet dread of the savage spears,
Three hundred leagues rode he.

He had wagered upon a festal night—
When the hearts beat fast and high,
And the eyes were bright, and the hearts were light—
"O'er the trail to rifle or fly
In six brief days, for the dizzy flight"—
And he would do or die.

Like the rushing wind, far, far behind
He leaves the mountain door;
The rude *jacal* with its flowers entwined
By his path he sees no more;
The boundless plains where the dim trails wind.
Like seas spread out before.

Where the night-winds moan, by the Cimarron,
He harks to the ripple's flow;
Like a spear swift thrown, on, on, alone
Through the dim night he must go;
Through a land thick-sown with skull and bone
Hy the fierce Arapahoe.

The bison rolls from his grassy lair,
As the waves roll on the sea,
And the Indian war-whoop rends the air—
The shout of the fierce Pawnee.
It was his to die, or do and dare,
For a mountain man was he.

With a fearful yell, as of fiends from hell,
The Indians quick pursue;
He is safely borne, right fast and well,
By his good steed tried and true.
The outline dim of the mountain swell
Fades in the distance blue.

But a moment's halt at some trapper's camp—
Some Ishmael, lone and stray,
And a fresh steed springs with impatient champ,
That will not brook delay.
O'er the long, long way, through the night-air damp,
And still away, away!

He sees bright waters flash and gleam,
His steed the current craves;
He draws the rein beside the stream
Where the reedy bulrush waves.
In the crystal tide like some bright dream,
The water-lily laves.

Swift from the treacherous ambushed reeds
Pours forth the arrowy hail;
Again, again his courser speeds,
Like a bark before the gale,
On! on, with many a wound that bleeds,
Along the fearful trail!

The rattlesnake sounds his warning dread,
As it sees him swiftly pass;
And the ravens croak at him overhead,
Their ominous "Woe! Alas!"
And the life-drops red, from his deep wounds shed,
Fall thick on the trampled grass.

The boundless levels retreating, show
The dim horizon's verge;
The weary zephyrs thrill faint and low,
Like some sad funeral dirge;
And the mighty seas of buffalo
Around him madly surge.

With heavy eye he vainly scans
The far horizon's sweep,
Nor sign nor sound of friendly man's—
He dares not pause nor sleep;
How fast and yet how slow the sands
Of weary time do creep!

Five sleepless nights, six weary days,
He speeds upon the trail;
He sees, as through a trembling haze,
The landscape dim and pale;
His staggering thoughts are in a maze,
His reeling senses fail.

Where the swift boats glide o'er Missouri's tide,
He came at the set of sun;
Six days of flight o'er the lone plains wide,
And the fearful ride was done;
His good steed tried, lay dead by his side,
But the wager was bravely won.

Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. 198.

Dedication Poem

Written for Downey College Dedication, and read by Miss Lu Crowell.

From sylvan paths, from smiling ways,
From burdened fields of bending maize;
From meadows kissed by softer gale
Than fans the dreamy Lombard vale;
From mazy lane and willowy street,
We come with hurrying, youthful feet,
With merry sport, and voiceful hum,
With eager hearts and steps we come
Through winding paths and vistas straight,
This Temple fair to consecrate.

Not with old mystic Druid rite,
Beneath the moon's pale, trembling light,
To strike with awe the pagan hosts,
Come we to flit like guilty ghosts,
That shun the holy light of day—
As shadows come, so pass away;
Not with the blood of victim slain,
Proud Learning's altar pure, we stain—
With music's wiles, and gentle arts,
And incense sweet of willing hearts,
With aspirations, pure and high,
These halls to Truth we sanctify.

Not 'mid the burning Libyan sands,
Not 'mid the glowing desert lands,
Thy taunting shadows mystic rise,
To mock the fainting pilgrim's eyes—
A false, delusive mirage ray,
To glint and gleam, and melt away.
Wrapt seers of Time, we gaze and see
A vision of the days to be;
Forth from thy wide, unfolding door,
We see the throngs impetuous pour;
On Life's vast plain their feet emerge,
We see a thousand paths diverge;
Afar, we hear the lofty shout,

“Excelsior!” ringing grandly out;
A tumult as of restless seas,
A murmur as of dreamy bees,
When steals the trembling midnight moon,
To kiss the sleeping flowers of June—
The sounds of toil and tumult cease,
The toilers sleep and all is peace.

Perchance, from thy soft lap may spring,
To awe the lands, some conquering King—
Some glorious, flashing meteor name,
Light History’s pages with its flame;
Some Franklin from its misty shroud,
To lure the lightnings from the cloud;
Some star-crowned Herschel, grandly wise,
To read the mysteries of the skies;
And tell the secrets of the stars;
Some Kane to dare the Arctic breath,
Some Hall to seek the Pole—and death;
Some Webster to expound the law,
Some Henry thunder-strike with awe,
The proud oppressors of his land
With burning words, defiant, grand!
To empty in the tyrant’s path
The pent volcanoes of his wrath;
Some Moses grand, to lead his flock,
To part the waves, and smite the rock
Of ignorance in savage lands,
And give to lips of thirsting bands
That blindly press with eager feet,
The draught of Learning, pure and sweet;
Some patient Locke, to trace and find
The hidden fountains of the mind,
From whence their rise, and fitful flow,
Their breadth and depth, and whither go.

Some Genius from thy halls may glide,
Like him who sleeps by Avon’s side;
In lore of awful Nature taught,
His realm, the boundless space of Thought;
King of the Ages, grand! sublime!

Encrowned with glory for all time.
Some dauntless, sweet, heroic Queen,
With royal pride and matchless mien;
Some Eleanor, with potent spell,
The poison of the Infidel,
With soothing art, and skillful tact,
And queenly, lovely lips, extract.
Some Isabella grandly dare,
For Genius, pledge her jewels rare;
Some maid inspired, some Joan of Arc,
To fan aflame dim Freedom's spark;
To kindle quenchless Freedom's rays,
And light a land with Glory's blaze,
When courage from her sons is fled,
And stir the pulses of the dead.
In youth's bright morning-time and glow,
Some stripling from thy walls may go,
To come again in other days,
A hero crowned with wreath of bays;
By storm and heat of battle browned,
Some steel-clad warrior helmet crowned,
To tell of wars and labors done,
Of battles fought and Plevnas won. [sic]

Forth from thy haven's peaceful breast,
Whose light gleams o'er the farthest West,
May no false beacons lure away,
Nor dreams Utopian lead astray
The seekers of thy guardian light,
To wander on through endless night;
Here, haply, free from sordid cares,
When Time her full fruition bears,
To seek thy welcome, sweet repose,
And muse beneath the clustering rose,
Shall Sages come with honored feet,
And Science find the chosen seat.

O, God-like Science, in thy dawn,
With steadfast march, go on, go on;
Past Fear's dim phantoms, cold and pale,
Through Superstition's ghostly-vale,
Go on with purpose pure and high,
Go up, until the stars are nigh,
Beyond the glittering, Heavenly zone,
And stand beside the Golden Throne!

God of the Universe! to Thee,
Mid Time's mutations yet to be,
When drowsy ages nod and sleep,
We give this holy fane to keep.
When monuments of pomp and lust
Lie low in rayless, dreamless dust,
Spurned and forgotten by the lands,
May this, our work of loving hands,
Gleam like a beacon on the shore,
Bright o'er Time's Sea, forevermore.

Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. 201.

Life

To hope, to doubt, to grieve, to mourn;
A journey ended, scarce begun;
A misty fog-wreath, upward borne,
As morning mist before the sun.
A trembling light, a streak of gray,
A gleam, a purple flush at dawn;
A risen sun, a dazzling ray,
A rainbow promise seen and gone.

A summer sky, all clouded soon,
A full-orbed splendor veiled from light
By lowering clouds obscured at noon;
A sun, gone down in gloom and night.

Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. 204.

Mission San Gabriel

Crumbling ruin, old and gray!
Relic dim of ancient glory!
Emblem mute of Time's decay,
Fading like a dream away,
Oh! to know each tender story,
Each fond legend of romance,
Born of maiden's magic glance,
Vivid as the lightning's flashes,
Lighting up the far expanse!
Vain the longing! dust and ashes,

Only, of the hearts remain,
Thrilling once with love and pleasure,
Throbbing quick with joy and pain,
Lust of power or hope of gain,
Saintly crown or golden treasure.
Here, within thy solemn shade,
Slumber matron, priest and maid,
Lover, warrior, pride, ambition;
Mouldering side by side are laid
Lowly birth and high condition.

Hallowed lamp of holy light!
Early ray of gleaming lustre,
Mashing through the gloom of night,
With thy soft effulgence bright—
How dead memories, round thee cluster!
Echoes faint of ghostly calls,
Whispers haunt thy lonely halls,
Of the voices gone and perished,
And oblivion's shadow falls
Over all fond hearts once cherished.

Here, where roses bloom and flush,
Heedless of the world's mutations,
Of its maddening whirl and rush,
In supreme, eternal hush,
Sleep the dreamless generations.
All their fitful dreamings o'er,
Waked to effort nevermore,
These forgotten, those before them,
And the orange, from her store,
Strews her snowy petals o'er them.

Gazing far o'er land and sea,
Still thy mountains, tall and solemn,
Lifting through eternity,
Silent sentries over thee,
Look on crumbling wall and column.
Bound as with a magic spell,
Hear we still thy virgin bell,
To the mountains calling, calling,
Throbbing, thrilling vale and dell—
Sinking, swelling, rising, falling.

Still thy silvery chime of bells.
With its echoes throbbing, dying,
Floating through thy sylvan dells,
Sweet its tender story tells,
To the zephyrs, sobbing, sighing;
And at solemn hush of eve,
Trembling nightwinds softly grieve,
Like fond mourners, vigil keeping;
And the vines their chaplets weave,
O'er a perished century sleeping.

Here where mouldering Time hath crept,
Still beside thy simple altar,
Where the contrite eyes have wept—
Where her vigils Faith hath kept—
Stands the priest, with cross and psalter,
Like a spectre, weird and lone,
Chanting in a monotone;
Like some mourner, weary-hearted,
Drooping o'er the burial stone
Of the loved ones, long departed.

Still thy drooping, dreamy oaks,
Like fond mothers, sad and tender,
Trembling at the woodman's strokes,
Spread their sheltering, glossy cloaks
O'er the poppy's golden splendor;
But the warrior's sword is rust,
And the padre's heart is dust;
Gone the gleam of lance and sabre,
And the souls that kept their trust,
Rest from earthly care and labor.
Relic of a century dead!

Type of earthly evanescence,
Ghost of strength and glory fled,
Time hath bowed thy hoary head,
Dimmed thy glowing incandescence;
Like a half-forgotten dream,
Drifting down oblivion's stream,
Slowly, slowly, sadly fading,
Like the day's expiring gleam,
Into mystic twilight shading.

Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. 205.

Magdalena

Thou art fallen, fallen, fallen,
Magdalena!
With a spell thy soul is thrallen,
Magdalena.

From the path of virtue crowded,
With a stain thy life is clouded,
With a pall thy glory shrouded,
Magdalena!

Thou wert glorious as a vision,
Magdalena,
In youth's springtime flush elysian,
Magdalena;
Rainbow Hope thy sky adorning,
Not a shadow dimmed thy morning,
Not a glance was flashed in scorning,
Magdalena!

Proud and peerless in thy beauty,
Magdalena,
Walking in the path of duty,
Magdalena;
Oh! what cruel fate hath won thee?
What dark, deadly wrong undone thee,
That the pure and holy shun thee,
Magdalena?

Beckoned Love's false sign unhallowed,
Magdalena,
And thy eager footsteps followed,
Magdalena;
Luring on but to degrade thee,
In sin's scarlet they arrayed thee,
Wrecked and ruined and betrayed thee,
Magdalena.

Do they scorn thee and condemn thee,
Magdalena?
Who shall judge thee to condemn thee,
Magdalena?
Thou art lost to virtue's keeping;
Clouds across thy sky are sweeping;
Bitter fruit thy soul is reaping,
Magdalena!

Who shall boast them of the morrow,
Magdalena,
In this world of sin and sorrow,
Magdalena?
Who defy the siren Fashion,
Pleading Love and tyrant Passion,
Or Want's palid lips so ashen, [sic]
Magdalena!

Yet though outcast and forsaken,
Magdalena,
From thy nightmare dream awaken,
Magdalena;
Words of promise He hath spoken;
Like the rainbow's glorious token,
Never yet to mortal broken,
Magdalena.

Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. 208.

The Desert Mirage

Scared and shriveled, scorched and blasted,
Like a giant fever-wasted,
Prostrate, hopeless, ever glaring wide with fixed despairing eyes
Stretch the desert-wastes where danger
Beckoning, smiling, lures the stranger,
Ever hoping, on and onward neath the furnace-glowing skies.

There tin- phantoms gleam and glitter,
Where the alkali spreads bitter,
Not a quivering song-bird's twitter ever greets the gladsome Spring
Thrilled with tremor, scorched with fever,
Hopeless horror broods forever,
Where Jehovah's wrath has withered every germ of living thing.

All! What vision bright of glory,
What fond dream of fairy story
Dazzles where the dim horizon like a trembling curtain falls?
What vague shadows, what creations
Mid the quivering air's vibrations
Rise like gorgeous exhalations—domes and castellated walls?

Temples reared with art's precision,
Clustering groves and fields elysian,
Glorious as a midnight vision, gorgeous as a fairy dream;
Spires ablaze with shimmering splendor
Tower afar o'er landscapes tender—
Over flowery vine-wreathed arbors, over fountain, lake and stream.

With its blessed spell assuaging,
Soon shall cool the fevered-raging,
Water, water, gleaming, dancing, see the sparkling crystal wave
July glancing, clear and clearer,
Shining, Hashing like a mirror;
Having onward, drawing nearer, soon the weary limbs may lave.

Over quivering white expanses
Flashing back the sun's hot glances,
Where the heat-wave writhes and dances, where the ashen lava-crust
'Neat the footfall echoes hollow,
Still the fainting footsteps follow,
Hoping still, and still despairing, o'er the desert's deathly dust.

Faint receding, dim and dimmer.
Fitful flashes fade and glimmer;
Here was seen the water's shimmer, but no river rolls its tide;
Speed the footsteps fast and faster,
Spread the death-wastes vast and vaster;
Wreck and ruin and disaster, scattered broadcast far and wide.

Here where gleamed the bright creation,
Like a bubble's false inflation,
Naught but death and desolation meet the fevered, maddened gaze;
Where a city's walls were builded,
Where the spires rose, tall and gilded,
But the ghostly, shuddering mountains tremble through the quivering haze.

Beckoning, mocking, still betraying,
Still inconstant, never staying,
Gleams the spell of death's enchantment fading on the brazen sky,
But a mirage, but illusion,
Melting dimly in confusion
Bids the follower hope abandon, bids him but despair and die.

Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. 209.

Instability

Two children played in fond childhood's trust,
And drew quaint signs on the earth's hard floor,
And wrote their names in the highway's dust,
But the whirlwind came in its pride and lust,
And dust and tracery were no more.

Two lovers stood on the gleaming strand,
And gazed afar o'er the boundless space;
He wrote their names in the shining sand,
As they wandered dreamily hand in hand,
And the tide swept over, and left no trace.

Ambition came in his pride to mock,
And graved his name on enduring stone—
Deep, deep in the everlasting rock,
But the earthquake heaved with a mighty shock,
And the shaft lay broken and overthrown.

Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. 211.

After All

After all the fretting,
After all the pain;
After all regretting,
After all the stain;
After all “to-morrow,”
After all the sorrow,
Wherefore seek to borrow
Trouble still in vain?

After all the swaying,
After all the sweep;
After all the praying,
After all the sleep;
After all the weeping,
After all the reaping,
After all the keeping,
What is there to keep?

After all the taunting,
After all the strife;
After all the haunting
Dreams with terror rife;
After all the scheming,
After all the dreaming,
After all the gleaming,
What is left of life?

After all the trouble,
After all the dearth;
After all the bubble,
After all the mirth;
After all the trying,
After all the sighing,
After all the dying.
What is left of earth?

Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. 212.

Shiloh

In the west the day was fading,
Purple haze with twilight shading,
And the ceaseless cannonading
With its thunder died away;
Silence came with soft enthralling,
And the smoke-wreaths quivering, falling,
Like a shroud death's features palling,
Settled over Blue and Gray.

Darkness with her mantle lying,
Hid the forms of dead and dying,
Hushed was sob and moan and sighing,
And like weird uneasy ghosts,
Through the shuddering darkness peering,
As of unseen danger fearing,
Gliding, flitting, disappearing,
Strode the sentries at their posts.

Midnight silence softly creeping
Lulled the war-worn soldiers sleeping;
Death was weary with his reaping
On that mighty harvest field;
Lay the fallen in their places,
With their pallid upturned faces,
Glaring wide through vacant spaces,
With fixed vision all unsealed.

O'er that field with carnage reeking,
Words of hope and comfort speaking,
Soft came Mercy's angels seeking
Through the plain of death outspread;
Where the lines had clashed and striven,
Where war's thunderbolts had driven,
Mangled, shattered, rent and riven,
Lay the dying and the dead.
Two amid the few surviving,
Each to other freely giving
Life's fast waning strength, seemed striving
With vain effort, faint, despairing,

Heedless of the torch's glaring,
Fast their life-blood ebbing, wearing
One the Blue, and one the Gray.

They were brothers, noble-hearted,
From Home's sacred threshold parted
Ere war's lurid flames were started,
In the pleasant days long past;
Here in shock of battle meeting,
Where the frenzied d ruins were beating,
Hot their rage to whitened heating,
Steel to steel, they met at last.

There in death they knew each other,
Brother stricken down by brother,
Nurtured by the self-same mother,
At the same soft, loving breast;
Years ago their paths diverging,
Led their footsteps on, emerging
Where the ocean tides were surging
In the South and in the West.

When broke Discord's yells resounding,
All the peaceful lands astounding;
When the heart of Freedom bounding,
Thrilled and leaped at Sumter's fall;
One beside Pacific's Ocean,
With a patriot's pure devotion,
Stirred with deepest, grand emotion,
Heard the Union trumpet's call.

One beguiled by soft romances,
Held in beauty's dreamy trances,
Where the queenly Crescent glances
O'er the mighty river's mouth,
Listened to the siren story,
Heedless of war's spectre gory,
Thrilled his soul with martial glory,
Heard the summons of the South.

Murmured each in accents dying,
In the shadowy darkness lying:
“Oh, for loved ones, waiting, sighing!
For the Old Kentucky home!
With its blue-grass glory seeming
Reflex soft of heavenly gleaming;
Where fond hearts to-night are dreaming
Of the wayward feet that roam!

“Oh, for childhood’s fading vision,
With its glorious dream elysian,
Ere dark Hatred’s fell decision
Scattered ruin far and wide;
Ere broke war’s deep, muttering thunder!
We are brothers, do ye wonder?
Tear us, part us not asunder!”
Faintly whispered each, and died.

On that spot where each had singled
Out his foe, when hatred tingled—
There, their life-blood intermingled,
Still and calm the brothers lay;
By the margin of the river,
In love’s fond embrace forever,
In a Union none might sever,
Heart to heart, the Blue and Gray.

Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. 213.

The Fall of Vanity

On his gorgeous, gilded way
Winged the butterfly one day,
Mid the flowery beauties sighing,
And the violet whispered, “stay,”
And the rose blushed deeply red,
And the lily drooped her head,
As he loitered, fluttered, flitted,
Round each shrine, and onward sped.

And the trifler, weak and gay,
Went upon his giddy way,
And he said, “I am more beautiful,
More gorgeous-hued than they;”
And he vanished like a dream,
With his evanescent gleam,
In his glitter and his glory,
In the sun’s refulgent beam.

And he flitted here and there,
Sipping nectar everywhere,
With his gaudy wings outspreading
On the soft and balmy air;
And he sailed, and sailed, and sailed,
Mid the fragrant breath exhaled
By the sighing beauties longing,
Till the sunset splendors paled.

But the evening air grew cold,
And his plumes of blue and gold
Weak and weaker vainly fluttered,
And he lay upon the mold;
And the fairies far and near,
Came to deck his lowly bier,
And the dew-drops o’er him trembled
Like Love’s fondest parting tear.

And each flowery beauty sighed
Like a newly-widowed bride,
In the twilight's chilly gloaming,
O'er the fall of gilded pride;
And their tender fragrance shed
O'er the dark and lowly bed,
In the hushed and lonely stillness,
Where the butterfly lay dead.

Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. 216.

Jubilee Poem

Written for the Los Angeles Jubilee Musical Festival, and Read by Prof. S. H. Butterfield

Lo, a fount of crystal wells!
Lo, a song of triumph swells—
Sweet and glad its story tells,
To the sky;
As when Miriam went before
Israel's rescued host of yore,
Holy radiance beaming o'er,
From on high.

Thou that reignest eternal still,
Set this tent upon Thy hill!
Bless it with Thy holy will,
Even here,
As the tent that held Thine ark,
Through the ashen ages dark,
Keeping still the holy spark
Bright and clear.

Far around life's deserts spread;
Spirits fainting, dying, dead,
Smiling Hope no more o'erhead,
Holdeth up;
Bitter, bitter as the draught,
Fierce from Marah's fountain quaffed,
Mingled folly, sin and craft,
Mix the cup.

Lo! the way is dark and drear,
Wandering mid the deserts here;
Lead us to the waters clear,
Bright that spring
In the cool and quiet shade
Of the leafy, sylvan glade,
Where the roses never fade,
Withering.

Thou that boldest sea and land,
In the hollow of Thy hand,
As a shining grain of sand,
Hear Thy erring children's cry;
Heedful of the sparrow's fall,
Hear the fainting spirit's call—
Fettered by its fatal thrall—
“Help us, or we die!”

Foster still these zealous bands,
Strengthen still these willing hands,
Still to snatch the burning brands
From the fire;
Clothe each warrior soul with might;
Strengthen every arm for right;
Let no soldier in the fight
Faint or tire:

Raise the weary ones that sink;
Nerve the timid feet that shrink
From the precipice's brink,
Shuddering o'er;
And through shadowy vales of night,
Lead them to the mountain height,
Crowned with everlasting light,
We implore!

Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. 217.

Poem

[Written for the Southern California Joint Horticultural and Agricultural Exposition. Read by Prof. G. A. Dobinson.]

From bowers of soft, perpetual Spring,
From mountain glens and sun-kissed lands,
With grateful hearts, and willing hands,
Our offerings, here we bring.

Not as of old, from Israel's path,
Through dreary, desert wastes arise
The incense of our sacrifice,
To stay a Father's wrath.

Not through the parted Red Sea waves,
Our toilsome, weary march hath led,
Mid desert lands, to lay our dead
In lone r forgotten graves.

They rest within the sweet perfume,
Where roses droop their slumber o'er;
Where songsters carol evermore,
And flowers eternal bloom.

Here, in the sunshine of His love,
Beside sweet Nature's altars grand,
Her own annointed priests we stand; [sic]
His smiles our works approve.

Our night is o'er, our march is done;
Here rest we 'neath the waving trees,
Fanned by the breath of tropic seas—
The Promised Land is won.

No brighter vision spread before
Lone, wandering Israel's weary bands,
Long groping mid the desert sands,
When Canaan's smiling shore

Shone in its glory, soft revealed
Beneath the gorgeous Eastern skies,
Fair as the dream of Paradise—
No more a mystery sealed.

Not as the Roman legions came,
Come we to rule a conquered West,
Nor this fair land by nature blessed,
Lay waste with sword and flame.

Proud conquerors, crowned with festal flowers,
We come to rule a smiling land
With peaceful art and gentle hand—
No blood-stained triumph, ours.

Here, rest and dream, oh, weary man!
In our soft, slumb'rous bowers of bliss
Is heard no wily Serpent's hiss,
There is no Father's ban.

Partake with us our fruits of gold
From beauteous hands that freely give;
Rejoice and revel, eat and live,
Nor fear the curse of old.

Lo! ample stores of wine and oil,
And all the fruits of smiling Spain,
And waving fields of yellow grain
Repay the laborer's toil.

No hopeless wail, no bitter cry,
No groans from helot bands oppressed,
From this bright Eden of the West,
Go up to God on high.

Here Freedom's hand hath set her seal,
And Labor stands with myrtle wreath,
Nor cringes in the dust beneath
The tyrant's iron heel.

Here in these soft elysian vales,
We only feel that time is fleet;
We only know that life is sweet
As magic fairy tale.

The bitter frosts, the chilling snow
That wrapped our childhood home, but seem
As some vague, shadowy, nightmare dream,
That bound us long ago.

Here, safe from elemental wars,
As Life drifts down Time's silvery stream,
Shall sages muse, and poets dream
Beneath thy lustrous stars.

Not softer melt the zephyr sighs,
Where droop the vines of sunny France,
Nor brighter, Beauty's eyes that glance
Neath Andalusia's skies.

The moonbeams kiss thy sleeping seas,
As mothers fond their babes caress
With Love's soft, lingering, sweet impress,
When day's last footstep flees.

Ne'er dreamed by Arno's cliffy side,
Where soft Italia's myrtles twine,
Rapt sculptor, painter, poet, bride,
Of scenes more bright than thine.

Beside thy crystal, sparkling stream,
The dreamer mid the smiling flowers,
O'er soft Arcadia's sylvan bowers,
May cease to sigh and dream.

Here hath Pomona's generous hand,
Sown wide in measure all untold,
Her luscious fruits of red and gold,
O'er all her favored land

The orange, girt with gold around,
Queen of her queenly, royal race;
Type of all beauty, love and grace,
With glory stands encrowned.

The swelling grape with purple dye,
Scarce waits the press to render up
Her juice, to crown the festal cup,
When vintage days are nigh.

Through rock-bound gateways, rent and worn,
The rivers seek the thirsting lands,
And richer than Pactolian sands,
Their offerings downward borne.

The kingly Nile with generous hand,
Brings not such gifts of corn and grain,
Brings not such tribute in his train,
To Egypt's hoary land.

Bright visions still their forms disclose
From patient Time's unfolding womb,
And all thy plains and valleys bloom
And blossom as the rose.

Here shall our glorious temples rise
Beside the boundless Western sea,
And statelier fanes to Liberty
Ne'er kissed the Grecian skies,

Than here shall crown the summits soon,
Of many a proud Olympian dome,
When Art and Science make their home
Beneath our Harvest Moon.

So meet we here, that we may lay
The firm foundations, deep and strong,
Of Science, Labor, Art and Song,
On this auspicious day.

And as the cycling years go round,
May this, our fadeless glory stand,
A perfect poem, pure and grand,
With wreath perennial crowned,

Till here beneath our generous skies,
Earth's brightest dawning day shall ope,
And Labor, Learning, Virtue, Hope,
Their dreams shall realize.

Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. 219.

Eaton, Preble County, Ohio

My Birth-Place

My native place, I know thee not—
No impress faint, no dream of thee,
Of cabin rude, of sylvan spot
Is stamped upon my memory.

All, all a void, not e'en a trace
Remembrance holds, the faintest gleam
Of any spot or any face,
Of wood, or field, or vale, or stream.

Thy name recalls a gallant scene—
Of Eaton and his dauntless braves,
Who taught the Corsair Algerine
That freemen are not eunuch slaves.

Thy name, O, Preble! tells of fame—
Of freemen's deeds and freemen's ships,
That belched their deadly broadside-flame
On pirate lairs, from iron lips.

I know Ohio's noble land
Is blest with noble homes, and sons
And daughters, and an empire grand,
That freedom loves and slavery shuns.

I know her Summer skies are blue,
Her mellow Autumn days serene,
Her fading leaves—what gorgeous hue!
Her Wintry blasts—how cold and keen!

Soft in the Indian Summer's haze,
That lingers as in sad regret,
Her gleaming crown of golden maize
Upon her queenly brow is set.

From childhood's scenes, with tears and sighs
We wander far away, alas!
And dream 'neath softer stars and skies,
Sweet dreams that never come to pass.

How circumscribed thy widest scope!
O, human heart, how incomplete
Thy triumphs grand, thy fondest hope.
Thy deepest draught how bitter-sweet!

And still each land shall keep and hold
Its lovers with some mystic spell,
With some sweet magic, new or old,
Enthrall their hearts, and it is well.

Where golden fruits of glory gleam,
Kissed by the balmy, fragrant air
Of tropic seas, I lie, and dream
No other land can be as fair.

No olive-plume or sighing palm
Waves listless in thy summer breeze,
Nor mingles with thy zephyrs' balm
The fragrant breath of orange trees.

Yet, them art doubtless fair and sweet
To those who, from their earliest birth,
Have wandered not with restless feet—
The fairest spot on all the earth.

Yea! Life is but a maze of dreams!
And doubtless dear to thee and thine
Those woods, and vales, and murmuring streams,
As these soft skies to me and mine.

I know not if a fairer land
My weary, wandering feet have found,
Beside the sighing Western strand
In green, and gold, and azure bound;

I know a solveless mystery,
As haunts some undeciphered scroll,
Broods o'er the everlasting sea,
To soft enchain the longing soul.

How vague the vast eternal sweep!
And gazing o'er the wide expanse,
Its way is lost mid tangles deep,
In dreamy mazes of romance.

* In response to a letter from a friend describing it.

Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. 223.

San Diego

O, maiden, that idly loiters,
And lookest with longing gaze,
Where the spread of the endless waters
Melts into the dreamy haze!

What sound to thy spirit, yearning,
Is borne on the sylph-winged breeze?
'Neath the glow of the sunset burning,
What is it thy vision sees?

"In the coming of Time's mutations,
Borne swift on his pinions fleet,
I hear the march of the Nations—
The murmur of countless feet.

"The music of sailors singing
Borne soft on the spicy breeze;
A vision of white wings, winging
Afar o'er the tropic seas.

"Faint glimpses of isles of coral
Asleep on the ocean's breast,
Encrowned with their glories floral,
I see in the mystic West,

"That evermore glance and sparkle
Like jewels of blazing light,
And tremulous, dance and darkle
And fade from the yearning sight.

"The Queens of the Orient beckon
Afar with their jeweled hands,
And the Princes impatient reckon
The leagues of the desert lands,

"That spread with their broad division
Away towards the gates of light,
And glare as in fierce derision
On lover, and prince, and knight."

O, maiden, with glance of longing,
Dream-rapt by the sighing shore,
Soon, soon shall thy courtiers, thronging,
Their gifts at thy feet outpour.

The kings of the earth shall woo thee
Though obstacles dark deter,
And suitors from far haste to thee
With incense, and spice and myrrh.

And the tide in thy veins shall quicken
As torrents that seaward pour,
And the masts in thy harbor thicken
As jungle on India's shore.

Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. 225.

Lethe

Sweet is the grave's soft sleep,
Silent and hushed and deep—
Nevermore pain or sorrow,
Nevermore toil or care,
Weariness or despair,
Waking to doubt, to-morrow.

Welcome, O, Lethean draught,
That the pale lips have quaffed
Centuries, long unnumbered;
Quaffing they ceased from toil,
Fretting and life's turmoil;
Resting, forgot and slumbered!

Thine is the cordial sweet
Soothing with spell complete,
Never again forsaking;
Thine is the siren kiss,
Lulling to endless bliss—
Slumber that knows no waking.

Come when thou wilt, O, Death!
Welcome thy mystic breath—
Why should we sigh and shiver?
Why should we swerve and shrink,
Standing beside the brink
Of the Eternal river?

Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. 227.

Pioneer Reveille

Lurid flash from memory's gleam
Backward cast!
Was it but a fevered dream
Of the past,
But a gorgeous, glittering train
Sleep engendered in the brain,
But a baseless vision vain,
Gone at last?

Once again I see the bow
Bright o'erarch;
Feel the desert's fiery glow
Sear and parch;
Hear our tread!—the startled land
Shakes, as billows shake the strand,
Once again the quick command,
"Forward, march!"

Where the icy torrents coursed,
Swift we came;
Nature's mighty barriers forced,
Wilds made tame;
Conquered, trampled, everyone
Fortune wooed, and empire won,
Plain and mountain over-run
As with flame.

Comrades, silent, are ye all
Slumber-wrapped?
Ye, the mighty mountain wall
Mined and sapped;
Like Cannae's conquering hosts
Lured from Glory's posts,
Dreaming on the silken coasts
Luxury-lapped?

Bugles, sound the Reveille!
Comrades, wake!
Ye that slumber by the sea,
Stream, and lake,
Rouse ye all! The sun is bright
On each snowy mountain height,
There are battles still to fight—
Heights to take.

In the vale where sings the lark
In the glow;
In the canyons, deep and dark—
In the snow,
In the mountains, they are there,
In the scorching desert's glare,
Scattered, sleeping everywhere—
Lying low.

Some have laid them down to rest
In the mines;
Some, with heat and toil oppressed,
Neath the vines;
Vain the tears that loved ones weep,
On the mountain heights they sleep
Where the snow-pall shrouds them deep,
Neath the pines.

Resting some with eyes at last
Slumber-sealed,
Where the cannon's vengeful blast
Loudly pealed;
Perished in the deadly fray,
Where contending Blue and Gray,
Met to mingle clay with clay
On the field.

Standing once as firm and true
As a wall;
Vanished as the morning dew,
Comrades all;
Borne as leaves upon the blast
Scattered rudely, far and fast,
As when north winds eddy past
In the Fall.

I have sought to rouse them all,
As of yore;
But a shadow like a pall,
Broodeth o'er;
Sleep again shall ne'er forsake them,
Earthquake shocks may vainly shake them,
Bugle blasts again shall wake them
Nevermore.

Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. 228.

To the Soul

O, thou essence immaterial
As the viewless air ethereal,
Lighting with thy mystic taper
All our being, all our ways;
Earthly bonds defiant scorning,
Fading like the stars at morning,
Vanishing like fleecy vapor,
In the sunshine's dazzling rays!

Vain the efforts to enchain thee—
Never mortal eye hath seen thee,
Coming, going, mystic ever,
As the wayward, wandering wind;
Rustling, rushing, sweeping, sighing,
Loitering, lingering, listless dying,
Silent fleeing, gone forever,
Leaving not a trace behind.
Vainly, vainly seek we ever
With a yearning, fond endeavor,
Still to solve the secret hidden
From Time's earliest dawn, as now;
Whither, when thy mission ended,
And thy breath -with air is blended
Like the trembling mist ascended,
Lost to vision, goest thou?

Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. 230.

Glory's Last Dream

O'er the mountains of the Horn,
Softly stole the flush of morn,
Lighting all that sylvan scene
With a heavenly smile serene
Slumbering softly far away,
Calm and sweet the Rosebud lay;
And toward the tropic zone,
Rolled the flashing Yellowstone.

Softly fell the picket's tramp
Round the slumbering, peaceful camp;
Not a sound of life was heard;
Not a drooping banner stirred;
O'er each sleeper's raptured soul,
Visions bright and radiant stole,
Gorgeous as the rainbow's gleams;
Ah! those visions! What those dreams
Drifting brightly as the foam?—
All of glory, all of home;
All of loved ones far away;
Some of children at their play,
Silvery voices sweet and clear;
Some of wives and sweethearts dear,
Mothers, sisters, tender eyes,
Soft and sweet as dewy skies—
Slumbering, sighing, dreaming all,
Till the thrilling bugle's call
Ringing out the reveille,
Bade the shadowy visions flee,
And the dream-chased night was past—
Brightest of the earth, and last.

Far away, extended, full,
Lay the might of Sitting Bull;
In the morn's bright, raidant glow, [sic]
Gleamed the lodges of the foe,
Standing in the purple morn,
Countless as the shocks of corn
With their hidden golden grains,
On Nebraska's boundless plains.

"Mount!"—a sudden leap and stir,
Haste to belt, and boot and spur,
And in straight and moveless lines—
True and strong as serried pines,
Close and tall in forest wood—
Dark and grim the warriors stood.

"Forward!" with impetuous leap
Swift the thundering squadrons sweep,
Onward sweeps the gallant band;
"Halt!"—and at the quick command,
Dense and dark the squadrons form,
As the clouds before the storm.

"Charge!"—a clang of flashing steel
Answered swift the rifle peal;
Like the vivid lightning's Hash,
Fell the sudden sabre's crash;
Mingled cheer and savage yell,
Of the shock of battle tell:
Like the waves on rock-ribbed coasts,
Broke against those savage hosts
Of the mighty Western plain,
Martial pride and strength in vain.

Long the battle raged and rolled,
Long they struggled in that fold
Deadlier than the boa's coil,
While their life-blood dyed the soil,
Till all hope of earth was past—
Storming, charging, to the last;
Sharp the deadly rifles crashed,
Swift and keen the sabres flashed.

Like a meteor in the skies,
Blazed the young commander's eyes;
Like a bugle's martial clang,
Still his clarion voice outrang,
Cheering with its latest breath
On to victory—or death.

Deeply flushed the evening skies,
With the sunset's crimson dyes;
But a deeper flush of red
All the valley overspread;
Battle-wreck and hero-gore
Strewed the earth's sad bosom o'er,
O'er the plain, late battle-swept,
Awful stillness shuddering crept,
O'er the earth, o'er everything,
Hush, as naught but death can bring.
Where had rolled the tide of strife,
Not a throb or breath of life,
Not a hero left to tell
How thy fought and how they fell,—
With the dying sunset's ray,
Passed fond Glory's dream away.

Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. 231.

Dreams of an Hour

Dreams of the sea and land!
Of soft skies rainbow-spanned;
Of tropic palms and coral isles,
Soft-kissed by murmuring seas;
Of lands that slumber bright,
Soft in the Orient light,
Lulled into trance by Heaven's own smiles,
Faint fanned by fragrant breeze.

Fond dreamer, silken bound,
With glory bright encrowned,
No clouds thy bright horizon shade,
Sweet zephyrs idly play;
O, dreamer, soft dream on;
The coming of the dawn
Shall see thy gorgeous visions fade,
As shadows fleet away!

Dream still of rosy bowers,
Of bursting buds, and flowers,
Of mazy paths by crystal streams,
Of mirrored cloud and sky;
Thy dreams shall perish soon,
Thy sky o'ercast ere noon,
Uplit by swift electric gleams,
That sudden Hash and die.

Fond dreamer of an hour,
Enthralled by magic power,
Soon, soon shall fade the mirage gleams,
Thy fairy trance be o'er;
Thy visions melt and pass,
As dew-drops on the grass;
Gray dawn shall chase thy gorgeous dreams,
To come attain no more.

Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. 234.

Bubble and Shadow

Life is but as an ever-changing dream—
A shining bubble on Time's changeless stream;
A wayward zephyr all too rudely blows—
Forever gone its bright, prismatic gleam.

Our foolish lives are mirrored as in glass,
And instant flit as shadows o'er the grass,
Urged onward by a mystic power unseen—
One moment linger and forever pass.

O, Life! how like a foolish play half done;
An aimless journey ended, scarce begun;
Absorbed all sudden by relentless Death,
As trembling dew drank by the ardent sun.

The gilded barks of ages, proud and free,
Have heaved and tossed on Time's eternal sea;
And countless dreamers through the countless years,
Have dreamed their dreams as fond and bright as we.

Fled is the splendor of their transient day,
Their gorgeous dreams of Empire passed away,
Gone the faint glimmer of their fitful light—
Their swords and sceptres moulder in decay.

O, vague, dim phantoms! O, unquiet rest!
Full of a haunting terror, half suppressed,
That come and go as shadowy clouds that pass,
Why do ye come to mock the human breast?

Borne sadly onward, like the leaves that fall,
Toward Oblivion's all-enshrouding pall,
We vainly stretch our supplicating hands,
Then viewless vanish—bubble, shadow, all.

O, human life! how frail and incomplete;
How fraught with trembling hope and bitter-sweet;
The smiling Present's empty bubble-dreams
The lessons of the perished Past repeat.

A Vision of a Day

Morning—a blushing of skies rosy-red,
Music and song as of revel and feast,
Blossom and bloom on the spray overhead,
Blushes and flushes as bride newly wed,
Over the face of the soft dewy East.

Noontide—a gushing of glory and glow,
Pulsing of labor, and murmur of bee,
Hurry of feet o'er the earth to and fro,
Grape of the vintage and fruit of the tree;
Life, like the ocean's swift tide in its flow
Vexing the breast of eternity's sea,
Gone in a moment forever—ah, me!

Evening—a flushing of crimson and gold,
Shadows in zenith, and flames in the west;
Night with her soft, starry curtain unrolled,
Heads for the pillow, and birds for the nest;
Sighs 'neath the willow and tears on the mold,
Weary hands folded in peace on the breast.

Midnight—a hushing to silence and sleep,
Quiver of starlight, and dew on the rose,
Shiver of moonbeam, and mystery deep,
Pale weary eyelids that tremble and close,
Respite from sorrow, and rest and repose.

Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. 236.

Sea, O, Sea!

Sea, O, sea! why dost thou sigh
Like a dreamer in his sleep?
Soft and still the shadows lie,
Trembling on thy bosom deep;
Sea-nymphs in their coral caves
Sing their tender lullaby,
Laving in thy crystal waves—
Sea, O, sea! why dost thou sigh?

Sea, O, sea! why dost thou moan
In the hush of midnight deep,
Like some mourner sad and lone,
Starting from her troubled sleep?
Haunts thy throbbing, heaving breast
Still the sinking sailor's groan,
Thus, that thou canst never rest?—
Sea, O, sea! why dost thou moan?

Sea, O, sea! why dost thou fret,
Restless ever in thy woe,
Like the hearts that ne'er forget
Memories of the long ago?
Do the visions of the past
Shadow o'er and haunt thee yet—
Visions all too bright to last?
Sea, O, sea! why dost thou fret?

Dost thou sigh for ages gone,
Wealth and splendor faded, flown,
Venice in her maiden dawn—
Carthage dreamless, overthrown?
Athens gazing like a bride,
O'er the blue Egean, free,
Gleaming in her jeweled pride?—
Moan no more, oh, haunted sea!

Other cities yet to be,
Proud and fair as purple Tyre,
At thy feet shall bend the knee,
Yielding to thy fond desire.
Break the dim, enchanted spell!
Bid the haunting memories flee!
To the past, a fond farewell!
Sleep and dream, O, sighing sea!

Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. 237.

A Song of Thanksgiving

Give a song of praise to the Giver of good,
Let it thrill through the skies with a grand emotion;
Let it roll as the strength of the mighty flood
In its rushing path to the boundless ocean.

A glad, free song, of the heart's sweet lyre,
Like the song of triumph of Jephthah's daughter,
When her swift feet hastened to meet her sire,
To welcome him home from the field of slaughter.

Let it startle the valleys and float on the breeze,
Like the battle's grand thunder-chorus ringing;
As the voice of the billows, when angry seas
Their might on the shores of earth are flinging.

There is springing hope where was dark despair,
Fond nature hath wept o'er the earth's deep sorrow;
There is verdure soft where were hillsides bare,
And the skies are bright for the coming morrow.

Soon, soon shall the plain spread her carpet bright,
And the orange shall shed her balmy sweetness
Round the Spring's soft steps, from her wreath of white,
Like a bride arrayed in fond Love's completeness;

The dewdrops sparkle, like gems adorning
Proud Beauty's ears, and the sky-larks sing
In the soft, sweet hush of the crimson morning,
A song of welcome to bright-eyed Spring;

"The gloom is o'er and the night is past,
And the spell-bound slumber of nature over;
Sweet, O, sweet, have you come at last?
We will build our nest in your blossomed clover."

On each mountain slope, from crown to base,
She hath left the trace of her fairy fingers,
And over the valley's awakened face,
The magic thrill of her sweet kiss lingers.

The fawn shall stray and the lamb shall skip,
Unheedful, all, of the wolf's fell malice;
And the butterfly flaunt, and the bee shall sip
His nectar pure from the flowery chalice.

Through the throbbing veins of each laughing stream,
The crystal current shall pulse and quicken;
And the humming-bird flash, like a fairy dream,
Through the leafy bowers where the rose-buds thicken.

Proud ships shall come for the crowding freight,
And golden dreams to the weary sleeper;
And purple grapes for the vintage wait,
And bending harvests, the sun-browned reaper.

Rejoice, O, sower! Rejoice, O, lands!
In the promise of peace and plenty given;
Though the years may number as grains of sand,
There is mercy and truth and love in heaven.

The word of man is as morning dew,
As foam that seethes on the rushing river,
A mist that melts in the ether blue,
But His promise endures, and shall stand forever.

Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. 238.

A Vision

Written During the Anti-Chinese and Kearney Agitation

I dreamed a dream that was not all a dream—
A dream of smiling skies and virgin lands,
And glorious vales, where every crystal stream,
Soft murmured seaward over golden sands;
Big-hearted, brawny, bronzed, strong-bearded bands
Of men stood in the early morning beam;
The mountains sank beneath their Titan hands;
Dim caves reflected far the pick's bright gleam,
And manhood, hope and justice reigned supreme.

Proud in the strength of manhood's hopeful years,
Grand in the vigor of their giant might,
The joyous, heedless, careless pioneers
Sang, in the soft glow of the golden light,
That mighty hymn of Justice and of Right,
That men drank in with eager listening ears,
Ere Hope's bright sun had set in gloom and night
Environed with a thousand nameless fears,
Or drooping Faith sank down mid sighs and tears.

A low, sweet murmur as of golden bees—
Fair cities rose and stood with gaze elate,
Their glad songs wafted on the western breeze,
And one, the Queen, beside the Golden Gate,
Enthroned in purple, kept her royal state;
Her fame was spread through all the earth's degrees,
Her favors sought by lowly and by great,
Her white-winged commerce shadowed all the seas,
And fair-haired children clustered round her knees.

A little time, and lo! a mighty change
Came o'er the land's soft, smiling, peaceful face;
No longer in the mart, the mine, the grange,
Found truth, and trust, and brotherhood a place;
Man left his fellow-man in life's swift race
To faint and fall, and faces new and strange,
In turn eclipsed him in the giddy chase;
And where equality was wont to range,
Were pampered pride and hatred in exchange.

Man to his brother-man no longer just,
On couch luxurious made his slothful bed,
And slumbered o'er the crater's quivering crust
Unheedful of the throbbing lava dread.
Faith, love and holy charity were dead,
Truth, honor, virtue trampled into dust,
To rise again no more; and in their stead,
Came hellish jealousy, and dark distrust,
And hatred, envy, avarice and lust.

Worth, friendless, starved, and riches were adored,
Dishonor vile, seized Honor's sacred posts,
And tainted Vice sat at the social board,
And lorded o'er the land with sneers and boasts;
As swarms of locusts o'er the sighing coasts,
More deadly than the warrior's vengeful sword,
Rose as a cloud, dark Asia's leprous hosts,
And on the shores defenseless, ceaseless poured
A countless, smothering, heathen, Tartar horde.

Proud Labor hid her face in darkened caves,
Or begged for bread with haggard visage lean;
The land was swayed by demagogues and knaves,
And purse-proud Arrogance, with haughty mien
And lip contemptuous, strode upon the scene;
The cliffs leaned trembling o'er the burdened waves,
A mildew-blight fell o'er her gorgeous sheen
And all her altars fair, and sacred graves
Were trampled by the feet of alien slaves.
First, faint indifference, then submission tame,
As slumberers wakened, yet but half-awake;

A consciousness of wrong, then burning shame,
And longing from the deadly toils to break.
As storms the bosom of the placid lake
Upheave, men rose and with a loud acclaim,
Asked right, for bastard wrong born of mistake;
Then deadly Discord, clothed with vengeance, came
With bloody sword and desolating flame.

The skies were lurid with the midnight glare
Of vengeful, fierce, incendiary fire;
Men gazed upon the ruin, in despair,
That told of quenchless hatred deep and dire;
Hope's lamp gleamed but a moment, to expire
In deeper darkness—not a ray was there
To light the gloom—the coward took his hire,
And shook his bloody dagger in the air.

The queenly City on her western shore,
No longer held a captive world in thrall;
The Goths, and Vandals clamored at her door,
And plucked her proud patricians in her hall.
Deep gloom and darkness gathered over all,
Her golden dream of luxury was o'er;
Kate's stern handwriting gleamed upon the wall.
Life's glorious flowers bloomed in her groves no more;
Her garnered fruit was rotten to the core.

Dimmed was the splendor of her jeweled gleam,
Cold, slimy serpents crawled around her feet,
Black, pirate banners flaunted o'er her stream,
Wild Arabs tented in each ghostly street.
Dark desolation reigned o'er all complete—
The wolf's long howl, the vulture's boding scream;
The masts lay prostrate o'er her rotting fleet—
Wreck, riot, ruin, reigned o'er all supreme;
I woke, and lo! a hideous nightmare dream!
The moonlight lay upon the gleaming tide,
Unvexed by earth's sore, pricking, chafing ills;
The dreaming City, like a jeweled bride,
Slept soft and peaceful on her thousand hills;
Yet through my soul an awful presage thrills,

Of vague impending ruin far and wide;
Such fear as heart of mortal ever stills,
When earthquakes heave and rushing whirlwinds ride
To humble haughty pomp and human pride.

Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. 240.

Dust and Ashes.

Dust and ashes, death and pall,
Faded light and withered bloom,
Sorrow, hush, decay and doom—
It is written over all.

Vistas of the far away,
Visions of the long ago,
Voices tender, soft and low—
How ye thrill my soul to-day.

Through the misty veil of years
Vanished visions slowly rise—
Spring, with rainbow-haloed skies,
April, with her smiles and tears;

Blended music, soft and low,
Insect hum, and song of bees,
Daisies and anemones
Nodding by the streamlet's flow.

Drooping low with weary wing
Wandering zephyrs faint and die—
Dreamy violets raptured lie
In the tender arms of Spring.

Music sweet, of blooming May!
How the birds at early morn
Sine; ecstatic from the thorn,
Sweet amid the snowy spray.

Oh, the flush of rosy June!
How the memory of the past
Sobs itself to sleep at last,
Like a weary child at noon.

Golden links in memory's chain—
Hope, and Faith, and Love, and Truth,
Severed with the dream of youth
Oh, to live a life again!

Cease, O, weary heart, to long!
It was but a transient gleam;
But a fitful, fading dream—
Echo of some siren song.

Dust and ashes are thy hopes—
Even as the shades that pass
Swiftly o'er the burnished glass,
Or the tender bud that opes,

But to wither at the breath
Of the chill September frost,
All its flush and glory lost
In the hush and gloom of death.

Cease, O, memory, cease to fret!
Let thy perished idols sleep,
Myrrh-embalmed and hidden deep—
Sleep, O memory, and forget!

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Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. 243.

A Song of the Old and the New

Written on New Year's Eve

What song shall we sing of thanksgiving?
What prayer from the soul shall be said?
What hymn to the love that is living?
What requiem chant for the dead?

For the new, there is voiceful devotion
Like the soft, dreamy murmur of bees;
For the dead, there is heart-stirred emotion
Like sobbing and sighing of seas.

Oh, dead love so dreamlessly sleeping,
We bend o'er thy cold, lifeless clay;
Mid sorrow, and sighing, and weeping,
We bear thee in silence away!

Thou art gone as a dream that is ended—
As endeth the sweet singer's song;
Thou art snapped as a bow that is bended
With tension too lasting and strong.

Like a wanderer, phantom—affrighted,
Thy bloom fled away ere thy time,
Ere thy fullness of hope thou wast blighted,
And withered ere yet in thy prime.

Fond hopes that we tenderly cherished,
Illusory, vanished and died;
Thy promise of fruitfulness perished,
Thy sweet founts of nourishment dried.

In the pageant of death we array thee
As bride, in her bridal-robcs dressed;
In the grave of the ages we lay thee,
White roses and red, on thy breast.

Cut down by death's keen, flashing sickle,
We lay thee to sleep 'neath the dew;
Like lover inconstant and fickle,
We turn from the old to the new.

In the mazes of time we have found thee,
Encircled with glory, O, sweet!
Sweet odors are wafting around thee,
And flowers encompass thy feet

Soft lace half thy beauty discloses,
Bright jewels thy bosom adorn,
Thy breath is as breath of the roses
When sparkle the dew-drops of morn.

Oh, beautiful bride, sweet and tender,
That linkest thy life with our own,
Thou hast come in thy glory and splendor
Like rose of the Summer, full-blown.

Full-blown as the sweet water-lily
That floats on the bright silver tide,
When north-winds, with bitter breath chilly,
No longer in south-lands abide.

By streamlet, and bright crystal fountain
Thou standest, O, beautiful one;
Thou strayest o'er hill-top and mountain,
And smilest in rain and in sun.

Bright chains that dark time may not sever
Shall hold us in thrall by thy side;
We will cling to thee, love thee forever,
O, garland-crowned, beautiful bride!

O heart that is throbbing and leaping,
As swells the wild pulse of the sea.
Remember the Past that is sleeping,
Mid dreams of the Future to be!

Mid offerings sweet of thanksgiving,
Give sighs for the days that are fled;
Give songs to the bride that is living,
Give tears to the love that is dead.

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Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. 245.

Song

Soul of the south wind sighing
Over the red rose dying,
O'er the pale petals lying,
Why dost thou grieve, and- cling
Unto the bare boughs shaken,
Moaning like heart forsaken
Never again to waken
In the bright flush of Spring?

Other sweet queens shall woo thee,
Other red lips shall sue thee,
Other fond brides come to thee
With their bright smiles to bless;
Love, her soft charms surrender,
May, with her rose-buds tender,
June, with her flush of splendor
Yield to thy fond caress.

Cease thy sad, wailing number,
Haunting no more her slumber,
Sorrows no more encumber—
Mem'ries thy bosom heave;
Dreamless thy love is sleeping,
Stars their bright watch are keeping,
Break not her rest with weeping,
Cease o'er thy dead to grieve.

Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. 247.

The Death of Samson

Glad floats the sound of mirth and song
O'er Gaza's festive scenes,
Around the sightless giant, throng
The scoffing Philistines
To taunt him with their triumph vain,
Nor dream his strength may come again.

To Dagon's praise their anthems peal—
Their songs of triumph, hark!
His hands the firm foundations feel,
Slow groping in the dark;
A smile of triumph lights his face,
His arms, the pillars firm embrace.

Slow heaves his brawny, swelling chest,
Unvexed by bond or cord;
And deep within his troubled breast,
The spirit of the Lord
Stirs like a mighty earthquake throe.
Presaging death and overthrow.

A sudden crash of reeling walls
Upon the stillness broke;
Such swift and sudden crash as falls
When lightnings rend the oak—
Arch, pillar, hall and battlement,
In one promiscuous ruin blent.

The sounds of tumult pass away,
As lull the raging seas;
Calm, still and terrible he lay
Amid his enemies—
Gone as the mighty whirlwind's breath,
Triumphant still, and strong in death.

Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. 248.

Poem

*Written for the Los Angeles Celebration of the Anniversary of
Independence—July 4, 1875*

Once more we come with song and cheer,
And bugle-call and roll of drum,
To honor all our hearts hold dear,
And sing the years to come.
Once more we stand beneath the fold
Of Freedom's banner, wide unfurled,
As stood our sires in days of old
Against a frowning world.

Forever, Freedom's emblem meet
To guard each freeman's home, or grave,
In Summer's peace, or war's fierce sleet
O, sacred banner wave!
Thy stars shall shine o'er hill and plain—
In glory blaze o'er land and sea,
To rend oppression's galling chain,
O, emblem of the free;
To guard the right, the wrong defy,
This, this shall be thy mission high.

Still sacred to the sons, as sires,
Shall be the boon thy memory holds;
To kindle fresh the patriot fires,
Still be thy starry folds
In peerless majesty unfurled,
The star of hope to all the world.
Still as the cycling years go round,
The prostrate nations, firmly bound
By tyrant's chains in foreign lands,
Shall lift to thee imploring hands;
And tearful eyes beyond the sea
Shall turn to thee, shall turn to thee.
What though vast oceans roll between,
And trackless deserts intervene,
Still turns the patriot's ardent soul,
As turns the needle to the pole,

Unto thy true and steadfast blaze
To guide his path in lonely ways.
From foreign lands the wanderer turns
To where thy constellation burns
In distant lands o'er ocean wide,
As turns the bridegroom to the bride,
And clasps thy folds in rapture wild,
As the fond mother clasps her child.

O, brethren, on this hallowed day,
Put, put contention far away!
May charity and love impart
Their healing balm, and on each heart
Fall like the gentle dews of heaven,
Forgetting all, all, all forgiven.
The spirits of the mighty dead
Rise up, and rend their gory shrouds,.
They hover round like shadowy clouds,
When day's bright beams are fled.
From Lexington and Concord's greens,
From Bunker's blood-stained glorious height,
From Brandywine's dark field of night,
From deathless New Orleans,
From YorkUnvn's trenches, moss o crgrown,
From sacred Vernon's hallowed gloom.
From every martyr-hero's tomb,
From graves forgotten, lone;
From Saratoga's bloody plain,
From Carolina's moaning pines,
From sad Savannah's fatal lines,
They cry to us again.
We hear their voices in the air,
We see their footprints in the sand,
They call to us on every hand
In hollow tones, "Beware!"
Immortal heroes, past and gone,
In glory's blaze, sleep on! sleep on!
No tyrant foe in hate and lust
Shall trample on your sacred dust,
Nor yet your children voiceless hear

Your memories taunted with a sneer;
Nor see your trust and honor sold
For base, accurs'd, barbaric gold.
The heritage by father won
Shall still be guarded by the son;
And worthy sons of worthy sires
Shall kindle sacred Freedom's fires;
Still shall your children guard the dust
Bequeathed to them in holy trust,
And tread the path their fathers trod—
The path to glory and to God.

Let no vain, despot's alien hand
Seek to enchain our glorious land!
Let but great Freedom's tocsin ring,
And forth her brave defenders spring
From every city by the main,
From every hamlet on the plain,
From all our hills of wind-swept pines,
From deepest depths of lonely mines,
In dazzling lines of flashing steel—
Lo! God hath set great Freedom's seal
On every mountain, plain, and lake,
And who that mighty seal shall break?

Oh, softer far than Grecian skies,
Our own bright, bending skies of blue;
And glorious as the Tynan dyes
Our crimson sunset's gorgeous hue.
To dream amid elysian bowers,
To drink the murmurous song of bees,
To rest beneath our own green trees,
In Heaven's own smile—such gifts are ours.
Away, forebodings weak, away!
Let no dark clouds obscure this day!
A band of brothers, lo! we stand
In firm, united phalanx grand;
Invincible from shore to shore,
One, undivided evermore.

O, banner of the brave and free,
May honor's gleam still cling to thee;
May no dark blot of damning hue
E'er stain thy deep cerulean blue;
May trustful eyes still turn to thee,
And in the wrath of days to be,
Amid the wreck of pomp and lust,
When thrones are trampled into dust,
May each bright, glorious, gleaming star
Of God's own setting, still be there!

We come again, a people free,
With hearts to holy Freedom true;
O, glorious banner, unto thee
Our oath, we here renew!
O, idol of our hearts desires!
O, sacred symbol of our sires,
Triumphant still, through doubts and fears,
O, thrice baptized in blood and tears;
While planets blaze or ocean rolls
To lave and kiss our sacred shore
To guard thee with our lives and souls,
To keep thee pure forevermore—
Whatever freemen yet have done,
Or patriots still may do or dare,
Here in the sight of Freedom's sun,
With bended heads, all reverent, bare,
Beneath thy folds, we swear! we swear!

Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. 249.

Mutations

I looked on life—a glorious plain outspread—
The winds blew soft, the blue sky overhead;
Calm slept the seas; “How sweet to live,” I said.

A trembling glory on earth’s bosom lay;
The sweet birds caroled at the break of day,
And dewdrops blazed on every trembling spray.

Forth went the toiler to his labor strong;
In the hushed air of rapture lingered long
The glad, sweet echo of the sower’s song.

The smiling landscape flushed like bride bedecked,
The crystal founts, the dreamy skies reflect;
I walked the earth, with lordly head erect

A change came o’er life’s gorgeous, glittering dream;
Afar through space, the lurid lightnings gleam;
A trembling terror broods o’er plain and stream.

Deceitful earth’s false, treacherous truce was o’er;
The raging seas rushed on the shrieking shore;
Hope’s magic, siren song was heard no more.

Dread thunders rent the welkin through and through;
Storm after storm swept o’er the smiling blue;
Fled, song and flush, and blaze of sparkling dew.

I saw the tares the weary sowers reap,
Saw Hope’s sweet flowers crushed by the tempests sweep
And said, “Oh, death, how sweet thy dreamless sleep!

“How vain, O, man, thy spirit’s worldly lust!
How vain, O, soul, thy earthly hopes and trust!”
And bowed my humbled head low in the dust.

Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. 253.

Springtime

Only the thrice-told, old, old story;
Springtime wakening of birds and flowers;
Forests aflame with red-bud glory,
April sunshine, and clouds and showers.

Sunrise glory and dewdrop glitter,
Sparkling meadows, and glistening leaves,
Skylark trilling, and swallow twitter,
Telling their loves 'neath the listening eaves.

Zephyrs winging with fragrance laden,
Kissing each trembling leaf and flower,
Softly as sighing of tender maiden,
Dreaming soft in her rose- wreathed bower.

Valleys ablaze with bluebell splendor
Under the arch of the soft, blue skies,
South winds kissing the rose-bud tender,
Dreamy sunsets and love-lit eyes.

Crimson sunsets and deepening shadows,
Lonely crickets that chirp and grieve;
Whispering zephyrs and sleeping meadows,
Solemn twilight and hush of eve.

Hands that sweet nothings idly fashion,
Glances tender, of love begot;
Eyes that tell of the soul's deep passion,
Lips that tremble, but speak it not.

Only a glimpse of Eden glories—
Flowers unfathered, and fruits of gold;
Only one of the heart's sweet stories,
Dreamed, and treasured, and never told.

Only Life's morn, swift clouds o'ershading,
April skies with their smiles and tears;
Only a vision of dreamland, fading
Dim down the vista of darkening years.

Woe! Woe! Woe!

Woe! woe to the earth, with her changeful mutations,
When the footsteps of God swiftly fall in His path,
To trample the blood of the proud, purple nations
Like wine from the press of Omnipotent wrath.

He cometh in anger and goeth in scorning,
And leaveth the whirlwind and earthquake behind,
Lo! the splendor of man is as mist of the morning,
And his glory and strength but as chaff in the wind.

Woe! woe to the land of the cypress and myrtle,
Awakened from love-thralling languor's soft dream,
When the nightingale's trill and the song of the turtle
Shall change to the thrill of the eagle's fierce scream.

In the East, like a phantom, dark-looming to frighten,
Comes the Angel of Death with his shadowy wings;
Earth's vales with the bones of her children shall whiten,
And vultures shall gorge on the flesh of her kings.

Woe! woe to the land of the prophet and dreamer,
Eor the proud sword of Osman is rusted and dull,
When the cross gleams triumphant from pennon and streamer,
And trumpets peal fierce in the gardens of Gul.

* Written upon the march of the Russians to the Danube.

Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. 255.

The Terror of the Seas

Long the skies, at midnight, redly
Flushed in earth's remote degrees;
Long a phantom, swift and deadly,
Scourged with flame the peaceful seas.

O'er the trackless ocean flying,
Like a comet, swift she came;
In her path were wrath and ruin,
In her wake were wreck and flame.

Faces bronzed grew cold and clammy,
Sank the pulses of the strong,
When in whispers "Alabama,"
Crept the midnight watch along.

Ever at her ghastly nearing,
Quivered all the air with sighs,
As a phantom disappearing
'Neat the glare of lurid skies.

Long the hunters of the ocean
Swept in vain, the watery space,
O'er the billows wild commotion,
Following still her deadly trace.

Like the Indian leopard, hated,
Long she prowled with deadly glare,
Till at last with carnage sated,
Homeward came she to her lair.

Like the cruel, crafty leopard,
Came she slyly stealing back;
Like the stern, avenging hunter,
Came the Kearsarge on her track.

Then, at last on her pursuer,
Like some crouching- beast of prey,
Fiercely turned the evil-doer,
Hemmed at last and brought to bay.

Rent were bars and bolts asunder,
As the earthquake-riven rock;
Belched the cannon's volleyed thunder,
Through the reeling battle shock,

Till at last, mid din and roaring,
Rushing through her shivered side,
Down her blood-stained hold, swift pouring,
Swept the fierce, resistless tide.

Mute, imploring, gazing over,
Trembling France, in terror saw;
And the white-faced cliffs of Dover
Pallid stood in fear and awe.

Died the echoes, faint and lowly
Of the cannon on the breeze;
Grimly, surely, slowly, slowly,
Sank "The Terror of the Seas."

Still the white-lipped cliffs of Dover
Lean above the sounding deeps;
And the white-winged ships flit over,
Where the buried phantom sleeps.

Nevermore her flag defiant,
Proud, shall flaunt the channel breeze;
Nevermore shall flaming commerce
Light her path along the seas.

But the waves shall chant their numbers,
Sadly, solemn, overhead;
And her buried sailors slumber
Till the seas give up their dead.

*

Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. 256.

Song of the Winds

Over hill and mountain leaping,
Over rill and fountain creeping,
Wandering still when flowers are sleeping,
Calling to the stars in glee;
Tyrant man may never chain us,
Walls nor dungeon bars retain us,
Crime nor bloodshed ever stain us—
Pure and Stainless still are we.

O'er the couch of loved ones dying,
O'er the graves of lost ones sighing.
Where fond hopes are quenched and lying,
Sighing sadly still go we;
Over town and sleeping city,
Over homeless ones in pity,
Singing still our mournful ditty,
Restless ever, still we flee.

Through dim caverns, echo-haunted,
O'er red battle-fields undaunted,
O'er pale squadrons, banner-flaunted,
Cold, where life hath ceased to be;
Over land and over ocean,
Where the billows, in commotion,
Ever heave in wild emotion,
Singing ever, still go we.

All unseen, as our Great Giver.
Speeding over lake and river,
Where the sighing aspens quiver.
Tripping softly o'er the lea;
Like a spirit gently winging,
O'er the flowers where bees are clinging,
Life to fevered nature bringing,
Ministering angels, we.

Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. 258.

Stand by the President

Stand by the President, men of the North!
Stand as he stood mid the battle's dread thunder,
When in the batteries flame belching forth,
Squadron and column were riven asunder.
Stand as he stood, through the battles fierce hailing;
Firm as the oak mid the wild, pelting rain;
Stand as the rocks stand, when mad waves assailing,
Break their proud strength and their fury in vain.

Stand by the President, men of the West!
Pure and unselfish, and firm is his soul;
Steadfast and true to his country's behest,
True as the needle that points to the Pole.
In the red flame of the battle's fierce action,
He was your bravest, and truest, and best;
Scorning the schemes and the hatreds of faction—
Stand by your President, men of the West!

Stand by the President, men of the East!
Firm as the pines of your forests of Maine;
Stand as he stood till the battle-storm ceased,
Pelting no more with its pitiless rain.
Firm, side by side with your heroes of might,
Stood he in line till the armies of Gray
Vanished and passed as the shadows of night—
Melted as snows in the Springtime away.

Stand by the President, men of the South!
Level and steady and true be your aim;
Stand as ye stood when the cannon's deep mouth
Belched in your faces its thunder and flame.
Bright in the flush of young Freedom's sweet morning,
Bury forever all hatreds and fears,
Counsels of evil and wrathfulness scorning,
Bury the Past, with its blood and its tears.

Proud in Hope's consciousness, peerless in beauty,
Calm in your majesty, firm in your might,
Stand as your Washington, steadfast to duty—
Stand by the President! stand by the right!

Stand by the President, soldiers and seamen!
Fixed is his soul as the Polar Star true;
Stand by the President, patriots and freemen,
Under the flag of the star-blazoned blue.
Rally men, rally, from mountain and valley!
Come as the seas come to welcome the storm;
Form as the squares form to break the mad sally,
Under the starry flag, patriots, form!

So shall rapt History tell our proud story,
Blazoned and shining with Freedom's bright glow;
Tell how we stood in our strength and our glory,
One, undivided, for weal and for woe;
One in the throb of our high aspirations,
One from the seas to the tall mountain bars,
Freest of peoples, and grandest of nations,
Under the gleaming and glint of the stars.

* Written upon occasion of the inauguration of President Hayes.

Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. 259.

Yearning

Earth so lone and wide,
Spreading far and grand,
Dost thou never hide
In some tropic land
Far from can: apart,
Some blest Eden set,
Where the weary heart
Resting, may forget—
Past thy dim confines,
Past thy hidden Pole,
Where love ever shims
On the yearning soul?
Sea, O, mystic sea!
Spreading vague and vast,
Like Eternity
O'er the perished Past,
Hast thou not some isle—
Some lone, blissful spot,
Where deceit and guile
Come and enter not—
Some bright coral gem,
Gleaming soft, serene,
Like some diadem
Crowning Beauty's queen?

Skies of deepest blue
That the mountains kiss,
Tinting with thy hue
Space's dread abyss,
Stars that gem the zone
Of the Milky Way,
Gleaming far and lone
With eternal ray,
Know ye not some place—
Free from care's alloy,
Where no sorrow's trace
Ever blends with joy?

Vainly still we ask—

Vainly we implore;
Lifts the mocking mask
For us nevermore.
Peace, O, spirit keep!
Earth, and sea, and sky,
To thy yearning deep,
May not give reply,
Not till earth shall pale,
Not till life shall flee,
Shall the mystic veil
Lift its pall for thee!

Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. 260.

Phantoms

Life is hut seeming,
Sleeping or dreaming,
Chasing bright phantoms afar and near;
Fading and flying they scatter
Sobbing and sighing,
Grasping at shadows that disappear.

Thirsting for glory,
Still the sad story;
Chasing a mirage o'er burning sands;
Lone and forsaken,
Dream and awaken—
Waken to die in the desert lands.

Glory up-springing,
Bugle notes ringing,
Startling the world with his trump of Fame;
Dazzling and flushing,
Onward goes rushing,
Lighting the gloom with his meteor flame.

Sudden appearing,
Madly careering—
Flashing like comet o'er midnight skies;
Fleeting and flying,
Fading and dying—
Gone, as the rainbow dissolves and dies.

Such is Life's doing,
Shadows pursuing—
Chasing the phantoms that lure us on;
Plotting and scheming,
Sighing and dreaming—
Dreaming, to wake in the cold, gray dawn.

Yet but a little,
Fickle and brittle—
Life yielded up with a moan and sigh;
Gleaming and shading,
Flushing and fading—
Fading as glory of sunset sky.

Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. 262.

Shadows

We are as the flitting shadows,
Fleeting, floating o'er the meadows,
As the tears of weeping widows;
Transient as the zephyr's sigh,
When the moon is on the billow,
Wandering through the weeping willow,
Sighing round our sleeping pillow—
Sighing, moaning, passing by.

We are as the waters gliding,
Oft cohering, oft dividing,
Madly rushing, meekly hiding,
Hurried onward, quick and fast;
As the ripple on the river,
But a startle and a quiver,
But a tremble and a shiver,
And Life's Rubicon is passed.

Onward, downward, deathward carried,
To the awful cataract hurried,
Where our puny bark is buried
In Death's whirlpool, dark and vast;
As the thistle o'er the heather
Swept in dark tempestuous weather;
As the unresisting feather
On Niagara's bosom cast.

Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. 263.

A Centennial Hymn—1876

Great King of every zone!
Before Thine awful throne
We bow to Thee!
Kingdoms and empires grand,
Before Thy dread command,
Arc humbled in the sand,
And cease to be.

Ruler of earth and air,
Our mighty Nation spare—
Thy people keep!
Still float our banner o'er
The land from shore to shore,
Till Time shall be no more,
And ages sleep.

Let thundering echoes wake
The land from sea to lake,
In triumph long;
As brothers let us stand
United, heart and hand,
And shout in chorus grand,
Great Freedom's song.

And onward to the last,
The glorious cycle past
Points still tin- way,
Till shades from earth shall flee,
And Freedom's blaze shall be
Through all eternity,
As one bright day.
Our Father, hear our prayer,
Keep us within Thy care,
We here implore!
Keep us in wisdom's ways
Through all the coming days,
And Thine shall be the praise
Forevermore.

Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. 264.

Dreamings

O'er Life's bright tide, in youth we fondly lean,
As hand in hand we stand beside the stream,
And gaze into its mirrored depths serene,
Where bright skies are reflected—and we dream.

Such dreams, as we may never dream again;
Awhile fond hope unto their memory clings,
Then fades as rainbow splendors; weak and vain
As foolish woman's fond imaginings.

We dream of glory, and the purple skies
Are rainbow-tinted at Life's opening dawn;
But evening comes, and clouds and storms arise,
And all the flush and splendor fled and gone.

We dream of wealth and riches—old and stale
We grasp the meanest, lowest things of earth;
W't e dream of love, and ashes cold and pale
Lie coldly on the dark, deserted hearth.

And this is all; and this is human life!—
A comet's trail; a meteor's fitful gleam;
A thrice-told tale; a never-ending strife;
And Fame is naught; and Life is but a dream.

Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. 265.

Donner

O'er weary wastes of desert sands,
Toward the distant sunset lands,
A wayworn band of pilgrims slow,
When flushed the skies with crimson glow,
Came where bright Truckee joyous leaps
From placid Donner's crystal deeps,
With throb and gush in sparkling stream,
As pure and bright as Love's young dream.

Across their pathway gleaming white,
Uprose the mighty mountain wall,
So lone, so stern, so grand, so tall,
The summit pierced the vault of night;
The long, long trail of starry light
Clung closely to the mighty bars,
A pathway for the dizzy stars,
Along that awful mountain height

O, mountains, towering proud and free!
Of strength, that ne'er shall pass away
But with Time's throes, meet emblems ye!
And man, of weakness and decay!
The Storm- King comes in wrath and might,
In -awful grandeur dark and slow,
And curtains with his clouds of night,
Each kingly head and crown of snow.

The thunders crash, the lightnings glare,
The earthquake tremors, throb and thrill—
The storms are hushed; lo! ye are there,
Calm, cold and white, eternal still!
Who hath not gazed thy grandeur o'er,
In the still watches of the night,
And felt his own weak spirit soar
Above that mystic, gleaming height—
In fancy trod that gleaming trail
That spans far space's boundless seas,
And longed to pierce the starry veil
That shrouds the heavenly mysteries?

Oh, weak and vain! we may not scan
The precincts of God's holy place;
Nor is it given to puny man
His hidden mysteries to trace.
We ceaseless toil and fondly strive
To leave our impress on some spot—
Time's swelling seas resistless drive,
The tide sweeps on, and we are not—
For one brief moment, hope and fear,
And trace faint lines with trembling hands,
Then pass away, and disappear
As figures traced on wave-washed strands.
Like fleeting shadows o'er the dell,
We hurry onward thick and fast;
The mountains stand immovable,
And they shall be, when we have passed;
But to lost, weary, wandering feet,
Their moonlit gleam, or noonday glare,
In place of longing, high and sweet,
Brings but deep horror and despair.
Yet hearts beat high and strong that night—
To-morrow they would scale the pass,
And sleep was sweet, and dreams were bright,
Soon, soon to fade away, alas!

The morning sun had bathed with gold
The long Sierra's glittering span,
As struggling upward, slowly rolled
The vanguard of that caravan,
With many a blow, and yell, and shout,
Up through the sun's fierce, scorching glare;
And household goods lay strewn about,
And wrecks of wagons here and there;
And here and there some famished brute
Fell prone with eyeballs glaring wide,
Then cast one wistful look of mute
Despair upon his mates and died.

Far, far above that dizzy place,
The granite ledges, stern and gray,

Rose sheer and steep with frowning face—
A moveless wall across their way;
And far beyond, uplifting high,
Bathed in the sunset's crimson glow,
Rose giants through the trembling sky,
Wrapped in their wintry cloaks of snow.
Like broken squadrons from the field,
Hurled backward by the battle shock,
Those men of iron slowly yield
Before that sullen face of rock.
Yet mid that awful solitude,
Went up no weak repinings vain; [sic]
And sleep brought hope and strength renewed
For effort, still to rend that chain.

All jaded, worn, day after day
They fruitless toil, mid hopes and fears,
And vainly strive to force their way
Through Nature's fortress barriers.
Like hope forlorn, assail the pass,
But still before them interpose—
Like battle-marshaled ranks, alas!—
Rocks piled on rocks, and snows on snows.

Yet still did Hope's sweet tendrils cling
Around their hearts in that dark hour;
And they would wait for gentle Spring
To free them with her magic power;
And snows would melt, and aid would come,
And storms and shadows soon would flee,
And they would find sweet rest, and home,
Beside the boundless Western Sea.
And weeping women dried their tears,
And hearts of sorrow ceased to ache;
They gathered up their scattered wares,
And reared rude cabins by the lake.

But lo! the sky is overcast,
And filmy shadows gather fast,
And drift about in sad unrest,

Around the mountain's lofty crest;
Then merging slowly into one
Vast shadowy veil, obscure the sun;
The leaden sky like funeral pall,
Hangs close and heavy over all,
And silence falls so dread and deep,
That nature sinks in drowsy sleep;
And stillness utter, awe and dread,
Enthralls, as reigns around the dead.

Such stillness as at twilight broods
O'er Luxor's voiceless solitudes;
Such silence as at midnight crawls
Through Herculaneum's ghostly halls,
Where smothered centuries buried, sleep
In everlasting silence deep;
Such hush as neath the Arctic glow,
Broods o'er Siberia's wastes of snow;
Such silent, chilling sense of fear
As thrills the heart when death is near;

As the lost traveler lone appals—[sic]
Such thrilling viewless fear as falls,
When falls the lion's noiseless paw,
A silent boding sense of awe;
Such awe as o'er the soul holds sway,
When spirits part from earthly clay;
Such awe as holds the world in thrall,
When Empires totter to their fall,
As thrilled through soft Italia's coasts,
When Hannibal's dark, vengeful hosts
Hung like the shadows of the night
Upon the wintry Alpine height,
Then swept as avalanche below,
While nations trembled at the blow,
And Rome's proud Empire rocked and reeled
On dread Cannae's crimson field.
The leaflets of the listening firs;
A silence broods o'er rock and rill,
The very air is hushed and still;
Still as when stormy columns form;

The stillness that precedes the storm.

It came at last! a mournful wail
Swept through the shuddering, trembling vale,
And shook with strange and mystic signs
The fingers of the sobbing pines:
The wind around the lake's dark hem,
Wailed like some low, sad requiem
Hymned o'er the clay whence Life hath fled,
When all but Faith and Hope are dead.

Down comes the snow; the smothering clouds
And still and white as novice' gown,
The feathery flakes come softly down;
Soft as the touch of infant hand,
Or leopard footfall on the sand,
Beside the dreamless sleeper's bed,
Where Afric's lonely deserts spread;
And Ethiopia's dusk and gloom
Still curtain round the traveler's tomb;
And thick as Persian arrows sped,
When Xerxes mighty hosts o'erspread
Like threatening clouds, the land and sea,
And burst on doomed Thermopylae.

And day and night, and night and day,
Until a week had passed away,
The fleecy flakes with chilling breath
Fell silent as the steps of death.

Snow, snow! around, above, beneath;
It wrapped them in its gleaming shroud;
The sullen gusts blew fierce and loud,
And chilled them with their bitter breath.

Fast locked, imprisoned; still the same,
The wretched, weary weeks were passed
In dreary gloom, and famine came
And stared them in the face at last.
Deep buried, ghastly, wan they lay,
Cold, shivering in their wretched pens,
And glared like hungry beasts of prey,

Within their subterranean dens.
Their caverned eyes, all mournfully,
A wild, weird, wistful longing took
Into their depths, as those who look
On dark Futurity's lone sea.
Strange mystic thoughts that come and flee,
Like lightning on their souls were traced;
And old, old pictures long effaced,
They saw again in memory:
Dim scenes and places long forgot;
The shady grove; the winding lane
Their childhood's home; that cherished spot
That they might never see again.
They heard the murmur of sweet bees,
They saw the swift Missouri's gleam;
Saw Mississippi's mighty stream
Rush onward toward the tropic seas;
The glorious prairies of the West,
They saw in majesty unroll,
Wide-spreading like some mystic scroll
By God's own mighty seal impressed.

They saw great stars at evening glow,
They heard a mother's gentle sigh;
And by the cradle, trembling, low,
Her sad, sweet, tender lullaby.
From out the thicket dark and still,
When lonely crickets chirp and grieve,
The weird song of the whip-poor-will;
Saw with sweet childhood's fond desire,
The flitting fire-fly's lamp illumine
With ghastly flash of fitful fire
The trembling twilight's pensive gloom;
They felt within home's sacred spot,
A loving sister's fond caress;
And for brief space almost forgot
Their own deep, utter wretchedness

Who hath not felt the magic power
To human souls in pity lent
In danger close and imminent,

By Hope in deep Despair's dark hour?
And mystic Hope that ever springs
Eternal in the human breast,
Soared once again on plumaged wings,
They sought and found a wretched rest.
And women ceased to moan and weep,
They muttered in their troubled sleep—
Those hungry figures lean and gaunt;
Their dreams were of bright Summer skies
In that near Western Paradise—
Then woke in utter woe and want.

And yet that land so near, so near
Their feet, that they might almost hear,
Amid its sweet perpetual Spring,
The mocking-bird and linnet sing!
A few brief miles, a few short hours,
And they might rest in Summer bowers;
A few white miles, and that was all
Between—but ah! that mountain wall,
Impenetrable as the gate
That guards the mysteries of Fate.

Ah! nevermore in Summer bowers,
Amid the fragrance pure and sweet
Of bursting buds and blooming flowers,
Shall rest their weary wayworn feet.
Like sentinels with arms at rest,
Tall pinnacles of dazzling white
Flash keen as flaming swords of light,
To guard the Eden of the West.
Cold, white, magnificent and grand,
Beyond the pen's weak eloquence
To tell, their glittering summits stand,
As crowded camp of giant tents.
Between, through awful rifts of snow,
The foaming torrents rage and dash,
Then sudden leap as lightning flash

Down to the yawning depths below,
On through dark, frowning canyons rent,

Through interposing rocky bars,
Where but the faint, far, trembling stars
Look in from heaven's high firmament,
Till from stern rocky lips between,
Forth issuing like some fairy dream,
The limpid waters Hash and gleam
In sparkling gladness crystalline;
There where the dimples dance and quiver,
The drooping vines their tendrils lave,
Till mingling with Pacific's wave,
Their mirror gleam is lost forever.

And they might win that land, and rest,
Those prisoned watchers pale and gaunt,
And find release from cold and want
In that fair garden of the West,
Soon might they rest where roses gleam—
But right before their eyes uprose,
Impassable as Fate's dark stream,
Steeps piled on steeps and snows on snows;
Night after night, they watched the bars
Frown coldly down with sullen face,
And saw the solemn march of stars
Sweep on through boundless fields of space:
Day after day would slowly crawl,
And watch the low, declining sun
Sink down behind that mountain wall,
And hope for aid, when hope was none.

Like prisoned corpses far below,
That might not burst their coffin lid,
They lay in gloomy darkness hid,
Wrapped in their winding sheet of snow;
There day by day, their faces blanch,
And that deep silence was unbroke,
Save when the awful avalanche
With thunder-voice the echoes woke.

Some sadly mused, all pinched and pale,
On prophecies of long ago—
Some babbling, weak, old woman's tale,

Told by the Winter's hearth-fire glow
When lines were scanned on eager hands
By curious eyes, and fortunes told—
Of lonely camps in mountain lands,
Mid hunger, wretchedness and cold;
How they should toil in vain to reach
A fairer home by sea-beat strands,
And leave their ghostly bones to bleach,
Unwept, in distant lonely lands.
Some dying, dreamed of heavenly crown—
Forgetting all the world beside,
In that dread hour—and some sank down
With curses on their lips, and died;
And some like famished beasts of prey,
With wolfish eyes of fiery red,
Glared ravenously on the dead,
Then each on each, and slunk away.

From Sacramento's Vale, afar,
Came brothers with the Spring's first breath;
They forced the rocky gates that bar
That awful charnel-house of death.
Why stand those bold, strong, bearded men
All faint and trembling, pale, aghast?
Why shake strong forms in that dark den
Like quivering aspens in the blast?
A fearful thing in human guise
That seemed to shun the light of day,
Before them crouched like beast of prey,
Glared fierce with murder-gleaming eyes.

Oh, never yet God's day serene
Hath looked upon such fearful scene;
His hairy jaws all smeared with blood
Seemed oped to rend them as they stood;
Around him in the ghastly light
Lay grinning skeletons with eyes
Upturned to supplicate the skies;
The bleaching bones gleamed bare and white.
Brave men one moment gazed in dread,
Then turning with one common thought,

From that soul-haunting horror, fled
Forever from that awful spot.

Stilled are the ravings of despair,
And hushed the groans of misery;
The maniac laugh, the ghastly glare—
The shrieks of murder in the air
Have passed away and ceased to be.
The bloody traces, they are not;
But awe-struck men in whispers speak,
The trains rush by with sudden shriek,
As fearful of that ghastly spot.

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Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. 266.

Remorse

Antony After the Revel

What! Has it come to this—
That I, a Roman, lay my manhood down—
Fame, Honor, Empire, Glory and Renown,
For a false siren's kiss?

Shall they still
“For royal Egypt's harlot's treacherous smile,
Beside the sluggish, serpent-haunted Nile,
He threw the world away?

“That for a wanton's lust,
He bartered the proud birthright of the brave
To do her bidding like a eunuch-slave,
Low groveling in the dust?”

Gods! Is it even so—
Contempt and scorn from those that loved me best!
In Rome's proud halls my very name a jest—
That I have sunk so low!

So weak! so lost! so vile!
To dangle in a foreign woman's train,
To feed her fickle, foolish fancies vain,
And wait her faithless smile,

While my tried legions chafe
Beneath the taunts and insults of my foes,
While I, in dreamy indolence, repose
In Love's soft dalliance safe!

To dally and to feast,
And with her silken tresses idly toy,
And track her footsteps like a puny boy
From school-day thrall released;

To revel all night long,
Mid drunken rout in Alexandria's halls,
While round about her close beleaguered walls
Proud Caesar's cohorts throng!

But let my foes beware!
Not half so deadly is the lion's wrath,
To those who cross his lonely desert path,
As my own fierce despair.

Ho! Herald, sound to arms!
Call all my trusty Captains to the field!
Death to the coward-slave would basely yield
His post to Safety's charms!

Bring forth my good sword true,
Whose edge hath smitten earth's wide, shrinking coasts.
Now shall it cleave young Caesar's serried hosts
Like lightning flashing through!

Through every throbbing vein,
I feel the tide heroic swiftly pour,
And Antony shall be himself once more—
A Roman once again!

Away, soft Pleasure's breath!
Now shall my soul drink deep of Glory's cup,
Until the reeling world is swallowed up
In Victory, or Death!

Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. 276.

To Our Sister

With Photograph

The past has drifted far away,
The years are all behind,
And faded into ashes gray
Youth's rosy hopes that twined
So soft and bright around each brow!
Oh! perished hopes, where are ye now?

Our ways are parted far and wide—
The Kates have set their sign;
And boundless wastes our paths divide,
But not my soul from thine;
Oh, not forgotten all these days,
Thy tender heart and loving ways!

Yet sister, when these shadowy lines
In after days you see,
Dream youth's fair sun still brightly shines,
And kindly think of me,
And these, our noble brothers dear,
As when our footsteps lingered near.
And gentle sister, when Life's day,
That closeth over all,
Has melted into eve away,
And night-shades softly fall,
May everlasting peace be thine,
And rest, where roses ever twine.

Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. 278.

Rest

After the weary years,
After the sad unrest,
After the sighs and tears,
Cometh the evening blest;
Rest for the weary feet,
Rest from each phantom scheme,
Quiet and slumber sweet.
After Life's troubled dream.

Life shall replace cold death,
Glory of bud and rose
After the North-wind's breath,
After the Winter snows;
Music of stream be heard,
Flowers shall bloom again,
Sunshine and song of bird
After the cloud and rain.

After Life's desert plain,
After the dust and heat,
After the toil and pain,
Cometh the twilight sweet;
Calm to each troubled breast
After the doubts and fears;
Quiet and peace and rest,
After the weary years.

Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. 279.

Mission San Fernando, a. D. 1882

Vague, mystic awe of midnight deep—
Low shivering sighs and hush of sleep
O'er shadowy arch and wall;
The wind goes by with hollow moan,
And o'er the ruins, dim and lone,
The trembling moonbeams fall.

The moon in glory rides on high;
The camp-fire fades; and, as I lie
Beside the smouldering coals,
A century, with its hopes and fears,
Its loves and hates, and smiles and tears,
Its mystic scroll unrolls.

The myriad lamps of heavenly light
Transfigure with a halo bright
The hoary ruins gray;
And lo! from out the buried years,
A vision of the past appears
In all its brave array.

I see beneath the mountain heights
The hurrying crowd of neophytes
Go by in burdened train;
And o'er the purple, billowy swells,
The music of the Mission bells
Floats softly up again.

I see the solemn, priestly march
Beneath the massive church-way arch;
I hear the prayers and sighs
Around the altar dim and quaint,
Where Holy Virgin, Christ and Saint
Look down with pitying eyes.

I see a throng of maidens fair—
Sweet lips that murmur low in prayer,
Or penitential mood—
That have no secrets to confess
Save Love's transgressions, more or less
Of evil, or of good.

I see the dim procession slow,
In solemn pageant come and go
To keep the Lenten Fast;
Quaint pomp of holy Mass and Feast,
Like sunrise rays that flush the east,
Night shadows fled and past

I see the lithe vaquero dash
Across the plain, like lightning flash,
Or mid the eddying whirl
Of frantic bands that flee in vain
For safety o'er the flowery plain,
His trusty lasso hurl.

I see the caballero speed,
And sudden rein his fiery steed,
And bow with knightly grace
Beneath his broad sombrero's shade,
To greet the un reluctant maid
O'ertaken in the race.

Morn, and a flush of green and gold!
But not the glory as of old,
The wakened vision greets;
No fleeing bands, with thundering sweep
Disturb the ages dreamless sleep;
But, hushed in silence, soft and deep,
The Past the Present meets.
Now but a sea of waving grain
O'erspreads afar the shimmering plain
Where once the serried bands,
Like shadows o'er a slumbering sea,
In wayward fancy, wandering free,
O'erclouded all the lands.

Dead are the Padres—cold and ghast;
Fled are the glories of the past
That once their shadows threw;
Dust are the hearts that once beat high,
And dimmed each lustrous, melting eye
That swept the ether blue.

The sighing olive bends and waves
Above the lone forgotten graves
Of neophyte and priest;
And lofty heights keep watch and ward,
As if the slumbering dust to guard,
From earthly care released.

Beyond thy circle, granite walled,
Ringed round and round with emerald,
Like shadowy phantom lines;
Where blue of skies, and mountains, merge
Upon the dim horizon's verge,
I see the spectral pines.

They stand as in the long ago,
Down-gazing on the scene below,
As in a spell-bound trance
They looked upon that early scene
Unfolded 'neath the skies serene,
The far-reflected, dazzling sheen
Of crucifix and lance.
A waste of crumbling, ruined piles;
A wreck of twisted, falling tiles,
Is all that tells to-day
Of San Fernando's kingly dower,
Of glory, triumph, pride and power,
Forever passed away!

Alas! for Glory's cherished gleam!
Alas! for Love's fond, tender dream!
For youthful hope and pride!
Now, naught remains to tell of all,
Save walls that totter to their fall!
And hushed Oblivion's settled pall
Spreads dimly far and wide.

Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. 280.

Illusion

I wandered by the ocean strand,
And wrote my name upon the sand
At early dawn;
When sunset died upon the main,
I sought my impress once again—
Lo! it was gone.
So Time's dark tides that heave and sway,
Shall wash Life's footprints faint away,
Away, away.

I saw the dazzling dew-drop gleam
Refulgent in the morning beam,
Kissed by the sun;
But ere the noon, its glory paled—
Its sparkling splendor all exhaled,
Its journey run;
Forever quenched its quivering ray—
In viewless vastness passed away,
Away, away.

I saw soft clouds at sunset lie
Illumed with glory on the sky,
Ere fell the night;
But with the day's expiring gleam,
They vanished as an idle dream,
! fled from sight;
Soft dying in the twilight gray,
As phantoms fading, passed away,
Away, away.

I saw the lily and the rose,
Their gorgeous splendors all disclose
In Springtime bloom;
I heard the winds of Autumn sigh,
And saw the Summer glories lie
Within the tomb.
As fades the flush of rosy May,
So perish all Life's dreams away,
Away, away.

Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. 283.

Perished Cities

Grave of lost nations! Land of dread mystery!
Where the Death Angel his watch ever keeps,
Shrouded oblivion covers thy history,
Clouded forgetfulness over thee sweeps;
Where the lone whirlwind uprears its tall column,
Over the desert-lands lifeless and wan,
Mournfully wandering, spectral and solemn,
Like some tall ghost of the centuries gone—
Listlessly wandering, swaying and sweeping,
I taunting forever the desolate space,
Like some sad mourner, regretfully weeping
Over the graves of a buried race.

Lost to the world is their name and their story,
Bright scroll of honor or record of lust;
Perished forever their fame and their glory,
Hidden by ages of darkness and dust.
All we may know of thy dark, shrouded history
Is that a city hath stood on this spot;
All we may write of thy dark, fearful mystery—
“Here hath a nation once lived, and is not.”

We, too, may perish ere Time’s full maturity,
Veiled be our glory from history’s light;
Cloud and obscurity shroud our futurity,
Dreamless oblivion hide us in night.
Glory and fame are but fickle and rotten—
Gone as the sound of the rolling drum;
We, too, may perish and slumber forgotten
In the long lapses of ages to come,
Seas may sweep over us, desert sands cover us,
Whirling and drifting o’er valley and plain,
Earthquakes may swallow us, ages to follow us
Search for our name and our record, in vain.

Armies may march to the battle-call hurried,
In the dim dawn of the ages to be,
Over our dust and our monuments, buried
In the dark depths of Eternity's sea;
Still shall we slumber, though empires be quaking—
Moveless, oblivious, dreamless our sleep—
Till the Great Trumpet's deep echoes, awaking,
Summon the dead from eternity's deep.

* The reference in this poem is to the ruined cities, scattered over the deserts of Arizona.

Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. 284.

The Song of the Locomotive

In the dim of the dawn of the East,
I chafe with a longing increased,
To the land of the West,
Where the bright visions rest,
To flee like a spirit released.

With a throb, and a thrill, and a scream,
A leap, and away like a dream!
Past woodland and brake,
I streamlet and lake,
O'er prairie, and valley and stream.

Like a mad fleeing demon insane,
I come with my swift-rushing train,
Where the night-banners flaunt
O'er the Indian's lone haunt,
Then vanish in darkness again.

Past caves of Aladdin, where shine
The treasures of grotto and mine,
Past mirage and gleam,
Still on like a dream,
Through shivers of tremulous pine,

Through sunshine, and darkness, and rain,
O'er mountain, and desert, and plain,
With a shriek and a roar,
Through the tunnel's dark door
I sweep with my thundering train.

With a crash, and a flash, and a gleam,
With a leap, and a bound, and a scream,
Through the gates of the West
With a longing unrest,
I vanish and pass as a dream.

Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. 286.

Life and Death

Life is a quickly ended race,
Where love clasps love a little space,
In trembling, yearning, fond embrace
Of hopes and fears;
Where friend meets friend, and swift forgets,
Full of vain dreams and sad regrets,
A clouded sun that darkly sets
Mid sighs and tears.

Earth is a vale of tears and sighs,
O'er-arched by ever-changing skies,
Whose evanescent crimson dyes
At morning gleam;
Life is but as a Summer day,
We pale and melt and pass away
As fades the sunset's dying ray—
A perished dream.

Death is but as the chilling frost,
When Summer lies with sweet hands crossed,
And zephyrs sigh o'er sere leaves lost
From spray and bough;
And sad winds wail, and Nature lies
Beneath the pall of sombre skies,
With pallid face and dreamless eyes,
And marble brow.

The chilling blasts of Autumn sweep,
And deathly tremors thrill and creep;
Earth's flowery glories, withered, sleep
In dust and gloom;
But Springtime comes, with smiling train,
And decks with flowers the sleeping plain,
And blushing roses burst again
From Nature's tomb.

Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. 287.

The City of Silence

I murmured a careless ditty
One morn in the month of May,
As I came to the gate of a city
That gleamed in the Spring's soft ray;
And idly said, "I will enter
And stray through its pathways wide,
And look on its busy centre,
And drift with its mighty tide."

I passed through its open portal,
And gazed with a face of awe,
For never a living mortal
Abroad in the streets, I saw!
I saw not the spirit warding
The gate with its mystic scroll—
Death's faithful sentry guarding
The rest of the weary soul.

Tall monuments, white and sparkling,
Rose beckoning, far and wide,
And willows, and cypress darkling,
O'ershaded each pathway's side.
And a hush of eternal slumber
Seemed ever to brood and cling—
A shadow to pall and cumber,
As cast by some raven-wing.

Long, long through the streets I wandered,
But never a shout or cry
Went up, as I sadly pondered,
Nor ever a moan or sigh;
But silence and awe are supernal,
Deep-shrouding, clung brooding o'er—
A stillness and hush eternal,
Unbroken, forevermore.

No bright, gilded wheels of fashion
Rolled on through the stately street,
Nor ever a cry of passion
Gave sign of a heart's proud beat;
Nor ever a voice of pity,
Nor ever a sob or sigh
Rose up from that crowded City
Of Silence, to fret the sky.

Then a fear as of death came o'er me—
Of something unseen, unheard;
Still slumbered the City before me
By semblance of life unstirred.
I knocked at each marble dwelling,
And heard but the zephyr's sigh;
The name that each door was telling
I called, there was no reply.

Then I said with a sad heart, sighing
As I turned to the gateway's door,
"I will cease from my labor, trying
This mystery to explore."
But hard by a marble column,
A figure paced soft and slow;
His face with an awe was solemn,
His beard was as driven snow.

And he said, with a voice of pity,
And a sigh like the South-wind's breath,
"This, this is the Silent City,
And I am its warder, Death.
With never an intermission,
Earth's myriads, slow or fast,
All, all in a dim procession—
They pass through my gate at last!

“All roads to this City centre—
From East and from farthest West,
Their toil-worn travelers enter
My gate, and I give them rest.
Rest, rest for the weak and weary,
The worn, and the lone, and old,
That have passed through Life’s deserts dreary,
Its storm, and its heat and cold.

“Here plotter, and pallid schemer
Repose in a slumber deep;
And prophet, and priest, and dreamer
Arc hushed in a dreamless sleep.
Together they sleep in quiet—
The beggar, with gilded Pride,
Proud Pomp, with its pampered riot,
And Poverty—side by side.

“The bright budding, tender, maiden,
The babe on its mother’s breast,
Proud manhood with promise laden.
The bride for the bridal dressed;
Old age with its triumphs hoary,
Rash youth, and pale coward Fear,
Hope, Wisdom, and Strength, and Glory
Together are gathered here.

“Here Envy, and Joy and Sorrow,
Arc buried and known no more;
And none for the coming morrow
Take heed, or are troubled sore.
The toiler forgets his labor,
The merchant forgets his wares,
The soldier, his cherished sabre,
The miser, his sordid cares.

“This, this is the Silent City,
Hushed deep as the wastes of snow,
Where nevermore Hate or Pity*
Its dwellers may feel or know.
O, firmer than Life’s frail building,
Are laid its foundations sure,
And longer than Folly’s gilding
And baubles, its works endure.

“Ye flourish a little season,
And flaunt in the sun’s bright gleam,
And know not a single reason,
Or wherefore ye toil and scheme!
Here, cometh no storm to mutter
And trouble your dreamless sleep,
But silence and stillness utter,
Their watches eternal keep!”

Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. 288.

Darkness and Light

Silence, as when hope is dying
In the dread extreme,
On the earth's broad breast was lying
Like a nightmare dream.
Not an earthquake dared to mutter,
Chaos ghastly, deep and utter
Reigned o'er earth supreme.

Not a tremor thrilled creation,
Not a shuddering breeze;
Not a quivering tide's pulsation
Stirred the lifeless seas—
Awe and silence, dread and stillness,
As when Death's dark, creeping chillness
Life's faint fountains freeze.
Not a breath of wind, sad sweeping,
Not a sigh or sound;
Not a zephyr tiptoe creeping,
Stirred the awe around.
Voiceless voids, and black abysses,
Never cheered by Day's bright kisses,
Slept in hush profound.

Swift through space the word came rushing:
"Let the Dark be Light!"
Lo! illumined earth lay blushing,
Clothed in glory bright
Light and beauty reigned in quiet;
Quick before His awful fiat
Fled away the night.

Sprang a myriad graces tender,
Swift from Nature's tomb;
Roses, flushed with queenly splendor,
Stood in fragrant bloom.
Death, and dread, and silence fastly
Fled away like spectres ghastly,
Through the shuddering gloom of night;

Glow of hope and purple glory
All earth's ways adorn,
Like a queen of fairy story
In her dazzling morn;
Flush of sky and dewdrop glitter,
Zephyr kiss and song-bird twitter,
Of the radiance born.

Music sweet and song resounding
Through the valleys fair,
Joyous life in earth abounding—
Life in sea and air.
Glory crowns the cloud-kissed mountain,
Splendor clothes the sparkling fountain—
Beauty everywhere.
Vast and dark, with plumes o'erclouding,
Black-winged, brooding night,
With her death- pall nature shrouding,
Fled in sore affright.
Swift before the fiat spoken,
Nature's spell-bound trance was broken—
There was Life and Light.

Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. 291.

Abalone

Dream of gorgeous sunset skies,
Reflex of the rainbow dyes,
Mirrored in the crystal wave,
Treasure of the Naiad's cave;
Brighter than the pearl's soft sheen,
Pride of dusky Egypt's Queen,
With thy iridescent gleam, [sic]
Changeful as a fairy dream;
Fit to deck a royal brow,
With thy lustrous glow, art thou.

Haply thou shalt deck the hair
Of some maiden sweet and fair,
Luring with a purer smile,
Than the Siren of the Nile;
Or, in trembling rapture, hide
In the tresses of the bride;
Or, in happy home remote,
Clasp the snow of some fair throat;
Or, in swooning rapture rest
Fondled soft on Beauty's breast,
Thrilling to the ardent kiss
Of some proud Semiramis—
Circling fond the radiant zone
Of some Queen to fame unknown.

Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. 293.

Union Blue and Rebel Gray

At Gettysburg, July 3, 1863

Belched the cannon's fiery blast,
Crashed the death-bolts through and through
Where the serried hosts were massed—
Rebel Gray and Union Blue.
Friends and brothers but of late,
Marshaled on the field of gore,
In the flush of pride and hate,
Met—to part again no more.

Met to greet as warriors greet,
With the hate that foemen feel;
Hand to hand, and feet to feet,
Rank to rank, and steel to steel.
Met to seek each other's lives
Mid the battle's deadly din;
Met to widow waiting wives—
Oh, the pity and the sin!

Mothers, sisters, long shall weep
In the far-off, lonely home,
And the maid her vigil keep
For the steps that never come.
Heart to heart, and breast to breast,
Every passion passed away,
After battle's heat they rest—
Union Blue, and Rebel Gray.

In the North's hushed cities grand,
Through the Streets the mourners go;
In the Smith's wide, sunny land,
There are sobs, and tears, and woe.
Oh, the sorrow! how they died
On death's harvest-field, that day!
Mingled, broadcast, scattered wide—
Union Blue and Rebel Gray!

Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. 294.

As the Grass.

I saw a babe on its mother's breast,
Close in its dreamless slumber pressed;
And its rest was sweet, in its trust complete,
As a fledgless bird's in its downy nest. [sic]

And then a boy, at life's opening day,
Bound o'er the flowery plain away,
Hither and there, and everywhere
He skipped unchecked, like a lamb at play.

A little while, and I saw a youth,
Lordly as Boaz, when gentle Ruth
Gleaned in his golden harvest fields,
And his eye was bright in its joy and truth.

His laugh was clear as a sabre's clang;
His shout like a bugle's notes out-rang;
And in the flush of the rosy morn,
His song was glad as the birds that sang.

And then a little, and lo! his hands
Grasped at the tribute of teeming lands,
And his flocks that fed, in their mighty spread,
Were countless and vast as the sea-sown sands.

I saw him once in the years again,
As he tottered alone o'er life's desert plain;
Fled was the gleam of Hope's mirage dream,
And his form was weary and bent with pain.

His eyes with the mists of Time were blind,
And his trembling voice like the sighing wind,
And the twilight gray of lifers closing day,
Fell sadly over his darkened mind.

And I said, as I turned from the scene, "Alas!
Man springeth up like the quickened grass,
But the cold winds call and the hoar-frosts fall,
And he fades as the shadow that mocks the glass.

“Death is his doom, and decay his lot—
To bloom like the grass, and to die and rot;
Fading and gone like the stars at dawn,
And his strength and glory continue not!”

Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. 295.

Our Dead President

Gleam of promise, vanished, gone,
Like a star at flush of dawn,
Like a glorious light withdrawn,

Best and noblest of the land,
Stricken in thy triumph grand,
By the curst assassin's hand,

O'er thy grave with flowers bestrewed,
Lo! we bow in grief subdued,
But to rise with strength renewed.

God of Nations, hear our prayer!
In this hour of dark despair,
With a people's anguish bear.

Curse the coward murderer, knave!
Curse the vile assassin, slave!
Let him fill a felon's grave.

Let the carrion-vulture sit,
Sable-plumaged, mourner fit,
Gloating ever over it.

Let pollution evermore,
On his worthless dust outpour;
All his memory cover o'er.

But for thee, a Nation's pride,
Hero-martyr, true and tried,
Love shall ever-more abide.

Roses round thy rest shall cling;
Fairest flowers shall bloom in Spring;
Sweetest birds shall flit and sing.

Here our children to thy tomb,
With their gifts of fragrant bloom,
As to holy fane shall come,

As Time's cycles swiftly fly,
And thy bright example high,
Teach them how to live and die.

As a flashing beacon-flame
O'er dark waters, so thy fame
Still shall shine; thy glorious name

Blazoned bright in every clime,
And thy words of faith, sublime,
Echo down the aisles of Time.

Not for thee may sorrow's gloom,
Cast its shadow o'er the tomb;
Garlands, fadeless in their bloom,

Round thy memory still shall twine,
And thy star forever shine,
Gleaming with a light divine.

* Written upon reception of news of the death of President Garfield.

Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. 296.

Alamo

The southern zephyrs whispered low
Around the slumbering Alamo,
And not one wail, o'er hill or vale
Foretold of wrath and overthrow.

By San Antonio's limpid wave,
Undaunted stood the free and brave;
And like a dream, the crystal stream
Flowed onward to its ocean grave.

Within, a noble Spartan band
Kept watch and ward o'er Freedom's land,
To brave the scath of tyrant wrath, [sic]
With lion heart and ready hand.

Without, ten thousand hirelings stood
With hearts athirst to drink their blood—
To crush the right, with tyrant might,
And strangle all of true and good.

Tiny came in darkly marshaled line,
Their flag, fell hatred's bloody sign,
Mid cannon boom, to meet their doom,
In serried mass, like driven kine. [sic]

Again! Again! and once again
They break against the walls in vain,
And far around, the bloody ground
Is strewn with heaps of helots slain.

How could those free-born patriot braves
Give up their sunny land to slaves!
Oh, better die, than live to sigh
And wait, for gray, dishonored graves!

They fought like brave men long and well,
And Glory's page shall ever tell
Of warrior meed, of hero deed—
How Crockett fought and Travis fell.

No messenger from thence went back,
Upon retreat's swift, fearful track,
To tell the tale of faces pale,
Of proud defeat, and Freedom's wrack.

Down sank the lurid trembling sun;
The work of patriot hands was done;
Asleep they lay at close of day—
The crown of deathless glory won.

Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. 298.

Bubbles

Evermore planning and striving and fretting,
Straining to reach till the bauble is won,
Ceaselessly moaning and toiling and sweating,
And what of it all when our doing is done?
Weary and worn, and the sun at its setting,
And never a step in the journey begun.

Evermore hungering, filled with desiring,
Shrouded in darkness, and plotting and scheme,
Fretting and getting, and toying and tiring—
What is our life but a meteor's gleam?
Naught but a flash in oblivion expiring,
Naught but a fever-racked lunatic's dream.

Quaking in fear like the aspens that quiver
Faint in the tremulous gray of the dawn,
What are our lives but a shudder and shiver?—
Only as blanks when the prizes are drawn;
Only the bubbles that float on Time's river,
Gleaming an instant and evermore gone.

Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. 299.

The Song of the Bee

With dreamy hum
I go and come,
Like flitting, fairy maiden;
And come and go
Where zephyrs blow
With flowery incense laden.

In hermit glen,
From haunts of men,
Afar I seek my treasure,
And revel long
Where beauties throng,
To list my tender measure.

By fount and spring,
On wayward wing,
Each fancy bright pursuing,
Amid their bowers
I seek the flowers,
And trance them with my wooing.

With thrill of bliss,
Bright lips I kiss,
Nor dream of faithless wronging,
And hour by hour,
From flower to flower,
I tell my tale of longing.

O'er hill and lawn,
From rosy dawn,
Till sunset's lances quiver,
I flit and sing
And sip and cling
Like lover fond forever.

And all day long
With ceaseless song
I drift o'er flowery meadows;
And sing and dream,
And flash and gleam,
Till fall the twilight shadows.

Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. 300.

Life's Panorama

What is earth with all its schemes
But a fleeting panorama?
What is life with all its dreams,
But a shifting weary drama?
Gorgeous visions come and pass
Like the shadow in the glass,
Fading, vanishing, alas!
Like the snow-flake on the river;
Dying like the sunset's gleam,
Melting like a midnight dream,
Swallowed in the depths supreme—
Gone forever, and forever.

What of all our plans and cares,
Ceaseless effort, toil unfailing;
What of all our hopes and fears?
Useless, bootless, unavailing!
What of glory's fond desire,
Trump of fame or tuneful lyre,
Siren-song and thrill of fire,
Of ambition's mad endeavor,
Onward, swift, careering, grand;
Like the foot-print on the sand,
Of the ocean's wave-washed strand—
Faded, blotted out forever!

Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. 301.

The Last Trump

I heard a mighty trumpet blast
That shook Creation's circle vast,
And sudden sprang to quickened life
The myriad sleepers of the pa t.

In earth's remotest lone degree,
From every island of the sea,
Awakened rose the spectral hosts
From Death's deep slumber, bond and free.

From Europe's every hill and vale
Oft swept by storm of iron hail,
Thick as the lances of the pine
Came forth the phantoms, cold and pale.

From every clime, from every land,
From Afric's burning wastes of sand,
From olden Asia's burdened breast,
They started up, a countless band.

The hoary Pyramids were rent,
Their awful secrets all unpent,
And mighty Egypt's mummied Kings,
Stalked forth in ghastly cerement.

Quick when the awful summons pealed,
Death's marble lips were all unsealed,
And gory legions slumbering long
Leaped up on every battle field.

Stern warriors plumed and glory-starred,
With helmets rent and battle-scarred,
From every desert, hill, and plain,
Where mighty Rome with Carthage warred.

Dark masses swayed like serried grain,
And Timour's Tartars once again,
Like thunder-cloud full charged with wrath,
O'ershadowed all the Eastern plain.

Thick from the land that long hath slept,
Where Mary smiled, and Jesus wept;
With lances poised, and sabres bared
The Moslem and Crusader leapt.

The soundless seas gave up their dead,
Their monsters in sore terror fled;
And countless spectres cold and pale,
Upstarted from their watery bed.

The shuddering millions, line on line,
Swift marshaled gave no cry nor sign;
And from their clinging garment hems,
Slow dripped the bitter, salt sea-brine.

The skinny miser lean and old,
With clammy fingers thin and cold,
Like carrion-gloating vulture, clutched
With talon-grip, his bag of gold.

The dark assassin dyed in blood,
Glared fiercely on the meek and good;
And vacant-staring side by side,
The murderer and his victim stood.

Pale risen ghosts thronged every place,
With stony eyes and pallid face;
In all earth's vast, retreating bounds,
There was no waste or vacant space.

The parted veil of heaven for aye,
As parchment scroll was rolled away,
And all earth's quickened spirits stood
In terror of the Judgment Day.

Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. 302.

The Ariel of the Spring

Tireless toiler, with thy wing
Winnowing soft the breath of Spring,
Darkling doubt is over, sing!

Sing of bright and Summer hours,
Sing of dreamy Summer bowers,
Sing of fragrance-haunting flowers,

Laden with their nectar sweet,
Glad that wait thy lips to greet
As when trembling lovers meet;

Sighing, beckoning everywhere—
On the mountain slope afar
Lifting high its mighty bar,

In the valley, on the plain,
Nestling mid the serried grain,
Kissed by sun, and dew and rain,

Wreathing Nature's smiling face,
Bending with their tender grace
Over each lone, vacant space.

O, thou Ariel-spirit fleet,
Flitting swift from sweet to sweet,
Every flowery queen to greet,

Sipping Nature's fairy wine,
Oh, that thy sweet life were mine;
n bright and brief as thine!

One sweet revel all the hours
Mid the dreamy, tender bowers,
Then to die mid dying flowers.

Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. 304.

The Jeannette.

Where, mid the shuddering gloom
Of the dim Arctic's death-like, cold embrace,
With Death and Terror ever face to face,
Hast thou thy living tomb?

We know not—only this:
With prayerful hearts, when Summer skies were blue,
We bade the fearless hearts a long adieu,
With many a tearful kiss.

We saw them proudly go,
When broke the cheers, mid many a throb and thrill,
Strong in unconquerable hope and will,
Out with the tide's strong flow.

We watched thy fading form
Glide swiftly seaward through the Golden Gate,
To battle with unconquered hosts of fate
Mid Polar ice and storm.

Mid trembling hope and fear
We saw thee through Alaska's mists and gloam,
And neath the Circle's low, impending dome
Like phantom disappear.

Where sleep ye, spirits brave?—
Where drifting icebergs drive with thundering crash,
Where hyperborean furies madly lash
The torpid Polar wave?

Ye tarry, sad perchance,
Where never Spring the shores with verdure strewed;
Where lifeless, cold, eternal solitude
Broods o'er the dread expanse.

Mid frozen, moveless calm,
Locked in eternal death, ye fondly dream,
'Neath the Aurora's weird unearthly gleam,
Of Southern Seas of balm,

Beneath such gorgeous sheen
As flashes from the bright, eternal crown,
As Heaven would cast its trembling glories down
In pity o'er the scene;

Or wait mid hopes and fears,
The rending of those awful prison bars,
Where blazing, changeless, swing the low-hung stars,
Like glittering chandeliers—

And long for Spring's soft breath
Faint blown along the latitudes far length
To rend that icy barrier's cruel strength
Of intervening death;

Or vainly seek a path
Out from that deadly spell of phantom night,
To glide once more to joyous life and light,
And foil the Ice King's wrath;

Or mid the icy chill,
Ye slumber dreamless, tombless, cold and ghast,
Where Nature guards, the Future as the Past,
Her awful secret still;

Or hast thou reached thy goal—
That phantom-haunted immemorial shore,
Where day and night and time are known no more—
The far mysterious Pole?

Locked in the frozen floe,
Perpetual prisoned in that awful main,
To watch the hopeless, idle years in vain
Go drifting to and fro?

Bold knights to danger gone!
We know not of your triumphs—where ye lie;
We only know that ye can dare and die,
As dared and died Sir John.

Along your phantom track,
We gaze with straining, tearful, wistful eyes,
As heavenward, daily, yearning prayers arise:
“Brave hearts, come back! come back!”

* Written during the progress of the search for the “Jeannette.”

Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. 305.

The Vintage

Soft sighs and dreamy purple haze,
And lo! the mellow vintage days!
Low droop the cluster-laden vines,
Beneath their burden's crimson gleam,
Like shadowy glimpse of Bacchus dream.
In glory stretch the serried lines,

From mount to sea; o'er hill and plain
They spread afar like queenly train;
And now anear and far around
The sun-browned laborers joyous strain,
From vales to echoing hills resounds.

Beneath the Autumn's mellow glow,
Where whispering groves, and leafy bowers,
Soft lull the dreamy, listless hours,
A thousand purple rivers flow;

A thousand fields in vale and plain,
Are red with flush of crimson stain,
Where marshaled squadrons all day long,
From rosy morn to twilight gray,
Like battle-conquerors, bear away
Their precious spoil with jest and song.

Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. 307.

The Opening of the Seals

Revelations

Dread stillness reigns in Heaven throughout,
The song of peace hath fled;
The Seals are compassed round about
With mystic forms and dread;
Then spake a thunder voice to me.
Through the dread silence, "Come and see!"

The shuddering earth shrank low to hear;
The seas fled from the strand;
A boding sound of wrath and fear
Swept o'er the trembling land;
The dread command Jehovah spoke,
And lo! the awful Seals were broke.

I looked and saw a steed of white,
And he that sat thereon
Armed with a bow, and rays of light
Flashed from his golden crown;
In pride he swept o'er plain and hill
Far conquering, and to conquer still.

I looked again upon the band,
And lo! the second Seal
Rent by the same Almighty hand,
Its mysteries reveal—
A warrior fierce on steed of red,
And peace and love from earth are fled.

And once again my gaze was fixed,
Another voice I heard;
And mid the hush of awe unmixed
The Spirit broke the third;
And lo! a steed of ebon black,
And he that sat upon his back

A balance held within his hand,
As still the right to weigh,
And from the midst of that dread band
Another voice did say:
“Weigh justice to the sons of toil,
And see thou hurt not wine and oil.”

I looked again and saw Death go,
On pale steed rushing past;
The nations shrank appalled, and lo!
Hell followed swift and fast;
Dark Discord dire, and Famine came,
And War, and Pestilence and Flame.

A voice that seemed my soul to awe
Came to me once again;
And ‘neath the altar’s shrine I saw
The souls of martyrs slain;
And sad the burden of their song,
“How long, O Lord! O Lord, how long!”

With pitying hand the Spirit tore
Another awful Seal;
The seas rush on the shrieking shore,
The trembling mountains reel;
With voice of thunder deep and grand,
A mighty earthquake rocks the land.

Slow reels the blackened, blasted sun
Faint staggering on his path;
The fiery comets shriek and run
Before His coming wrath;
Awe stricken, in a deadly swoon,
Sinks the affrighted, bloody moon.

The sceptred Kings, and mighty ones,
The masters and the slaves,
The daughters proud, and haughty sons,
Seek Earth’s remotest caves;
The mountains to the valleys flee,
And isles forsake the shriveled sea.

Down fall the stars; e'en as a scroll,
The heavens in shrinking fear,
Into dim chaos backward roll—
The lifeless atmosphere,
Dead Nature's awful funeral pall
Hangs dark and heavy over all.

The awful day of doom hath come
The fiat thrills through space;
Let trembling earth shrink mute and dumb,
Before His awful face;
God's footsteps walketh in His path,
And who shall stand before His wrath?

Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. 308.

Mystery

Oh, for light to pierce the gloom
Of the rayless, silent tomb!
For some echo from that shore
From the voices gone before!
From that broad and beaten track
Whence no footsteps cometh back!

Will no beacon ever shine,
Ever come no word, nor sign?
Will no breath of earthly gale,
Ever lift that awful veil?
Will no whimpers ever come
From the voices still and dumb?
May we never here below,
Aught of the Eternal know?
Never till the spirit flees,
Solve Death's awful mysteries?
Not for all our pleading tears,
Not for all our hopes and fears,
Not for all our yearning sighs
Will the mystic curtain rise.
Wherefore dream? No human gaze
Yet hath pierced that filmy haze,
Never Love's deep yearning fond,
Yet hath pierced the dark Beyond.
Vain, O, soul, thy longing thrill,
Wait thy moment; Peace, be still!

Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. 310.

The Ostrich

Bird of the desert land,
Born of the heat and glare,
Thy home is mid the burning sand
Where all things bright despair!
Away! away! away!
Swift as the chainless wind;
A fading speck in the dazzling ray,
Thy foes are left behind.

A haunted life is thine,
Child of the homeless plain!
Thy glory but a danger sign,
Thy treasure but thy bane.
Afar mid viewless space,
They track thee even now,
Thy nodding plumes Pride's pomp to grace,
To deck vain Beauty's brow.

Not where the palm tree waves,
And murmurs low and sweet;
Not where the crystal fountain laves
The weary pilgrim's feet;
Not mid the sighing flowers
By zephyrs soft caressed,
Not in the hush of dreamy bowers
Thy wandering feet may rest;
Not in the leafy glade
Thy haunted steps may stray,
Not 'neath the sweet Mimosa's shade—
Bird of the wastes, away!

Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. 311.

Finis

Pleat and toil,
Loot and spoil,
Envy, malice, fierce turmoil,
] late and strife,
Discord rife—
This the work and fruit of life.

Toil and spin,
Haste and win—
This the everlasting din.
Fume and fret,
Strive and get—
This the lesson ever yet.

Brief thy span,
Every plan
Transient as the mist, O, man!
Glory's gleam—
Every scheme
Soon shall vanish as a dream.

Slow or fast,
Slight or v.
Dust and ashes at the last:
Tears and gall,
Shroud and pall—
This the last, and end of all.

Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. 312.

The Meeting of the Kings

Ye burning, blazing, incandescent spheres!
Met on the boundless plains of heavenly space,
First in the lapses of the countless years,
Mid glittering, starry legions, face to face,
Like earth's proud monarchs in ambition's race,
Disdainful of weak man's vain sighs and tears—
Ye march triumphant on toward power and place,
Unmindful of the puny, trembling seers,
Of supplicating prayers, and hopes and fears.

In flaming pomp, where gleam the circling zones,
You keep your pageant in the midnight skies,
Like jeweled monarchs on their glittering thrones,
Enrobed in glory's evanescent dyes.
The trembling stars look down in soft surprise,
While earth's weak, babbling, scared, prophetic crones,
In awe look up with wonder-startled eyes,
Then cross themselves, and speak in whispered tones,
And grovel in the dust, with sighs and moans.

Yet wherefore crouch in terror, boastful man,
At vague portents thy coward spirit quails
To look upon? The mighty Power whose plan,
Infinite in its grandeur, never fails,
In everlasting strength, o'er-mastering, still prevails,
Nor yet is measured earth's brief, fitful span,
Nor weighed in Time's eternal, awful scales,
And wanting found, to perish 'neath the ban
Of Him whose gaze the universes scan.

* On the conjunction of the great planets, July, 1881.

Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. 313.

The Lost Mine

A Legend of Death Valley

Through the burning, deathly sand,
Toward the beckoning Golden Land,
Crept a wayworn, weary band,
Faint and slow;
They had forced the mountain gates,
Braved the Indian's wiles and hates,
Battled with opposing fates,
Still, and lo!

Here was danger new to thrill,
Terror dark their souls to fill,
Desolation deeper still
Onward spread;
Not a sound relieved the scene,
Not a trace of living green,
All around, afar, between—
Lifeless, dead.

Here no verdure-giving spring,
Not a ghastly, living thing;
Not an insect spread its wing
In the glare;
Faint the shimmering mountains lay,
Or, like phantoms faint and gray,
Fearful, shuddering, shrank away
In despair.

Dim and far the desert spread,
Gleamed and glowed its fiery bed—
Like a furnace overhead
Flamed the sun;
Spectral-like, as clothed with fear,
Through the quivering atmosphere
Rose vague shadows far and near—
Hope was none.

Still they struggled on again,
Ever on, in vain, in vain!
O'er that awful wrath-swept plain
Scorched and bare;
Staggering onward wildly, blind,
Death was in the shriveled wind,
All around, before, behind,
Everywhere.

Toward the western mountain rim,
O'er that waste of horror dim
That no artist-brush may limn—
Pen may tell
Of its desolation dread,
Over vast expanses spread—
Chased each mirage as it fled.
Till they fell.

There through all the dewless years,
Through the mists of sighs and tears,
As when life's last hopes and fears
Ceased to thrill,
Where the shuddering night-wind moans
With its faint, expiring tones,
Gleam the bleaching, spectral bones
White and still.

Only one, with iron will,
Stronger than his comrades, still
Gained the far, faint, phantom hill
With its wall
Stretching onward, far away,
Glaring in the sun's hot ray,
Towering skyward, hoar and gray,
Bare and tall.

On, with fainting steps he pressed
Upward toward the splintered crest,
Till the sun within the West
Hid his sheen,
And the moon, with terror white,
Bathed each awful phantom-height
Cast her weird and ghastly light
O'er the scene.

Up and up his footsteps led
Through the rocky gorge's bed,
Where an earthquake bolt had sped
In its wrath:
What is that before his knees
That his trembling vision sees,
Sweeter than the store of bees,
In his path?

In a narrow fissure reft,
By some mighty earthquake cleft—
Relic of convulsion left—
Slept a spring,
Crystal-sparkling, pure and cold,
Veined its walls with glittering gold,
Ransom fit, in days of old,
For a king.

Parched, his hot and shriveled skin,
Fire without and fire within,
In his ears a rushing din—
So he fell
Where, with down-thrust finger tips,
He could cool his fevered lips,
As the bee her nectar sips
From the cell.

There, with fierce demoniac glower,
Chained by some mysterious power,
Prone he groveled hour by hour,
On the bank;
To the night, wild songs rehearsed,
Each one madder than the first—
Sang and laughed, and prayed and cursed
As he drank.

Sated full, at last he rose,
Seeking rest and short repose,
But his eyes in slumber close
But to ope;
Hope's bright rainbow spans his heart,
As his fingers clutch and part,
Or, with fierce, convulsive start,
Wildly grope.

Lying in the moon's soft blaze,
In a half-delirious maze,
What is that his trembling gaze
Thrills to see?
In the moonlight still and cold,
Gleamed a vein of virgin gold,
With its store of wealth untold
Full and free.

There he lay till night was gone—
Hugged it in his arms of brawn,
Till the flushing of the dawn
Shed its gleam
O'er the giants in repose,
Looming tall like tented foes,
And the glorious sun uprose
Like a dream.

Gold! to buy a kingdom's crown,
Gold! to soften fortune's frown,
Gold! down,
Sparking there;
Blinding with its dazzling gleam,
With its radiant light supreme,
Like some magic, fairy dream,
Bright and fair.

There in ecstasy all day,
Prone as worshiper he lay
Gloating o'er that dazzling ray,
Gleaming bright;
Then his feet unwilling tore
From his precious golden store—
Covered deftly o'er and o'er
From the sight.

Blindly wandering toward the west,
Many days he onward pressed,
O'er the desert's lonely breast,
Vague and vast;
Wandering blindly round and round,
Toward the dim horizon's bound,
Till a hunter's camp he found—
Found at last.

Vainly sought he year by year
Through the regions, far and near,
Where the ghastly mountains peer
Through the ha.
Strong, elated as with wine,
I I ping fondly for a sign—
For the mystic hidden mine
With its blaze.

Yet toward that phantom shore
Turn his footsteps evermore,
Still he maunders of his store—
Ever strays—
Where the treacherous mirage gleams;
Vast his gorgeous wayward schemes,
Bright his royal, Croesus dreams
Gild his days.

Still before the old man's eyes,
Like a meteor o'er the skies,
Evermore that glittering prize
Trails its gleam;
Like some spirit all unblest,
Wandering in a sad unrest,
With a memory mad possessed,
Still he dreams.

Still he haunts the Vale of Death,
Where the desert's fiery breath
Shrivels all above, beneath,
Like a hell,
Maundering ever of the past,
Wandering o'er that terror vast,
Haunted ever to the last
By a spell.

*

Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. 314.

Death Valley

Lifeless, hopeless, desolate,
Pitiless as Time and Fate,
Blasted by undying hate.

Like some shriveled human heart
Pierced by envy's hellish dart,
Scarce of earthly life a part,
All around, above, beneath.
Hopeless thirst, despair and death,
Madness in thy burning breath;

Symbol of the soul's desires,
Strewn with dust of funeral pyres,
Of ambition's perished fires,

Withering all that seek thy ways,
Scaring every human gaze,
Pitiless through all the days;

Dead to every living thing,
Every waft of plum aged wing,
Every sweet caress of Spring;

What dread secret of the past,
What dark terror, vague and vast,
Holds thy shuddering memory fast?

What convulsion fierce and dread,
When its mighty throes had fled,
Left thee desolate and dead?

Not upon thy blasted plain
Love or hate or joy or pain
Stir a thrill of life again.

Smitten, shattered long ago,
Shriveled, shrouded, sunken low
Far beneath the ocean's flow;

Time may flush, and fade, and pale,
Still, O, dread mysterious vale,
We may never know thy tale.

In thy ashen grave so deep,
Locked in death's eternal sleep,
Still thy awful secret keep.

Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. 319.

Work and Win.

Do your minds for knowledge yearn?

Work and win!

Do your souls for glory burn?

Work and win!

Would you take a bond of fate,

Enter Honor's golden gate,

Answer "Expectations Great?"

Work and win!

Do you long for honor, fame?

Work and win!

For a glorious, deathless name?

Work and win!

Would you noblest warfare wage,

Write your name on history's page

With the heroes of the age?

Work and win!

Would you join immortal bands?

Work and win!

Dream not, clasp not idle hands,

Work and win!

Time is fleeting, life is short,

Would you enter glory's court?

Fritter not the hours in sport—

Work and win!

Do your thoughts to fame aspire?

Work and win!

Would you reach the summit higher?

Work and win!

Would you upward, heavenward climb

To the shining heights sublime?

Idle not the precious time—

Work and win!

* Written for *Great Expectations*, a paper of the "Work and Win Society" of the Eighth Street Public School.

In Memoriam

John Glass

Not dead! Not lost! Not gone!
True father, husband, counselor and friend!
Only for earthly eyes a ray at end,
As light of stars at dawn.

Gone only from our sight
As planet 'neath the far horizon's verge;
A glorious, shining, lesser light to merge
In an immortal light!

We feel thy presence still—
Soul-conscious of a gentle, mystic force—
Feel through our lives thy spirit-influence course
With sweet, electric thrill.

Where many a silken thrall
Deft Nature's fairy fingers fondly spin,
Thy loving spirit lingers still within,
Around, and over all.

Where the sweet orange trees,
As brides with snowy drapery o'erspread,
Like incense from a golden censer, shed
Their odors on the breeze—

Where myriad glories bloom
Beneath the glow of soft cerulean skies,
And wafted odors burden Spring's soft sighs
With mystic, sweet perfume—

Thy loving spirit broods
In twilight hushes, when the silence creeps
Through rosy bowers, and dewy Nature sleeps
'Mid fragrant solitudes.

With courage calm and high,
Faith's narrow path thou trod'st, nor turned aside
From duty's call as soldier true and tried
Feared not to live or die.

The cypress droops and nods
Above thy tomb; thy body, dust to dust
Returned; thy spirit's holy faith and trust,
Thy Country's and thy God's.

As tones of silvery bell,
Throbbing afar with lingering echo-call,
Thy voice's gentle spell still holds in thrall
The home thou lov'dst so well.

Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. 322.

Alcyone

So far, so grand, so lone, thy glimmering light,
Oh, unrevealed and awful mystery!
Queen of the stellar spheres that gem the night,
Thou rulest in glory, bright Alcyone!
The burning constellations on thee wait,
To do thy grand and high imperial will,
Like glittering courtiers that attend thy state,
Proud in unbridled pomp, but subject still.

In scornful pride thou keep'st thy queenly place,
Encircled by thy radiant, flashing zone;
Veiled in the depths of everlasting space—
Eternal, distant, blazing, glorious, lone!
Worlds, planets, suns, unnumbered as the sands
That strew the mighty ocean's boundless floor,
Thick-sprinkled far, like wandering shepherd bands,
Bestrew the fields of space forevermore.
Time's everlasting cycles ebb and flow
In hushed procession, solemn and sublime;
The worlds are born and perish, come and go—
But what to thee are worlds, and space, and time?
Vast suns round vaster suns unseen, revolve,
And haply may the yearning soul at last
The awful riddle of thy mystery solve,
O, central sun of boundless systems vast!

Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. 323.

Pasadena—A Picture

Soft breath and tender sighs,
Dim haze and azure skies!
And lo! before the longing gaze
A glimpse of Paradise!

Afar, the ocean's bed,
Blue, trembling overhead!
Beneath, Pomona's banquet-board
With countless gifts outspread!

Here Ceres decks the plain,
And Bacchus, with his train
Of purple, vine-crowned revelers,
Sends up his glad refrain.

And Flora, with her crown,
Looks ever musing down
Through bowers of soft, eternal Spring,
On slumbering plain and town.

Behind, the mountain walls!
Deep shade and waterfalls!
A sense of mystery brooding o'er,
A spell the soul entralls.

Beyond, the dreamy vale!
Afar, a shadowy sail,
O'er slumbering seas, mid quivering haze,
Flits like a phantom pale.

And vague and spectral isles,
Like brides through tears and smiles,
Half hidden by the trembling veil,
Gaze o'er the watery miles,

Soft, longing toward the land,
Where skyward, blue and grand,
Far glancing o'er the sleeping seas
The tall Sierras stand.

In quiet, deep repose
The orange gleams and glows,
And round a thousand happy homes
Fond clings the clustering rose.

Here, weary, sick and sore,
That haply seek thy door,
May stay their weary, wandering feet
And rest forevermore,

To dream amid thy flowers,
To muse beneath thy bowers,
Where health, and hope, and sweet content
Thrill all thy rosy hours.

With trancing sight and sound
Thy fairy courts abound;
With rarest gems, thy queenly brow
With richest jewels crowned.

Vales, mountains, seas and skies!
Groves, bowers and zephyr sighs!
More fair than Canaan's vision gleamed,
O, Dream of Paradise!

Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. 324.

Decoration Poem 1881

Where comrades soft repose,
With laurel and with rose,
Wet with the tearful dew;
With violets sweet and bays,
With thankful prayer and prai-e,
We come from peaceful ways
Our offerings to renew.

Sleep, noble heroes, sleep!
The stars their watches keep,
There is no danger nigh;
Peace sheds her silvery light
Through all the restful night,
A glow of glory bright
Broods over earth and sky.

No cloud is in the South,
No cannon from its mouth
Sends forth its awful roar;
No more the martial feet,
'Mid Storm of battle sleet,
Spring to the drum's fierce beat—
War wakes the land no more.

No thunder in the North,
In muttering tones gives forth
Its warning, deep and dread;
No smoke-pall spreads its haze,
No vengeful batteries blaze,
But peaceful, quiet days
Around and overhead.

The battle-storm hath ceased;
No cloud is in the East
To veil the glorious sun;
No cloud is in the West—
Sweet calm and peaceful rest
Broods o'er our country's breast—
Hate's bloody course is run.

By fairest, tenderest hands,
Through all the smiling lands,
Your graves are fondly decked,
Beneath Spring's bluest skies,
Mid May's last melting sighs,
And tears from softest eyes
Fall o'er your dust unchecked.

Sleep, Comrades of the Blue!
Oh, heroes! tried and true,
There is no battle-call—
No blast of bugle shrill,
No cannon-boom to thrill,
But hush and quiet still,
Around and over all.

Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. 326.

The River of Death

Far neath the haze dimly floweth a river,
Glassy and still with its murmurless tide,
Awing the soul with a tremulous shiver,
Straining its gaze to the far-hidden side
Veiled in oblivion's shadow forever:
Chartless as fathomless, soundless as wide.

Never a signal bell calls to the hearer,
Never a beacon-light glimmers or burns,
Lighting its mystery clearer and clearer,
Never a sailor that mystery learns.
Many embark on its smooth, glassy mirror,
Never a soul from the journey returns.
Yet, when the brain from life's sore indecision
Resteth and fastly in slumber is scaled,
Cometh bright flashes of lightning elysian,
Glimpses of glory and splendor revealed;
Fading as spectres that flee in derision,
Swift when the blast of life's bugle is pealed.

Only when life's panorama is shifted,
Melting from view like a vision dissolved,
Fading away 'neath the horizon drifted,
In the dim hazes eternal involved—
Only at last shall the curtain be lifted,
Rent the thick veil, and the mystery solved.

Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. 327.

Tay Bridge

Northward, through the shades of night,
Swept the train with steadfast flight
Through the peaceful Border-lands,
Where no more the warring bands
Stand defiant, High and Low,
Foot to foot and foe to foe.

What, though shrieked the blinding storm?
Youthful hearts heat high and warm.
But a little lessening space
Soon should love with love embrace.
There were lovers, sweethearts near,
Brothers, mothers, sisters dear,
Home's alluring, silken ties,
Loving hearts and tender eyes,
Yearning souls and waiting feet,
All that makes life's living sweet—
All the mystic ties that bind
Human heart to human kind.
But a rumble and a crash,
But a glimmer and a flash,
Through the mist-wreathed, Lowland plain
Came the rushing midnight train,
Where the iron trackway swerves
Round the hills in sweeping curves,
Fleeing through the darkness on,
Like a spectre, seen and gone.

On toward Scotland's kingly seat,
Rushed the train through storm and sleet
Onward, with defiant roar,
Till it reached the hither shore;
And before them yawning lay
Wide the black abyss of Tay.
Onward, through the shuddering gloom,
Swept the dreamers to their doom,
Hovering over Death's dark sea,
Trembling o'er eternity—
Then a plunge of mute despair,

Trembling but an instant there,
Hopeless, voiceless, helpless they,
And the waters claimed their prey.
Not a shriek, or curse, or prayer,
Rose upon the midnight air;
Dream and hope and life were o'er,
Swallowed up forevermore,
Till the awful judgment day,
In the depths of cruel Tay.

Where the treacherous current rolls,
Sleep three hundred perished souls;
Not a ghastly traveler pale,
Left to tell the fearful tale
With his awed and trembling breath,
Of that midnight train of death.
Ye that in your quiet homes,
In the twilight shades and gloams,
Hear the water's shuddering splash,
Or the tempest's awful crash,
And within the circle warm,
Listen to the howling storm
Safe beside your blazing coals,
Think of all these perished souls!
Pitying reader, pause, and pray
For the souls that sleep in Tay.

Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. 328.

Alexandrian Revel

Swiftly glides life's rapid river,
Fragrant lilies sigh and quiver,
Roses bloom and fade forever,
Rainbows melt and pass away;
Trip bright youth's fond, wayward measure,
Sip red lips rich nectar treasure,
Chase the butterfly of pleasure—
Life is but a Summer day.

Love's fair sun is brightly gleaming,
Beauty's rays are softly beaming,
Waken not the soul's fond dreaming,
Laugh at danger while we may;
Cease of trouble's store to borrow,
Lightly jest and scoff at sorrow,
He will come, perchance, to-morrow—
Chase dull brooding care away.

Heed not morn's swift steps advancing,
Mock old Time with song and dancing,
Beauty's eyes are brightly glancing,
Naught but pleasure here holds sway;
Rules his court, our King and Master,
Spreads his kingdom vast and vaster,
Swiftly circle, fast and faster,
Chase dull care away, away!

Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. 330.

Dying Summer

Soft hazes veil the sun,
The Autumn winds are sighing;
The Summer days are done,
Their glory fading, dying.
Low shivers in the air,
Sobs, sudden ceasing, starting;
A tremor everywhere,
As soul from body parting.

Sad Nature fondly grieves
As mourner lowly bending,
O'er withered flowers and leaves
No more in glory blending.
Between sweet life and death,
The thread, how frail and slender!
When falls the frost-king's breath,
How vanish strength and splendor!

But Spring-time, with her train
Of glitter and of glory,
Shall come and tell again
Her olden, tender story;
With sighs and sweet perfume,
With dewdrops on her lashes,
And roses shed their bloom
O'er Autumn's dust and ashes.

The seasons in their sway—
How like to joy and sorrow!
The clouds may shroud to-day,
The sunshine gild to-morrow.
How like the days of men,
The sun of life forsaking;
A little sleep, and then
To glory fresh awaking!

Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. 331.

Last Chance

The Prospector's Story

Nestled low where the peaks pierce the steely expanse,
Like a dream, fading slow, lies the camp of Last Chance,
Once busy, now dead to Life's swift, gushing springs,
As dust of old Egypt's proud Pyramid Kings.
Shall I tell you its story, its hopes and its fears?
The tale of its glory, its sighs and its tears?
Its dream of ambition, its rise and its fall?
Ah! the story of one, is the story of all!
Like magic creations they spring in a day,
Then sicken and perish and rot in decay—
C Camp-Cities, springing like sudden mushrooms,
That fatten and flourish and die with the "booms."
They come like the whirlwind, and melt like a breath;
Around them but solitude, silence and death!
Like white-sheeted spectres, tall giants arise
And glare into space with their pitiless eyes;
No sound save the far booming avalanche roar,
That breaks as the thunder of seas on the shore;
No call of the bugle, no carol of bird,
No life-pulsing throb in the silence is heard;
No sight breaks glare of the snow-sheeted sheen—
No motion enlivens the death-haunted scene,
Save the phantom-like breath, that at midnight faint stirs
The star-jeweled crowns of the low-moaning firs;
No waving of hands, save of wrath-boding signs,
When storms toss the arms of the turbulent pines
That sadly, eternally, wistfully sigh,
Their feet on the mountain, their heads in the sky.

We dream we are steadfast; a year or a day—
But only a little, we tarry and stay:
As from plague-smitten cities we turn us and flee;
Such is, and has been, and will evermore be
The pitiless, stern, inexorable fate,
When drained of their treasure-gifts, sooner or late,
Of all the bright phantoms that beckon and shine—
These magic creations and myths of the mine;
We turn from them mournfully, leaving them all
To wild beasts that raven, and reptiles that crawl.

But what of that “prospect,” and finding the same?
It was poor Charley Saunders who gave it the name.
We were partners, we three, “Grizzly Bob,” he and I,
And started, determined to strike it, or die.
It was March, and the snowy Sierra loomed tall
Across the dim East, with its far-flashing wall.
We fastened our snow-shoes, and strapped on our packs,
Our blankets and tools, and our “grub” on our backs.
Up treacherous canyons, o’er dizzy divides,
Through tangle of fir-trees, down swift icy slides,
’Neath pinnacles tottering, day after day,
’Mid danger we kept on our perilous way,
Till scaling the face of the battlement tall,
The wide world beneath us, we triumphed o’er all.

We stood on the summit: what sight of amaze,
Neath our fear-shrinking feet, met our terrified gaze!
Down, down^ through the shuddering voidness it fell
To a bottomless gloom like a vision of hell!
On the opposite cliff slept the sun’s dying sheen,
Vague, fathomless depths of the canyon between,
But up from its shadowy, deathly repose,
No sound through the phantom-like stillness arose;
And down to the depths where the dim shadows lay,
By footsteps untrodden, seemed never a way;
Yet we must go forward; ’twas death to turn back,
And death beckoned grimly before in our track.

Just then we heard Charley shout loud in advance,
“I’ve found it! come on, boys; hurrah! the last chance!”
Then saw him reel wildly, and clutch at the snow,
And helplessly glide toward the shadow below;
And saw him plunge down, with a sinking of breath,
Down, down to abysses of horror beneath!
All vainly we listened for struggle or sound,
But never a cry broke the silence around;
We called down the steeps of his swift, dizzy track,
But never a ghost of an echo came back!

How we got down it, did it, I never can tell;
At last to the bottom we tumbled and fell
Mid fierce, frantic clutching, and swift headlong drive,
Bruised, mangled and bleed more than alive.
We hunted for Charley and found him at last
Held fast by some croppings, dead, mangled and ghast!
Slow, painfully creeping, we there made our bed
Fast side by side sleeping, the living and dead.
We woke in the morning—chill, hungry and sore,
Dead eyes glaring on us, dark cliffs frowning o’er;
But thinking in sadness to bury away
In the grave’s peaceful slumber, our comrade’s cold clay,
We strove with our sharp willing picks, for a space
In the rock’s flinty bosom to open a place.
A blow given aimlessly—was it a dream?—
’Mid white, fractured crystals a dazzle and gleam!—
There, close to the face staring whitely and cold,
The prize of our longing—the glitter of gold!
The dream of Aladdin! and long in a trance,
Forgetful, we stood by our prize of Last Chance.

Time sped but a little, and there was a town;
And roads zigzag winding, crept upward and down,
Slow climbing, and cleaving, and clinging mid space,
As dizzy with fear to the cliffs rocky face.
All, all like a dream! crumbling slow in decay,
The dim fading picture you see there to-day.

With Summer, bold prospectors came from afar,
As the shepherds that followed bright Bethlehem's star;
Came whispers of treasure, and rumor of gold,
And fast came the worshipers eager and bold.
There were swagger, and blindness, and craze of the mine,
And riot and revel, and madness of wine;
Came swift from all quarters, the foolish and sage,
Rash youth's reckless daring, and wisdom of age.

The months brought the chill of October's keen air,
And doubt, disappointment, defeat and despair—
Brought little to comfort, and little of gold,
But presage of sorrow, and Winter, and cold.
A little, and lo! there was stillness and hush
As broods over earth at the day's dying flush;
No echo of footsteps; deep silence o'erhead,
All voiceless and lifeless, deserted and dead!

And what of the ledge of whose treasures I spoke?—
Went back on us, "petered," and left us flat broke!
It was but a pocket; a bright, empty dream,
Illusive that dazzled and flashed with its gleam,
Like the false desert mirage that lures with its glare,
It beckoned; we followed and reaped but despair.
Ah me! how we scoff, and denounce with a will
These false, fleeting phantoms, and follow them still!

Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. 332.

Sunset

In Memoriam Henry W. Longfellow

Life's bright day of glory past—
Toll the bell!
Sunset hush and glow at last!
It is well!
Dies at eve thy lingering gleam,
Melts thy brightness like a dream
In the zenith's depths supreme—
It is well!

Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. 335.

Above the Clouds

Dedicated to Memory of Major-General Joseph Hooker

Bold stricken low in death,
Thy flight is ended now!
Around thy form with bated breath
And silent tears, we bow.
We know thy spirit, free and proud,
In glory soars above the cloud.

When peril thrilled the Nation's life
Through all its breadth and length,
High o'er the fierce tumultuous strife
Exultant in thy strength,
Thy scream rang out o'er hill and plain,
Amid war's deadly hurricane.

Free and untamed, O, peerless King!
Lord of an empire wide,
Fierce of the eye and strong of wing,
No clouds thy sun might hide;
Thy path was where the tempests crashed,
Where thunders rolled, and lightnings flashed.

Above war's maddened, rushing stream,
When combat shook the world,
They eye flashed fierce with joyous gleam,
Where thunderbolts were hurled,
And gazed with fixed unblenching stare
On vivid war's red lightning glare.

Amid the darkness drear and deep
Of battle's deathly shade,
On Lookout's cloud-palled awful steep
We watched thy pinions fade
And vanish 'mid the gloom of night
To reappear in blazing light.

Though lost thy form to mortal view
In vast Eternity;
Through skies of soft ethereal blue
We know thy spirit, free and proud,
Still upward wings its tireless flight
Toward the blazing throne of light

Thy pinions folded on thy breast
No more earth's storms may dare;
Bold ruler of the tempest rest
Beyond the lightning's glare!
Far, far above earth's loftiest steep,
King of the Storm, thy eyrie keep!

Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. 336.

Sierra Madres

A View from San Gabriel

Eternal, towering, hushed, supremely grand!
Mid trembling haze of softest, bluest skies,
Ye lift above the slumbrous, dreamy land—
Soft-kissed by raptured, wandering, zephyr sighs.
Beneath your feet a glimpse of Paradise
Glimmers and fades afar on either hand,
Where luscious plenty, steeped in languor lies
‘Neath rose- wreathed bowers, by spicy breezes fanned
Beside the boundless ocean’s gleaming strand.

Lo! Everlasting as His awful throne
Ye loom forever o’er the pigmy world,
Enthroned in kingly purple, silent, lone,
With banners far above the clouds unfurled.
In vain the tempests in their wrath have swirled
Their sleety storms around your star-gemmed zone;
Their dizzy hosts are broken, shattered, hurled
Through swooning depths, contemptuous downward thrown
Mid yawning, black abysses, and are gone!
Encircling far, with cordon vast, complete,
Ye stand in line like battle-marshaled hosts;
Awed in your conquering presence, it is meet
Proud man should cease his weak, vain, idle boasts.
We come and go, but ye shall keep your posts
Forevermore mid storm or Summer’s heat,
To watch and guard the slumbering, sighing coasts
That bask in blissful dreams of glory sweet,
Low at your flower-embroidered, queenly feet!

Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. 337.

Welcome to France

Thunder, O, batteries! Welcome, O, France!
Let the deep echoes o'erburden the wind;
Bright in the sunshine of Liberty's glance,
Shimmer the emblems of glory entwined.

Fling the twin banners from turret and crest!
Cheers from the depths of the heart of the land
Roll like the thunders, from East to the West—
Echo and break on the Occident strand!

From the far, faint Alleghany's blue line
To the Sierra's long glittering chain,
Swell the hosannas from city and mine;
Thunders the welcome from Texas to Maine.

Friend in our friendlessness, tarry and rest!
First in all greatness, all science and arts!
Liberty's champion, Liberty's guest,
But in our homes, our affections and hearts!

Over the banners of glory entwined,
Trembles the blue of the boundless expanse;
Let the glad welcomings burden the wind!
Dip the bright Stars to the Lilies of France!

Wander with us in our sun's golden light,
Dream of our future dim, spreading and vast,
Haloed with glory effulgent and bright,
Ponder with us on the present and past.

Lift from the landscape a century's pall;
Lo! the long lines of the battle array!
Ships to the batteries thunder and call—
Leap the red lightnings in war's wrathful play.

Here but for ye, had our valleys been drenched
Red with the blood of a sacrifice vain—
Liberty's light at its dawning been quenched,
Never to glimmer and beckon again.

Here brave De Grasse with his cordon of ships,
Keeping his watch o'er the tremulous tide,
Belches his hate from his guns iron lips—
Hurls his red bolts in the might of his pride.

Here in this parallel, bold Rochambeau
Under the pall of the smoke-spreading haze,
Crouched like a lion, and stormed at the foe
Keeping his lair neath his batteries blaze.

Here Lafayette with his legions of might—
Liberty's champion, knight without stain,
Waited impatient, and chafed for the fight,
Under the storm of the death-pelting rain.

Here, where our Washington marshaled his strength,
Folding the foe in his meshes at last,
Kept ye unbroken the lines iron length,
Holding the tyrant in hopelessness fast.

Strengthened to manhood by trial and time,
What is our present, and what we may be,
Now in the flush of our youth's budding prime,
Brothers, compatriots, look ye, and see!

Over the mountains and over the plains,
Time's laggard, snail-creeping pace is outrun;
Ocean to ocean is linked with the chains,
Binding our lands and our peoples as one.

Empires on empires in infinite train
Spread through the space of the fading degrees;
Gazing afar o'er the limitless main,
Laving their feet in the uttermost seas.

Golden the fields of the wide-spreading West
Stretching away to the set of the sun,
Plenty and peace on her limitless breast—
Only a step in our journey begun.

White with her cotton, the fields of the South
Bask in the sunshine and beckon afar—
Strong in Hope's consciousness, proud in her youth,
Bright as the gleam of the soft morning star.

Refuge to victims of Tyranny's thrall,
Peace and good-will to all nations of earth;
Freedom, Equality, Justice to all—
The-e are the rights and the fruits of our birth.

Welcome and cheers, like the thunder's deep thrill,
Echo and roll through the depths of the sky;
Cannons make answer from valley to hill!
East, North and South with each other outvie!

Fling the twin-banners from turret and wall!
Let the bright pageant the senses entrance!
Drums wake the echoes, and bugles make call!
Thunder, O cannon, a welcome to France!

* Written on the occasion of the Centennial Celebration of the Surrender of Yorktown, October 19, 1881.

Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. 338.

God's Country—California

Where is the land, of all, the best
Beloved of Him who rules the skies?
In North or South, or East or West
The favored Eden-land, where lies,
To tempt the weary soul to bliss
With fairest flowers and softest kiss?

Not mid old Asia's mouldering wastes,
Not India with her Brahma-ban,
Where pride-besotted, lustful castes
Look down upon their brother man;
Not China with her groveling crowds
That pall the earth like threatening clouds.

Not where the Crescent's baleful sign
O'ergleams the dozing Syrian shore;
Not withered, palsied, Palestine,
Her strength and glory are no more;
Hushed are her fountains' pulsing flow—
His smile departed long ago.

Not where hot Afric's dusky hosts
In everlasting darkness dwell
Along her fever-haunted coasts,
Or by the lonely desert well,
Nor where old Egypt's mummies keep
Their everlasting secrets deep.

Not where blanched Europe's serried tents
Menace with battle-wrath the soil,
And lustful landlords wring their rents
From wretched, starving sons of toil;
Not by the castled, German Rhine,
Or Loire's soft bosom, wreathed with vine.

Not where the mighty Amazon
A flowery Empire ever laves,
Resistless flowing ever on
To mingle with the ocean's waves,
Nor where the Pampas vague, outspread,
Vast as the sea's lone, level bed.

Not where the stern old Plymouth Rock
Frowns o'er the stern old Pilgrims graves,
Immovable to meet the shock
Of bleak Atlantic's vengeful waves,
Not where the North's cold, icy breath
Makes life one long, grim war with death.

Not where the firefly lights the gloom
Miasmic of the cypress swamps,
And pallid wanderers meet their doom
Amid the hush of Southern clamps;
Where panthers prowl with velvet paws,
And saurians wait with open jaws.

Wouldst thou, O weary wanderer, rest
Where softest zephyrs ever blow?—
Seek thou the Garden of the West,
Where golden fruits of glory glow
Actual in His gracious smile,
Uncurs'd by cunning serpent-guile.

'Tis here, where ever looking down
Through mystic veil of purple haze,
The tall Sierras with their crown
Of glittering snows forever blaze;
Where winds are soft and skies are blue
From Yuma's sands to Siskiyou.

Land lit by light of love divine,
O gem in golden circle set!
Land of the olive and the vine,
The fairest land that ever yet
Was praised by any mortal tongue,
By painter limned, or poet sung!

No languor of the tropic zones
Thy sons and daughters lull to sleep;
No Borean blasts, or dread cyclones
Thy vine-wreathed bowers and vales o'ersweep;
But health and strength and happiness
The homes of all thy children bless.

O, chosen spot of Nature's God!
Thy coming grandeur who shall tell?
Unsmitten by His chastening rod,
Here shall all grace and glory dwell;
And deathless minstrels yet to be,
Shall sing of thee, shall sing of thee!

Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. 341.

Whip-Poor-Will

When the hush falls still and deep,
And all nature seeks repose,
And the sighing zephyrs sleep,
And the dew is on the rose,
And the shivering twilight damp,
Shrouds the landscape's vernal bloom,
And the firefly's fitful lamp
Flickers vaguely through the gloom;
Like some weary heart in pain,
Then I chant my weird refrain—
"Whip-poor-will! whip-poor-will!"
With its ceaseless mournful plain—
"Whip-poor-will! whip-poor-will!"
With its lonesome measure still,
Sad recurring oft again.
How it haunts the silence deep
With its plaintive, mournful thrill!
Like remorse cannot sleep—
"Whip-poor-will! Whip-poor-will!"
How the accents wail and die,
Like some hopeless spirit's cry!
Drifting, drifting from the sight,
Through the shuddering gloom of night;
Now the fainting echoes fall,
Dying on the darkness still,
Like some soul's despairing call—
"Whip-poor-will! whip-poor-will!"

Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. 343.

1781—The Queen of the Angels—1881

A hundred A fairy tale—
A lonely land, a dreamy vale,
A silent, silvery, sighing sea
d by a gleaming sail!

A plain unmarked by mete or bound,
By Summer's ardent kiss embrowned,
Dim spreading 'neath the trembling haze,
Unbroken solitude around.

Afar, uprearing skyward, tall,
Encircling blue, a mighty wall,
Stern sentries looming dim and vague—
The mountains watching over all.

A beacon-flash upon the sight,
A star's soft blaze 'mid the gloom of night,
A ray of bright, celestial glow,
A spirit born to earthly light.

Caressed and kissed by every breeze
Borne from the yearning coral seas,
Thy cradle watched by angel hosts,
Fond dandled on thy Padres knees.

Neath tender skies of azure sheen
Where Nature ever smiles serene
On dreamy vale and mirror tide—
Fair was thy natal morn, O, Queen!

Anon, beside thy crystal stream,
Thy fair face mirrored in the gleam;
Where roses flush and lilies bloom
We see thee stand as in a dream.

The years go by, and to and fro
Their tide-like cycles come and go,
And like the ocean's ceaseless tides
Life's changeless currents ebb and flow.

The matin call and vesper bell
That echo far, and sink, and swell,
And melt away in cadence sweet,
Of holy love and guidance tell.

O'er flowery mesas far away
The herds in lusty gladness play,
And crop the verdure soft, the while
December smiles like wanton May.

The careless, lithe vaquero speeds
O'er swelling hills and grassy meads,
Or hurls his trusty lasso where
The tufted tule waves its reeds.

A trance unbroken, save when hosts
Of savage foes, like midnight ghosts,
To rude dispel thy maiden dreams,
Steal seaward from their mountain posts.

Then clang of steel and gleam of lance;
The trumpet's blast, the sabre's glance
That tell of danger's presence nigh,
Awake thee from thy tender trance.

At last, in strength and flush of pride,
With eagle glance and lordly stride,
A mail-clad knight, with ardent ki 3,
Impatient claims thee for his bride.

And queenly in thy ripened charms,
No more to start at vague alarms,
Safe in his watchful guardian love,
Thou retest in his sheltering arms.

Sweet floats thy song upon the breeze,
Borne to thy home o'er tropic seas;
Glad is thy smile of matron pride,
And children cluster round thy knees.

Afar, the distant, yearning lands,
O'er burning wastes of desert sands,
In friendship's longing, fond desire
To greet thee, stretch their jeweled hands.

The seas are white with snowy sails
Swift winging on with favoring gales,
To bear thy lovers in their haste-
Impatient to thy vale of vales.

The mocking-bird, amid thy bowers,
Sings through the sweet, enchanted hours,
And all the gliding steps of Time
Are fettered by a chain of flowers.

Soft pearls bedeck thy bosom fair,
And diamonds light thy glorious hair;
Sweet music lulls thy blissful rest,
And floats upon the listening air.

Thy children's spreading homes around
In teeming fruitfulness abound,
And all thy courts and flowery ways
Ring out Centennial's joyous sound.

O, Mother-Queen! with gifts complete,
The gliding years of life are sweet,
And sweet and soft the vernal days
That strew their garlands at thy feet.

And still thy loving, yearning glance
O'ersweeps the smiling, broad expanse
Of flowery, vine-clad, fruitful plain-
On, tender dream of fond romance!

* Written on the Centennial of the founding of the City of Los Angeles, September 5, 1881.

Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. 344.

Life Is but a Dream.

Life is but a dream,
Fading, fickle, fleeting,
Filled with fancies bright,
Baseless visions thronging;
But a mirage gleam
Beckoning, luring, cheating;
Melting from the sight,
With its glint of longing.

Evanescent, gone
With its flush of glory,
With its quivering blaze
Fierce, or faint, or tender;
Like the stars at dawn,
Like the bright Aurora,
Melting from the gaze
Like the rainbow's splendor.

Like the fading dyes,
Still that ever vary,
Of the sunset rays
Mirrored on the river,
Haunting evening skies
Dazzling momentary,
Like the lightning blaze,
Seen and gone forever.

Fading every scheme,
Mocking with confusion,
Lingering but a span,
Fleeing in derision;
Life is but a dream,
But a brief illusion,
Ended, scarce begun—
But a changeful vision.

As the dewdrop's beam
Glittering in the morning,
As the shadows fly
O'er the mirror-river;
As the lightning's gleam
Dying with its warning,
Brief as zephyr's sigh,
Heard and gone forever.

Melting into gloom
Like the meteor trailing
Through the night o'erhead
In the skies o'erbending;
Like the rose's bloom
Perishing and paling,
Flush and fragrance fled
Ere the Summer's ending.

Like the vapory cloud
With its filmy brightness
Floating o'er the meadow,
Drifting o'er the stream;
Gleam, and pall, and shroud,
Essence of all lightness—
Man is but a shadow,
Life is but a dream.

* Written at suggestion and request of a friend.

Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. 347.

Yucca

Bride of Spring arrayed in white,
Spirit of ethereal light
Gleaming on the mountain height,

In thy veil's soft, snowy sheen,
Gazing like some glorious Queen
O'er the landscape's vernal scene;

Like some maiden fair and tall,
Spell-bound by Love's tender thrall
Listening for some mystic call;

Daughter of the doting years,
Bride of April smiles and tears
That but song of triumph hears,

Blissful dreamer of a day,
Type of Beauty's swift decay,
Soon thy bloom shall pass away!

Soon shall fade thy bridal wreath—
Melting, even as a breath,
And thy glory sleep in death.

* This glorious queen of flowers in the Southern California landscape, at present in full bloom upon our mountain slopes, as is well known, requires three years in coming to maturity ere sending up its tall flower-stalk, and after a brief and brilliant reign of about one month, fades and dies, never to bloom again.

But a memory shall remain.
And thy Sister's fairy train
Soon shall take thy place again.

Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. 349.

Erin—1880

O, Land of the longing desire!
O, Land of the shamrock and lyre!
Sad ended and hushed is thy song;
The flush of thy Springtime is fled,
Thy children are crying for bread,
Thy tale but a triumph of wrong.

All pallid and white are thy lips,
As white as the sails of the ships
Of England that shadow the seas;
The harp of thy singers that thrilled,
In faintness and sorrow is stilled—
Thy wine-press is drained to the lees.

Thy blood has been shed as the rain;
Thy strength has been wasted in vain,
To pamper the purple one's pride;
Her roses have budded and bloomed
With glory of crimson illumed;
Thy shamrocks have withered and died.

O, Erin! in emerald sheen,
No more o'er the seas as a queen
Thou gazest in pride, as of yore;
The vultures thy death-throes await,
The wolf keeps his guard at thy gate,
The dream of thy glory is o'er.

* Written by request of an Irishman.

Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. 350.

Eve

Tremble the shadows in twilight repose,
Shivers the rose;
Quiver the stars in the firmament's deep;
Whisper the zephyrs mid tangle and bower;
Rest for the weary, and dew for the flower—
Vision and sleep.

Mystical music and quaver of sound
Floating around,
Lull the faint senses with Lethean spell;
Soothing the spirit with somnolent kiss,
Soft flitting fairies, fond legends of bliss
Whisper and tell.

Birds dreamy warble and insects faint trill
Quiver and thrill;
Far through the depths of Infinity's space,
Languid the stars twinkle faint in the skies,
Soft looking down with their love-laden eyes—
Angels of grace.

Rises the moon in her glitter and sheen—
Night's gracious queen;
Gilding with silver the far mountain chain,
High rearing vainly her progress to bar,
Flooding in glory and splendor afar
Valley and plain.

Cloud-shadows loitering over the grass
Dreamily pass;
Fade like a vision life's wearisome schemes,
Melting like mists of the morning away—
Respite and rest 'neath the tremulous ray—
Slumber and dreams.

Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. 351.

From Sea to Sea

Dreamer, haunted by a vision
Of an earthly paradise;
Verdant vales and fields elysian,
Blooming flowers and balmy skies;
Of a land where Love reposes,
Dreaming but of tender bliss
On his fragrant couch of roses,
Fanned by zephyr's gentlest kiss;
Of a valley softer, fairer
Than the vale of far Cachmere;
Be in all its gifts a sharer,
Seek and find it, only here.

Come away! The fairies beckon
To the ever-blooming bowers
Where the tendrils twine and thicken,
Burdened with their gifts of flowers.
Hither hasten! leave bleak Winter
With his chilling ice and snows
For a land he may not enter,
[s the iron courser cham]
For the word that sets him free,
From the curb restraining, cramping,
For the race from sea to sea.

"Forward!" with a snort and quiver
Springs the steed with joyful scream;
Over plain and hill and river,
Flashing like a meteor's gleam;
Plunging, speeding onward madly
Like the rushing, roaring wind,
Leaving Winter's thralldom gladly, [sic]
Snow and ice and death behind,
Never tiring, never weary,
Leaping o'er the mountain-bars,
Through the canyons dark and dreary,
Neath the light of sun or stars.

Ghastly deserts—glaring, tragic,
Shriveled! blasted!—What is this?
Presto! change! What spell of magic
Weaves this metamorphosis?
Is it but a mirage cheating,
But a promise false as fair?
But a baseless vision fleeting,
Luring with its treacherous snare?

Lo! a landscape fair as Eden
Spreading, fading into space!
Zephyrs soft, with fragrance laden
Kissing blooming Nature's face.
Where the tender grass is springing,
Mantling earth with vivid green,
Lambs are bleating, birds are singing
Under skies of azure sheen.

Here may longing souls immortal
Fruits of Life and Knowledge claim;
Guards no angel stern the portal
With his threatening sword of flame.
Ah! how vague, and faint, and shimmery,
Eastern scenes and seasons seem!
Winter! It is but a memory—
But a fading nightmare dream.

Here in "frosty hoar December,"
Lilies nod and roses swoon,
Lulled in peaceful, happy slumber
As upon the breast of June;
Here the heliotrope bloom-laden
All the sweet, long season through,
Like a blissful love-tranced maiden,
Lifts her tender eyes of blue.

Mirrored in the crystal fountain,
Dreamy bowers in rapture gaze,
Bending sky, and hoary mountain,
Drooping flower, and purple haze.
Here the broad bananas shiver,
Waves its wand beside the river
In the fragrant air of balm.

Glossy-vestured, bending over
Whispering to the sighing rose,
Like a blissful happy lover,
Lo! the golden orange glows!
Here the song of Love and Pleasure
Nature's throbbing bosom thrills,
And the mocking-bird his measure
To his mate ecstatic thrills.

What is this far gleaming, darkling
Neath the dim horizon's haze,
Like a mirror, flashing, sparkling
In the sunset's golden blaze?
Lo! Pacific rapt in seeming
Slumber, soft as skies o'erhead;
Placid as an infant dreaming
In its cushioned cradle-bed!

Here in bowers of living glory
Youth and Strength eternal cling;
Clustering as in olden story
Round De Leon's fabled spring.
Seeker for youth's fountain longing,
Here, O weary wanderer, rest,
Mid earth's brightest glories thronging
In the Eden of the West.

Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. 352.

To a Humming-Bird

Beautiful fairy! how bright to behold!
With swift-flashing pinions of azure and gold.
Glittering and gone like some fairy-land dream,
Vanishing quick as the lightning's swift gleam,
Evermore cleaving through Summer air, fleet,
Evermore leaving a sweet, for a sweet,
Thrilling the rose with a vision of bliss,
Stilling each flower with a kiss for a kiss,
Murmuring to every sweet blossom, of love,
None are too lowly, and none are above.
Coming with whisperings tender and glad,
Leaving earth's flower-queens lonely and sad—
Ripened September and sweet-blooming May,
Lover inconstant, away, away!

When the bright sun glimmers low on the sea,
Sweet honeysuckles are sighing for thee;
Still do they sigh for thee when thou art gone,
Through the long night, till the coming of dawn.
Dreamily under the light of the moon,
Silken petunias shiver and swoon;
Fond, pouting fuchsias shrink deep in the gloom,
Heliotropes faint in their fragrant perfume;
Violets blue-eyed, droop low, half afraid,
Lilies shrink sad, like a maiden betrayed—
Stealing the sweets from each flower's deep cell,
Lover inconstant and fickle—farewell!

Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. 355.

Exempt.

[Written for the Reunion in honor of the Los Angeles Exempt Firemen, April 3, 1879. Read by G. A. Dobinson, Esq.]

Fire! Fire! Fire!
Climbing, curling, crackling, creeping,
Flashing, flaming, lapping, leaping,
Rolling, roaring, raging, sweeping
Fierce o'er dome and spire;
Maddened as the mad sea waves,
Sweeping to their shrieking graves
Trembling suppliants, shuddering, weeping,
To the awful ocean caves.

Sudden as the lightning's flash,
Fierce the charging squadrons dash;
Ringing shout and trumpet blare
Wake the trembling midnight air.
Through the outworks bursting, rending,
Ceaseless volleys swiftly sending,
Sternly hand to hand, contending
On the red field storm and crash.

Lo! the flaming tongues of fire
Yield to arms that never tire,
Fitful Hashing, fading still,
Conquered by a stronger will,
See! they smoulder, sobbing, sighing,
Hero-strength no more defying,
Humbled, sinking, fainting, dying,
Sullen in the gloom expire.

Storm-bronzed veterans, battled-scarred!
Heroes of the "Old Time Guard!"
Honor-laden, dream and rest,
By a grateful City blest!
Glory-sated, sleep and dream
In the light of love's bright gleam;
May no envious "false alarms,"
Break the links of love's soft charms.

Dream, exempt from toil and care,
May no lurid midnight glare,
Spreading wide its crimson dyes,
Red illumine the peaceful skies:
May no clanging midnight bell,
Sudden tale of danger tell;
Lulled in beauty's gentle arms,
Dream, exempt from all "alarms."

Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. 356.

Poem

[Respectfully Dedicated to the Teachers of the Los Angeles Public Schools.
Read at the Reception by Mr. S. H. Butterfield.]

Laborers in life's fields of learning,
Virgin soil to light upturning,
Sowing seed of knowledge broadcast
O'er the world's wide, fallow ways!
Burdened heads are swiftly rearing—
Still in duty persevering,
Yet with patience firm and steadfast
"Wait the glorious harvest days."

Work and wait a little longer
Till the shoots are taller, stronger,
Labor ever ceaseless, zealous,
Lest the Evil spread his snares;
Sleep not while the wheat is growing,
Ever watchful care bestowing
Guard the fields of knowledge, jealous
Lest dark Error sow his tares.

Watch the buds of understanding
Swelling, bursting, soft expanding
Into leaf, presaging glory
In the coming years to be;
Various each in form and splendor,
Lowly, lofty, haughty, tender,
Telling each its mystic story—
Fern, and flower, and vine and tree

Some, as lordly oaks down-stooping,
Some, as graceful willows drooping;
Some, like tender flowers half- fearing,
Some, the clinging, trailing vine;
Shrinking some, and opening slowly
As the violet, meek and lowly;
Some their lofty heads uprearing
As the storm-defying pine.

Guardians of the present winging—
Of youth's tender shoots upspringing,
Loving care and high ambition
All your efforts still attend!
And the golden fruit shall cluster,
Gleaming soft with mellow lustre
In the coming time's fruition,
When the boughs full-laden bend.

Lo! afar the day is breaking,
Earth to quickened life awaking,
Flashing where the dewdrop sparkles,
Spreading far its gorgeous dyes;
Speed the light of knowledge quickly!
Let its rays fall fast and thickly,
Till its halo earth encircles
As the rainbow spans the skies!

Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. 357.

Thanksgiving.

*Written for the Thanksgiving Entertainment of the Christian Church, and
Read by Rev. Mr. Bovard*

Thou to whom vast space is nothing, earth's long centuries as days,
Hear our prayerful words of homage, hear our songs of thanks and praise!
Thou hast borne us on to glory as are ships o'er ocean's tides;
Thou hast clothed us with a splendor as are radiant, jeweled brides.
Dream our vales where rosy Plenty slumbers with her sister, Peace;
Lie our flocks in sweet contentment, burdened with their fat increase;
Neath our groves with clusters laden, rest we in the pleasant shade,
With no foe to sore molest us, none to taunt or make afraid;
Clothed in silken pomp and purple, never shone so bright a sheen,
Where the Nile his tribute rendered, round the brow of Egypt's Queen;
Lulled by Fame's soft, siren story where the Orient stars look down,
Never blazed so bright a glory round Zenobia's jeweled crown!
Conquering, and still to conquer, never proud Semiramis
Tranced beneath Assyria's splendor, dreamed of Empire such as this!
Lo! the famine-stricken nations lift to us imploring hands!
God, we thank Thee, that Thou lov'st us better than all other lands!
Fair as Eden's bloom primeval is our pleasant dwelling-place;
With full hearts, O God, we thank Thee, for this Garden of Thy Grace!
Not in fear and trembling, shrinking as the Christian shrank of old,
Not 'neath stripes and torture sinking, steadfast to the faith we hold;
Not 'mid woe and destitution meet we here Thy name to praise;
Not through bloody persecution lead our broad, divergent ways;
Not mid jeers and sore reviling hear we forth the Cross of scorn,
Ours, the victor-crown of roses, not the taunting crown of thorn.
Fierce Intolerance no longer here his fevered rage may slake;
Bigot Hate no more may kindle flame to sate the fiery stake.
Learning's mystic, mighty forces, Hate's dark dungeon-door ubars,
Sweeping onward in their courses, silent as the march of stars.
As a fount of waters living, laving soft the mountain's feet,
Wells our triumph of Thanksgiving with a murmur low and sweet.
Thou that rul'st the constellations, flaming nightly, hear our song;
Keep us still mid Time's mutations; we are weak, but Thou art strong!
Man is as the blossom vernal, soon his reign of glory o'er;
But Thy strength endures eternal, limitless, forevermore!
Yea! when mouldered and forgotten, perish all the dreams of lust

Thine shall be the crown and sceptre when earth's thrones are trodden dust!

Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. 359.

Shakespeare

Great king of kings!
Sublime, eternal in thy majesty,
Lo! at thy sacred feet, weak, pigmy things,
We bow to thee.

To thee was given
All strength and knowledge, empire over souls;
The mysteries of earth, air, hell and heaven
Are written scrolls.

The shrouded springs
Of human hearts, are but as history,
And all men's dreamings, and all hidden things
Are bared to thee.

To thee
Thrones are but playthings, crowns and sceptres, toys;
Thou tramplest empires and they cease to be
When fancy cloy.

The Earth's fixed sphere
Rocks to its deep foundations at thy call—
Thrones, palaces, and castles disappear,
And vanish all.

Thy minions leap
As soldiers to the battle-stirring drum;
Thou callest spirits from the vasty deep,
And lo! they come.

Thou frown'st, and the world
Is earthquake-rocked, the tempests have release;
Thou smilest, and the tempest flags are furled
And all is peace.

Unseen, unfelt,
"The cloud-capped towers" that kiss the vaulted skies,
"Like baseless fabrics of a vision" melt—
As rainbow dyes.

At thy command
Dim, dreamy, glorious vistas stretch away;
The tempests sink before thy wizard wand,
And night is day.

Earth's proudest falls,
And counselors surrender up their trust
At thy behest, and haughty Cardinals
Lie low in dust.

Before thy magic touch,
Back from the buried past the ages roll,
And show us damning deeds of horror, such
As daunt the soul.

Before thy potent spell
Long-sepulchred, forgotten spirits rise,
And tales of blood and horror shuddering tell
With hollow eyes.

Time's misty darkness flees
The spirits of earth's mighty ones, long fled,
With us hold converse, and the sullen seas
Give up their dead.

The world's heroic ones
Come thronging, round us, at thy magic call—
The chivalry of France, great England's sons,
Greeks, Romans, all.

Grim warriors, visored, capped,
All armed and mailed, go forth to mortal strife,
And clay-cold ashes, century-enwrapped,
Start forth to life.

The mighty dead
Spring up to fight once more on Cressy's plain;
And England's warring Roses, white and red,
Bloom once again.

Like thunder-cloud full charged with wrath,
Great Henry bursts upon the Gallic shore;
And bloody Richard, in his ghostly shroud,
Stalks forth once more.

With bated breath,
We see the bloody dagger in the air;
And horror-haunted, murder-dyed Macbeth
Stands in despair.

Aghast, amazed,
We see great Duncan on his bloody bier;
And fierce, ungrateful Goneril, and crazed
And crown less Lear.

In awe and doubt
We hear the elements deep thunders roll,
Nor half so fierce the tempest's rage without
As in his soul.

In death's deep gloom
We see pale Romeo cold and silent lie;
And gentle Juliet from the friendly tomb.
Comes forth to die.

And dark Othello leaps
With hell-born, raging, jealous, flaming eyes;
And murdered Desdemona sweetly sleeps—
Love's sacrifice.

We see old Shylock's rage,
Deprived of vengeance and the forfeit flesh;
And lovely Portia's cunning, disengage
The law's strong mesh.

In wayward grooves
Mad Hamlet's wild, fantastic grief appears;
And sweet Ophelia's piteous madness moves
Our souls to tears.

Proud Cleopatra's smile
Flashes upon us like some dazzling dream—
False, fickle, fair enchantress of the Nile,
A meteor's gleam.

Stern Romans stand
Within the Capitol's high-pillared halls;
They gather round thee, and at thy command
Great Caesar falls.

False Cressida,
And beauteous Helen, fatal bane of Troy,
And Troilus, like a lion whelp at bay—
Fond, reckless boy,

Rise on our sight
And vanish like the Summer clouds. Anon,
A gorgeous "dream" of fairy revels, bright,
And brief, and gone.

The nations bow
In awe-struck wonder at portents sublime,
And gaze, and turn, and then forget, but thou
Hast stirred all time.

As night by stars o'ergleamed,
A glory to our life thy thoughts impart;
And more than mortal ever thought or dreamed,
Thou wast and art

Thy genius darts
Bright with the gems of spoliated time;
Thou reignest o'er our weak, unstable hearts,
Supreme, sublime.

Great central sun!
Through boundless space thy radiant glories shine,
Nor darkest corner of the earth may shun
Thy light divine.

Still shall thy dazzling ray
Illumine the darkness on Time's farthest shore,
And glory's beams immortal round thee play
Forevermore!

*

Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. 360.

ROUGHNESS

Humorous and semi-humorous poems

Our Party at “Murderer’s Bar”

Men came afar to “Murderer’s Bar,”
The room was full of jesting;
Six “gals” were there, with frizzled hair,
The scene was interesting.

And sixty men—one “gal” to ten—
With boots outside their trousers,
No dandies fine, to sip their wine,
But healthy mountain rousers.

There were “Grizzly” Green, from “Lost Ravine,”
And Dick and Ned Trevannion;
And “Brick” and “Pet” came from “You Bet,”
And Cox from “Secret Canyon.”

There were Charley Spence, from “Common Sense,”
From “Brandy Flat” came Potter,
And “Slippery” Sims, from “Yankee Jim’s,”
And “Port Wine” sent Drinkwater.

There were Jones and Waite, from “Devil’s Gate,”
And Smith, the “Wild Cat’s” foreman;
And “Woolly” White, from “Hell’s Delight,”
And William Park, from “Poorman.”

Then “Virgin” Vance came from “Last Chance,”
And “Pike” from “Ground Hog’s Glory,”
And “Rip” and “Buck,” from “Nip and Tuck,”
And “Bloody Run” sent Story.

And "Irish Pat." from "Poker Flat,"
Came up to see the rally;
And "Limber" Lent, from "Nigger Tent,"
And "Yank" from "Onion Valley."

There were "Gassy" Champ from "Roaring Camp,"
And "Chuckle-Head," of "Gopher,"
And "Mary's Lamb," from "Yuba Dam,"
And "Lazy Bones," from "Ophir."

And "Red Top" Lee from "Cherokee"
Was there in raiment showy;
And "Hangtown" sent, to represent
HIT chivalry, Jim Bowie.

And "Old Ben Bolt," gay as a colt,
And festive Robert Riddle,
And "Bow Leg" Brown, from "Fiddletown,"
Came down to play the fiddle.

All like a rose, their new store clothes
With sweet perfumes were scented;
Our boys were thar, and "Murderer's Bar"
Was ably represented.

High hung the goose; fast flowed the juice
Of "Navy plug tobacker,"
Till Tom let loose a perfect sluice
On Mike, the big bullwhacker.

Then Michael swore, and ripped and tore,
And wanted satisfaction;
Called Tom McCann no first-class man,
But only a back-action.

Then Thomas rose, and set his nose
Up in the latest fashion,
With one neat pass, sent Mike to grass,
And that cooled down his passion.

The fiddlers now kicked up a row,
It really was so funny;
They would'nt go and draw a bow,
Until they got their money.

Then Charley Spence he took offense,
And called them bilks and diddlers;
And said, ah, well! that place called hell
Was full of just such fiddlers.

Then "Old Ben Bolt," for little "Colt,"
Went quickly down prospecting;
And said that same damned swindling game,
Was what he'd been expecting.

The powder fizzed, the bullets whizzed,
The shootists danced and capered;
To dodge the lead, each ducked his head—
A dozen men were peppered.

Then Charles cried, "Cease, let us have peace!"
The pistols still were smoking—
And Ben allowed, he'd treat the crowd,
And call it only joking.

Gay was the scene, and Brown and Green
Went round refreshments handing,
Till Green he paused, which somehow caused
A slight misunderstanding.

Brown's face turned red, and Green he said,
He'd better try to shove him;
No little squirt, with white "biled" shirt,
Should put on airs above him.

Then Brown, he said he'd put a head
On Green to keep him quiet;
And Green he smiled, like infant mild,
And said he'd better try it.

And then he said he'd punch the head
Of Brown, for recreation;
And Green hit Brown, and knocked him down,
Which caused a slight sensation.

Then “Irish Pat,” from “Poker Flat,”
Pitched into Sam, the bully,
And said he was a “Nagur, shure,”
Because his head was woolly.

Then “Rip” and “Tare” went at it square,
And “Tare” got Ripley under,
And held him there, fast by the hair,
And gouged his eyes like thunder.

Then Dave and Jim, they took a whim,
And pitched into each other;
And Dave shot Jim, and settled him,
And kissed him for his mother.

Then Smith and White got in a fight,
And fought like all creation
Till Smith on White performed a slight
Caesarean operation.

A gentle thrill, the dancers fill,
A crowd around them gathers;
And White laid still, and made his will,
And slept beside his fathers.

The lamps shone bright, the “gals” got tight,
The daylight came advancing,
And “Big Joe” Clark and Billy Park,
Monopolized the dancing—

Till William Park made some remark
That Joseph deemed too tarty;
He just turned loose, and cooked his goose,
And that broke up the party.

We all felt proud the jovial crowd
Enjoyed themselves so hearty.
It was, as every one allowed,
A most successful party.

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Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. 364.

Ashmead

And is it over then, indeed,
Ashmead,
The longing days of ice and cream,
Fond Hymen's bright, celestial gleam,
Cold, cold and perished Love's young dream,
Ashmead?

Oh! have they brought it all to naught,
Ashmead?
Two souls with but a single thought
That blissful ease in Hymen sought—
Such wreck and ruin have they wrought,
Ashmead?

And did that blushing virgin rest,
Ashmead,
Her willing head upon thy breast,
Upon thy wildly throbbing vest,
And was that form with ardor pressed,
Ashmead?

Oh! were your pleadings all in vain,
Ashmead?
How could they sever true Love's chain,
When fell her tears like crystal rain!
How could they view such cruel pain,
Ashmead?

And wilt thou go to heal thy sores,
Ashmead,
To fight against those savage Boers?
Or delve mid Tombstone's glittering ores,
Ashmead?

Oh! do not throw thyself away,
Ashmead,
And perish in the deadly fray,
Or go and hide thy head and pray,
And count thy beads like Friar gray,
Ashmead!

Yet nevermore upon this earth,
Ashmead,
Mid scenes of revelry and mirth,
Though others tempt with noble birth,
Canst thou forget her *sterling* worth,
Ashmead.

'Tis sad to hear the marriage bell,
Ashmead,
Toll trustful, true Love's funeral knell,
Dissolving rude, the tender spell!
Sic transit gloria! Fare-thee-well,
Ashmead!

* Written upon reading the cablegram that the proposed marriage between Mr. Ashmead Bartlett, aged about 25, and Lady Burdett-Coutts, aged 70, had been broken off by outside interference.

Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. 371.

Fact Vs. Science

They say our crust is slowly cooling!
What sickly, sentimental mewling;
What everlasting, blank tomfooling!

And here it's getting hot and hotter,
Until our reeling senses totter,
And ice is turned to tepid water.

From lofty cope to deep foundation
Our dead-walls drip with perspiration,
And men remark, "—and damnation!"

Or other something quite expressive,
In tone and manner all aggressive,
Then melt together, coalesce. [sic]

The fat man seeks a nook to find him,
To loose the garment's bonds that bind him,
And leaves an oily trail behind him.

The mercury, as upward toiling,
With wrathful rage is fiercely boiling—
To burst its bonds is fairly spoiling,

And men of high and low condition,
From minister to politician,
Make oath with frequent repetition—

In tuneful limp accord together,
Like cocks o'ercome, with drooping feather,
"This is the hottest spell of weather!"

Oh, for some term of stern decision—
Of forcible, exact precision,
Not found within the New Revision,

That bears a proper, true relation
To broiling, roasting and cremation,
To emphasize the situation!

* Camilla Flammarion and other scientists say: "The earth's crust is slowly but surely cooling." For confirmation of this theory, witness the frantic ebullitions of the thermometer recently.

Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. 373.

Come Where Your Love Lies Dreaming

A Wild(E) Aesthetic Invocation

Come and see us, Oscar, do!
We are dreaming but of you!
We are lonely (boo! hoo! hoo!)
Come and heal our anguish.
Pink of all perfection sweet,
Lily, sunflower, rose ass-thete,
Come, O come! we do entreat,
Leave us not to languish.

All our sighing, southland girls
Long to deck your flowing curls
With their flowers and things and pearls,
(Pity, O Adonis!)
Long that too-too thing to see
(What-you-call-it) round your knee—
That ass-thetic—(te! he! he!
Pardon, mercy on us!)

At the very thought of that—
Breeches, stockings and cravat—
All their hearts go pit-a-pat,
Wild(c) with palpitation;
Mystic longings thrill them through—
Oh, have pity, (boo, hoo, hoo!)
Come and see us, Oscar, do!
Soothe our desperation.

* Written upon the reception of telegram from Oscar Wilde that he would only visit Los Angeles upon a guaranty of \$500.

Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. 374.

Dam(N) the Debris

Oh, dam(n) the Yuba and the Bear,
And dam(n) their worthless, old debris;
We often dammed them everywhere
In Fifty-one, and -two, and -three,
And did it boldly, I allow,
So where's the harm in d—ning now.

I mind me of the weeks of toil,
And how we laid the bed-rock bare,
To meet with disappointment's foil,
And found no trace of treasure there—
No need of engineers had we
To help us dam(n) the blank debris.

I know we differ in our views
On schools, monopolies and rings;
Sec different things in different hues—
Religion, politics and things;
Yet, on one point we all agree
To dam(n) that riotous debris.

Although we think it's hardly fair
To call on us to help you through,
By all means dam(n) the treacherous Bear,
And dam(n) the festive Yuba, too;
No longer let them riot free;
Corral their wild, untamed debris.

We differ much, I greatly fear,
On what is right, and just, and fair,
We of the vaccine counties here—
You of the ursine monster's lair,
Yet quite unanimous agree
To doubly dam(n) your blank debris.

Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. 375.

The Czar's Coronation

Written Just Previous to the Czar's Coronation

You must wake and call me early, call me early, Dagmar dear
To-morrow 'll be the grandest day of all the festive year;
Of all this festive year, Dagmar, the proudest, grandest day,
For I'm to play Czar so gay, Dagmar; I'm to play Czar so

I know they gibe and sneer, Dagmar, because I go so slow,
And tell how "Glorious Peter" did, in sacred, old Moscow;
Let them call me coward-hearted, I care not what they say,
For I'm to be crowned in May, Dagmar; I'm to be crowned in May.

As I peeped out through the palace bars, whom think ye I should see,
But that Krapotkin leaning up 'gainst a sour apple tree!
He was thinking of that sharp thing I said about Siberia—
But I'm to be crowned in May, Dagmar; I'm to be crowned in

They say he's dying just for hate; if so, well, let him be:
That all his band, with bombs and things, is going after me;
We'll let him know that little game is one that two can play,
After I'm crowned in May, Dagmar; after I'm crowned in May

Little Aleck shall go with me to-morrow, to the show,
And you and all the rest, Dagmar, will be around, I know;
And I hope when that thing's put on at last, it will be put on to stay,
When I'm crowned Czar in May, Dagmar; when I'm crowned Czar in May.

From all the wondering lands afar—Old Wilhelm and Young Wales,
Emmanuel and Joseph, too, and Tartars with pigtails,
And good Queen Vic, if she isn't sick, or weak in her precious knee,
And many more from a foreign shore will come to our court to see.

And big and little potentates will don their new store clothes,
And strut and stretch, and swell about to show their fullest growths—
Oh! a long, long line of glittering crowns will come in proud array
To see me crowned in May, Dagmar, to see me crowned in May.

I wish the thing were over; quite nervous-like I am;
There will be such an eager crowd, I really dread the jam;
And then those horrid Nihilists who play such hellish tricks
On kings divine, I greatly fear they'll get me in a fix.

Oh! ere the priest anoints my head, see that the oil is right,
And not some Nihilist compound of devilish dynamite;
And if they make me take a sip of blessed, holy wine,
Just taste it first yourself, my love, to see it's genuine.

And Daggy, dear, go search, yourself, beneath my golden throne,
Lest they should blow me up on it and leave you all alone;
And put another extra coat on my new steel-plated shirt,
Lest in the crush my sacred flesh should get a little hurt.

Search well the inmost depths of my new patent-leather boots,
To see there's naught concealed within that cocks itself and shoots;
And dearest one, first closely scan my breeches gilded seat,
To see there is no fulminate to raise me off my feet.

But, oh! above all other things, that fearful, fearful crown!
Before I place it on my head just turn it upside down,
And batter it and hammer it just let my subjects scoff
That it may keep my head upon, and not go fizzing off;
And take the diamonds, one by one, unto a blacksmith shop,
And bid him try each blazing gem to see if it will pop.

Oh! it will be a jolly time, if not for me, for them,
To see me place upon my brow great Russia's diadem.
Of courtiers proud, with praises loud, there will be many a host—
My own sweet Nihilistic pets, and maybe, too, Herr Most,

And Rossa, the O Donovan, from Erin's shamrock lea,
And the bold "Black Hands," from foreign lands, will all be there to see;
Red, black and white, to see the sight, they will come from haunts afar,
For I'm to play "Russia's Czar," Dagmar; I'm to play "Crown the Czar."

Full many will look with awe, Dagmar, upon my royal face,
And envy me and wish that they were standing in my place;
I only wish they were, Dagmar, and I could soundly sleep,
And steal away, that very day, and go to herding sheep.

*

Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. 376.

Bully for Blaine

“Bully for Blaine!
Hit ‘em again!”
Hear the grand chorus from mountain to sea.
Firm in his stand—
Wasn’t it grand?
Proud of New England’s bold hero are we.

Massed in our might,
Firm for the right—
See! the Republicans stand like a wall,
Steadfast and true to his country’s behest,
Sticking like glue,
Democrats, Workingmen, Greenbackers, all.

Chainless and free,
Stirred as the
In your full praise- all our factions combine,
Shouting amain,
“Bully for Blaine!”
Down from Mount Hood to the Mexican line.

Aliens vile, tread
Over their bed—
See! our brave heroes dead, writhe in their graves;
Thrills their cold clay
Trampled. Away!
Treaties that make us the equals of slaves.

Standing upright,
Strong in your might,
Oh, but you did it so nobly and grand!
Lion of Maine,
Do it again,
Let your deep bugle blasts startle the land.

Pride of our boast,
Come to our coast,
Speed over mountain and desert and plain;
Give us a shake—
What'll you take?
Here's to your uttermost end, Mr. Blaine.

* Upon the vote in Congress of Mr. Blaine on the Chinese Restriction Bill.

Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. 378.

Ye Weather Prophet

“Go up, old bald-head!” prophesy again,
Wag your wise ears and give another bray!
Some time or other it may chance to rain,
Then you can wink your eyes, and proudly say,
“My knowledge scans the mystery of the sky;
O, what a mighty oracle am I!”

Boys! throw the dust into his blinking eyes;
Prick him with pins to help him up the grade!
O knock-kneed prophet! owl-eyed babbler, wise,
Open your throttle-valve, we’re not afraid!
Trot out your whole menagerie! Who cares?
“Go up, old bald-head, bring along your bears!”

Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. 379.

Smith of Sucker Flat.

A Pioneer's Reminiscence

“Smith?” Seems to me I’ve heard that name!
Smith?—Smith?—Well, I declare!
I think I’ve heard about the same,
Sometime, somehow, somewhere.
Jest wait a little; let me think—
Why, yes! I knowed him well!
Kept whiskey station at the “Sink;”
Had grub and things to sell.

Then thar was hi—“Pot-bellied Smith,”
Way back in fifty-eight
Or fifty-nine, a pardner with
Bill Jones at “Devil’s Gate; “
And Smith who handed in his checks,
(A fairish man I guess,)
That time we stretched them fellers necks
For jumpin’ Brown’s Express.

We hung old “Poker Smith,” let’s see!
That was for cheatin’ games;
And one, we bounced at Cherokee,
For sellin’ salted claims.
Then thar was Smith of Yuba Dam,
Who fiddled and taught school;
And Smith whose tother name was Sam,
That stole McCracken’s mule.

And “Bald-head Smith”—he spelt it Smythe—
A mighty tony chap,
As keen as any new-ground scythe,
We used to call him “Cap;”
And “Lazy Smith”—sometimes called “Pike”—
Too lazy most to budge,
A second-hand jack lawyer like;
Some people called him “Judge.”

Then thar was Schmidt the barber-sport,
Whose wife put on such style,
We called her “Dutchess,” just for short—
You ought to seed her smile.
And “Plug-hat Smith” with ways so proud,
You’d thought he was a king.
And “Jackass Smith” who laughed so loud
He made the canyon ring.

And hold! there was old “Peg-leg Smith”
That mined at Bloody Run,
Who laughed at grizzlies, danger, death—
He was another one.
And “Mormon Smith” that struck it rich,
Who had so many wives,
They couldn’t settle which was which
To save their precious lives.

There was a Smith at “Sucker Flat,”
A most peculiar man,
Who had a most peculiar “gal,”
Whose name was Mary Ann.
She was as sweet as any rose,
And full of life and fun,
And had at least a dozen beaus—
Of which myself was one.

Her cheeks, likewise her hair, was red—
That was in fifty-three;
Ah me! how swiftly time has fled,
And likewise also she.
I recollect I married her
About the first of May,
And “Keno Johnson” carried her
Upon a mule away.

We had a little row up thar,
And then she sulked and moped,
And final lit out from the Bar—
Jest vamosed and eloped;
Yes! now I come to think of it,
In all my various tramps,
I've knowed a right smart chance of Smiths,
At divers times and "camps."

Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. 38o.

Go Slow, Young Man!

Hotter check up, and go slow, young man!
Life's a rough journey, you know, young man,
And you may get tired, or floundered, or mired,
In effort at fleetness and show, young man!

Tis true that the ladies may smile, young man,
And simper when viewing your style, young man,
But that will grow old, and useless, and cold
And tiresome, after a while, young man.

O, how do you flourish so sleek, young man,
On only ten dollars a week, young man?
"Old Sol" I'm afraid, in his splendor arrayed,
Compared with your glory, was meek, young man!

You've a promising little moustache, young man,
But where do you get all your cash, young man,
For perfume and smell, to cut such a swell,
And caper and cut such a dash, young man? "

What station in life do you fill, young man?
Sole heir of a millionaire's will, young man?
Or skip, jump and hop, round a counter or shop,
Or guardian stern of the till, young man?

Do you handle the funds of a bank, young man,
To keep up such racket and rank, young man?
And when "something goes wrong," will it be the old song—
"A guileless, unfortunate crank young man?"

You're gorgeous with jewels and chain, young man,
And flourish a sweet little cane, young man;
But everything shows as plain as your nose,
There's vacuum where should be brain, young man.

There's always a-many a slip, young man,
In life, twixt the cup and the lip, young man,
But tis safe to assume, ere the roses thrice bloom,
You'll go to the "springs" on a trip, young man.

John Chinaman, My Jo, John

Respectfully Dedicated to the Real Workingmen of California

John Chinaman, my Jo, John,
When first we were acquaint,
We thought you soft as dough, John—
A simple, moon-eyed saint.
You're much too smart, and we must part,
O, it is ever so!
For all about we hear the shout,
"John Chinaman must go!"

You take the poor man's bread, John,
His meagre, scanty pay;
And only when you're dead, John,
You take your bones away;
This swindling game's a burning shame,
You play it down too low,
And thus despoil our land and soil,
John Chinaman, my Jo!
Some things will happen, sure, John—
Some things you never dreamt—
For Kearney swears, and rips and tears,
And hoarsely bawls for "hemp."
Your pig-tail is too long, John,
Must be curtailed, you know;
And you must just "get up and dust,"
John Chinaman, my Jo.

The proof about you thickens, John,
You're far too fat and sleek—
You're much too fond of chickens, John,
For one so mild and meek.
The angry crowd with tumult loud,
Like seas toss to and fro;
If you are wise take my advice,
And just get up and go.

Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. 383.

Cetawayo

Thou wert every inch a king,
Cetawayo;
Had your way in everything,
Cetawayo;
By no foolish scruples haunted,
Took what pleased you, all undaunted—
All the dusky wives you wanted,
Cetawayo.

Thou wert proud and full of grit,
Cetawayo;
Wouldn't budge nor scare a bit,
Cetawayo.
Sat upon your ivory throne,
Sway of England wouldn't own,
Said you'd rule your land alone,
Cetawayo.

You did raise the very "Harry,"
Cetawayo,
When your warriors wished to marry,
Cetawayo.
In your vision everywhere,
"But the brave deserve the fair;"
Veterans but with love should pair,
Cetawayo.

You did make your own selections,
Cetawayo;
And for youthful predilections,
Cetawayo,
Didn't care a single shilling,
And for maidens still unwilling,
Had a way quite frank and killing,
Cetawayo.

Stranger to Pity's pleading tear,
Cetawayo;
Stranger still to coward Fear, -
Cetawayo;
Sudden as the lightning's scath,
Deadly as the lion's wrath,
Wreck and ruin strewed thy path,
Cetawayo.

Taurus-like in brawn and muscle,
Cetawayo,
Thou wert eager for the tussle,
Cetawayo;
Gave no heed to threat or story,
Didn't care for England's glory,
Nor her peerless Queen, Victoria—
Cetawayo.

Scorned your foes within your kraals,
Cetawayo;
Dare them from your mountain walls,
Cetawayo;
Made it lively for the Briton
While you had a place to sit on—
Truce and compromises spit on,
Cetawayo.

As the maddened buffalo,
Cetawayo,
Thou didst rush upon thy foe,
Cetawayo.
Scorning still to bend or yield,
With thy assagai and shield,
Sought thy foemen in the field,
Cetawayo.

Isandula's gory tale,
Cetawayo
Long shall English faces pale,
Cetawayo.
Gazing wide the waters o'er,
Tender eyes on England's shore
Weep, for those shall come no more,
Cetawayo.

Yesterday as whirlwind thou,
Cetawayo;
Humbled, captive, fallen now,
Cetawayo.
Once as eagle strong of wing,
As the tiger's deadly spring,
Thou wert every inch a king,
Cetawayo!

Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. 384.

O, Why Should the Spirit of Mortal Be Proud?

“Oh, why should the spirit of mortal be proud”
When it goes to the circus to mix with the crowd?
Because, that the tinsel is gorgeous to see,
And the clown is as funny as funny can be—
Inspiring to look at the tricks of the bear,
And the females that posture, with nothing to wear;
The festive performers, tight-rope and trapeze,
Who hop, skip and jump like a parcel of fleas;
The feats of the acrobats grand to behold,
Who cling fast to nothing, with perilous hold;
Then longing, defiant, new dangers to dare,
Like a shell shot from mortar, go whizzing through air.

’T is also soul-lifting to ponder and gaze,
And muse on the animals—mark all their ways;
The lithe, dandy monkeys that grimace and dance
With a grace like a polished professor from France;
The loves of the elephants, tender and true,
The giraffes, and giant, and giantess, too;
The dwarf and the dwarfess so cunning sedate;
The lion and lioness lying in state;
The tiger and tigress outstretched on the floor;
The awful gorilla (from Erin’s green shore,)
Who curbs his hot anger, all ready to break
When punched by the hoodlums, for courtesy’s sake;
All rare captive creatures that creep, crawl, or run,
Apes, ant-eaters, everything under the sun,
All docile and sitting around on their hams,
Or lying in peace, like the innocent lambs;
All happy and good in the highest degree,
How spirit-inspiring! How pleasant to see!

But when we look round on the great human crowd
And note its performance, ah, that’s why we’re proud!
Here, children stare mutely with saucer-like eyes,
Or yell with delight in a blissful surprise—
All ages, colors, tan, freckle and brown,

Lank Pikes from the country, fast hoodlums from town;
The hay-scented granger, the clerk from the store
With hair parted sweetly behind and before,
Parading so proudly with sweethearts and girls
All gorgeous with jewels, paste-diamonds and pearls;
Here citizens jolly from over the seas,
With an odor suggestive of Limburger cheese;
Proud women arrayed like the lilies in bloom,
Musk-roses might envy their fragrant perfume;
Fat ladies by fashion's whims never accursed,
Rotund as a hogshead, and ready to burst
With merriment; maidens half shy and demure,
With eyes staring wonder, and "warranted pure"
As innocent angels, with butterfly wings,
Who go for the candy, and pop-corn and things;
Here old-fashioned people 'tis pleasant to know,
Just from the "back country" to take in the show;
Whole families winding in sinuous trail,
That tapers like serpent from head to the tail;
The patriarch thoughtful, old woman and all,
From misses that giggle, to babies that squall.

O, visions of bliss, ere our fore-parents sinned!
O, dreams of the tropics, of "Ormuz and Ind!"
Of homes of the Peris, of lotus-kissed Nile;
Of spicy-breathed Ceylon's bright coral-set isle,
Where lovers coo soft 'neath the shadowy palms
As happy and careless, and thoughtless as clams—
Utopia's dreams! Ye are sweet, ye are fair,
But cannot at all with a circus compare!
When we feel we are equals, and one of the crowd,
O, that's why the spirit of mortal is proud!

Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. 387.

Trouble

Jangle and clatter!
What is the matter?
Everything troubled and everything wrong;
Ministers preaching,
Orators screeching,
Cracking our tympanums, still, with their gong.

Doctrines that vex you,
Sadly perplex you—
Ring in your ears, your confusion to seal;
Death and cremation!
Hell and damnation!
Child of iniquity, how do you feel?

Preacher in passion,
Gabriel fashion
Blowing his trumpet, and taking his text
Quickly convinces
Hearer that winces,
Trouble in this world, and hell in the next.

Atheist howling,
Orthodox scowling,
Everyone telling you what is the best;
Braying forever,
Leaving you never,
Haunting you, taunting you, O, for a rest!

O, for a season
Tempered with reason!
When will this torment and torturing cease?
Preacher dogmatic,
Howling asthmatic,
Cease from your torture, and let us have peace!

Drivers o'erload you,
Poisons corrode you,
Till you're as sad as an alkalied ox;
Finding and losing,
Doctrines confusing,
Orthodox, Paradox, Heterodox.

Horrors eternal!
Tortures infernal
Filling you, thrilling you, grilling you through!
Ministers shouting,
Ingersolls scouting;
Mortal hysterical, how do you do?

Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. 389.

Oleomargarine

Sacred old bummer of Ganges and Nile!
Cease from your grumbling and listen awhile.
Stop your boo-hooing, you horrid old bilk,
Useful for butter, and why not for milk?
Listen to science, awhile, if you please;
Bah! you old mountain of butter and cheese.

Soon shall your blood on the desolate plain,
Redden the earth with its dark crimson stain;
Soon shall your hide in a cart taken hence,
Wrinkled and gory, be hung on the fence
Soon shall your fatness and glory be seen
Bolted and chewed by a sausage machine,
Drenched with cold water and warmed in a vat,
Crammed into canvas, and tied up in that,
Molded and squeezed huge rollers between,
Changed into, O! O-le-o-mar-ga-rine!
Churned like the seas by the wild tempests vexed,
Salted and rolled into packages next;
Spread in thin wafers the palate to suit—
How do you like it, you horrid old brute?
Wonderful Science! What next will you do!
Everything old must give place to the new.
Eggs, by the millions, they hatch 'em by steam;
Babies—new process—dear madam, don't scream,
Greatest invention—but really, just now
Cannot precisely explain to you how;
Tell you to-morrow—have patience and wait,
(Patents for sale for the county and State;)
Sugar-cured hams manufactured from wood;
Carefully canvased and warranted good—
Now comes this latest to finish the scene—
Ole—(I can't speak it; you know what I mean—
Can't say that awful word twice if I tried;
Did the thing once, and I like to have died.)
Age of invention! philosopher's dream!
Wonderful era of lightning and steam!
Grand are thy triumphs, but greater than all

O-le-o-mar-ga-rine—that's what they call
Grease from some dark and mysterious source,
Butter from bulls—bully butter, of course!

Man, he is good, ('tis a thousand of shames,)
Only for "poker" and like parlor games.
Can't make him useful at all if you tried—
Worth not a "cuss" for his tallow and hide;
Can't teach him how to make honey like bees,
Worth not a cent to make butter and cheese;
Vain as a peacock and cross as a bear,
Only a handful of whiskers and hair;
Won't work in harness at all; as a rule,
Bucks like a "bronco" and kicks like a mule;
Won't do to roast, like a turkey or pig,
Tougher than buckskin, and rather too big;
Horrid incumbrance on Nature's great plan—
Everything useful for something, but man.

Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. 390.

Baby

Blissful Love's evangel!
I lap pi ness for kings!
Mamma's "precious angel,"
Minus but the wings.

Babbling babies ever
Striving vainly, each
With a fond endeavor
Happiness to reach;

Whether dark or sunny,
Restless all their days;
Bless me, ain't it funny
Just to watch their ways?

Infancy's soft weakness
Haply safely o'er,
See it, full of meekness
Sitting on the floor.

Eyes in wonder blinking,
Solemn as a bat;
At the ceiling winking,
Dropping this for that:

Grasping quick, convulsive,
Rattles, toys and rings;
With desire impulsive,
Swallowing all things.

With a leer sagacious,
Leaving naught untried,
Stuffing mouth capacious—
Never satisfied.

See him awkward toddle—
Never in repose;
See his mother coddle
When he bumps his nose!

Up again and at it
Ere his eyes are dry,
See him fondly pat it—
What he terms “a pie.”

Fooling with a pin—
See the little fellow;
Now he sticks it in—
Hear him howl and bellow!

Quick self-closing gates,
Soon he knows their histories;
Now investigates
Other little mysteries.

Watching every bubble
With his blinking eyes;
Getting into trouble
Chasing butterflies,

Hear his piercing screeches,
Thrilling and intense,
As he tears his breeches
Climbing o’er the fence!

Now he sees a swallow!
Salt upon his tail:
Expectation hollow—
How his projects fail!

Now he sees a dolly
Of the female gender—
What egregious folly!
Nonsense soft and tender!

What ecstatic bliss!
How they grin and gabble!
How they coo and kiss;
How they lisp and babble!

Now they pluck the roses
Fresh with dew of morn;
Now they scratch their noses
With the naughty thorn.

Now he bids defiance
To his nurse's ban;
Now he plays at "science" —
Calls himself "a man."

Now he dives in "pools; "
Hides himself in "hedges" —
Playing with edged tools,
Finds how sharp their edge is.

Now he issues "stocks,"
Cunningly designing;
Now he gathers rocks—
Calls it "honest mining! "

As the years have swept on,
Grown a little bigger,
Longs to own a weapon
With a little trigger.

Feather in his hat—
How he struts and swaggers!
Talks of this and that—
Pistols, swords and daggers.

Now he runs for "office" —
Rustles round the street,
And his hat will doff us
Everywhere we meet.

Spite of admonition
Oft to have a care,
Plays at "politician; "
Tries to mount a chair.

Crash, and yell, and rumble!
Bless me! there it goes,
With a headlong tumble
On its precious nose!

Finis! nose all battered,
Gewgaws thrown aside;
Playthings broken, scattered,
Nothing else untried,

Now it climbs the ladder—
Gracious! there it goes!
Lying dreamless, lifeless,
With its upturned toes!

Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. 392.

Ravoninahtritriniarivo!

I read that name the other day,
And awful passion shook and thrilled me,
And vowed I'd do it right away—
I'd go and rhyme it, if it killed me!
The hardest time you ever saw
I had, I'd have you all believe, O,
Just hear me try it—(Oh, my jaw!)
Ra-vo-ni-nah-tri-trin-i-a-ri-vo!

It was a heathen freshly caught—
This “Noble of a Thousand Honors!”
And quite deserved them all I thought,
These gifts conferred by royal donors.

He was a little, gilded man,
In royal favor's smile a basker;
His color was a black and tan,
His liege, the Queen of Madagascar.
He came from that lorn Sheba dun,
Beyond swarth Afric's confines farther,
To court our mighty Solomon,
Our shining sun, the awful Arthur!

Long, long I wrestled with that weird
And awe-inspiring patronymic,
But all my efforts wild appeared
Of madman's mouthings but a mimic.
I wipe the sweat from off my brow,
And feel much better you perceive; O,
I lip, hip, hurrah! I've got it now—
Ravoninahtritriniarivol

It was a fearful thing, that name,
When first my trembling ear did hear it—
As hard for me to speak the same
As for the “noble one” to bear it;
But now I’ve got it right, ha! ha!
No more my troubled soul shall grieve, Oh!
Eureka! Bueno! Hip, hurrah!
Ravoni! ha! ha! triniarivo!!!

* “The Noble of a Thousand Honors,” the Queen of Madagascar’s Ambassador, recently arrived in New York.

Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. 395.

King Theebau

King Theebau, sick at Mandalay,
The cable tells us, t'other day,
By his astrologers' vice,
Fixed up a potion in a trice,
And took it as a patient should,
But didn't do him any good.
O, king! although you'd *quantum suff*?,
The mixture wasn't strong enough.
Your priests and maidens, much I fear,
Had not such strength as those grown here;
And much I doubt, I must confess,
If you'd a lawyer in that mess,
Or mining shark of any size,
Or broker, stock or otherwise.

If you'll but persevere, O, king,
We'll gladly help you fix this thing!
They're much too weak your priests and preachers—
We'll send you Kallochs, Cooks and Beechers,
And scores of hungry politicians;
All colors, sexes and conditions;
A Legislature we've no use for,
(We trust you'll quickly cook their goose for;)
A hundred more or less attorneys,
Our long-tailed "Johns," and long-eared Kearneys,
And in the batch, if you so please,
We'll send along a few M.C.'s.
Of maidens, we've a countless throng,
Though ancient, well preserved and "strong,"
There's Susan B., that mighty talker,
And blithesome Dr. Mary Walker;
And to complete the royal stew,
Your infants maybe they will do.

Betime your torment keenly pricks,
These fresh ingredients nicely mix;
Then in your raging, feverish hours,
Plant *them* beneath your kingly towers,
And if *you* fail of being cured
Twill do *us* good, we feel assured.
If you this course but well pursue
Twill *cure them* if it doesn't you.

Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. 396.

O, Semi-Trop!!

O, Semi-Trop! What do you mean?
What have we clone? Alas! alack!
That you should take us right between
Our wildered eyes a sudden whack!
I'm sure we've been your lovers true—
Have let our frisky muses sing;
Have praised your balmy skies of blue,
Your flowers, your bowers, your everything;
Have whispered to thee many a tale,
Have doted on thee as a bride,
Compared thy gifts to Eden's vale,
(With much advantage to thy side,)
Have overlooked some little faults—
Some fond and foolish ways you had—
Some little slips and skips and halts,
And now—it really is too bad!

As in a dreamy trance we see—
The ice-panes crash beneath our feet;
A dazzling gleam o'er hill and lea,—
White-shrouded, shivering citrus tree,
And snow-balls Hying in the street;
And every night thy frosty breath
Comes laden with the chill of death.
I do believe, upon my soul,
That reckless, restless Jeems Bennette
Is bringing home the icy Pole,
A prize within his swift Jeannette—
To strike us so, with sudden pop!
How could you, cruel Semi-Trop?
Now here is frost, and snow and ice,
O——and blazes, ain't it nice!

Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. 398.

Poor Old Bones.

Ancient, muffy, guileless Bones!
Dreaming soft of tropic zones,
Gentle knight of saw and hammer;
Pilot of the ship of State,
Tempt the tempest not of hate;
Linger till the seas are calmer.
List the breakers threatening tones,
Brave old Bones!

Poor old Bones!
Stocks and stones
Well might melt to tears and pity
At those resolutions, when
All those festive Workingmen
Met *en masse* in Oakland city,
Och hones!
Crushed Bones!

Sighs and moans!
Poor old Bones!
Wreath of rue thy brow entwining;
Held in terror's awful fetters,
Poring o'er those fatal letters,
Sealed and signed with mystic signing,
Grinning skull and cross of bones—
Poor old Bones!

Poor old Bones!
Useless Bones!
Like a wether sent to slaughter, [sic]
Fast corraled by "cursed rings," [sic]
Stript of all thy fleece and things,
For that stolen draught of "water;"
Weep, Stones,
For Bones.

Poor old Bones!
Hear his groans!
Awed and dazed by Kearney's swagger,
Threats of skinning like an eel,
Death by sudden hemp or steel,
Poison, bullet, noose or dagger;
Kearney's edict swift dethrones
Poor Bones!

Poor old Bones!
Now the groans
Plead for mercy loud and louder;
Now they cease and all is still,
Now they grind thee in the mill,
All thy structure crushed to powder—
Poor Bones!
Ground Bones!

Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. 399.

In Camp—1849

The natives all looked on in awe;
We were the queerest set of comers:
Huge travelers from “Arkansaw,”
And “Pikes,” and “Argonauts,” and bummers.

Big, homely “Hoosiers,” tall, raw-boned;
The “Southern Chiv,” the “Bowery Boy;”
And whittling Yankees, nasal-toned,
And “Sucker Boys” from “Illinoy.”

We tried each other to amuse,
And ready all, for rows and musses;
Turks, Christians, Infidels and Jews,
And other miscellaneous “cusses.”

All day we worked beside the sluice
With pick and pan, and spade and rocker;
And left our purses lying loose,
And never dreamed of safe or locker.

And so we worked with jest and song,
And reckless threw away the “tailings,”
And rocked the “cradle” all day long,
But never heard an infant’s wailings.

And when the busy day was done,
And night unveiled her starry glories,
We gathered slowly, one by one,
Around the fire, to hear the stories—

How “Greenhorn Gulch” was panning out
To every man a hundred dollars;
And “Jake” and “Greeny” went about
With “white biled” shirts and stand-up collars;

How Jenkins struck it awful rich,
(The same that had that pretty daughter,)
And thought he’d have to dig a ditch
From “Wild-cat Run” to fetch in water.

And then we heard a noise without,
And Louis Lee, the lazy loafer,
Came in and told us all about
The doings of the boys at "Ophir;"

The chunk just found by Harry King;
The pocket struck by Mike O'Bannian;
And how he had the biggest thing
Of any miner in the canyon;

How "Texas Bill" and "Irish Pat"
Were ever all the rows and shoots on;
And gambler Hill, of "Brandy Flat,"
Passed in his checks, and died with boots on;

How "Sailor Tom," of "Whiskey Slide,"
Let daylight through the bully, Wiggins;
How "Alabam" fell down and died,
And went to prospect other diggin's;

What awful luck that "Nigger" had,
Who put on airs, and garments showy,
Until one day "Kaintuck" got mad,
And sliced him up, with ten-inch bowie;

How grim old "Rocky Mountain Gray"
Went out to hunt, one morning drizzly;
And how they found him dead next day,
All chawed and mangled by a grizzly;

How Bob and Jim, the "tarnal fools,"
Went to the Bay, and came back "busted;"
And Smith was whipped for stealing mules,
And with his "pard" got up and "dusted;"

How Jones and Johnson went about
And put on airs and drank their bumpers,
Until their prospect "petered out,"
And left them poor as counter-jumpers;

How "Frisco Kate" and "Hangtown Sal,"
Danced at the ball with roughs and bummers;
And how old Simpson's red-haired "gal,"
Threwed off on spooney Charley Summers.

And "Lije" just then chipped in, and told
Of Wood's Express, by agents halted;
And how the claim that "Yank" had sold
To "Pike" at "Humbbug Flat" was "salted."

And then some one discussed about
Dick Ropes, who tied to Susie Keller—
She "sized" his "pile," and cleaned him out,
And left him for another "feller;"

And he, poor fool, took on and cried
All night, and in the morning, Sammy,
A bullet hole found in his hide,
And he all stiff and cold and clammy.

And then we talked about the rains;
(The moaning pines, their branches tossing;)
The wonders of the mighty Plains,
And what befel us in the crossing;

Of night attacks by foes unseen;
Of Indian hunts, and wild excursions;
Of swimming rivers—Platte and Green—
And other innocent diversions;

Of "Devil's Gate," and "Chimney Rock;"
The mountain pass; the desert glaring;
Of mirages that ever mock
The steps which follow them, despairing;

Of alkali; of water bad;
The pony race, and who was winner;
Of Brigham Young—the wives he had—
"More than his share, the d—d old sinner;"

How hard he makes the poor things work,
And always keeps 'em in a harem,
Like any cursed heathen Turk,
And never lets a man go near 'em;

And if they smile on one, alack!
He quick disposes of the burden—
He takes and ties them in a sack,
And throws them in the “River Jordan.”

And then we talked of friends and home;
The trip by sea, across the Isthmus;
Of safe return, no more to roam;
And greetings warm at merry Christmas.

And so the night hours waned and crept,
Until our eyes grew dim and weary,
And each his blankets sought, and slept,
To dream, perchance, of Belle, or Mary.

O, glorious days! O, dazzling gleam
Like meteor’s glare upon the river;
Bright vision fled! O, golden dream!
Like rainbow seen, and gone forever.

Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. 400.

Charley Ross.

Oh, for some hermit, lone retreat!
Oh, for some Eden-land seraphic!
Where I no more that name might meet
Within the columns telegraphic.

Have they no pastime more refined—
These men that harness up the lightning—
Than thus dethroning reason's mind,
And babes and ancient granddames frightening?

Yet still they ply the weary wires,
And flash it ever strong and stronger;
I feel fell fury's flaming fires,
And I can stand this thing no longer.

If to oblivion's dark shelf
That philanthropic deed consigned him,
I'd murder "Charlie Ross" myself
I think, if I could only find him.

Give us a name both rare and new,
As Smith, or Schneider, Jones or Johnson;
Or Green, or White, or Brown would do,
But I am sick of "Monsieur Tonson."

My lips have drained the cup of gall,
And life has many heavy crosses
For me; but heaviest of them all,
These everlasting "Charlie Rosses."

Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. 404.

Alkali Jim

Died with His Boots on.

“Died with his boots on—game to the last!”
That’s what the telegraph said last night;
Yes; he was always mighty fast—
Always into a row or fight.
Alkali, hung? Yes, I reckon it’s him—
Somewhere out there about Albuquerque;
Gamblin’ and shootin’?—That’s just like Jim,
Anything else before honest work.
Son of a minister—knowed him well—
Always full of old Nick, and wild;
Reckon he didn’t believe in hell—
Got too much of it when a child.
Went to school with him many a day—
Swore like a parrot, and smoked and chewed;
Always dangerous-like at play—
Mad in a minute, and fit and clawed.
Ready of hand, and free of heart,
True to his friendships wrong or right—
Chivalrous? Always would take the part
Of the dog that was undermost in the fight!

Come out here to this coast—let’s see!
Disremember of all the facts,
Somewhere in ’52 or ’3,
Started at Frisco peddling tracts;
Reckon he saw no healthy signs,
Took to women, and cards and wine;
Heer’d of him next at the Comstock mines
Dealin’ faro in ’59;
Vigilantes and him fell out
Up in Montana and Idaho,
When they put all them cut-throat gangs to rout,
Told him to git, in a way not slow.

Flittin’ and driftin’ here and there,
Over the mountains and deserts dim,
Never long settled anywhere;

Every camp on the coast knowed Jim.
Bannock, Helena, Deadwood, all
Made it hot for his little game;
Here in the Summer, there in Fall,
Denver and Leadville just the same;
Heer'd of him once at Bodie, too,
Tucson, Tombstone, Total Wreck;
Roamin' the camps of the coast all through,
Reckon he's passed in his final check.

Lazy and proud as a haughty Turk,
Cut and shoot at the drop of a hat,
Talk to him about "honest work?"
Wouldn't hear to a bit of that;
True as steel to the friends he had,
Hatin' them strong that hated him,
Plenty of good and more of bad,
That was the kind of a boy was Jim.
Reckless and wild from the very start,
Only in cussedness takin' pride,
And his poor old mother will break her heart
If ever she hears how her darlin died.
Run with a gamblin' drinkin' lot,
Spendin' their money, free and fast—
"Died with his boots on!"—Hung or shot
Always the way with that sort at last!

Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. 405.

The Charge of the Light (Clad) Brigade

Half a mile, half a mile,
Half a mile downward,
Trudging through sand and sun,
Went the One Hundred;
Downcast and slightly nude,
Stared at with glances rude,
What though the multitude
Giggled and wondered.

Down on the wave-washed strand
Forms the devoted band,
Fastly linked, hand in hand,
Fashion and Folly;
Stared at by “rake” and “swell,”
Rustic and city belle,
O, but they stood it well;
Wasn’t it jolly?

Not one, though fat or spare,
Not one, for graces rare
In that crowd standing there,
Might one have singled;
Half-breeds and thoroughbreds,
Bald heads, and curly heads,
Auburns and festive reds
Picturesque mingled.

Stripes down their longitude,
Stripes round their latitude,
Males in meek attitude
Tremblingly went in;
“White-lipped, with terror dumb,”
Watching the rollers come—
Brassy and crop-haired some,
A la San Quentin.

Matrons sedate and staid,
Watched their young nestlings wade;
Young maid and ancient maid,
Jostled and lilted;
Soon in the breakers power,
Helpless to shrink and cower,
Waiting like Summer flower
But to be wilted.

Breakers to right of them,
Breakers to left of them,
Breakers in front of them
Volleyed and thundered;
Would they dare brave the swells,
In their wild, frenzied spells,
Bald heads and blushing belles?—
All the crowd wondered.

Idly the gang on shore
Lounged on the sandy floor;
Clerks from the dry-goods store,
Foppish and frisky;
“Sykesy” and “Mose” and “Lize,”
Doctors with goggle eyes,
Dealers in merchandise,
Lager and whiskey.

Lawyers with child-like smile,
Grangers devoid of guile,
Dandies in stunning style,
Broadcloth and dusters;
Mermaids and other maids,
Light shades and other shades,
High grades, and other grades,
Lying in clusters.

Forward the bathers stept,
Oh, how the breakers leapt!
Oh, how they madly swept
Shoreward and rumbled!
Caught in the naughty swirls,
Dark curls and sunny curls,
Fat girls and funny girls,
Ruffled and tumbled.

Wrecked was each helpless craft,
Oh, the salt brine they quaffed!
Oh, how they shrieked and laughed,
Struggled and scrambled!
Stripped of art's mysteries,
In the receding seas
Some on their hands and knees
Festively gamboled.

O, how they shoreward skipped!
O, how they rained and dripped!
O, how they tent-ward tripped
When it was over!
Musing on "frauds" and "salts,"
Musing on ringlets false,
Dreaming of "hop" and "waltz,"
Maiden and lover.

When shall their memory fade!
Oh, the brave show they made
Freely and fully!
Worse halves and better halves,
Big calves and little calves,
Wasn't it "bully?"

Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. 407.

The Eastern Question

Those Eastern lands where Love reuses,
And dreams upon a bed of roses;
Those Orient lands of lotus-leisure
That Moore has sung in tuneful measure;
Soft-steeped in sighing, sensuous languor,
Except when stirred by jealous anger,
Or pricked by bayonets or sabres
Of Russ, or Greek, or other neighbors
Their dreamy, dozing life molesting—
How very, very interesting!

You read about those curious people
Who build a church without a steeple,
And give you choice of circumcision,
Or practice on you short division;
Who squat around upon their ranches
Transacting business on their haunches;
And if astray a wife you've led off,
Will coolly clip your foolish head off;
And then, without a warrant written,
Will calmly drown her like a kitten;
Who never laugh at something funny;
Who scorn to work and yet love money;
Who ornament their mosques with dados,
And sulky slaves with bastinados;
Who marry wives and keep no tally,
And fight, and pray, and swear by "Allah!"
And feel that in a mortal tussle
The Mussulmen are men of muscle.

You read of various other matter—
Of sweet perfumes and priceless "attar;"
Of lovely houris, just "too niter,"
Until your heart is in a flutter;
Of Muftis, Muezzins, and Dervishes—
Those guardians of the loaves and fishes;
Of yasmaks, turbans, trowsers, tunics, [sic]
Of Khedives, Pashas, Beys and Eunuchs—
One of the East's peculiar features—

Society's most petted creatures;
Those gentle-men—a harem's treasure,
More bent on business than on pleasure;
Who guard from harm the sacred harem—
(You wonder if the ladies fear 'em)
And then remark, "What curious people,
Are those who 'run' Constantinople!"

You grow quite hot discussing Turkey,
And shout, with gestures wild and jerky,
"No compromise with curst Mohammed!
The Turk must go from Europe, d—n it!
His creed denies a soul to woman!
He lets his daughters look on no man;
A living corpse whose carcass cumbers;
A nightmare troubling Christian slumbers;
A blot on Europe's map a stigma!"
And leave unsolved the dark enigma.

Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. 410.

The Song of Chin Lan Pin

I am mighty Chin Lan Pin!
Don't you know me? I'm "Ah Sin!"
You step out and I'll step in—
Workeeman, you hearee me?
Pack your traps and don't be long,
When you hear my breakfast gong;
From Pekin to far Hong Kong
Alice coolee fearee me.
I can Chinee coolee tamee,
Melican he muchee samee,
Sabbee you my little gamee?
Alice cash I grabbe;
I can makee heap go dead;
I can cuttee offee head;
I can takee allee bread
Bunglingame no sabbee.

I'm a Tartar stout and bold,
Sandal-clogged and gilt with gold,
Not of any common mould—
Allee time way uppee;
I'm a mighty Mandarin,
You step out and I'll step in,
Or your sort we'll quickly skin
As a rat or puppy.

Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. 411.

Our Late Celebration

A Fourth of July Lyric

What Los Angeles did at our grand celebration,
When we met to remember the birth of our Nation,
I will try to relate in a way that's impartial,
Without envy or malice—and first came our Marshal—
A Wolf in sheep's clothing, as smiling and placid
As oil of croton or sulphuric acid.
Though wolfish his aspect, he never would hurt you,
And the last in the world, in distress to desert you;
Yet should you let evil ways cumber or trip you,
He'd scent you afar, and would certainly nip you.

And next came his Aids, their good service to render,
So gorgeous and grand in their dazzling splendor;
As gay—let me see—well, I think, on reflection,
As a spotted male horse, on the day of election.
Their untamed, fiery steeds reared aloft and cavorted,
And arched their proud necks and they whinnied and snorted,
Then started all sudden, then stopped as in wonder,
Their heads decked with ribbons; their necks clothed with thunder.

The cortege moved on and nothing could be gayer
Than the turnout that carried our worthy Lord Mayor.
And the Common Scoun—Council, I mean—too, were present,
So smooth and so smiling, and looking so pleasant.
Like a dream of the past, by the fancy begotten,
Like memories buried and almost forgotten,
Came four Veterans gray, by the hand of time smitten,
Who once in their prime, whaled the cohorts of Britain—
At Chippewa was it;—or was it at Lundy?—
A mighty good job, though they did it on Sunday.

Then men came, who, when lowered war's thunder-cloud gloomy,
Went forth to the land of the old Montezuma;
In the Halls of the Aztecs—you all know the story—
They reveled where princes once sat in their glory.
They vanished, and then came, the "Old Forty-Niners,"
With Long Tom, and Rockers, Bullwhackers and Miners;
The scene made me falter, and sigh like a booby;
And I thought of the long ago days on the Yuba,
When we washed the vile dross in the Long Tom and Rocker,
And owned as much railway, as Stanford or Crocker.

The Firemen came then, with their picturesque turnout,
Who, if they can help it, will not let you burn out;
They came with their engine—gay midnight carousers—
In gorgeous red shirts, and black cassimere trousers.
Next gleamed in the line two bouquets of young Misses
All bright as the blossoms the sweet west wind kisses;
Some small like the bud, ere its glory discloses,
Some bright as the flush of the early Spring roses;
There, too, in the line came proud Liberty's goddess
In rainbow-hued train, and gay Star Spangled bodice,
And "Justice" with equipoise scales quickly neared me—
I asked for a pound, but I don't think she *heard* me;
Her stock was exhausted, perhaps, by so many,
For she passed on her way, and I didn't get any.

There were Germans from Rhine, and Gymnasts and "Turners."
Could turn inside out—and some very young earners;
And next in the line, inarched the bold Sons of Erin,
With Shamrock and harp, and the loved "green a-wearin'."
There were Butchers on horseback, and Grocers in wagons,
And Vintners with wine in huge barrels and flagons;
There were men "on the square," who wield mallet and auger,
There were "Artists" in hair, and "Old Chris" with his lager;
Like the waves came the owners of flocks, with their henchmen,
There were swarthy Rancheros and gay, gallant Frenchmen;
There were Bakers with bread-carts, and Milkmen with milk;
And Ladies, all lovely in satin and silk—
Some, cold as the stream touched by chilly Boreas—
Some, shy as the shrinking night-blooming Cereus;
Some, brown as the leaves, touched by Autumn's breath chilly—

Some, blooming and fair as the sweet water-lily,
Some, boisterous and glad as the bright leaping billow—
Some, tender and sad, as the lone weeping willow;
There were eyes that were veiled by the long silken lashes,
And some that were bright as the quick lightning Hashes,
Some, sadder than death, in their sorrow and ashes.

The Piper they blowed till we looked on in wonder,
The Drummers, they drummed like the deep, rolling thunder;
We marched to the Garden of Paradise, quickly,
Where grapes intertwine with orange boughs thickly;
Saw the trees, but we saw not the “fair fruit forbidden,”
No doubt there was some, but ’twas carefully hidden.
The platform was weak as a lover’s first sonnet,
And groaned neath the dignity centred upon it;
Its structure was not in a healthy condition,
And it fell with a crash like a dream of ambition.
Then the Parson he prayed, but I couldn’t hear fully,
But a lady in front whispered softly, “That’s bully;”
And the Reader got up, and with grand peroration
And grimaces, went for the Great Declaration;
And when he had finished they brought out the Poet;
He bowed and he smiled; and they told him to “go it;”
He went; and dear Poet, don’t let this thing fret you;
That *lady* remarked, “That is bully, you bet you.”
It was good; and so softly the smooth measures glided,
We were charmed with his song, and we all coincided.

Then the Orator rose, in his turn, and orated,
Denouncing oppression, and tyranny hated,
And spoke of vile plots our dear rights to inveigle;
And his glance was as fierce as our own fearless eagle.
Then he went for our foemen and sent them to Hades
And talked of sweet women, and flattered the ladies;
(Which the same, I’d remark, while my pen is about it,
No Fourth of July ever passed off without it.)

Then the Rabbi arose, our deep feelings expressing—
For our Country, imploring God’s choicest blessing.
We felt as we listened, indeed we were sinners,
And then—we felt hungry, and went to our dinners.

The twilight came soft, with its hush sad and tender,
The stars blazed aloft in their glory and splendor,
The rockets soared skyward, and slowly descended,
And the "Fourth" with its pomp and its glory was ended
And I say it, with never the least hesitation,
We had a good time at our late celebration.
MR. McPHERSON.

Did I never advise you of Mr. McPherson?
A very nice man, but a very queer person,
Who never sought office, and paid all his taxes,
And never asked help in the grinding of axes;
Who never was ruffled, blow cold or blow hot,
But seemed to lack something, you didn't know what:
And to prove to you all that his head wasn't level
He didn't believe in a hell or a devil:
Yet a very nice man, but a very queer person
For c very-day life, was this Mr. McPherson.

Although he detested the talk of this slang age,
When speaking, he sometimes used violent language;
And lawyers and preachers and such, he termed "scamps,"
And book agents, canvassers, lecturers, "tramps;"
And "dealing" in stocks he called "robbing and stealing"—
This crusty old man, with a plainness unfeeling,
And sneered at the "fashions" and scorned all pretenses,
Which proved he was clearly quite out of his senses—
Oh, a plain-spoken man, but an unpleasant person
In society's walks, was this Mr. McPherson.

He minded his business and scorned to talk slander—
This terrible, hard-headed, old salamander.
Drank just what he wanted, and ate with his knife,
Took life in dead earnest, was true to his wife
And his friends; yet a very unpopular person
In this "gilded age" was old Mr. McPherson.
At last he fell ill of an ailment complex,
And all felt relieved when he passed in his checks.
His sickness—a sort of an asthma or phthisic—
Soon carried him off, for he wouldn't take physic;
And scoffed at prescriptions and blasphemed the doctors,

And called them all manner of “potion concoctors”—
Said they were “in league with old Death and the Devil,”
Which proved to a fraction his head wasn’t level—
Such a crotchety, willful, unreasoning person!
Peace, peace to the ashes of Mr. McPherson!

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Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. 412.

In Memoriam

He was the pride of all our flock,
No other could come near him;
Our high-heeled, noble Brahma cock,
The lord of all the harem.

He used to call with trumpet-tongue
Ere death's cold chain had bound him,
Like Sainted Mormon, Brigham Young,
His pullets all around him.

He numbered all his wives by "tens"
In grand review each morning,
But sore bereaved his widowed hens
Set desolate in mourning.

No more the dainty worm he picks
To tempt their longing palates;
No more his tender, orphaned chicks
Shall feel his feet, like mallets.

He was of all the roost the boss,
Likewise the "Champion Walker,"
And never for a word at loss,
A most persuasive talker.

He sleeps beneath the orange tree,
Where wolf nor skunk may take him,
Oblivious to our grief, ah me!
Till Gabriel's trump shall wake him.

* Our Big Boss Rooster "Brigham," departed this vain world, Aug. 26, 1879. *Requiescat*, etc.

Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. 417.

Diospyrus Kaki

Fruit of the Gods!

Thou puckery, sweet illusion, fair and bright!
Thou dream of golden glory fond and brief!
Soft to the touch and tempting to the sight,
How hast thou brought our trusting souls to grief!.
We taste, our eyes with sudden tears are blind,
As mourners sad, that comfort may not find.

“Fruit of the Gods?” what sleek, sarcastic Jap,
In silken gown, and bamboo-basket hat,
Or oily, smooth-faced missionary chap
To fleece us of our stamps, invented that?
If so, what funny sort of gods are these
They worship blindly, o’er the Western seas?

Gall at thy worst, insipid at thy best,
At average like a toad-stool over-ripe;
How like a viper warmed within our breast,
Thou waited’st for thy chance to rend and gripe!
What hopes we kept embalmed in myrrh and spice,
Of each sweet sproutling, dear beyond all price!

We gave for each small object of our lust
Three silver tokens. So it came to pass
They bore the motto grand: “In God we Trust.”
We trusted, and our hearts are sad, alas!
And sick with hopes indefinite deferred,
Or full of wrath, as captive grizzly stirred.

“Fruit of the Gods!” I gave some to my swine;
What eager rush, contention and turmoil!
You should have heard them grunt, and squeal and whine

N. B.—A few trees for sale at first cost price. Confederate bonds taken at par in payment.

Like childhood lured to take the festive oil!
They were the maddest pigs you ever saw,
And now prefer a cabbage, cooked or raw.

Go to! thou goodly seeming of desire,
Thou mocking phantom, with high-sounding name!
Thou fraud, with blush upon thy cheek of fire,
As conscious of thy all-pervading shame;
With valor and religion's high attest, *
With other humbugs lie thee down to rest.

Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. 418.

Modern Love's Young Dream

"Love in a Cottage?"
Nonsense and pottage!
Hold the fort, girls, reinforcements are near;
What though ranks eager
Closely beleaguer,
Rescue will reach you in time, never fear.

What though love sighing,
Haunts you slow-dying,
You will be smiling in time as your wont;
"Kisses and Cupid?"
Mercy, how stupid!
Bullion and money-bags, ho! to the front!
"Love is enough?"

Blarney and stuff!
Nothing like fashion and flounces and rank;—
"Death and heart-famine?"
Nonsense and gammon!
Nothing like lucre, and coin in the Bunk.

* The unapproachable excellencies of this fruit were attested by certificates, real or spurious, of naval officers, and missionary preachers in Japan.

Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. 419.

Hattie Higgins

A Red Dog Miner's Romance

Married! Well,
That just beats hell!
That just gits me, stranger, sorter:
“Couldn’t get along without it?
Needn’t take on so about it?”
Well, I know I hadn’t orter.

It is many years ago,
We was promised like, you know;
Sorter half-engaged, you see,
Me to her, and her to me.
She was just the very neatest
And the smartest gal, and sweetest,
Ever in the Red Dog Diggin’s—
It was somewhere, let me see!
Way back there in ’53—
And her name was Hattie Higgins.

It was fixed. A little while,
When I’d finished up my pile
And my claim had ceased to pay,
(It was payin’, stranger, bully,)
We should splice and go away
Down and settle at the Bay—
We had fixed the thing up fully.

We would build a castle there,
Firm and tall and not of air,
Just as other wealthy sinners;
Get up “corners,” loan out money,
Live on clover, milk and honey;
Give receptions, routs and dinners,
Ride in cars and omni busses;
We would laugh and snap at fate,
Put on style, and live in state—
Something like them Nob Hill cusses.

Everything was work in well,

When a stranger came—and hell
Was to pay from that time forward;
He was dressed in stove-pipe hat,
White biled shirt and striped cravat, [sic]
Patent boots and gaudy vest;
And his coat was of the best—
Bought with money that he'd borrowed.
He could dance and sing and play
Like a Frenchman all the day,
And was polished-like and chatty;
Still, I didn't dream of danger,
But I noticed, somehow, stranger,
He was awful sweet on Hattie.

Soon I noticed with alarm,
She was held as with a charm;
Dreamy-like and absent-minded,
When I came at fall of night;
But she listened with delight
To his compliments long-winded.

Women, they are curious critters;
Show them something new that glitters,
And they fly right off the handle;
Show them diamonds, silks and rings,
And they'll singe their foolish wings,
Like a moth in flame of candle.

First, I didn't care a bit
For his flattery showered upon her
When they'd talk and sit and sit,
Rather proud-like of the honor.
I was never of that kind—
One of them hot, jealous cusses,
Seein' motes, yet stony-blind,
Always gettin' into musses.
Sooner I'd have thought to see
Oil and water make a fusion,
Than her fondness turn from me;
But I woke from that delusion.

Well, to cut the story short,
Told her that I'd better leave—
Wasn't any of that sort
Over milk once spilt to grieve.
Didn't care to take a part
In a durned three-handed game;
Tried to blot her from my heart,
But I loved her all the same.

She? Of course she felt quite bad
At this turnin' of the card;
Cried a little, but was glad
That I didn't take it hard.
Me? I went about my work,
Grave and proud as any Turk,
Melancholy as a mule;
For when courtship takes that form
'T isn't any use to storm—
Always make the thing a rule.

So I let them bill and coo
All the dreamy Summer through;
And the thing went on and on,
Soft as Eve and Adam's fall,
Till the truth began to dawn
Plainly, and I saw it all.
Then I flared up like old Harry—
Offered him his choice, to fight
Or the foolish gal to marry—
Said he'd make the thing all right.

Still, her fears he'd lull and soften,
Lulled the heart that he'd betrayed;
Promised marriage soon, and often;
Promised still, and still delayed.
But she woke to comprehension
Of results of coming time,
Wild with shame and apprehension;
But he didn't care a dime.

Just to think the cussed shame,
When he'd wearied of his claim—
Worked the lead of her affections,
Severed all her heart's connections—
Jumped the game—the triflin' scamp!
Meaner than the meanest Injun,
May his soul in hell be sing'in'—
Lit right out and left the camp!

Would you ever think it, stranger?
In her helpless time of danger,
Sneakin fled the coward whelp;
To her pleading gave denial,
Left her in her hour of trial,
But I found her friends and help.
But their help was all in vain,
And the dawning of the light
Saw her at the close of night,
Free from travail and from pain.
Soft her gentle spirit fled,
Upward soaring with the lark;
But -she left a tiny spark,
Faint and flickering in her stead.
Helpless, weak as weak could be,
Lay her worse than orphaned child;
And it seemed to smile on me
As her mother once had smiled;
Then I swore a solemn oath,
In the presence of them both—
Of the living and the dead—
I'd protect the helpless kid;
Then I ci find where he was hid,
And I'd settle him with lead.

After that, a month, or maybe
More, I took her little baby,
With its mother's angel face,
Down to Frisco, to a place—
To a couple that I knowed;
They was childless, rich and lone,
Hadn't any of their own,

So she gladdened their abode.
She'd her mother's gentle smile,
And the eyes that ever haunt,
And I swore she should not want;
So I staked her with my pile.
Gobbled up a powerful lot
Of them worthless sand-heaps there,
Vacant then, and bleak and bare,
Just how much, I've now forgot.
Don't remember what I paid—
But I know I got them cheap,
There they laid, and laid, and laid;
Now they say they're worth a heap.
Then I made a little swing,
To a lawyer's took a turn,
Signed and settled everything—
Deeded it to her and hern.
Then I took an oath, you see,
That upon this changeful earth,
She should never know of me,
Or the secret of her birth.
So she grew the fairest flower
In proud Frisco's queenly bower,
Fairy-like in form and grace—
Everything- is for the best,
And her secret, let it rest;
For it might be out of place,
Now the thing's well nigh forgot;
So it's better, maybe not—
For they're awful proud and—well
Don't you never, never tell.

Stranger, don't you think me crazy?—
Maybe I'm a little hazy,
Thinkin' over all the past;
Of her young life's cruel scorning,
Of the clouds that veiled her morning;
But her skies are bright at last.
When I heard that she was married,
Her, the little kid I carried—

When I read it in that paper
All about her high-toned marriage,
Presents, diamonds, jewels, carriage,
That's what made me cut that caper.

So it is! A curious thing
Just to watch—the queerest sight,—
How them mushroom fellers spring
Rank and juicy, in a night,
Fly into an awful passion
If you dare to intimate,
When their piles were not so great,
That their mothers took in washin'.
Start a little peanut stand—
That's the way them fellers do it—
Get a tract of worthless sand,
Run some streets and alleys through it;
Keep a little whisky shop,
Gamble in them minin' stocks
Till the under dog's on top—
Pilin up their marble blocks;
Every one a dancin' round,
Like a Scotchman in a reel;
Bounce you with a sudden bound,
Skin a stranger like an eel;
Last week busted, rich to-day,
Pilin up their cords of money—
That is frisky Frisco's way;
Yes, you're right! it's awful funny.
But they say that now and then,
Lone and scattered, you may find
Bully, brave, big-hearted men,
And her feller's of that kind.

But, I've got way off the track,
Thinkin' of that little kid;
And I'll tell you what I did
When I made the riffle back.
Well, I took the rascal's scent,
Followed him to Nigger Tent,
Whiskey Flat and Mormon Bar,

Hangtown, Ophir and Nevada,
Tracked him back to Rough and Ready
And I got the scoundrel thar,—
Got the game that I was after;
It was in the afternoon,
Look in in the Star Saloon,
I was struck with shouts of laughter;
He was drinkin' with Bill Summers,
And a crowd of gamblin' bummers,
And was boastin' of her ruin,
Of sweet Hattie's foul undoin',
And was somewhat worse for grog;
All my blood boiled hot as lava;
I was heeled with trusty navy,
And I shot him like a dog!

"What about it?" Well, not much;
But a jury sot that night;
Some was Yankees, some was Dutch,
Plain, straightforward, used to such,
Honest, rough, red-shirted miners,
Mostly tough, old forty-niners,
And their verdict, "Served him right!"

So I've been here ever since—
Seen the early foot-prints fade,
Watched the eve's soft, mellow tints
Melt and deepen into shade.
All the boys I ever knew,
They have vanished long ago;
Frazer, Washoe, Caribou—
They are scattered through and through,
And the valleys down below;
Some are rich, and some are broke,
Some have stood, and some have fell—
Rest beneath the pine and oak;
Which are happiest, who can tell?

Leave these lonely, played-out diggin's,
Where the stream in silence glides?
Leave the grave of Hattie Higgins?—

Not for all the world besides!
Here, where shadows dance and quiver,
Dreaming of the past forever,
Where the pines in whispers call,
I shall cherish, living, dying—
What is that? Her spirit sighing—
That's it, stranger, that is all.
I have done with life's prospecting,
I have ceased of hope expecting—
What to me is wealth or glory?
Stranger, you may sneer and scout it,
That is all there is about it—
That is mine and Hattie's story.

Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. 420.

Autopsical

Six medicos met for a festive palaver,
Around the stark form of a passive cadaver
In life they had tortured with Latin prescriptions—
Vile, villainous compounds of divers descriptions;
Draughts, drastics, enemas and clysters;
Incisions, and cuttings, and probings and blisters—
They had pounded him, sounded his chest, diagnosed him,
“With everything wrenched him, and drenched him and dosed him,
And now after all when the breath of life failed him,
These doctors were curious to know what had ailed him,
And quick, like grave vultures, they gathered around him,
As soon as grim death with its fetters had bound him.

And first on the programme, like birds of ill omen,
They went for their cold, rigid, victim’s abdomen,
And broke through the walls, like bold burglars unbidden,
To ransack the secrets of nature long hidden,
And took out his inner works, lungs and viscera
With neatness, and scanned them attentively, very;
And pulled them, and stretched them, and twisted and turned them;
Except where their nostrums had shriveled and burned them,
And probings and punchings had changed their position,
They were healthy and quite in their normal condition;
And it seemed from this hasty post-mortem outgiving,
Almost, that the subject should really be living.
Then turning once more toward the corpse, wise and solemn,
They traversed the dim cerebro-spinal column,
And prospected upward and took out the brain,
And weighed it and found out its weight to a grain;
Commented, examined, inspected it long;
All healthy, quite perfect, and nothing was wrong.
And sorely the knights of the scalpel were puzzled,
As hounds in the reach of their prey closely muzzled.

Then one, *apropos* of the matter at issue,
Said something was wrong with the “adipose tissue,”
And one in a manner half earnest, half dreamy,
And thoughtfully stupid, suggested “pyaemia,”
Which theory preposterous raised such a racket,
He quickly subsided, and weakly took back it;
And another remarked of the same in relation,
The trouble was due to undue “inspissation,”
Which learned, mysterious, awful allusion,
Created a flutter of classic effusion.

Then others as darkly would mumble and mutter,
And talk back in Latin, quite “utterly utter,”
Till brother at last was arrayed against brother,
And looked with suspicion the one on another,
As fiercely they hurled their huge bolts scientific,
Like giants aroused, in a manner terrific.

All vainly their feelings they struggled to smother
With mutual effort, and glared at each other;
Each word, look and action, in hapless connection,
Though quite unintentional, seemed a reflection
Of each upon each, that the other one slew him,
And each grabbed the part that was nighest unto him,
And the air was as thick with the fast-flying members,
As leaves in the gusts of the Eastern Novembers;
And brain, lung and viscera mingled and blended
In one common wreck when the battle was ended.

Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. 428.

To the Alameda Street Goat

Picketed in a Clump of Cactus

Goat that goest for the palm
Of the cruel thorny cactus,
With a smile serene and calm,
In a way to quite attract us,
Dost thou never feel a pang
When the prickles cling and hang
In thy gutta percha throat,
Or a vague, uneasy feeling
In thy hidden depths remote,
Through thy inmost being stealing?

Munching with a calm content,
In a manner philosophic;
Making no undue comment
Blasphemous or apostrophic;
Taking all things as they come,
In one total compact sum—
How I envy thee thy lot—
Thankful for thy daily diet,
Raw or roasted, cold or hot,
Taken in repose and quiet.

Gentle goat, good-night, and rest;
May no nightmare dreams oppress thee;
May no pains within thy breast
Shoot, and rankle, and distress thee.

May the man that tied thee here,
Sleep with conscience quite as clear;
May he never heave a sigh
Over lesser, poorer cheer—
Gentle goat, I go; good-bye!

Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. 430.

The Stock Wizards

Scene I—A dark den in San Francisco. In the middle a caldron boiling. Thunder, lightning, and a strong smell of brimstone. Enter sundry wizards.

1st Wizard.—Thrice the brindle bull hath lowed;

2d Wizard.—Thrice and once the grizzly growled.

3d Wizard.—(Broker—cries)—Tis time, tis time!

1st Wiz.—Round about the caldron go,

In the poisoned stuffing throw;

Damning lies to trusting friends,

False reports and dividends,

Freshly cooked and smoking hot—

Boil them first in the charmed pot.

All.—Double, double, toil and trouble,

Fire burn and caldron bubble.

2d Wiz.—Stocks for greedy gullions baited—

Crown Point and Consolidated;

Mexican and Occidental,

Julia, Alta, Continental;

Grant, Imperial, (what a muck,)

California and Kentuck;

Overman, and Best and Belcher,

Hale and Norcross for a squelcher.

Stir in faster, hurry! hurry!

Lady Bryan, Gould and Curry;

Modoc, Savage, Yellow Jacket,

Ophir, Andes, (what a racket,)

Bullion, (bet your bottom dollar,)

Justice, Confidence and Chollar;

Woodville, Utah and Exchequer—

For a sudden homestead wrecker,

And a charm of powerful trouble,

Like a hell-broth, boil and bubble.

All.—Double, double, toil and trouble,

Fire burn and caldron bubble.

3d Wiz.—Tooth from slimy serpent's jaws

Skin of wildcat, tail and claws;

Tear from “operator s” eye,
Sage-brush tea and alkali;
Murderer’s bowie, hangman’s noose,
Skull of idiot, brain of goose;
Ray of sunlight filtered through
Soft translucent pane of blue;
Metre for consumed gas,
Hoof of mule, and ear of ass;
Sting of scorpion, toe of lizzard,
Soul of miser, broker’s gizzard;
Lock of shaven convict’s hair,
Horn of bull, and claw of bear;
Waxy cards from gamblers den,
Burglar’s jimmy, forger’s pen;
Secrets from the realms of evil,
Gas from Comstock’s lowest level;
Wrinkled horn of mountain ram,
Thorn of cactus, spike of palm;
Woman’s savings, workman’s bread;
Manhood’s vigor, hair from head
Whitened by the frosts of years;
Orphans sighs, and widows tears;
Blood-clot from the crimson tide
Of the perished suicide;
Eagle’s beak, and vulture’s claw,
Coil of boa, gulf and maw
Of the San Francisco shark;
Ores extracted in the dark;
Chlorides dull, and crystals bright,
Ruby, Oxide Stedtfeldtite;
Sulphurets of rainbow hue,
Orange, purple, green and blue;
Wildcat ledges, spurs and dips
Silvered ere the late eclipse
With a miner’s sweat and blood
Make the bouillon thick and good.
Add thereto a *little* metal
For ingredients of our kettle,
And you have a bully soup—
Good enough for any dupe.

All.—Let them drain the kettle dry;
If it gripe them and they cry
Like sweet babes that colics stir up,
Give them Winslow's Soothing Syrup.

Grand Chorus.—Double, double, toil and trouble,
Mirage gleam, and glitter bubble.

Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. 431.

Jim Blaine

“First, Last and All the Time.”

Have they flashed it o’er the wire
Jim Blaine,
How the land is all on fire,
Jim Blaine?
Let them prate of sham “reform, [sic]
We are coming as the storm,
And we’ll make it mighty warm,
Jim Blaine.

Let “dark horses” clear the track,
Jim Blaine!
Bay or roan, or cream or black,
Jim Blaine!
You’re the steed that never tires,
In your pulses course the fires
Of a line of conquering sires,
Jim Blaine!

You’re the ticket that will win,
Jim Blaine!
And we’re bound to run you in,
Jim Blaine!
Let your foemen sneer and flaunt,
Yours the soul they cannot daunt—
You’re the man the people want,
Jim Blaine!

Have they heard the thunder-blast,
Jim Blaine?
“We are for you first and last,”
Jim Blaine!
From our vales of bending vines,
From our labyrinthine mines,
From our lofty hills of pines,
Jim Blaine!

You're a man from crown to heel,
Jim Blaine!
And we know you're true as steel,
Jim Blaine!
O, they tried to steal your Maine,
But their efforts all were vain,
And we'll beat them once again,
Jim Blaine!

Yours the motto high and grand,
Jim Blaine!
"Freemen, for proud Freedom's land,"
Jim Blaine!
Here's a toast to "Blaine and Booth,"
Here's to "Justice, Right and Truth,"
Here's an end to hatred's ruth,
Jim Blaine!

* Written and Published during the struggle in the Chicago Convention between Blaine and Grant.

Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. 433.

That Little Difficulty Twixt Me and Joe McNulty

What! didn't never hear of that—
That little difficulty
That happened down at "Sucker Flat"
Twixt me and Joe McNulty?

Well, Joe and me, we courted Sal,
Old Simpkin's red-haired daughter;
His only pride, his only gal—
That lived at "Stinkin' Water"—

That shallow reservoir, you know,
Built by the old man Story,
Down at them diggin's, as you go
From "Pike" to "Ground Hog's Glory."

What! Never saw old Simpkin's Sal?
I'd swear it to a jury,
That she was just the sweetest gal,
That ever left "Missouri."

Of all bright things without a flaw,
Her eyes were just the brightest;
Of all white skins you ever saw,
Sal's skin was just the whitest.

Well! Joe and me we claimed that ground,
As I was just remarkin';
Though all the other boys around
Done some promiscuous sparkin'.

We sunk our shafts not far apart,
And drifted all directions,
And "scraped the bed-rock" of her heart,
And "creviced" her affections.

'Twas in the Spring of '91,
I tried that little spec on—
Took stock in that big drift they run—
You've heerd of that, I reckon.

With Bill, and Sam, and Andy White,
And many more by countin',
Up there just back I's Delight,"
To tunnel "Table Mountain."

The thing went up in crash and smoke,
(That's when your friends forget you;)
And left us pretty much flat broke—
'T was mighty rough, you bet you!

So, after them dark, cloudy days
(I haven't yet forgot cm),
We went to work to make a raise,
And climb up from the bottom.

"Rough?" You can bet! But after that,
We couldn't live in clover,
But pitched our camp at "Cut-throat Flat,"
To work their tailings over.

And every mornin' Sal came down
To comfort us poor sinners,
Like angel with her shinin' crown,
And helped us cook our dinners.

And when she tripped down to the Bar,
That we was then at work on,
You ought to seed the boys down thar
Their boots and trousers jerk on.

You ought to seed the pains we took—
We dried up in a hurry,
And tried to talk just like that book
Got out by "Lin'ley Murray."

No cuss words vain, or slang was heard;
"To git," we called it "vamoose,"
And when to "Long Tom" we referred,
We termed it "Lengthy Thomas."

You know them "Suckers" giv' a ball,
(That candle's out, dog-gone it!)
Jim Snooks cum "down and axed us all—
You bet! their boys is on it.

The gals turned out from "Pike's Divide,"
"You Bet," "Last Chance," "Hell's Blazes,"
"Grass Widow's Gulch," and "Whisky Slide,"
"Red Dog," and all them places.

Them outside camps cum down hell-bent,—
"Old Hundred," "Alligator,"
And "Murderer's Bar," and Nigger Tent,"
"Biled Owl," and "Small Potater,"

"Dead Broke," "Mad Mule," "Tin Cup," "Lone Star,"
"Coyote Run," "Rapooyah,"
"Bald Eagle Canyon," "Mormon Bar,"
And "Glory Hallelujah."

From "Angel's Camp," and "Buzzard's Roost,"
The boys cum down by dozens—
"Sick Man," "Biled Shirt," "Plug Hat," "Cooked Goose,"
And brought their second cousins.

"Hostetter," "Blowhard," "Heavyswell,"
"Game Cock," and "Turkey Gobbler,"
"Port Wine," "Old Bourbon," "I X L,"
"Cocktail," and "Sherry Cobbler;"

With all their gals: "Big-Footed Lize,"
And "Hummin'-bird," and "Myrtle,"
And "Yaller Jacket," "Gimlet Eyes,"
"Wild Rose," and "Snappin' Turtle."

The fiddlers got the thing all set—
Struck up "Old Dan'l Tucker;"
It was the liveliest times, you bet,
They ever seed at "Sucker."

Well, after several starts and halts,
(Them fiddlers played like killin';)
Some high-toned cuss called out "a waltz!"
And all the gals was willin'.

I'd never seed that dance before—
Each one their partner luggin'
And raslin' round and round the floor,
And reely thought 't was huggin'.

Well, "Poker Pete" of "Devil's Gate,"
Waltzed with that gal of Gardner's;
And "Plug-Hat Treat," hugged "Hangtown Kate,"
And Joe and Sal was pardners.

And when that huggin' scrape began,
(Just hand me that dee-canter;)
You bet, I was the maddest man—
I went for Joe instanter.

I took him right betwixt the eyes,
(The gals clung to their pardners;)
And he upset "Big-footed Lize,"
And she, that gal of Gardner's.

And then the boys, they all pitched in—
Went at it rough and tumble;
And every one went in to win
In one promiscuous jumble.

Well, there we fit, and fit, and fit—
Joe grabbed "Big Pike" and threw him;
We went it blind, and each man hit
The one was nighest to him.

Till fin'ly some one hollered out
To "know what in the thunder
The tarnal row was all about,"
(Some four or five was under.)

I 'lowed it was a cussed shame
(And others j'ined the chorus;)
A low-down, cut-throat, swindlin' game,
To hug our gals before us.

Then Joe and me, each for his knife,
Went like a flash of lightnin';
But "Plug," called out to stop the strife
For fear their pardners frightnin'.

I swore I didn't care a durn—
(The gals kept on their pleadin's,)
Till Joe, he moved that we adjourn
For subsequent proceedin's.

Then "Bruiser Bill"—the cussed fool,
He made a slight suggestion,
That we should fight it out "by rule,"
And put it to the question.

The boys they giv' a grand hooray,
And said as how they reckoned
In order we should have fair play,
Each one should have a "second."

They stripped us of our coats and shirts
Like any prize-ring bruisers
Who deal in scientific hurts—
With nothing on but trowsers.

We pranced around with faces barked—
Each other's visage spilin',
But as that "Bruiser Bill" remarked,
We always "cum up smilin'."

And then we hit, and danced, and run,
Jumped sideways just like spiders;
Well! yes, I s'pose, it was some fun—
At least for them outsit.

Well! each of us the boys allowed,
Looked like a peeled potater,
When Sal burst through that howlin' crowd,
To act as "mejiator."

Just then we clinched—I'll not repeat—
It very little matters,
Joe grabbed me by the trowsers seat
And tore it all to tatters;

And then I got his waistband foul;
Rip! tare! went all the stitches,
The crowd sent up a deaf'nin' howl,
And down cum Joseph's breeches.

Well, Sal, she fainted right away;
The boys around her hovered;
But Joe and me, we didn't stay
To wait till she recovered.

Joe staggered in to Tom McCall's
Like any prize-ring bummer,
And got a pair of overalls,
That he had wore all Summer.

And when, at last, we ventured in
Among the ballroom clatter,
Sal looked as though there hadn't been
A thing at all the matter.

A little skeery at the most,
As though there might be danger,
And nestled up almighty close
To that confounded stranger—

One of that kind that looks high-toned,
With takin sort of riggers,
And puts on airs as though they owned
At least a thousand niggers.

They always dress and fix to kill;
As though they don't a cent owe—
Them high-toned chaps from Marysville,
And likewise Sacramento.

Well, both of us, we felt so cheap,
We didn't dare to "go one; "
Like dogs just caught a-killin sheep,
We couldn't look at no one.

Joe never offered Sal his hand—
I felt as bad, and more so,
And didn't dare to try to stand—
My pantaloons was tore so.

My eyes was swelled, my heart was full—
That cuss with Sal was prancin',
And there I sot like Settin' Bull,
And didn't feel like dancin'.

Well then, I s'pose, of course you know
That such things always bothers;
And neither of us couldn't go
And take her to her father's.

And when that tarnal ball broke up,
I felt a sort of sinkin';
That big, biled-shirted, high-toned pup
Just went for her like winkin'.

Well! yes—I s'pose I'm better off,
A single man can get on
Most any way; (goll-darn that cough,)
But one thing you can bet on;

On all them waltzes, I am down,
(They make them gals onsteady;)
Or else my name aint "Grizzly Brown,"
The "Boss of Rough and Ready."

Man; I dunno—well, I guess—
"And happy?" Well! there's maybes;
At least she's got a pin-back dress
And half-a-dozen babies.

And that, I reckon, mostly ends
That little difficulty,
And now there aint no better friends
Than me and Joe McNulty.

"High times, and slightly rough," you say,
"That style of rows and musses?"
Well! it may seem somewhat that way
To recent Eastern cusses.

But you can just bet all your dimes,
You've never knowed what fun was;
We've never had such bully times
As them in '51 was.

Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. 435.

Dynamo

“Let there be light!” away with night!
Behold the radiant sheen
That clothes our town from base to crown,
With glory’s blaze serene!

Now falls no “darkness hushed and deep,”
There is no “twilight gray;”
Our citizens forget to sleep,
And night is turned to day.

No longer ‘neath the shadows dark,
Where witches love to glide;
The young men pause to light a spark,
Or in the gloom to hide.

What though old Sol forgets to rise
And shed his puny rays?
Our Dynamo shall light the skies
With softer, brighter blaze.

Turn down the gas! alack, alas!
The olden slow regime!
Now glows each spire with magic fire,
As in a fairy dream.

Our puzzled cocks with feathery flocks,
Strut ‘neath the brilliant ray,
And scratch and fight by candlelight,
And go to roost by day.

* Written upon the lighting of Los Angeles by electricity.

Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. 442.

Hot! Hotter!! Hottest!!!

Oh! for some cool and shady, nice land,
Some sylvan grot in Greenland, Iceland!
Some place to cool our desperation,
Something to check this perspiration;
Some place not hot as blazing coal is,
Quite near to where the mystic Pole is.
More than a member of the Senate,
I envy festive Gordon Bennett,
Or rather, his enjoyment next year,
No longer heated, broiled and vexed here.

The heat is getting really horrid,
Quite melting, wasting, broiling, torrid;
It is as hot almost, beshrew me!
As hot—as hot—as h—l or Yuma,

Or any other well-known centre,
That sad, unwilling travelers enter.
Oh! for some spot to have one on!
Oh! for some iceberg's breast to lean on!
Some cooling surface smooth to glide on!
Some glacier's slippery face to slide on;
Some cool moraine to build a town on;
Oh! for an ice-floe to sit down on;
And oh! to close this painful topic,
For some nice place less semi-tropic;
I feel my reeling senses going,
Oh! oh!—but what's the use of O—ing!

* Written during the late awfully heated term.

Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. 443.

Denis Kearney

Thou stall-fed importation, fat and corny!
Broad-buttocked, brawny, bully, bellowing “cuss!”
Why dost thou paw the dust of California,
And with our “Short Horns” to raise a muss?
Shake ot thy shaggy visage at them thus,
They spreading, sharp protuberances horny—
We’ve trouble now, enough, ’twixt Turk and Russ;
Curtail your bray, and cease your senseless blarney—
O, brassy, gassy, ass-y, empty Kearney!

Vain, donkey-braying, would-be legislator;
Swelled nigh to bursting with a vain conceit;
Broad-mouthed and foul—half-horse, half-alligator,
That takest thy slimy way along the street;
Thy empty nonsense echoing crowds repeat
As man the oracles of his Creator;
Oblivion shall spread its winding-sheet
Around thy worthless carcass, soon or later,
O, bald-faced, bellowing, bovine bloviator!

Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. 444.

John Doe

I would like to know your face,
John Doe!
Station, family, business, place,
John Doe;
Coming, flitting here and there,
Making trouble everywhere—
What a lively man you are,
John Doe!

You're a most unlucky cuss,
John Doe;
Always getting in a muss,
John Doe;
Still of public peace the foe,
You and festive Richard Roe,
Seeking trouble, twin-like go,
John Doe.

After breakfast on a "train,"
John Doc;
After dinner, "raising Cain,"
John Doe;
Still pugnacious when you've lunched,
Bunching men, and getting bunched;
Punching heads and getting punched,
John Doe.

You're a most egregious ass,
John Doe;
Never let occasion pass,
John Doe;
Raising riot, making din,
In some gilded place of sin,
Getting tight and taken in,
John Doe.

You are worse—I make no bones,
John Doe—
Worse than Brown, or Smith, or Jones,
John Doe;
Still your name the phalanx leads;
Still you sow your tare-y seeds;
Fill the dailies with your deeds,
John Doe.

You're a mystery complete,
John Doe,
Still with boon companions meet,
John Doe,
Startling peace with lusty throats,
Figuring in reporters' notes,
Sowing wild, obnoxious oats,
John Doe.

Listen to a friend's advice,
John Doe!
Let the area sown suffice,
John Doe;
Whistle down your brakes, go slow,
Hold your horses; whoa, John, whoa,
Curb your festive spirit's flow,
John Doe!

Leave your tempters in the lurch,
John Doe,
Get religion, join the church,
John Doe;
With a calm, determined mind,
Say to Satan, "get behind;"
Throw temptation to the wind,
John Doe.

I would know about your life,
John Doe,
Got a sweetheart or a wife,
John Doe?
Are your relatives high-toned?
Arc you in fond hearts enthroned,
Outcast, fallen or disowned,
John Doe?

It is very strange that yet,
John Doe,
You and I have never met,
John Doe,
Yet your name I've daily heard,
Till it's grown a household word;
Symbol of reform deferred,
John Doe.

Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. 445.

Lo, the Poor Indian!

Respectfully Dedicated to Ye Noble Apache

Lo, the poor Indian! whose esthetic soul
Finds solace in the festive, flowing bowl;
(Or tin-cup filled with “rot-gut” all the same)
And in pursuit of white or colored game;
Whose eagle eye, with satisfaction scans
The scalps of Yankees and of Mexicans
With equal joy, to deck his peaceful lodge;
Whose highest aim is how to skulk and dodge;
Who enters into Agents plans with zeal
(Whenever there is anything to steal);
Who spends his noble leisure in pursuit
Of “grub” or wayward prospectors to shoot;
Whose favorite pastime leads him to and fro
’Twixt Arizona’s haunts and Mexico;
Who, when hard-pressed, is always “awful good,”
And seeks the “Agency” for rest and food;
Enabled by a nation’s “cultured sense”
To loaf, and live at Government expense;
Who dines on ham and bacon as a rule,
Nice sugar-cured, but better loves a mule;
Whose gentle hands, imbrued in miners gore,
Still itch and tingle for a little more—
His feet, proud Agents never taught to stray
In honest labor’s hard and beaten way—
His feet have trod a devious way of late
But Crook will teach him how to “take it straight.”
Hail! “Honest Injun!” noble brother red!
Angelic, good—especially dead!

Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. 447.

Picnic Poetry

Away! away to the greenwood's shade
Where the fresh, green youth, and the soft, sweet maid
Delight mid the fern-clothed glades to rove,
And stuff each other with cake and love,
And nuts, and candies, and fruits and pies,
And dream of Eden's sweet Paradise;*
While the deer looks on with soft, wondering eyes
Opened wide in a mute surprise
To see them go for the hard-boiled eggs,
While the ants crawl blithely up limbs and legs;
Where the bumble-bee buzzes and bums around
And the brindle bull bellows and paws the ground;
And the garter-snake glides through the long, green grass,
And the centipede sips from the fresh-filled glass;
And the hairy tarantula creeps and crawls,
And the wildcat clamors and caterwauls;
And the tumble-bug tumbles, and twists, and turns,
And the bull-frog frisks mid the feathery ferns;
And the woodpecker pecks on the pendant limb,
And the widowed dove coos her lonesome hymn,
And the mule brays his anthem more lonely still,
That touches the heart with a solemn thrill—
O, this is living old Adam's way
Ere naughty Eve led his heart astray!
Here everything living is pure and free—
Away! away, to the greenwood tree!

Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. 448.

The Landlord's Story

A Tale of the Summit

There was hell to pay that night,
Forty men, and nary a bed;
Some was drunk, and all was tight,
Mostly on the row and fight—
Storm within, and storm o'erhead.

There was wrath and ruin wide,
Infants woke from troubled sleep;
And the snow fell soft and deep
Over all the steep Divide.

There was cussin', yell, and shout,
Glasses smashin', rush and din;
Madly roared the storm without,
And 't was mighty rough within.

Wimmin screamed and children cried—
There was trouble in the camp;
Now and then some triflin' scamp
Got a bullet in his hide.

There was pistol-practice fair—
Only "pilgrims" missed their aim
In that crowd; a tarnal shame—
Any one could get a pair.

'T wasn't often that we missed
In them times; they'd cook your goose
If you did; took no excuse—
Just a slight, peculiar twist,
Steady nerve and supple wrist,
Throwed 'er up, and turned 'er loose.

There was seldom cause to taunt—
Now and then some reckless cuss
With an aim pro-mis-cu-ous,
Got a man he didn't want.

“What about the cor-puss?” Pshaw!
Stranger, you are mighty green—
Fixed it up ourselves between—
Didn’t need no form of law.

We was men of common sense—
When a feller ceased to stir,
Didn’t need no cor-o-ner—
Planted him without expense.

“Ruther lively?” Yes, you’re right!
It was that, and something more;
And, as I remarked before,
it was mighty rough that night.

It was in them Washoe days;
Crowds and crowds of bummers broke—
Not a jack-knife left to soak—
Litin’ out to make a raise.

Men with coin and enterprise,
Minin’ sharps and gamblin’ sports;
Wimmin of all shades and sorts—
Widders, grass and otherwise.

Everything was full indoors
Miners, teamsters—mule and ox—
Packed on all the beds and floors,
Thick as sardines in a box.

Forty teamsters on a “tare,”
Going it with a perfect rush,
For the times was mighty flush—
Money plenty—didn’t care.

There was “draw” and other games,
All the boys was flush and free—
Disremember half their names—
Most forgot em; let me see!

There was “Arkensaw,” and “Pike,”
“Rot-gut Sam,” and “Cock-tail Joe,”
“Gotch-eared Pete,” and “Red-mouth Mike,”
Half a dozen you may know.

Well, as I before remarked,
There was gamblin' and play,
And to pass the time away,
Some was drinkin', others larked.

There was poker, song and wine,
All the fun a man desired,
And the boys was feelin' fine,
Bettin' high when I retired.

Sometime later in the night—
Maybe one or two o'clock,
There occurred a row and fight
Something like an earthquake shock.

Seems from Arkensaw's report,
Nearly all the boys was broke,
Leastways quit, to drink and smoke;
Joe and Samule held the fort.

Joe, it seems, had staked his pile,
Forty slugs, upon his hand,
With a gentle lamb-like smile—
Always had a heap of sand.

Samule threwed his buck-skin belt
Full of twenties in the pot;
Reached behind his hip, and felt,
Askin' Joseph what he'd got.

Joe remarked, he thought three kings,
Safe to bet on all the while—
Always went his little pile
On them sort with crowns and things.

In a bland-like way and free,
Samule said he thought so too;
Likewise, also he'd a few
Of that kind, and throwed clown three.

Decks don't seldom run that ways.
Mostly always have two pair,
And that both was holdin' trays,
Was a little singu-lar.

Both seemed struck as with surprise,
Fumbled in their hinder pants;
Looked into each other's eyes
With a dark, suspicious glance.

Briefly, Joseph didn't wait—
Quickly jumped upon his feet,
Said he'd soon exterminate
Any gent who thought he'd cheat

Samule likewise said the same—
He would clean out any man,
Who might intimate a plan
Laid to swindle, in his game.

That was where the row begun—
Cheers was smashed, the bar a wreck;
“Six kings in a poker deck?”
That might do in play for fun.

Neither of them didn't care
Not a continental cuss
For the money—nor a muss—
Wanted things upon the square.

Which? I reckon you are right—
“They was on it,” no mistake;
Men will mostly always fight
When a principle's at stake.

I was sleepin' with my wife,
Heedless of the storm and strife,
Dreamin' of Missouri's shore,
Of sweet childhood's festive pranks,
Playin' leap-frog on its banks,
When a bullet struck the door.

Then my wife began to weep—
Couldn't get a wink of sleep,
For the noise them fellers made;
So I loaded up with sand;
Took a navy in each hand,
Started in to make a raid.

Knowed my wife was in distress—
She'd them foolish wimmin's ways—
Didn't stop at all to dress;
What a tab-lo met my gaze!

Every single feller thar,
Strikin' out with knife or fist;
Didn't seem particu-lar
As to who he hit or missed!

I was standin' with my toys,
Slightly clad and un-attired,
To remonstrate with the boys,
When some cuss behind me fired.

I was startled, giv' a bound—
Wasn't mortal, none of that;
But I got a painful wound
In the region where I sat.

Mad? You bet your precious life!
That would make a preacher fight;
There was yell and shout and strife,
And I opened, left and right.

Then my bar-keep took a hand,
With a double-barreled shot,
And he made it mighty hot,
For he'd plenty of the sand.

Lois popped like rotten eggs—
Some was wounded, eight or ten,
In the chest and ab-do-men;
Some was peppered in the legs.

Well! the row was quickly done;
Weepons empty; had to stop;
Fellers saw we had the drop
On that caucus; every one.

Arkensaw he up spoke
Mild-like, and proposed to Pike,
That we'd call it all a joke—
Free and accidental-like.

Then he put the thing to vote—
Most with voices meek and low,
Murmured "yes," with gentle note—
Not a feller voted "no!"

Only four or five was hit
Bad, and still and quiet lay—
Didn't have a word to say,
Never objected a bit;
Took no interest anyway.

Sam and Joe, of all the crowd,
Seemed to stand upon their guard;
Serious-like and gloomy-browed—
Seemed to feel a little hard.

Then I made a little speech;
Said it was a tarnal shame,
As I took the hand of each,
That a triflin' foolish game,

Thus should end by usin' tools
In a way quite free and loose;
Make them, like a pair of fools,
Want to cook each other's goose.

Then I called on each aloud,
Asked em all to take a drink—
Put the motion to the crowd,
That's what got em; made 'em think.

Well, they made me ref-e-ree,
My decision they'd abide;
Told em they had best agree,
Each one treat, and then divide.

Bet your life, them boys was bricks!
Each one spoke and said the same;
“Wouldn't dream of swindlin' tricks
In an honest business game.”

“They was peaceful men and square—
Honest as the day was long,
Wouldn't think of doin' wrong,
For that trifle layin' there.”

“Wouldn't tech the stuff at all;
If they'd do it, dog their skins!”
And they up and giv' it all
To a widder that had twins.

Runnin' a first-class hotel,
Didn't need much fuss nor art
In them days of tumult; well,
yes; the business paid right smart.

Liked the business? Why of course—
Off-hand men, and off-hand ways—
Mighty pleasant in them days,
Many other things was worse.

Yes, you're right! 't was lively times;
Never'll see their like agin,
Men was happy, lose or win;
Wouldn't stop to pick up dimes,
If they'd do it, dog my skin!

Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. 449.

Romeo and Juliet

Modern Version

Mrs. Romeo Montague, *nee* Capulet,
Took chloroform slyly to make her forget
Some sorrow and trouble her match-making ma
Concocted and planned in conjunction with pa,
Who said she must marry that other young muff,
When she felt she already was married enough.
She took it with faces, and tremors, and thrills,
As calmly as though she was swallowing pills;
Then said “Now I lay me,” and quickly undressed,
As though she were going to her innocent rest,
And blew out the gaslight and jumped into bed
And pulled up the cover, and played she was dead.
They came and they found her and made much ado,
And raised a tremendous hullabuloo!
Wept oceans of tears, wrung their hands, and tore hair,
And draped their front door with the sign of despair;
Then hired a hearse with its emblems of gloom
To haul her in state to the family tomb.
A sleek undertaker, the job undertook
A man with a grave sanctimonious look;
And thus with much weeping, and sighing and moans,
They laid her away with her ancestors’ bones
Where all the old Capulets—matron and maid,
When placed *hors du combat*, were cheerfully laid;
And so in her sweetness, and beauty, and bloom,
They laid her away in the cold, clammy tomb.

Then Romeo came through the night-shadows dim—
(He owed some one something, or some one owed him,
Which made him quite anxious and careful no doubt
That no one should see him or catch him about)
In spite of old Capulet’s lofty commands,
A-sighing, and moaning and wringing his hands,
And said he would sleep by his Juliet’s side—
The tomb for the couch of the bridegroom and bride;
And told in the fondest and tenderest terms

His love and his grief—how he envied the worms;
And more of a similar tenor, he said,
Well fitted to move and disquiet the dead,
And vowed that in spite of the darkness and gloom
And bolts, he would burgle old Capulet's tomb;
And then like the maddest and craziest of fools,
He waltzed round the marble, and out with his tools.
Then Paris, the would-be fond husband likewise,
Woke up to the racket and opened his eyes,
And swore such a grave-robbing trick was a shame,
For he had, himself, just pre-empted that claim.
In fact, he had ransacked sweet Verona's bowers,
And came with a cartload of lilies and flowers
(*A la* Freddie Gebhardt) regardless of cost,
To show his esteem for the loved and the lost;
Frail, sweet, fading emblems of beauty and bloom,
To strew them about o'er his lady-love's tomb.

Then both used some uncomplimentary words,
And out with their weapons, and slashed with their swords,
Till Romeo gave such a neat little dig
That Paris fell down like a knife-stricken pig—
A fall in the market, of nice Paris green,
As sudden a tumble as ever was seen.
Then Romeo moaned with a soul-sinking moan,
And shuddered and groaned, with a heart-breaking groan,
And tossed off a cocktail of poison with grace,
With "Here's to my love!" in a very brief space,
And made a neat speech, and expended some breath,
Dilating at length on the beauties of death,
And paid some high compliments then to her worth,
And called her the darlinest girl on the earth;
His lily, his sunflower, his ducky, his wife,
And said she was handsomer far, than in life—
Remarked, so the short-hand reporter set down,
"Come quickly, O, death, and my happiness crown!
O Juliet, Juliet! why did you go,
And leave me alone in my heart-breaking woe!
I die! but my soul shall chase yours through the skies
And nevermore rest till it captures the prize,

O, truest and best of the feminine sex!”

And then he subsided and passed in his checks.

Then Jule she awoke from her long, dreamless sleep,

And straightway began to lament her and weep.

Pale, cold, bloody corpses lay scattered around

And Romeo likewise, with never a wound.

She saw he'd been drinking, for there lay the cup

All empty—he never had left her a sup,

And then she upbraided him, called him a son

Of—something, for selfishly leaving her none,

And then in a passion, though only half-dressed,

She plunged his pet bowie right into her breast,

Sighed, shuddered, and shivered and then she was gone—

Oh, wasn't it awful—the way they went on!

Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), p. 456.

UNCOLLECTED AND LATER POEMS

Located poems, 1881–1892

The Padres of Old

They were merry old fellows in cassock and gown,
Those jolly old knights of the smooth-shaven crown,
Those lion-souled, eagle-eyed Padres of Spain,
Who lorded it grandly o'er mountain and plain;
As ready with fair Señorita to dance
As grant absolution, or balance a lance;
Whose churches and missions impregnable stood,
And did to the heathen what seemed to them good;
They brought up proud sinners with sharp, sudden pulls,
And lassoed their converts like broncos and bulls,
Or gathered confessions from red, rosy lips,
To hoard as the treasure the honey bee sips,
With hands that were ready and hearts that were bold:
How I envy those clean-shaven Padres of old!

With fair purple vineyards and wide-spreading flocks,
They sighed not for riches, they cared not for “stocks”—
Not “Comstocks,” at least, though they bellowed and gored,
And fought for a “rise” at the Devil’s “Big Board”
With a genuine reckless “Bonanza King’s” greed,
And cornered the stock in eternity’s “lead,”
Refusing all offers of Satan to sell
“Salvation’s” sure stock, though they “shorted” on “Hell,”
And played for the kingdom, with Satan and sin,
When souls were the “divvy,” and gathered them in;
With stores of frijoles and flagons of wine,
They craved not the treasures of city or mine;
With princely possessions to have and to hold,
They were bully old fellows—those Padres of old.

Publication. First printed in Horace Bell, *Reminiscences of a Ranger*, or, Early Times in Southern California (Los Angeles: Yarnell, Caystile & Mathes, 1881), pp. 125–126.

Provenance. Text and lineation checked against the original-page Internet Archive / UC Berkeley scan. Bell introduces Kercheval by full name as his ‘poetic friend.’ The poem was not reprinted in *Dolores; and Other Poems* (1883).

Poem

From North and from South, from the East and the West,
We come from all quarters arrayed in our best;
From mesa and valley we come to the Fair
With the flavor of hay and its seed in our hair,
In proud independence, the equals for aye
Of Europe's gilt sovereigns, the Kings of to-day,
The paupers to-morrow, to flee from the scath
Of an age-fettered, downtrodden people's red wrath.

Lo, here are the fruits of free men and free soil!
Rare offerings meet, of free hands and free toil;
The best that in tropic and temperate zone
That God in his broadcast abundance has sown!
Look round you! What wonder your wide vision greets,
The biggest of everything—babies and beets!
Potatoes, tomatoes, and cucumbers green,
The biggest and longest that ever were seen.
And pumpkins that Peter, as nursery rhymes tell,
Might choose for a house for his wife very well!
And squashes and melons and apples and pears,
And everything earth on her broad bosom bears.
To our land from the East send your spies if you please,
For the clusters of Eschol we discount with ease!
Of grapes we've all sizes, and colors and dyes,
From white to the crimson of flushed sunset skies,
And groves of the orange, all gleaming with gold,
Down-burdened with beauty, and glory untold!
Yea, fruits of the finest that ever were seen,
And more than knew Adam in Eden, I ween!

And stock that old Noah might rise to remark,
"Far finer than any that entered the Ark!"
From long-horns to short-horns, and no-horns at all,
We have them in endless variety all.
From the "mooley" that moos to the bullock that paws
And scoffs at the weakness of man, and his laws:
The Devonshire, Ayrshire, and Alderney sleek,
The Holstein and Jersey, with eyes soft and meek,
The proud stately Durham, the lord of the grange,

And lastly, the “Texas,” the boss of the range.
Of horses, we boast of the fleetest and best
Of steeds to be found in the east or the west;
From the trotter that trots, to the Norman that draws
With horse-power as fixed as old Gravity’s laws,
And racers, might trouble an Arab’s repose,
As witness our Baldwin, and Titus, and Rose,
And swine that Chicago might covet to gain,
And pine for their earthly possession in vain,
And sheep, that old wool-seeking Jason of Greece
Intent on such treasure, might envy the fleece!
Of fowls we’ve all species, and sizes, and shapes,
From the turkey that struts, to the mocker that apes;
Hens common and lowly, hens pure and high-bred,
From Bantam to Brahma with high haughty head;
From the birdling that hums to the ostrich that kicks
With all the fine vigor of Sullivan’s “licks.”

Here Ceres has scattered her largess of grain
In measureless plenty o’er valley and plain.
We have wheat fields that stretch to the horizon’s rim
And fade in the leagues of the distances dim.
The wide San Fernando begirt with her chain
And stately Laguna, the queen of the plain,
And corn that the corn-fed old dweller in “Pike,”
In all his long lifetime saw never the like!
Yea! all things have we in this “garden” of ours
Where perfume of fruit blends with perfume of flowers;
Where zephyrs sigh soft, from the tropics far blown;
And man reaps the harvests from meadows unsown;
Where “Fall” is a fiction and “Winter” a dream,
And man may sit down by the life-giving stream
Where the sun gazes down from the infinite blue,
Warmth-giving, unclouded, the long cycles through!

Yet all these grand gifts of our land of the west,
Though priceless the treasures, we prize not the best.
We can point you with pride, like the matron of Rome,
To our matrons, the jewels of hearth and of home!
The finest of babies, the sweetest of girls
We show you, behold them! lo, these are our pearls!

Publication. Transactions of the Sixth District Agricultural Association (1885), pp. 430–431; read at the opening on October 20, 1885, by William A. Spalding.

Provenance. Text transcribed and checked against the scanned Transactions in the Kercheval archive.

The Days of Forty-Nine

“Old pardners,” welcome back again; for you the glass we fill;
For you the camp-fires fresh we stir; the fatted calf we kill!
We’re glad to see you all, you bet! and olden times recall,
For here is gold in plenty yet and room enough for all.
It gleams amid our orange trees; in every field of grain
That waves and nods in every breeze; it burdens every plain.
And you may stake a claim at will—unpack and try your luck—
Beside the claim of Yank or Bill, or Pike or Old Kentucky.
Make camp with us, here’s ground that will pay good wages, never fear,
From top to bed-rock all the way, and water all the year!
Though forms are bent, and scant our hair, and beards as white as snow,
With you our blankets still we’ll share, as in the long ago.
Here meet we once again at last, beneath the fig and vine,
While memory recalls the past—the days of Forty-Nine!

Once more “dead broke,” from Sutter’s Fort we take our various ways,
Allured by true or false report and start to “make a raise.”
Once more we pack o’er dizzy trail, and “whoop the mulas up,”
And drink our coffee dark or pale, from tin or pewter cup;
We flip the festive flapjack o’er, and by our skillful means
We make a royal bill of fare of rusty pork and beans.
We hear once more the torrents roar; the sighing of the pines,
And search for store of golden ore amid the lonely mines.
We sing once more the glad refrain beside the golden streams,
And rock the cradle once again, and dream the olden dreams,
Cosumnes or Mokelumne, or Yuba’s bars beside,
By Feather or American, or Trinity’s swift tide;
Once more ’mid Hangtown’s hills we drive; on Murderer’s Bar we mine;
At Nigger Tent and Yankee Jim’s, You Bet, Red Dog, Port Wine;
At Poker Flat and Poor Man’s Creek, once more our luck we try,
Where nuggets once were sown as thick as planets in the sky;
And Whiskey Diggin’s, Bloody Run, and Jackass Butte once more,
And many another classic spot, we work in fancy o’er.

Bold knights of pick and pan were we, who smote with flashing steel
The serried ranks of mountain heights, and made the giants reel,
Till one by one we forced at last each genii-guarded door
With fierce assault, and rifled each of all its golden store.
We hear once more the Indian yell, we track the grizzly bear
'Mid wastes of tangled chaparral, and rouse him in his lair,
Or chase the "Tiger" to his den, when night steals o'er the land—
Red-shirted, bearded, fearless men—a brave, devoted band!

But where are they, the jolly boys—our noblest and our best,
Who sailed the mains or braved the plains to seek the Golden West?
They seek no more the camp of eves when falls the gentle dew;
We once were thick as summer leaves, but now, alas! how few!
Our comrades rest by many a trail; in lonely lands they sleep;
On mountain heights, in every dale, in every cañon deep;
In every vale from South to North in nameless graves they rest;
By every stream that pulses forth from white Sierra's breast;
They sleep, "life's fitful fever o'er," beneath the skies of blue,
From San Diego's sun-kissed shore to snowy Siskiyou;
'Mid far Montana's gold-veined hills; in all the lonely lands,
From Yukon's frozen, icy wastes, to Arizona's sands.
And we shall greet them nevermore by sluice, or drift or dump,
Until upon the other shore, Old Gabriel blows his trump!

O memories bright of vanished light—the light of other days!
What plans we laid, what pranks we played, around the camp-fire's blaze!
What schemes we schemed, what dreams we dreamed beneath the sighing pine!
What days were these, by sunset seas, O days of Forty-Nine!
O glorious days of simple ways, when hearts were warm and true,
When dreams were bright, and cares were light, and skies were soft and blue,
Come back once more with all your hopes and all your joy and pain,
O olden days, O golden days, come back to us again!

Publication. *Los Angeles Herald*, April 22, 1890, p. 2; written for the visit of the New England Society of California Pioneers.

Provenance. Text checked against the Library of Congress newspaper image and OCR. A separate broadside is held by the Huntington Library.

Come Over, Dear Grover

Come over, dear Grover,
And revel in clover,
And have a good time in our “wild, woolly West”;
O, we’ve plenty of shooting
And excellent “rooting”
For razor-back porcines—as good as the best.

Ahead of “Hog Island,”
And then we’ve our highland,
Where grizzlies, and lions and wildcats are found;
And then we’ve our lowlands
Beneath our white snowlands,
Where all the fair fruits of Pomona abound.

To beat all creation
’S our sole occupation;
We’ve “climate” as good as the best, at the least,
That acts like a tonic,
And names as euphonic
As those that you love in the land of the East.

Here ’neath the south sky-land
We’ve “Rattlesnake Island,”
And “Deadman’s” and many another resort,
With names quite suggestive,
Where those would be festive
And free from “dull care” may have excellent sport.

We’ve a “slough” we call “Nigger,”
Where you can pull trigger
And slaughter the web-footed fowls you love best;
The ducks and their cousins,
By sixes and dozens—
O, we’ve plenty of sport in the “wild, woolly West!”

We've trees you might lop off
And not see the top of,
And air with more "ozone" than ever was seen;
We have oceans of flowers,
And rose-tangled bowers,
And a "bell" all embroidered in gold and in green.

We have old crumbling missions,
Likewise politicians,
All hoary and smitten with hopeless decay;
They have reaped of their sowing,
Are gone, or are going,
Decrepit and dying, all passing away.

We have "bays" where the "Buzzards"
Fear never the blizzards,
And as for the seekers of office, per se,
We'll choke 'em and bang 'em,
Or drown 'em or hang 'em,
And "quarter and draw" if they don't let you be.

Yes, Grover, come over,
And be a bold rover,
As festive and free as in days of your youth;
O, let it be also,
Bring Mrs. C. also,
And don't you forget you to bring Baby Ruth.

Publication. *Los Angeles Herald*, January 15, 1893, p. 7; dated Los Angeles, December 27, 1892.

Provenance. Text checked against the Library of Congress newspaper image and OCR; obvious mechanical errors have been silently corrected.

SELECTED PROSE

Horticultural writing, 1890

The Story of St. Vedralia

Perhaps within the memory of the present generation, since the discovery of gold, few events have proved of such surpassing interest and importance to California as the discovery and introduction of *Vedralia Cardinalis*, popularly known as the Australian lady-bird, or lady-bug, and the history of the miracle wrought by her in the extermination of the countless hosts of the terrible *Icerya purchasi*, or cottony cushion scale, may well be worthy of a place in the archives of the Historical Society of Southern California. Some time, about the year 1876, the white scale was introduced into Los Angeles on some orange trees imported from Australia by Mr. T. A. Garey, but none at that time dreamed of the baleful significance of those snowy flecks appearing here and there, and stealthily stealing from tree to tree. But the 'cloud no bigger than the hand' at first, grew until it overspread the whole horticultural horizon. Then when men realized the terrible character of the scourge that was upon the land, desperate and frantic efforts were made to stay it, but without avail. Relentless in its march as the ruthless hosts of Attila, it ravaged the richest and fairest vales upon which the sun looks down, and left but ruin, desolation and despair in its path. All kinds of trees in addition to the citrus family, vineyards, shrubbery, flowers, weeds, alfalfa, everything in the shape of vegetation, was in turn being attacked by the loathsome destroyer, and settled gloom and foreboding reigned over all. During all this period numberless and costly experiments were being conducted all over the coast with sprays, mixtures and emulsions, comprising everything deadly known to chemistry and science, but no material benefit was ever derived from their use, although some check was in places for the time being, made to the onward march of the victorious *Icerya*, and oftentimes the destruction of orchards hastened considerably thereby. Treatment by the gas process proved equally ineffectual, and probably half a million of dollars would be a very conservative estimate as the cost of labor and material thus vainly expended. Many horticulturists, who had been deriving princely incomes from the citrus fruits at the rate of from five hundred to one thousand dollars per annum net per acre, found themselves suddenly deprived of the same, and no words can adequately portray the despair and hopelessness of their situation. Probably five millions of dollars would be altogether an inadequate compensation for all the losses and damage caused by the cottony cushion scale from the time of its first appearance in Southern California to the

present, and it will require many years for the trees not absolutely ruined to regain their old-time healthfulness and vigor.

It was at this juncture, in the year 1888, that it was decided to send Mr. Albert Koebele to Australia on a mission for the discovery, if possible, of some parasite or predaceous enemy of the *Icerya*, it being a theory with many that Nature always provides an antidote for every poison, and a remedy for every evil, if we but know how to avail ourselves of the beneficent provision. Much acrimonious and unseemly discussion has been indulged in as to whom belongs the merit of the suggestion, and the measures taken to render it a success, but as Mr. Koebele was under pay, and acting under instructions from the Entomological Division of the Department of Agriculture, to Prof. Riley and his subordinates undoubtedly belongs much of the credit originally of the great discovery. Although during several years preceding Mr. Koebele's arrival in Australia, the white scale had almost ceased to exist there, no one could assign the true cause, but it did not take Mr. Koebele long to make the discovery, although owing to the scarcity of the *Icerya*, and consequent scarcity of the *Vedalia*, it was with great difficulty he succeeded in obtaining and forwarding to Prof. D. W. Coquillett, of Los Angeles, two or three small colonies in December, 1888, and January, 1889. Proceeding afterward to New Zealand he discovered them there in much greater numbers, and from thence sent in the spring several larger colonies, the first being placed in the orchard of J. W. Wolfskill, Esq., on Alameda street, Los Angeles, and the later consignments colonized in the orchards of Col. Dobbins and A. B. Chapman, Esq., of San Gabriel. About the middle of April, 1889, from the first small colonies established in the orchard of Mr. Wolfskill, that gentleman, Prof. Coquillett and Mr. Alex. Craw commenced the work of distribution, and to their untiring zeal, faith, energy and public spirit, the State is greatly indebted for freeing us from the deadliest menace that ever threatened the horticultural interests of this or any other community. From the orchards of Messrs. Chapman and Dobbins also, many colonies were distributed to surrounding groves, and in June the Los Angeles County Horticultural Commission established a central propagating station at the orchard of Mr. William Niles, on Washington street, from whence hundreds of colonies were sent out all over the county, and even to distant portions of the State. Thenceforward the work of annihilation of the hosts of *Icerya* was rapid and complete. As silent, as deadly, as mysterious, as came the Angel of Death to smite the countless hosts of Sennacherib,—

*The sheen of whose spears shone like stars on the sea,
When the blue waves roll nightly on deep Gallilee,*

so silently and almost in a night, smote our beneficent angel, St. Vedula, the white and ghastly hosts of terror that encompassed us round about, and they passed away and were not. Ere November's rains, naught remained to remind us of our deadly enemies save their white and filmy shrouds that may be seen to this day, fluttering in the breeze in every orchard, like flags of truce of vanquished armies that have passed away forever.

With the disappearance of the white scale, also disappeared the Vedula, as that appears to be their natural and only food, and being cannibalistic in nature, the larvae attack and devour each other with all the voracity and nonchalance of the denizens of 'Darkest Africa.' Yet the germs of both the *Icerya* and *Vedula* appear to have survived during the winter in some mysterious and hidden manner, and both have reappeared during the present summer in many places, but in very limited numbers.

Recently the writer received a communication (and remittance) from Mr. Albert Jaeger, of Honolulu, Sandwich Islands, stating that the white scale had made its appearance there about one year ago, and was already causing great damage and consternation, and begging that a consignment of *Vedula* should be immediately sent to them, which was done by last steamer. It is safe to say that never again will the pallid hosts of the *Icerya* be permitted to terrorize and devastate other lands as they once did our own, for the *Vedula* being 'fittest,' will survive and conquer. Then let us, like Miriam going forth before the hosts of Israel, sing songs of triumph and thankfulness for our deliverance, and forevermore keep in holy veneration the memory of our gracious lady, St. *Vedula*.

Publication. Historical Society of Southern California, Los Angeles, vol. 1, no. 5 (1890), pp. 10–12; contributed July 1890.

Provenance. Text checked against the editor's JSTOR download and the repository text layer. Broken line-end hyphenation has been joined; evident scanning losses at the right edge were restored from a second searchable witness. Historical scientific names and Kercheval's rhetoric are retained.

Letter on Garey's Tragedy Prune

Los Angeles, June 30, 1890

Thomas A. Garey, Garey, Cal.—Dear Sir:—In reply as to my opinion of the Tragedy, would say it is undoubtedly the most valuable of all plums or prunes for the following reasons: It is very early, and sweet and palatable as soon almost as it begins to turn or color, it is very large, meaty, firm and showy, hence the best prune known for shipment to distant points and centers, and as the largest dried prunes always command the most fancy prices, it would seem as though they would never have any competitors, unless something in this line should be found still superior, which is not probable. The tree itself is of the most vigorous habit, and it is certain that it is less liable to the attack of insect pests than other varieties, of this there is most ample proof in the orchards of all who have propagated it in the vicinity of other infected trees. Last year the price paid the growers at their orchards was \$1 per box of 20 pounds; this year \$1.20 and \$1.25 for the green (fresh) fruit. When it is considered that two and two and a half cents per pound for other prunes is a good and remunerative price the value of the Tragedy can be appreciated.

A. F. Kercheval

Publication. *Garey's Tragedy Prune: A New Fruit of Wonderful Promise* (Los Angeles: Rural Californian, 1890), pp. 5–6; letter dated June 30, 1890.

Provenance. Transcribed from the public-domain pamphlet scan. Kercheval is identified there as president of the Los Angeles County Board of Horticultural Commissioners.

DOCUMENTARY CONTEXT

Kercheval's orchard and biological control

Kercheval's Orchard and the Imported Ladybirds

On August 31st, Mr. Albert Koebele and I visited the orange orchard of Albert F. Kercheval, at Los Angeles, where the first colonies of lady-birds from Australia were placed, and which arrived last winter and spring. Besides ourselves there were present John Scott, Horticultural Commissioner of Los Angeles County; D. W. Coquillett, Special Agent of the Department of Agriculture; Henry W. Kruckeberg, editor 'Rural Californian;' Col. J. R. Dobbins, A. Scott Chapman, Esq., of San Gabriel, and others.

It was at this place that the beetles of the first shipment were placed. These arrived in very feeble condition. Mr. Koebele says that they probably hibernated in Australia, and possibly had deposited their eggs before he captured them. However, after a careful examination of this place we found beetles, eggs, larvae, and pupae of the steel-blue ladybird (*Orcus chalybeus*). Insects of later importations were received in good condition, and sufficient numbers of beetles, larvae, and pupae were found to justify the assertion that this species has become established at Los Angeles.

Editorial note. This official report concerns imported steel-blue ladybirds rather than *Vedalia cardinalis* itself, but it documents Kercheval's orchard as an experimental site and clarifies his institutional role within a larger network of entomologists, commissioners, and growers.

Publication. Alexander Crow, 'Report on the Condition of Parasitic and Predaceous Insects in California,' in Report on the Importation of Parasites and Predaceous Insects (1892), pp. 13–15; excerpt from p. 13.

Provenance. Text checked against the public-domain report scan. This document is by Crow, not Kercheval, and is included as evidence about the experimental work conducted at Kercheval's orchard.

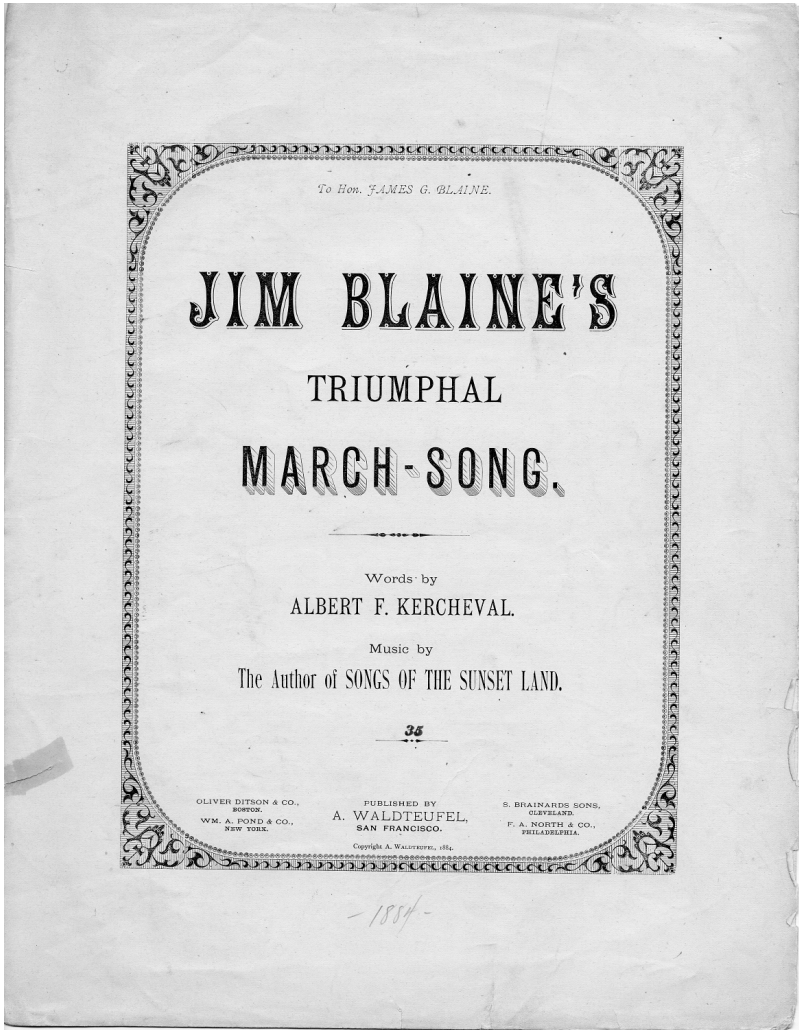
MUSIC AND EPHEMERA

The campaign song as printed music

Jim Blaine's Triumphal March-Song

Kercheval's campaign poem Jim Blaine was issued as a march-song in San Francisco about 1884, with music by Carlos Troyer. The poem itself appears in the 1883 sequence; these plates preserve the later musical setting as a separate historical object.

Source. California Sheet Music Project, UC Berkeley Library, BOX 11-235. Public-domain repository images; record 99532.



Sheet-music plate 1 of 4

JIM BLAINE'S

TRIUMPHAL MARCH-SONG.

Words by ALBERT F. KERCHEVAL,
Author of "Dolores and other Poems"

Music by the AUTHOR of
"Songs of the Sunset Land"

Tempo marcial.

1. They have flash'd it o'er the wire, How the
2. You're the ticket that will win, Jim Blaine! And we're
3. You're a man from crown to heel, And we

land is all on fire, Let them prate of "sham re-form," We are
bound to run you in, Jim Blaine! Let your foemen sneer and flaunt, You're the
know you're true as steel, O, they tried to steel your Maine, But their

coming as the storm, We will make it migh - ty warm, } Jim Blaine!
soul they can - not daunt, You're the man the peo - ple want, }
efforts all were vain, And we'll beat them once a - - gain, }

Arrangement for Brass Band also,
to be had at the Publishers.

Copyright A. D. 1884. by A. WALDTUEFEL.

4

Let the "dark horse" clear the track, Bay or
They have heard the thun-der-blast, Jim Blaine! "We are
You're the mot-to high and grand, "Freemen,

roan, or cream or black, You're the steed that nev-er tires, In your
for you first and last, Jim Blaine! From our vales of bending vines, From our
for proud Free-dom's land, Here's a toast to Blaine in soothe? Here's to

puls-es course the fires, Of a line of conquering sires, Jim, Blaine!
lab-yrinth in mines, From our loft-y hills of pines, Jim, Blaine!
Jus-tice, Right and Truth, Here's an end to hatred's ruth,

Sheet-music plate 3 of 4

5

CHORUS. ad lib:

Let the "dark horse" clear the track, Bay or
 They have heard the thun - der - blast, Jim Blaine! "We are
 Yours the mot - to high and grand, "Freemen,

roan, or cream or black, You're the steed that nev - er tires, In your
 for you first and last, Jim Blaine! From our valves of bending vines, From our
 for proud Free-dom's land, Here's a toast to Blaine in soothe; Here's to

puls - es course the fires, Of a line of conquering sires,
 lab - y - rinth - ine mines, From our lof - ty hills of pines, Jim Blaine!
 Jus - tice, Right and Truth, Here's an end to hat - red's ruth,

CONTEMPORARY RECEPTION

Notices, criticism, and reminiscence

Press Notices Bound into the Original Volume

The literary exercises of the Los Angeles Lyceum last evening were very interesting. An original poem by Mr. A. F. Kercheval, entitled ‘Shakespeare,’ was a really sublime production. It is, by far, the most superior poem produced on the great subject, since Pollock’s ‘Chandos Picture’ was given to the world. It possesses immense power, and revels in a majestic, Miltonian measure, which no modern poet, within our recollection, has so long, so purely, and so musically sustained. We are willing to promise this poem wide recognition, and lasting reputation.—Col. J. J. Ayers, Los Angeles Express.

We publish on the first page of this issue Mr. A. F. Kercheval’s grand poem on Shakespeare. We consider it a very powerful production, and although less subtle than poor Pollock’s ‘Chandos Picture,’ it pays a vigorous and lofty tribute to the genius of the great bard. Mr. Kercheval possesses the poetic art in an eminent degree, and in this poem sustains a measure with great purity and melody which is at once difficult and ponderous.—From the same.

We publish to-day, a genuine poetic gem from the gifted pen of Mr. Albert F. Kercheval. The soft music of its rhythm, the delicate beauty of its word tracery, its exquisite lights and shades, and golden vein of imagery, all stamp it as a piece which could only emanate from true poetic genius,—‘A Midsummer Night’s Dream.’—Express.

Mr. A. F. Kercheval’s pen picture of ‘The days of ’49,’ published to-day, is, in our opinion the best poetical sketch of the anomalous condition of society in those times that has yet been published. Read it.—Maj. Ben. C. Truman, Los Angeles Star.

We publish to-day, another grand poem from Mr. A. F. Kercheval. There is a sonorous sublimity in his treatment of lofty subjects, which, without fear of respectable contradiction, we pronounce unequaled by any contemporaneous poet,—‘Ode to the Sun.’—Express.

The refined reader will thank us for publishing the sublime poem ‘Mono,’ from the pen of Mr. A. F. Kercheval. It is a powerful painting, and breathes the very genius of the ghastly and repulsive solitudes of that blasted region.—Express.

The appointment of Mr. A. F. Kercheval by the Fourth of July Literary Committee, as Poet of the Day, reflects credit upon that committee. We shall look for something very superior from his pen. He has written by far the best poetry yet produced on the Pacific Coast, (we do not except Pollock,) and his tribute to Shakespeare, his ‘Ode to the Sun,’ and his poem ‘Oblivion’ are productions which Byron would have been glad to have baptized with his imprimatur.—Los Angeles Express.

‘Charlie Ross,’ by Mr. A. F. Kercheval, published in to-day’s Express is one of the wittiest and neatest things we have read in an age.—Express.

We publish to-day another poem from our gifted contributor, Mr. A. F. Kercheval, ‘Sierra.’ It is a sublime effort, replete with lofty thought and splendid imagery. So powerful a poem should obtain for our local bard the entrée into the most select literary publications in the country, and we hope yet to see his occasional pieces gathered in a volume and given to the world.—Express.

Friday evening’s Express contained a poem by Mr. A. F. Kercheval, entitled ‘Sierra,’ that should be read by all who admire a sterling production. It is grand in conception, felicitous in method, and graceful in word painting. Mr. Kercheval has a good many styles, but ‘Sierra’ is in his best. He reminds us of Stedman and Carleton, as a general thing. Yet he is a man of poetic surprises. One day he will rattle off something of the Bret Harte style, except that the effort is a superior one, and again his name appears to a poem that would rank with some of Joaquin Miller’s in exquisite sentiment and sublime thought. We cannot resist copying the last two verses.—Maj. Ben. C. Truman, Star.

We commend the following little gem, from the sparkling pen of Mr. Albert F. Kercheval, to the perusal of our readers. A gentleman of critical

discrimination has made the following comments upon it: 'This is the prettiest and most perfect gem that I have yet seen from Mr. Kercheval's gifted pen'—'To a Humming-bird.'—Express.

A soul-inspiring poem, which will awake an echo in the heart of every patriot, will be found in another column. It is from the pen of our farmer-poet, Albert F. Kercheval, who, if he get his due, will have a national reputation in as short a time as it has taken him to acquire a local one,—'Stand by the President.'—Republican.

A most eloquent and affecting tribute to Hon. O. P. Morton, from the poet, Kercheval, will be found elsewhere. No patriot can read it without deep emotion.—Los Angeles Republican.

Kercheval's Poems. A desire has been expressed, by a large number of the people of Los Angeles, that our esteemed fellow-citizen, Albert F. Kercheval, would allow the publication of a volume of his poems for the pleasure of his numerous friends, and for the purpose of putting in permanent form his many beautiful gems that have been floating about in a fragmentary form for several years. We are happy to state that Mr. Kercheval will probably accede to this earnest desire on the part of his numerous friends, and publish in the near future a duodecimo volume of his poetical writings. Such a publication would be warmly welcomed by the people of our great Commonwealth, among whom Mr. Kercheval has resided for more than a quarter of a century.—Republican.

Mr. Albert F. Kercheval, the sweet poet of Los Angeles, another of whose meritorious productions we reprint to-day, is shortly to publish his many beautiful poems in book form.—Santa Barbara Press.

The granger-poet, Albert F. Kercheval, of Los Angeles, has been solicited to publish a volume of his poems and has consented. All his poems are readable, while some are really gems, and we are pleased to find that a prophet may be honored in his own country.—Colton Semi-Tropic.

Mr. A. F. Kercheval favors us to-day with an exquisitely sweet little poem. It breathes of verdure and flowers and velvety growth, and ripples as smoothly as the lucid waters of a brook over a bed of marble pebbles,—'Come Again, Gentle Rain.'—Express.

The Gods love good poetry. Kercheval's sweet lines, 'Come Again, Gentle Rain,' which we published Saturday afternoon, bore almost instant fruit. As lovely and beneficent a rain visitation as we ever had, followed swift in the train of the gentle invocation.—Same.

We publish on this page a little gem of poetry by Albert F. Kercheval, of Los Angeles. We cannot now recall the name of any poet in whose fertile brain the Muses have woven sweeter fancies.—Santa Monica Outlook.

Mr. A. F. Kercheval tries his master-hand in a new line of poetry to-day. In 'Mr. McPherson' he has given us a very finished production, in which satire and humor are exquisitely blended.—Express.

Mr. A. F. Kercheval contributes a most exquisite little poem entitled 'Eve.' Its tones are as dreamy and shadowy and poetic as the soft-fading lines of a Los Angeles twilight. The author has shown the perfection of his art in the ethereal glamour and repose which he throws around his delightful picture.—Express.

We commend to our readers the perusal of Mr. Kercheval's poem 'Cetawayo.' It has two striking merits—one its easy, musical flow; the other, poetic inspiration from a subject so unpoetic as the savage King of the Zulus. But Mr. Kercheval is not only master of the art in poetry, but has the power to infuse into the most prosy and uninspiring subjects, the fire and magnetism of his own poetic nature.—Express.

Publication. *Dolores; and Other Poems* (San Francisco: A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1883), preliminary pp. v–vi.

Provenance. The complete Albert F. Kercheval group from the publisher's two-page press-notice gathering. Text reset from the original page images; obvious scanning errors are removed, while the notices' promotional claims and period vocabulary remain.

Horace Bell Introduces 'The Padres of Old'

It is with the greatest possible reverence I refer to the Mission Fathers, and their manner of dealing with the Indians. My opinion of and respect for those holy men is such that, feeling my matter-of-fact, prosaic style wholly inadequate for expression, I have therefore enlisted in that behoof my poetic friend, Albert Fenner Kercheval, and will finish this chapter with his lively poem.

Publication. Horace Bell, *Reminiscences of a Ranger* (1881), p. 125.

Provenance. Transcribed from the original-page Internet Archive / UC Berkeley scan. Bell's praise is playful and introduces the poem printed in this edition among the uncollected poems.

A Riverside Notice

Mr. A. F. Kercheval, the Los Angeles poet, arrived in Riverside last Sunday and spent two days taking inspiration from the Riverside orange groves. To assist his imagination he carried home some Washington Navels and Eureka lemons.—Riverside Press.

Editorial note. The notice precedes the publication of *Riverside in Dolores; and Other Poems* and supplies a contemporary glimpse of Kercheval gathering material in the citrus landscape. The clipping reproduced in the source package is the editor's own Newspapers.com download.

Publication. *Los Angeles Times*, January 6, 1882, p. 3; reprinted from the Riverside Press.

Provenance. Transcribed from the editor's own Newspapers.com clipping, downloaded July 24, 2018, and included in the accompanying source package.

Review of Dolores; and Other Poems

Only three or four Californians have ever published better volumes of verse than the one under review; and those three or four are the ones whose reputations are more than local. Among those who may be called local poets of California, we have seen no one's work that compared with Mr. Kercheval's. Much of it has appeared in the daily and weekly papers, chiefly of Los Angeles, and has been copied quite generally by the press of the State; frequently these fugitive verses have been such as to catch the eye of the critical reader quite beyond the wont of newspaper verse. The poems are all flowing, faultless in versification, intelligent in manner, and poetic in feeling; their most marked characteristic is an approach to that high lyricism in rhythm which, in the songs of the few poets who attain it, seems to convey the idea more by a direct appeal to the feelings through the ear, than by address to the brain: such, for instance, as Shelley's 'When the lamp is shattered,' or any of Swinburne's lyrics. This music-like quality of the great lyricists is, it is true, nowhere attained; but one catches echoes of it everywhere; as, for instance, in the following:

*Whither, when roses are fading,
Fleeteth their mystic perfume?
Whither when storms are o'ershading,
Fleeteth their glory and bloom?
Fading and flying they scatter
Wide, when the autumn winds call,
Ruthlessly, what does it matter
Where the pale petals may fall?
Over the mountain or meadow,
Over the desert or glade,
Into the glimmer or shadow,
Into the sunshine or shade.*

*Chasing life's bright, gleaming bubble,
Some in the East and the West,
Why should we sigh with a trouble,
Where our cold ashes may rest?
Lulled by the soft-cooing turtle,
Watched by the sentries of God
Under the cypress or myrtle,
Under the marble or sod.*

There is not great originality in any of these poems, as far as thought or workmanship goes (if such a word as 'workmanship' may be used of verse so spontaneous and free from self-consciousness). In subjects, however, there is much originality. The leading poem, '*Dolores*,' is a legend of San Gabriel; and a very large proportion of those following are legends or descriptions of Semi-tropic California. In the ballad and narrative verse, no one except Bret Harte has ever done as well by California. Of the 'rough,' humorous poems, two or three are excellent, ranking higher in their line than the serious poems in theirs; eminently the one on the 'Debris Question,' and the one upon the 'Coronation of the Czar'; others, however, fall far below the grade.

Mr. Kercheval's poetic reputation has suffered from his local popularity. A large number of occasional poems—Fourth of July poems, poems written for military reunions, school dedications, etc.—are a drawback to any collection, Dr. Holmes's always excepted. In like manner, the very natural desire to see all his fugitives together between covers has led him to put in everything, good, bad, and indifferent—always the most satisfactory way to make a collection for those to read who are already a writer's admirers, but the way least likely to win new admirers. The result is a heavy volume of over five hundred pages, containing more than two hundred poems, many of which are merely repetitions of each other. The best of these, in a volume of half the size, would have attracted wider attention. Notwithstanding these points of criticism, however, we are prepared to give a very cordial welcome to Mr. Kercheval's book, and are not surprised at the pride with which his poems are regarded in his own section. No one has done a tithe of what he has to make Southern California known to song. One more quotation will help to give a fair conception of the quality of the poetry; the description is of Pasadena.

*Behind, the mountain walls!
Deep shade and waterfalls!
A sense of mystery brooding o'er,
A spell the soul enthalls.
Beyond, the dreamy vale!
Afar, a shadowy sail,
O'er slumbering seas, 'mid quivering haze,
Flits like a phantom pale,
And vague and spectral isles,
Like brides through tears and smiles,
Half hidden by the trembling veil,*

*Gaze o'er the watery miles,
Soft, longing toward the land,
Where skyward, blue and grand,
Far glancing o'er the sleeping seas
The tall Sierras stand.*

At the end of the volume are added a smaller number of poems, by Mr. Kercheval's daughter, Rosalie W. Kercheval. They resemble his quite closely in most respects, but have somewhat less vigor and spontaneity and much more finish, and equality of merit. We quote one:

*She saw the far-off gleaming
Of moonlight-silvered swords;
And half in absent dreaming
She touched the sounding chords;
Whose vibrant echoes firmer,
Gave back some haunting tone,
With every strain a murmur,
And every note a moan.
What weary heart-confession,
What dream of other days,
In all its olden passion,
Crept down the shining ways!
The restless hands moved slower,
As fraught with memories;
The bended head bowed lower
Before the ivory keys.
What though the low winds listened,
Or dimmed the dusky eyes;
Perchance but dewdrops glistened
Without, from starry skies.*

The workmanship of the volume is excellent, well-nigh the best that we have seen on this coast, falling only short of the best grade of Eastern book-making work.

Publication. *Overland Monthly*, January 1884, pp. 110–111; anonymous review.

Provenance. Text checked against the complete public-domain issue scan from UC Berkeley. Column order, quoted verse, and substantive judgments are preserved; spacing and quotation marks are normalized for this edition.

James J. Ayers Remembers Kercheval

Albert F. Kercheval was a sweet character. He was an enterprising orange-grower in the lower part of Los Angeles city, where he raised some of the finest fruit grown in the county. He was a born poet, and his verse was as pure and as limpid as the waters that flow from the fountain of Helicon. Some of his ambitious pieces deserve to live as long as English poetry is read. ‘Oblivion,’ ‘Ode to the Sun’ and ‘Shakespeare’ are simply majestic in their grandeur of thought and the cadent beauty of their harmonious numbers. He published a volume of his poems in 1885 that ought to grace the library of every lover of the Muse. He died in 1892.

Editorial note. Ayers’s affectionate reminiscence misdates both events: *Dolores*; and *Other Poems* appeared in 1883, and Kercheval died on January 24, 1893.

Publication. James J. Ayers, *Gold and Sunshine: Reminiscences of Early California* (Boston: Richard G. Badger, 1922), pp. 302–303.

Provenance. Text checked against the Library of Congress scan. Ayers’s two incorrect dates are retained in the quotation and corrected in an editorial note.

AFTERWORD

Publication, provenance, and editorial limits

The shape of the 1883 book

Dolores; and Other Poems was published in San Francisco by A. L. Bancroft & Co. in 1883. Its scale and variety make it less a compact lyric collection than a retrospective archive of a public poet's occasions. Albert's work is divided by tone: Serious and Sentimental precedes Roughness, the humorous and semi-humorous poems. The volume then turns to poems by his daughter Rosalie. This reading edition restores Albert's full sequence while respecting that division of authorship, then adds located poetry, prose, documentary context, music, and reception.

Several poems carry the 1883 editors' explanatory subtitles or footnotes. Those notes are retained near the relevant text. Running heads, printed page numbers, ornamental rules, and purely typographic display devices are omitted. Every poem begins on a new page; each new chapter of *Dolores* also begins on a new page.

Text and provenance

The base text is the archive's partially corrected transcription of the 1883 volume. It has been collated mechanically and by spot-checking against the searchable HathiTrust scan and a second public-domain scan. Stanza divisions, source italics, and intentional verse-line indentation are retained. Continuations caused only by the original page width are reflowed without hanging indents, while running heads are suppressed. Double hyphens are rendered as closed-up em dashes, and display capitals in titles are regularized.

The source materials contain OCR damage. Obvious title errors and a limited number of unmistakable mechanical errors have been corrected silently, but this is not a diplomatic or variorum edition. Doubtful readings have generally been allowed to stand rather than reconstructed without

evidence. The four uncollected or later poems and the supplemental prose were newly transcribed from original-page or searchable scans and receive individual provenance notes. The 1882 notice is based specifically on the editor's Newspapers.com download.

Completeness and limits

Complete Poems here means Albert Kercheval's full section of the 1883 collection, including its preliminary Dedication, plus the uncollected or later poem texts located during the present archive search. It does not mean that every newspaper or manuscript poem he wrote has been found. The 1883 press notices name works and print histories that may reward further newspaper searching, and unattributed or differently titled reprints may remain unrecognized.

The Story of St. Vedula and the letter on Garey's Tragedy prune are included as selected prose, not as a claim to complete prose. Rosalie W. Kercheval's poems remain excluded by authorship, although the 1884 review's assessment and quotation of her work are retained as part of the reception history. Reported 1849 overland letters remain a research lead until their earliest witnesses can be verified. A future scholarly edition could add systematic newspaper collation, establish first-publication dates poem by poem, and resolve the remaining OCR uncertainties against high-resolution page images.