

And to live he is in fear.
Then, at last, I let him down
Once more into his dapper town,
To chatter, frightened, to his clan,
And forget me if he can.'

Fable

The mountain and the squirrel
Had a quarrel;
And the former called the latter 'Little Prig.'
Bun replied,
'You are doubtless very big;
But all sorts of things and weather
Must be taken in together,
To make up a year
And a sphere.
And I think it no disgrace
To occupy my place.
If I'm not so large as you,
You are not so small as I,
And not half so spry.
I'll not deny you make
A very pretty squirrel track;
Talents differ; all is well and wisely put;
If I cannot carry forests on my back,
Neither can you crack a nut.'

Ode, Inscribed to W. H. Channing

Though loath to grieve
The evil time's sole patriot,
I cannot leave
My honied thought
For the priest's cant,
Or statesman's rant.

If I refuse
My study for their politique,
Which at the best is trick,
The angry Muse
Puts confusion in my brain.

But who is he that prates
Of the culture of mankind,
Of better arts and life?
Go, blindworm, go,
Behold the famous States
Harrying Mexico
With rifle and with knife!

Or who, with accent bolder,
Dare praise the freedom-loving mountaineer?
I found by thee, O rushing Contoocook!
And in thy valleys, Agiochook!
The jackals of the negro-holder.

The God who made New Hampshire
Taunted the lofty land
With little men; —
Small bat and wren
House in the oak: —
If earth-fire cleave
The upheaved land, and bury the folk,
The southern crocodile would grieve.
Virtue palters; Right is hence;
Freedom praised, but hid;
Funeral eloquence
Rattles the coffin-lid.

What boots thy zeal,
O glowing friend,
That would indignant rend
The northland from the south?
Wherefore? to what good end?
Boston Bay and Bunker Hill
Would serve things still; —
Things are of the snake.

The horseman serves the horse,
 The neatherd serves the neat,
 The merchant serves the purse,
 The eater serves his meat;
 'Tis the day of the chattel,
 Web to weave, and corn to grind;
 Things are in the saddle,
 And ride mankind.

There are two laws discrete,
 Not reconciled,—
 Law for man, and law for thing;
 The last builds town and fleet,
 But it runs wild,
 And doth the man unking.

'Tis fit the forest fall,
 The steep be graded,
 The mountain tunnelled,
 The sand shaded,
 The orchard planted,
 The glebe tilled,
 The prairie granted,
 The steamer built.

Let man serve law for man;
 Live for friendship, live for love,
 For truth's and harmony's behoof;
 The state may follow how it can,
 As Olympus follows Jove.

Yet do not I invite
 The wrinkled shopman to my sounding woods,
 Nor bid the unwilling senator
 Ask votes of thrushes in the solitudes.
 Every one to his chosen work;—
 Foolish hands may mix and mar;
 Wise and sure the issues are.
 Round they roll till dark is light,

Sex to sex, and even to odd;—
 The over-god
 Who marries Right to Might,
 Who peoples, unpeoples,—
 He who exterminates
 Races by stronger races,
 Black by white faces,—
 Knows to bring honey
 Out of the lion;
 Grafts gentlest scion
 On pirate and Turk.

The Cossack eats Poland,
 Like stolen fruit;
 Her last noble is ruined,
 Her last poet mute:
 Straight, into double band
 The victors divide;
 Half for freedom strike and stand;—
 The astonished Muse finds thousands at her side.

Astræa

Himself it was who wrote
 His rank, and quartered his own coat.
 There is no king nor sovereign state
 That can fix a hero's rate;
 Each to all is venerable,
 Cap-a-pie invulnerable,
 Until he write, where all eyes rest,
 Slave or master on his breast.

I saw men go up and down,
 In the country and the town,
 With this prayer upon their neck,—
 'Judgment and a judge we seek.'
 Not to monarchs they repair,
 Nor to learned jurist's chair;