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COLLECTED POEMS
AND TRANSLATIONS

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The Snow-Storm

Announced by all the trumpets of the sky,
 Arrives the snow, and, driving o'er the fields,
 Seems nowhere to alight: the whited air
 Hides hills and woods, the river, and the heaven,
 And veils the farm-house at the garden's end.
 The sled and traveller stopped, the courier's feet
 Delayed, all friends shut out, the housemates sit
 Around the radiant fireplace, enclosed
 In a tumultuous privacy of storm.

Come see the north wind's masonry.
 Out of an unseen quarry evermore
 Furnished with tile, the fierce artificer
 Curves his white bastions with projected roof
 Round every windward stake, or tree, or door.
 Speeding, the myriad-handed, his wild work
 So fanciful, so savage, nought cares he
 For number or proportion. Mockingly,
 On coop or kennel he hangs Parian wreaths;
 A swan-like form invests the hidden thorn;
 Fills up the farmer's lane from wall to wall,
 Maugre the farmer's sighs; and, at the gate,
 A tapering turret overtops the work.
 And when his hours are numbered, and the world
 Is all his own, retiring, as he were not,
 Leaves, when the sun appears, astonished Art
 To mimic in slow structures, stone by stone,
 Built in an age, the mad wind's night-work,
 The frolic architecture of the snow.

Woodnotes I

I.

For this present, hard
 Is the fortune of the bard,
 Born out of time;
 All his accomplishment,
 From Nature's utmost treasure spent,
 Booteth not him.
 When the pine tosses its cones
 To the song of its waterfall tones,
 He speeds to the woodland walks,
 To birds and trees he talks:
 Cæsar of his leafy Rome,
 There the poet is at home.
 He goes to the river-side,—
 Not hook nor line hath he;
 He stands in the meadows wide,—
 Nor gun nor scythe to see;
 With none has he to do,
 And none seek him,
 Nor men below,
 Nor spirits dim.
 Sure some god his eye enchants:
 What he knows nobody wants.
 In the wood he travels glad,
 Without better fortune had,
 Melancholy without bad.
 Planter of celestial plants,
 What he knows nobody wants;
 What he knows he hides, not vaunts.
 Knowledge this man prizes best
 Seems fantastic to the rest:
 Pondering shadows, colors, clouds,
 Grass-buds, and caterpillar-shrouds,
 Boughs on which the wild bees settle,