

# **The Poems of Joseph Furphy**

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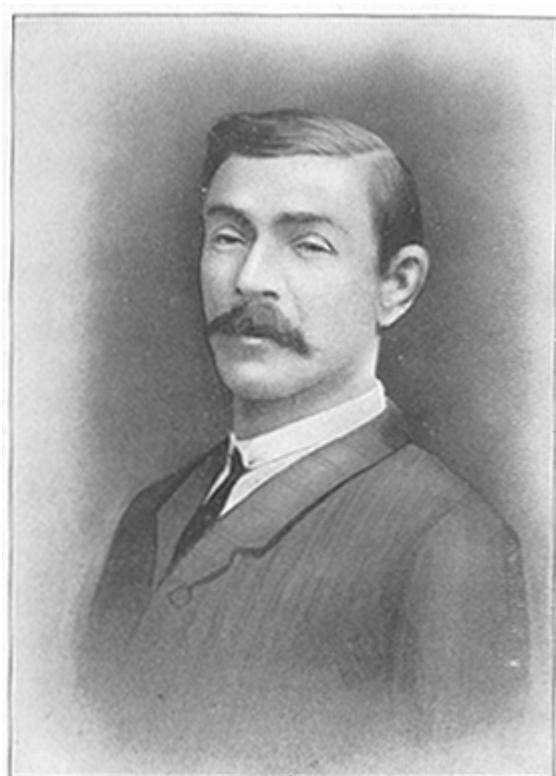
## **The Poems of Joseph Furphy**

Collected and edited by K.B. [Kate Baker]

**Melbourne and Sydney**

**Lothian Book Publishing Co. Pty. Ltd.**

**1916**



JOSEPH FURPHY





THE AUTHOR'S MOTHER

## PREFACE.

As in hell, while "the heads" were devising the best method of introducing that spice of variety we used to call "sin" into the tame blessedness of Eden, and while the rank and file diabolic were engaged in a football match, others apart sat on a hill retired and discussed Hegel, Bergson, Calvin, Chuang Tsu and Robert Blatchford, and found no end in wandering mazes lost; so in Australia, while billies boil, and the wattle gold gets sicklied over with the anaemia of the drawing-room ballad-monger and the society woman's wilting patronage, and the sentimental "bloke" takes his "tart" to the semi-finals of the football season or to the latest slip-slop of the "movies," and the spotted Lily of Brogan's Lane returns from the Salvation Refuge to "Little Lon," and the swagman hopeless searches for the lost "Up the country," and the shearer, in London-made boys' stories anyway, "knocks down" his cheque at wayside shanties, and while the jaded earth seeks relief from the *ennui* of existence in the fairly hopeful-looking attempted suicide of a world-war by way of a three years' tremendous antistrophe to the two thousand years' strophe of Christianity, - even while these things have been and are, a few of us apart sit and seek to find some Ariadne clue and some Sesame word in order to stalk the Minotaur of the wandering mazes and to open the cavern where surely, in the process of time, Gold (if only fairy gold) has matured for us and our race.

Of these few in our land, "Tom Collins," the author of the present book, was the fore-runner. In the quality of that remarkable book of his, "Such is Life," published by the **Bulletin** when that journal was the clear clarion of all that Australia is to be, a book, which apart from the realism of a careful and restrained observer of bush-life and the bush itself, reveals critical and analytic powers of a high order and the culture of a real man throughout its rich bulk, one can see auspices of high accomplishment for future Australia, Lucians, Montaignes, Emersons, Borrowes of her own, racy of her soil and conscious of her destiny. On "Such is Life" our author's fame will, when tardily it comes, rest, but all who know and value that book and through it have got to love the man, will welcome the insight into phases of his character which the publication of the present volume will give. They will not find perhaps the Psalms, for instance, free from metrical and other more serious faults; they will, according to their lights, regret the occasional lapses into what in a less sincere soul would be unpardonable cynicism in the presence of what many hold as sacred things, and perhaps shiver as sheer prose intrudes into a line or a verse or a whole psalm. But with the sympathy which "Such is Life" has ineradicably generated in its readers, they at least will know what a pure genuine lover of man, essential democracy and Australia is wrapped in this rough clothing, and will thrill, as I do, at the idealism that the occasional cynicism and even superficial attitude disguise. For instance, with all its obvious faults, perhaps even of taste, "Brahm" appears to me to honour the paper that first published it and thereby Australian literature. It will, moreover,

not take much critical acumen to trace, when one remembers how long ago most of his work was written, the paternity of more than one recent school of Australian literature to "Tom Collins."

Joseph Furphy ("Tom Collins") was born at Yering about 1843 of Methodist parents. They came from that part of Ireland which, in spite of the curse thereon for the awful crimes of King Conchobar against Deirdre and the Children of Usna, produces still so many remarkable men and women that Celts are fain to believe that even Cromwell and the Settlements could not quite have annihilated those Red Branch Knights and bards who with their Sunburst banners and magical songs followed Queen Mab to danger so many centuries ago. Both father and mother had a literary turn, the former taking some part, I understand, in helping Baron von Mueller in one of his books on the Flora of Australia. "Tom Collins" father appears to have been somewhat strict with the callow philosopher, for he says that he was "carefully brought up under a small tree stripped of its twigs." His mother, who is still living, and, at 98 years of age, still alert in mind, is, as one of my correspondents who knew her says, "one of those women whom their children call blessed." Those who have read "Such is Life!" which is largely autobiographical, will remember that he held some official post in the country in New South Wales, and at one time with his brother, John Furphy, he owned implement works at Shepparton, Victoria. With his family he went to Western Australia a few years ago, and died there on the 13th September, 1913, at the age of 68. His widow lives at Claremont, Western Australia, and his two sons, Felix and Sam, have a foundry in Fremantle.

The **Bulletin** school of Australian literature, notably under the remarkably able headmastership of the lovable J. A. Archibald and the discerning and in his prime certainly not negligible rattan of A. G. Stephens, has in many departments of literature produced such splendid results that there is, apart from that of the earlier generation, scarcely any good Australian literature not of **Bulletin** origin, but in the whole **Bulletin** family there is no more sincere writer than "Tom Collins," and in his particular corner of the library I do not think I am doing injustice to anyone in saying that on the whole our finest production of prose literature up to the present is "Such is Life!"

BERNARD O'DOWD.

November 26th, 1916.

# **The Poems of Joseph Furphy**

## A CHRISTMAS HYMN.

The Seraph-song of morning's prime  
That hail'd Messiah's birth,  
The charter of a coming time  
When Love shall rule the earth,  
Rings from yon far Judaeen hill —

# "GLORY TO GOD; TO MEN GOOD WILL!"

Opposed to Jewish Temple-rites,  
Strange to the lore of Greece,  
That message comes from starry heights,  
A key to lasting Peace.  
What-e'er our creed, we own its thrill —  
"Glory to God; to men good will!"

Though Art may strive for utterance yet,  
And Science grope her way,  
A wider zone of thought is set  
Where shines the perfect day;  
A motive passing earthly skill —  
"Glory to God; to men good will!"

For let the wise and prudent know,  
As trustful children would,  
That oracle of long ago  
Contains the Greatest Good;  
Unvex'd by doubt, unmix'd with ill —  
"Glory to God; to men good will!"

A wiser world grows sick of strife,  
Of mockery dearly bought;  
And man, achieving truer life,  
And brave, unselfish thought,  
That high behest shall yet fulfil —  
"Glory to God; to men good will!"

So lies millennial peace in reach,  
While empires rise and fall;  
For, age on age, and new to each,  
That glad prophetic call  
Comes peeling down the cycles still —  
"Glory to God; to men good will!"

# "BRAHM"

## (For the "Bulletin.")

A spectral film that came and went,  
In its elusive way gave vent  
In some unreal words which meant;  
    "I think therefore I am."  
That phantasm only thought it thought;  
A vain conception crudely wrought;  
    An egotistic sham.  
Which brings us up against the fact  
By Chunder's attestation backed —  
There is no Substance, Thought, nor Act  
    Nothing exists but Brahm.

This quaint contraption here below  
Is not a magic shadow show  
Where phantom figures come and go,  
    As held by old Khayyam.  
A show has time and space enough,  
But here we only have such stuff  
As dreams are made of — mental fluff  
    And visionary flam,  
Throughout the universal scheme,  
Be sure things tare not what they seem,  
(To quote a well-known psalm)  
They're only whimsies of a dream  
    A transient dream of Brahm.

All through the cycles of the Past  
At which Notation stands aghast  
He has subsisted, first and last,  
    Lone, functionless and calm.  
Nothing extraneous can obtrude  
Upon his Sabbath quietude,  
Or discompose his tranquil mood,  
    For nothing is but Brahm.  
"The Past and Present here unite  
Beneath Time's flowing tide" (to cite  
    A Bard of Uncle Sam)  
For Time stretched out in aeons dim  
To Apprehension's very rim,  
Is insignificant to him  
    A Bagetelle to Brahm.

For once in his negation deep,  
He somehow chanced to drop asleep;  
And through that forty-wings there ran  
    A flitting dream. So time began —  
He dreamed this stellar lens of ours,  
Which mocks at telescopic powers  
Innumerable suns sublime,  
    At furious speed yet keeping time!  
And so remote that to the eye,  
They look like fixtures in the sky,  
But that's a trifle. Round about  
A million light-years further out,  
    The wisps of nebular portend.  
Sidereal schemes without an end  
And this is no poetic flight  
Nor idiotic blatherskite,  
Nor what is termed a cram.  
However vast these plans may seem,  
They're only figments of a dream  
    A trifling dream of Brahm.

He dreamed our System's fiery gas  
Condensing into solid mass;  
And during several billion years,  
    Evolving planetary spheres.  
But take this globe, alone, to prove  
How things have moved — or seemed to move.  
He dreamed some pulpy form of life:  
Mutation slow; and savage strife:  
With Nature's forces all in play,  
And Darwin's system under way;  
While bits of hide and tufts of hair  
For countless centuries fill'd the air;  
And only those were left alive  
    Whose fitness caused them to survive.

Monsters that lived in Gulfs of slime  
With names that balk and baffle rhyme  
Prodigious sloths, whose daily food  
    Was half a ton of leaves and wood —  
Grim saurians of terrific strength,  
A quarter of a mile in length,  
Unightly bats, with twelve-foot wings,  
And endless tribes of fearsome things  
Cull'd down, in point of fact, so fit  
That they should thrive in Sheol's pit  
And breathe its exhalations thick,  
Holding their own with Ancient Nick.

And so, while ocean bottoms rose  
To stand awhile as high plateaus  
And mountains sank beneath the main,  
    To rise time after time again:  
And rocks were formed, and strata rent  
And Polar ice-caps came and went;  
And geological ages pass'd  
Each an improvement on the last;  
And on the wrinkled crust of earth  
More decent forms of life had birth;

Man was evolved a product queer;  
A breed that it would pay to sheer;  
And which it might be safe to say,  
Has reached a higher stage to-day  
    Since restless generations gone  
Have passed a few ideas on.  
But, bear in mind, this human race  
Diverse in colour, smell, and face;  
These off-shoots from the simian stem  
The Sons of Japheth and of Shem,  
The progeny of Ham.  
With mongrel races that infest  
The isles and mainlands, east and west,  
From Chili to Siam,  
Are less than ripples in a stream,  
They're only ripples on a dream  
Namely the dream of BRAHM.

Even that race, divinely nursed,  
Which for its virtues has been cursed  
And booted into seven times seven  
By every nation under Heaven  
    The seed of Abraham;  
And those brave lions in their den  
Each one a match for aliens ten,  
With fist or rifle, bat or pen  
I mean God's modest Englishmen,  
Whose very fog is balm;  
These are less tangible withal  
Than shadowy rabbits on the wall  
Nothing exists but BRAHM.

Our swarming brethren of the North  
Whatever you may judge them worth  
    Sling Muck and Soogoo Ram,  
Are fantoids like yourself and me,  
Though differing somewhat in degree

Nothing exists but BRAHM.

That Fatman, dining at his club,  
On costly wet and sumptuous grub;  
The pilgrims in the roadside pub;  
The washerwoman at her tub;  
And Jacky in his native scrub,  
On bandicoot and yam  
Are momentary sports of thought  
That flicker out and come to nought  
In this brief dream of BRAHM.

Illusion in the very air  
(If such an envelope were there);  
And things that seem to claim your care  
Your Wife, with her untidy hair:  
And Grandma, in her easy chair:  
And baby in the pram —  
Are all a visionary crew  
Which fact need never worry you,  
For you're an apparition too,  
Nothing exists but BRAHM.

But flies are in the ointment sweet,  
And jumpers in the cheese we eat,  
And maggots in the treacherous meat;  
And mildew on the jam.  
That is to say, we might complain  
Of many a kink in things mundane;  
Of barbarisms that still remain  
For instance "Sport" imposing pain;  
Monarchial "loyalty" inane;  
The gnats at which the Wowsers strain;  
The camels that they entertain:  
Sectarian bigotry insane.  
The ruthless quest of sordid gain —  
A sad, perennial stream of bane,  
Which only in a sense profane  
We're competent to dam.  
The feckless poet's cult of grog:  
The idle bummer's cadge for prog;  
The stern official's odious "gog"  
The flunkey's meek Salaam —  
Such provocations, daily met,  
And grounds of meddlesome regret,  
Shall find their panacea yet;  
With ratling promptitude you bet,  
In this same dream of BRAHM.

Unquestionably, no one knows  
The likely period of his doze;  
But this we know that when he wakes  
We vanish in a brace of shakes;  
Without dismay or qualm.  
The earth, the sun, and every star  
Shall vanish like the freaks they are;  
The corn and oil, the flower and grass,  
The fig and vine, shall simply pass,  
The eucalypt and palm:  
The microbe small, the ponderous whale;  
The greyhound swift, the tardy snail;  
The lion and the lamb;  
The sand and granite, quartz and schist,  
Shall vanish like a so-called mist  
Which the fictitious sun has kiss'd  
(Of course they never did exist),  
NOTHING EXISTS BUT BRAHM.

## A PSALM OF FORTITUDE.

Are you, like me, a peevish brat,  
With feelings extra-fine?  
Are you disposed to whip the cat  
When misadventure lays your flat?  
Then paste this memo in your hat —  
A Man Should Never Whine.

The axiom is no safeguard rare,  
Nor talisman divine;  
For, deaf to bounce as well as prayer,  
Grim Fate will never turn a hair.  
But still the principle is there —  
A Man Should Never Whine.

When "Answers" spurns your doggerel lay  
(He often baskets mine)  
And balks you of renown and pay,  
Squirm not, but laugh, and darkly say,  
"Ha! tyrant! there will come a day!"  
A Bard Should Never Whine.

Should Gladys freeze you from her sight,  
Don't languish or repine;  
But let her know, in terms polite,  
That she has made your future bright;  
Then marry Ermytrude for spite —  
A Bloque Should Never Whine.

A killing frost may nip your buds  
(There's Wolsey as a sign);  
You may forego your stylish duds,  
And trade away your pin and studs,  
To live on bandicooted spuds;  
But you Must Never Whine.

Religiously, your cake is dough —  
You haven't walk'd the line.  
Peter won't know you from a crow;  
So your address must be "Below,"  
Where Socialists and such-like go;  
Still You Must Never Whine.

But even should Repentance come,  
Don't supplicate and pine.  
Seek out the corybantic scrum,  
And caper round the mighty drum,

And make Salvation fairly hum —  
A Saint Should Never Whine.

Beneath such petty details lies  
Calm Nature's great design,  
That we on stepping-stones should rise;  
And any decent chap who tries  
To score some points before he dies  
Can Surely Never Whine.

Things standing thus, it is not nice  
To rate yourself a swine;  
Just let this argument suffice:  
An abject whimper cuts no ice,  
But only tends to lower your price —  
A Man Should Never Whine.

## A PSALM OF RESIGNATION.

In spite of his imposing plea,  
A freeman whom the truth makes free  
Is often fairly up a tree,  
    And marvels why it should be thus.  
Then reasoning in his tin-pot way  
That honesty can never pay,  
He loses faith, as well he may;  
    Yet he has simply Miss'd the 'Bus.

Concerning noodles who profess  
By moral rules to gauge success:  
Their thinking tackle's in a mess,  
    And they are wrong to Tartarus.  
Don't say the worthiest lead the van.  
That gag is deader than Queen Anne.  
If it were straight, no honest man  
    Need grieve that he had Miss'd the 'Bus.

All are alike in Satan's grip,  
If we accept your Shakespeare's tip,  
Who hints, *per* Hamlet, that the whip  
    Is earned by every one of us.  
Which is absurd (as Euclid says),  
For all have good and evil traits,  
Though some go smoothly all their days,  
    And some are doom'd to Miss the 'Bus.

Even the Yiddish Sage confess'd  
He had to give this problem best,  
Namely, to find desert express'd  
    In terms of Need and Overplus.  
He saw not damper to the wise,  
Nor gonce to men of enterprise,  
But Buckley's prospect of a rise  
    For anyone who Miss'd the 'Bus.

What agencies manipulate  
This economic drafting-gate  
Through which we pass to find our fate,  
    It would be futile to discuss;  
But any man with half an eye  
Can see that mysteries underlie  
The great "Whaffor"? — the age-long, "Why"? —  
    Required by those who Miss the 'Bus.

Some swell-coves, narrow'd by their luck,  
In Evolution's rut are stuck,  
Like that wool-bearing reptile-duck  
Which bushmen term the platterpuss;  
Whilst in our class we often find  
A stubborn attitude of mind  
Attending the demnition grind  
Dealt out to those who Miss the 'Bus.

"Read Samuel Smiles, you dreaming flats!"  
Say thrift-apostles, through their hats;  
But wearily we answer, "Rats!"  
It's not worth while to make a fuss,  
Preach us no Self-made Merchant's creed —  
Columbia's Curse — which holds, indeed,  
That we should loot our fellow-weed,  
And help him but to Miss the 'Bus."

Again, we could "arise! awake!"  
And whoop with 40-devil, brake;  
But no improvement should we make,  
No more than doth the hairy Russ.  
If we decline to act the goat,  
But sanely think, resolve, and VOTE,  
Then doubtless we shall keep afloat,  
And Johnny need not Miss the 'Bus.

This seems to summarise our case.  
I hope we carry it with grace,  
Acknowledging in Fate's embrace  
The nelson of an octopus.  
And when the Last Conveyance comes,  
Neither the swell who pots the plums,  
Nor we who fossick round for crumbs,  
Shall be allowed to Miss the 'Bus.

## A PSALM OF PATIENCE.

O kid! with face of healthy tan,  
    With lunch-bag, books and slate;  
You needn't long to be a man,  
    Self-confident and great;  
For ever since the world began  
Each boy must spring to Nature's plan,  
Must worry through as best he can —  
    Make up your mind to Wait.

O young galoot! you find it rough —  
    This iron hand of Fate!  
Your confidence is mostly bluff,  
    And doubts preponderate —  
Are you the genuine all-wool stuff?  
Are you a daisy or a muff? —  
Patience! you'll find out soon enough,  
    If you can only Wait.

O baffled bloke! with no resource!  
    Whose knowledge comes too late;  
Whose prospects change from bad to worse,  
    Till Hope gives place to Hate!  
Sick of existence, and perforce  
Impatient for the long divorce —  
You'll get your call in proper course,  
    Take my advice, and Wait.

O geezer! drawing near the test  
    That none may obviate;  
Don't waste your time in fruitless quest  
    *Re* man's post-mortem state.  
That doubt will soon be set at rest —  
You'll be extinguish'd, grill'd, or blest,  
Or spook the world from east to west.  
    Meanwhile, you have to Wait.

## A PSALM OF SUBJECTION.

Nurse your "unconquerable soul,"  
But diligently bear in mind  
That Life is not a wayward stroll,  
For Circumstance asserts control,  
And fiercely prods you up behind.  
This dictum you can safely trust —  
Growl you may, but Go you must.

Though you may shaft with all your might,  
And kick against the goad, like Paul,  
Though you may prop, and squeal, and bite,  
You still put up a losing fight —  
Unconquerable soul, and all.  
Still subject to Compulsion's thrust,  
Growl you may, but Go you must.

Have done with bluff, for Satan's sake,  
A bulrush never can be strong.  
You're overmatch'd — make no mistake —  
The option is to bend or break;  
In either case, you're forced along,  
And what avails your cheap disgust?  
Growl you may, but Go you must.

In point of fact, your name is Sludge,  
And puppet-like your lot is cast,  
For though you may rebel and grudge,  
And spitefully refuse to budge,  
Your claim will be pegg'd out at last.  
Sludge to sludge, and dust to dust —  
Growl you may, but Go you must.

Next hear St. Peter's challenge keen,  
"My son, you've fail'd to nick a goal.  
In headstrong wickedness serene,  
You fear'd not parson, king or queen;  
Your Bible was the BULLYTEEN;  
Wherefore, your name is off the roll.  
No picnic on these meadows green,  
No part in this celestial scene,  
For your unconquerable soul.  
March down yon steps — the doom is just —  
Growl you may, but Go you must."

## A PSALM OF COUNSEL.

Though some good folks may take it ill,  
As trifling with parsonic frill,  
Thus saith the Lord to Jim and Bill,  
    In admonition stern and straight:—  
Ye hold from Me the brightest zones,  
The fairest realm this planet owns,  
Guarded on every side by Jones,  
    And standing yet inviolate.  
So far, so good. And all the rest,  
Amounting to a racial test,  
May be compendiously express'd  
    In four short words — Be Up To Date.

*Australia is the unit.* There!  
This Commonwealth denotes your share;  
Ye have no loyalty to spare,  
In spite of all your Empire prate.  
For though the Motherland be good,  
Yet may some oddities intrude,  
Which it would be extremely rude  
    On your poor part to imitate.  
For instance, if she should be lame,  
It's not included in the game  
That you should limp behind the dame,  
    By way of keeping Up To Date.

AUSTRALIA IS THE UNIT, mind!

With bounds unchangeably defin'd;  
A continent to you assign'd —  
    That is the primary postulate.  
One "angry cloth" to call your own;  
One scorn for every brand of drone;  
One slant-eyed menace — yours alone! —  
    Involving each ingredient State.  
The Commonwealth is paramount;  
City or province merely count  
As streamlets from that central fount —  
    Provided you are Up To Date.

If you should fail, with such a start,  
To lead the world in Thought and Art,  
You're only fit to draw a cart,  
    Which probably would be your fate.  
Now take the tip of Holy Writ —

You won't survive unless you're fit;  
And something more than honest grit  
    Must go to make a people great.  
An Asiatic boundary fence  
Is little better than pretence  
Unless you're white in every sense —  
    Unless, in fact, you're Up To Date.

Ye have an old-man job on hand,  
One that will tax your sense and sand;  
The building of a nation grand  
    Is not accomplish'd while you wait.  
Put not your trust in men of girth,  
Who should have left this waken'd earth  
About the period of their birth,  
    And lived in times appropriate.  
For well-a-day! their date is fled;  
Unearned Prerogative is dead,  
And Decency may reign instead —  
    But only if you're Up To Date.

Touching your own forefathers' case,  
Ask History what has taken place  
Since Dago legions made the pace —  
    Say, *Anno Domini* 78.  
Thrice has the Motherland been lost —  
Three separate times has she been boss'd  
By enterprising foes who crossed  
    The German Sea or Dover Strait;  
While Bulldog Boys, with clods and sticks,  
Fail'd to frustrate their knavish tricks;  
Hence Freedom's show was simply nix —  
    Which came of not being Up To Date.

Till torn with feud, or sick with rot,  
Or reconciled to Slavery's lot,  
    And ripe for wiping off the slate.  
A parcel of anointed skunks;  
A crowd that views its work, and funks;  
A push of despots, scabs, and drunks,  
    I will by no means tolerate.  
Assyria therefore had to go,  
The Roman, Greek, and Ikey Mo.  
Gehenna gapes — and rightly so —  
    For nations drifting Out Of Date.

Look out for snakes among the grass —  
The noisy parish-minded ass;

The paltry devotee of Class;  
The preacher of sectarian hate.  
To give such pests an honest deal,  
With justice to the public weal,  
You may respect their narrow zeal,  
But count them foes within the gate.  
Should they as candidates appear,  
Dispose them in their proper sphere,  
That is to say, upon their ear  
Your statesmen must be Up To Date.

Beware of Thrift's insidious creed,  
That gospel of the moral weed;  
For when a race professes Greed,  
True aspiration must stagnate.  
But don't denounce, with censure rash,  
The helpful medium known as cash,  
Nor swamp it in a futile splash,  
Blind to what may eventuate.  
Don't underrate what gonce can do,  
Yet always keep in easy view  
The unpretentious six-by-two,  
Which places Mammon Out Of Date.

You can't do better than apply  
The Reverend Hervey's rousing cry,  
Who bids you Set Your Standards High,  
And never pause nor deviate.  
This also you must realize —  
However high those standards rise,  
In ethic or artistic guise,  
Your potencies are adequate.  
By all-round worth success is won;  
And though you have no soft thing on,  
Be sure distinction waits upon  
The nation that is Up To Date.

The point of honour is your crux;  
Run always straight, and chance the ducks;  
For in this world of constant flux,  
The higher type must dominate.  
All fetish forms you may neglect,  
But vices that command respect,  
And virtues that are least correct,  
You will do well to cultivate.  
Confront the proud, sustain the weak,  
And not for you shall Freedom shriek  
Till falls your Kosciusko peak —

Assuming you are Up To Date.

## VIRTUES THAT PAY.

You argue — as sympathy governs your bias —  
That Wisdom distributes the capon and crust,  
Indulging the sinful, and stinting the pious,  
Or starving the wicked, and fattening the just.  
You are wong to the Evil One; hear what I say  
There are ruinous virtues, and virtues that pay.

If your purpose be saving your soul and your bacon —  
Fruition forthwith, and a sweet by-and-bye;  
If your definite project stand clear and unshaken  
A fatman on earth, and a seraph on high  
In working this out let it still be your lay  
There are ruinous virtues, and virtues that pay.

Such virtues are not of the workshop or cloister:  
They test every act by the way it pans out;  
They prompt you to seize on the world as your oyster,  
Inserting our knife with a spirit devout.  
For strait is the portal, and narrow the way  
Representing the route of the virtues that pay.

Men as good as yourself, or most probably better,  
Have gone to the rear, after many a try —  
A permanent wage-slave, a usurers' debtor  
Reduced to the motto of "Root, hog or die,"  
But their handicap dates from an earlier day,  
When they failed in espousals of virtues that pay.

There is nothing outre in the man with the bluey;  
He started, like you, for a goal undisclosed  
But never in life can he come within coo-ee —  
Though he may reach a goal, (with the vowels transposed)  
And a similar Sheol gapes fair in your way,  
If you turn out deficient in virtues that pay.

You must race, like St. Paul —you must race for the dollar —  
No pause of compunction must ever intrude:  
You must watch, you must pray, never missing a collar  
The course is severe, and the company good.  
You must reverence the Thrift-God, and earnestly pray  
To be grounded and built up in virtues that pay.

By this means you will serve the Almighty and Mammon,  
And die in a state of salvation and wealth;  
When the clergy, without a suggestion of gammon,  
Will furnish your soul with a clean bill of health.

So you'll sweep through the gates in your spotless array  
A shining example of Virtues that pay.

## "THE GUMSUCKER'S DIRGE."

Sing the evil days we see, and the worse that are to be,  
In such doggerel as dejection will allow,  
We are pilgrims, sorrow-led, with no Beulah on ahead,  
No elysian Up the Country for us now.

For the settlements extend till they seem to have no end;  
Spreading silently, you can't tell when or how;  
And a home-infested land stretches out on every hand,  
So there is no Up the Country for us now.

On the six-foot Mountain peak, up and down the dubious creek,  
Where the cockatoos alone should make a row,  
There the rooster tears his throat, to announce with homely note,  
That there is no Up the Country for us now.

Where the dingo should be seen, sounds the Amy tambourine,  
While the hardest case surrenders with a vow;  
And the church-bell, going strong, makes us feel we've lived too long,  
Since there is no Up the Country for us now.

And along the pine-ridge side, where the mallee-hen should hide,  
You will see some children driving home a cow;  
Whilst, ballooning on a line, female garniture gives sign,  
That there is no Up the Country for us now.

Here, in place of emu's eggs, you will find surveyors' pegs,  
And the culvert where there ought to be a slough;  
There, a mortise in the ground, shows the digger has been round,  
And has left no Up the Country for us now.

And across this fenced-in view, like our friend the well-sung Jew,  
Goes the swaggy, with a frown upon his brow,  
He is cabin'd, cribb'd, confin'd, for the thought is on his mind,  
That there is no Up the Country for him now.

And the boy that bolts from home has no decent place to roam,  
No region with adventure to endow,  
But his ardent spirit cools at the sight of farms and schools,  
Hence, there is no Up the Country for him now.

Such a settling, spreading curse must infallibly grow worse,  
Till the saltbush disappears before the plough,  
But the future, evil-fraught, is forgotten in the thought,  
That there is no Up the Country for us now.

We must do a steady shift, and devote our minds to thrift,  
Till we reach at length the standard of the Chow,

For we're crumpled side by side in a world no longer wide,  
And there is no Up the Country for us now.

Better we were cold and still, with our famous Jim and Bill,  
Beneath the interdicted wattle-bough,  
For the angels made our date five-and-twenty years too late,  
And there is no Up the Country for us now.

## "THE BULLFROG BELL."

Now the truce of night brings respite to the sordid care of day,  
And in listlessness I pace the river side,  
Where the solitude is wounded by no lighted window's ray;  
But illicit fancy will not be denied  
For the darkening flat reiterates a freer life's farewell,  
In the long familiar knocking of a bullfrog bell.

And in reverie I see the loaded waggons slowly creep,  
Far across the western plains of New South Wales;  
With "talking" wheels and platforms, with wool-ropes biting deep,  
And the dust of two broad countries on the vales.  
Till the stars take shape in patterns, and through their dreamy spell  
Comes the low, incessant knocking of the bullfrog bell.

And the retrospection lingers, bringing spiritless regret,  
Though the northward track is open to me still  
I may count the morning muster — I may track the stragglers yet  
I may spell or battle onward, as I will  
I may wake at night to listen, and know that all is well  
By the reassuring answer of the bullfrog bell.

But that virile life repeated would be wearisome and trite,  
Since the glamour of adventure cannot last  
When the future, with its freshness, its pulsing, roseate light,  
Has congealed into a leaden-coloured Past.  
So an unreturning era owns its sympathetic knell  
In the melancholy knocking of that bull-frog bell.

# "THE SCHOOLHOUSE ON THE PLAIN."

## (From "An Idyll of the Wimmera.")

On the geodetic line, where the parish boundaries join  
At a level and interminable lane  
You can see it there, alone, standing calmly on its own,  
Like an iceberg in a solitary main.  
It's a topographic base, and each near or distant place  
Is located from the Schoolhouse on the Plain.

It lies open to the road, in the usual country mode,  
With a few old waster posts to bridge the drain;  
The reserve is clean and dry, being several inches high,  
The building standing back about a chain.  
Nothing could excel the stand, and it's worth its bit of land,  
That inexpensive Schoolhouse on the Plain.

It requires a lick of paint, to correct the weather-taint,  
And its windows should have here and there a pane;  
The open-jointed floor swallows pencils by the score,  
And the veteran desks are inked with many a stain;  
Still it's proof against the wet, and there's lots of service yet  
In that unpretentious Schoolhouse on the Plain.

Such eventual wear and tear, with contingent disrepair,  
Is appointed unto everything mundane —  
Bear in mind it braves with ease the fanatic and the breeze,  
Spreading influence that nothing can restrain —  
Think how superstitions yield, and sectarian feuds are heal'd,  
In that nation-building Schoolhouse on the Plain.

All the district, far and near, has a postal centre here,  
So suitable that no one can complain;  
Here the local Rechabites, on alternate Thursday nights,  
Renew their solemn davy to abstain;  
Also that improvement class, call'd the Literary Ass,  
Holds its meetings at the Schoolhouse on the Plain.

When election time draws near, then the hayseeds rally here,  
To catechise the candidate urbane;  
To demand a cockspur line, and an open port for twine,  
With reduction of the railway freight on grain.  
Here on polling day they meet, to discomfort Lygon Street,  
No nonsense with the Schoolhouse on the Plain!

Here the missionary man, fresh from Indian or Japan,  
Unblushingly takes on him to maintain

That he labours day and night in a harvest field that's white,  
With other statements shaky and inane;  
But his magic-lantern show makes the entertainment go,  
Till applauses fill the Schoolhouse on the Plain.

Every Sunday, after two, there's an old-man rendezvous,  
And the edifice becomes a sacred fane;  
Then along the fence, each side, stands a line of horses tied,  
And the seats within hold all they can contain;  
While some good, well-meaning man, as per local-preachers' plan,  
Holds Service in the Schoolhouse on the Plain.

And as he exhorts or prays, or the flock their voices raise  
In rendition of some Sankey-book refrain,  
A dozen dogs, and more, hold possession of the floor,  
Dumbly showing how they need insectibane —  
Nor are such things taken ill, for there's no superfluous frill  
At those preachings in the Schoolhouse on the Plain.

There the boys deal glances fond, and the girls, of course, respond,  
In spite of the indifference they feign;  
Whilst the mothers of the youth listen to the word of truth,  
Till they feel about as innocent as Cain;  
And the toddlers play bo-peep, and the rude forefathers sleep,  
Being bosses of the Schoolhouse on the Plain.

But the Monday, coming round, as by ancient usage bound,  
Sees our jossless system under way again;  
Then the hopefuls mobilize, and the droning murmurs rise,  
Whilst the tree of knowledge creaks beneath the strain;  
And the R's extend their roots, and the young idea shoots,  
Under cover of that Schoolhouse on the Plain.

There are stories carted here, from the Northern Hemisphere,  
And design'd to cause a thrill through every vein,  
Of monarch's, grave or gay, each distinguish'd in his day  
By being feeble-minded or insane —  
But here the kids compete for the scorner's sinful seat.  
Their troubles at the Schoolhouse on the Plain!

As becometh Jim and Bill, their solicitude is nil  
Touching Mary Queen of Scots or Anne Boleyn,  
But the ructions of the kings, when their docile underlings  
Made a many-figured tally of the slain,  
Are consider'd worth review, for the sporting instinct true  
Is powerful at the Schoolhouse on the Plain.

There are lessons setting forth how an islet somewhere north  
Knock'd the stuffing out of Holland, France and Spain;  
How, from east to west, its drum makes our planet fairly hum,

And the sunrise follow meekly in its train;  
How that spadeful, all alone, gave us everything we own,  
Especially this Schoolhouse on the Plain.

And the lydy-teacher there, comes from heaven alone knows where,  
Like some angel they're vouchsafed to entertain.  
She controls her motley drove by the gentle power of love,  
Emphasising her affection with a cane —  
True, she cavils all the while at the rough, untidy style  
Of her pupils in the Schoolhouse on the Plain.

She sets up to know a lot, but there's one defective spot  
In the dignity she struggles to sustain;  
For her days are pass'd in fright, and her sleep's disturb'd at night,  
As if she had Inspector on the brain;  
And her heart is in her mouth as she watches north and south  
From the windows of the Schoolhouse on the Plain.

And when she is elsewhere gone, that old school will still live on —  
Just as she herself was not the first to reign —  
Since, for better or for worse, Young Australia comes in force,  
(As a reference to the Year-Book will explain);  
And he only leaves a place for his duplicate to grace;  
In the roll-book of the Schoolhouse on the Plain.

They mature, and off they drop, in an intermittent crop,  
Not a single soul desiring to remain;  
For they know their road about, they can turn things inside out!  
But existence, as they quickly ascertain,  
Is a great deal harder row than they thought they had to hoe,  
When they wagg'd it from the Schoolhouse on the Plain.

Many a shearer, tough and strong; many a drover, two yards long;  
Many a bullock driver, hairy and profane;  
Many an innocent yahoo; many a red-hot subject too;  
Many a law-abiding devotee of gain;  
Many a work-girl; many a wife — looking back upon their life,  
Cherish memories of the Schoolhouse on the Plain.

Some important changes gleam o'er the spirit of their dream  
As they blunder through their honourless campaign —  
All that sense of brutal wrong has been dissipated long  
From the standard they were driven to attain;  
And they wish with all their heart they could make a second start  
At the undervalued Schoolhouse on the Plain.

## THE FLY IN THE OINTMENT.

("Bulletin," March, 1900.)

When the great Creator fashion'd us, and saw that we were good,  
He commission'd us to dominate the planet as it stood.  
But His ordinance meets denial still, and peace remains unknown,  
For the Boer is always with us, calling certain lands his own.

Yet the Lord has given us grace to scent a Good Thing from afar —  
Are we not our brother's keeper? Most assuredly we are!  
So we seek to bear his burden, and benignly take him in,  
Though he fight like forty devils in his ignorance and sin.

Once the Boers of Athens met us on the veldt of Marathon,  
Where they fired upon our ambulance, and consequently won.  
And the Maccabean Dutchmen, by their sniping tactics mean,  
Smote our absent-minded beggars round Jerusalemfontein.

The commandos of Arminius denied us land or loot;  
Not to speak of that old Dopper, Oom Bruce of Bannockspruit.  
At Sempachstrom, at Gransonkop, we met the laager's Swiss,  
And they mowed us by the acre, through their white flag artifice.

O the countless tons of swaddies, O the money worth of tools,  
We have spent to prove our doctrine — that the Big Battalion rules!  
Yet the stolid Boer confronts us still, in dirt and Scripture strong,  
While our dividends evaporate — How long? O Lord! how long?

Let us beg the workman's shilling, let us smell our hats in prayer,  
For the swift and lasting triumph of the multi-millionaire.  
Let us reap the fields we sowed not, gather where we have not strawed  
Since your wily operator is the noblest work of God.

Bravely sings the long-hair'd Alfred, "Forward, forward let us range,  
Let the great world spin for ever down the ringing grooves of "Change,"  
O be sure the Good Time Coming shall attain its glorious birth  
When the patriot owns his blunder, and the boodler owns the earth!

## LINES FOR LIZER-JANE'S ALBUM.

(Miss Drewitt.)

No two leaves that wave in Arden,  
No two grass blades on the plain,  
No two flowers that gem the garden,  
Show as twins in form or vein,  
No two grains of desert sand  
Counterpart leave Nature's hand.

So the all resourceful mother  
Forms her children each unique  
Meet to supplement each other  
In the purpose all should seek  
Thus her aim deciphered shows  
None must copy, none may pose —

Hence no trodden path can guide thee;  
Thou art duplicate of none;  
Untried issues shall betide thee;  
Options new beneath the sun  
And thou can'st not copy well  
Failing perfect parallel —

Let thy course be independent  
Steered by three bright stars above,  
Ever shining soft, resplendent  
Boding Faith and Hope and Love,  
These shall guide thee to thy best,  
Like the wise men's beacon blest.

## **BIRTHDAY LINES TO K.B.**

Life is a Poem, short or long,  
A dismal Dirge, or jovial Song,  
A Psalm of faith, or Lay of Pride,  
One stanza by each year supplied.

And thy sweet Hymn of love and truth,  
A carol of unfading youth,  
Which God hath given thee to rehearse,  
Enlightening others' chequered way,  
Is strengthened by a further verse  
Upon the gracious April day.

## **A CHRISTMAS GREETING TO K. B.**

While changing Seasons run their course,  
Controlled and guided from above,  
It is thy part to re-inforce  
The broadening stream of Light and Love.

## **A S.S.T.'S LAMENT.**

Would I were a profit monger,  
    Buying cheap, and selling dear,  
Groceries, or something stronger,  
    Toys, or pipes, or sporting gear,  
Wrong, maybe, but ain't it wronger  
    That I should be stranded here,  
While my upper lip grow longer,  
    Month by month, and year by year?

## IMPROMPTU LINES.

Deem not this wielder of this pen  
The happiest bloque alive,  
For I am only five-foot-ten,  
And ye are ten-foot-five.  
Wherefore I clothe myself in jute,  
And likewise softly go,  
Like that historical galoot  
Whose tale you surely know.

## IN MEMORIAM.

(February, 1879.)

A gentle loving thoughtful boy,  
    But happy gay and bright:  
A gleam of sunshine from the sky  
    That filled a home with light.  
And whether busied with his play  
    Throughout the passing summer day,  
Or sleepless in the night  
    A simple song by children sung,  
For ever in his memory rung,  
    Found gleeful utterance from his tongue  
And filled him with delight —  
    "Jesus loves me — He will stay  
Close beside me all the way."

But now across the morning sky  
    The shade of night has rolled —  
Lay all his little playthings by,  
    His hands are still and cold.  
His loving eyes once bright as day  
    Are turning to their former clay —  
No more:— the tale is told:  
    The soul has left that pulseless breast  
For regions of eternal rest.  
    Ay but to die — a child, alone  
Without a guard or guide  
    To launch into the vast unknown  
Where shapeless phantoms glide,  
    To cross the gulf no bridge can span  
To realms unseen by living man  
    All strange and yet untried.  
With no familiar loved one near  
    To charm away his childish fear,  
And give him one soft word of cheer  
    To break the dreary void.  
Alas! conjecture seems to swim  
    And reason waxes faint and dim,  
But faith affirms 'tis well with him  
    Whatever may betide.  
Jesus loves him — He will stay  
    Close beside him all the way.

## WHAT THE HEART OF THE POET SAID TO THE "BULLETIN."

Tell me not in future numbers  
That our thought becomes inane,  
That our metre halts and lumbers,  
When the Wattle blooms again.

Lies of great men all remind us  
We can challenge and restrain  
Such attempts to bluff and blind us,  
When the Wattle blooms again.

Therefore take our gage of battle!  
Freedom reasserts her reign:  
We are not dumb, driven, cattle  
When the Wattle blooms again.

Doubtless ANSWERS, weekly, daily,  
Adding to his heap of slain,  
Feels a jar, when Nature gaily  
Bids the Wattle bloom again.

No cent censor! time thou learnest  
All this contract may contain —  
Dust thou art, to dust returnest,  
But the Wattle blooms again.

Time may change this loyal jernal  
From religious to profane,  
But a rhythmic law eternal  
Makes the Wattle bloom again.

Trust no Flossie, howe'er pleasant,  
Sweeps are treacherous, totes are vain;  
Banks and scrip are evanescent,  
But the Wattle blooms again.

Cultivate no fair ideal;  
Own no country-seat in Spain;  
All these things must go to Sheol,  
Whil'st the Wattle blooms again.

Czar, and Pope, and Dei Gratia  
Pass like phantoms of the brain  
Never so our bright acacia,  
For the Wattle blooms again.

Thus you see, austere and lonely,

Sailing o'er Life's solemn main,  
One great fact is certain only —  
That the Wattle blooms again.

## **AUTOGRAPH VERSES.**

**(Written on board "Kyarra," bound for W.A.)**

### **For Miss Eliza Cook.**

"Prove what Life can give of gladness;  
    Seek for aught that merits trust —  
All thy mirth will turn to sadness,  
    All thy bliss to cold disgust.  
Soon revolving years will banish  
    Fairest hopes, in darkness laid;  
Earthly treasures soon must vanish,  
    Strength and beauty fail and fade."

Thus, life-weary, spake the preacher,  
    Closing his misguided quest.  
Heed him not, the half-truth teacher,  
    Deaf to Love's supreme behest.  
But with Faith thy life adorning,  
    Serve thy race as Heaven hath plann'd;  
Sow thy seed at dawn of morning,  
    Nor at evening stay thy hand.  
Never shall this path seem weary;  
    Never hath such purpose fail'd;  
Nor the retrospect proved dreary,  
    When Life's furthest heights are scaled.  
And in bright realms still above thee,  
    On some ever-verdant shore,  
Those thou servest, and who love thee,  
    Shall rejoin, to part no more.

## **BREAKING THE NEWS.**

Johnny's drowned — here's his clo'es  
Where he's got to, we dunno;  
Sure enough, he never rose;  
So we thought we'd let you know.  
Gosh! the fright has knocked us flat —  
Here's his shirt, an' here's his hat.

Never seen him since he plopp'd,  
Jist a'side the big red-gum;  
So, thinks we, poor Johnny's copp'd —  
All so suddent! — ain't it rum?  
Must be snagg'd among the roots —  
Here's his pants, an' socks, an' boots.

Simplest thing you ever seen —  
Only just a common swim —  
Cripes! it might as ready been  
Me or Bill in place o' him!  
Try to snake him out, I s'pose?  
Anyway, we fetch'd his clo'es.

("Bulletin.")

## **"ARE YOU THE COVE?"**

"Are you the Cove?" He spoke the words  
As freeman only can.

The squatter freezingly inquir'd,  
"What do you mean, my man?"

"Are you the Cove?" His voice was stern,  
His look was firm and keen.

Again the squatter made reply,  
"I don't know what you mean."

"O dash my rags! let's have some sense —  
You ain't a fool, by Jove!

Gammon you don't know what I mean —  
I mean, ARE YOU THE COVE?"

"Yes, I'm the Cove," the squatter said.

The swagman answered, "Right!  
I thought as much. Show me some place  
Where I can doss to-night."

# THE DEATH OF PRESIDENT LINCOLN.

(A Romance.)

December 11th, 1867.

The fleecy clouds had passed away  
Before the bright approach of day,  
And now the morning's radiance shines  
Upon an Army's order'd lines,  
And light the glancing sunbeams play'd  
On bayonet point and sabre-blade.  
Slow rolled the ponderous mass along —  
A hundred thousand bayonets strong,  
And thirty thousand horses prance  
Impatient of the slow advance,  
While o'er those glittering groves of steel  
The striped and coloured spangles reel  
And Hail! Columbia! lofty notes  
Peel from the trumpets brazen throats.

From post to post the generals ride.  
The army's steady march to guide,  
And aides fly swiftly o'er the plain  
With bloody spur and slacken'd rein;  
And far and wide on every side  
The hollow trembling earth replied  
To those grim legions measured stride  
On dark Virginia's shore —  
And many a heart bounds high with pride  
That soon shall beat no more.

The foe, of far inferior force,  
Scarce sixty thousand foot and horse,  
Stand watching with undaunted glance  
The Federal foeman's grim advance;  
And turn again their hopeful eyes  
To where their own loved banner flies —  
That flag of tessellated bars,  
That on its checks bore seven white stars  
Which waved on many a field before  
But now, alas! is seen no more:  
Its short and bright career is o'er,  
Its light was quenched in streams of gore.

Far on the left, where rank on rank,

Kentucky's footmen held the flank,  
A youthful warrior rode alone,  
To every Southern soldier known,  
For that long falchion by his side  
Had turn'd the battle's doubtful tide  
In many a dark and desperate fight  
When right still triumphed over might.  
His simple dress, undeck'd with lace,  
Bore no brigade's distinctive trace —  
'Twas Booth, who long had vow'd to stand  
The Champion of his Fatherland;  
Unflinching, faithful, firm and fast,  
And strike for freedom to the last.

He rode a horse of spotless white,  
With ample chest, and limbs of might —  
That fiercely strains upon the reins  
As, slow advancing o'er the plains,  
He marks the Union ranks of grey  
And greets them with a furious neigh —  
He lists the hollow thundering drum  
Which tells him that the time is come  
To charge these hostile columns home,  
And flashing flakes of feathery foam  
Fly from his chafing mouth.  
First in the charge's wild career,  
And in retreat the last in rear,  
And, first or last, unknowing fear,  
That noble beast had not his peer  
In all the spacious South.

At once, on centre, left and right,  
The loud artillery woke the fight  
With round-shot, grape and shell —  
And loud the cry of conflict rose  
As fiercely now the armies close  
And vain it were to tell  
How, charging on the cannon's mouth,  
The fiery soldiers of the South  
Were midway met in deadly strife,  
Where each man fought for death or life  
And thousands bled and fell.  
Before the Federals charged — ere yet  
The heavy armed battalions met  
In conflict fierce and dire.  
While skirmishers in scatter'd rank,  
Extended far on front and flank,  
Maintained a dropping fire —

While every ear was bent to hear  
    Their proud Commander's word.  
To bid them charge at full career  
    With bayonet and sword.

Booth calmly watched their threatening course  
    And sternly reined his furious horse.  
But when the opening cannon rung  
    And bugles blew and charged aloud,  
His weapon from the scabbard sprung  
    Like lightning from the thunder-cloud —  
And where the bayonets reddest shine  
    Along the Federals' charging line —  
Where wounded horses wildly leap  
    Through pools of life-blood fetlock deep —  
There his gigantic battle-horse  
    Swept onward in resistless course.  
Round his invulnerable head  
    His reeking crescent blade,  
Still scattering drops of crimson red,  
    In lightning circles played.  
Through fire and smoke the war horse dash'd  
    Unharm'd by shot or shell,  
And where that falling weapon flash'd  
    A Federal soldier fell.

But Lee, who mark'd with eagle glance  
    The Federals' last reserve advance,  
Call'd up his veterans grim and grey,  
    The flower of Southern infantry —  
Down where the dark palmettos wave  
    Ten thousand Carolinians brave  
Their double column shows —  
    Each moment fringed their ranks with flame,  
And fast the withering volleys came  
    Against their flinching foes,  
And through the batteries of the North  
    Their fatal welcome thunder'd forth  
In showers of iron rain.  
    Still fiercer rose their music's swell  
And wilder pealed their battle-yell,  
    While fast and faster still they fell  
As whistling shot and shrieking shell  
    Clove many a ghastly lane —  
And thicker still their bullets came,  
    And closer deadlier grew their aim,  
The Federal lines were heaped with dead  
    And fast the rising panic spread

Along their wavering force,  
Till passing round their left-ward flank  
Their own reserve came rank by rank —  
New England's hardy horse  
Forth to the front each troop advanced,  
Each ready sabre naked glanced,  
And every horse's flank was lanced  
And slacken'd every rein —  
In charging column firm and deep,  
At racing gallop on they sweep  
Who seldom charge in vain.  
That swift advancing avalanche  
Boasts the same spirit stern and stanch  
That tamed a haughty tyrant's pride  
And crushed his servile train  
On Glorious Marston's swarthy side  
And Naseby's bloody plain —  
The Puritan and Cavalier  
Of other days are pitted here.

But well the rifles played their part  
For many a steed, shot through the heart  
Came headlong to the plain.  
And many another kept the ranks  
With empty stirrups smote his flanks  
Whose rider reeling from his seat,  
And trampled neath the horses' feet,  
Might never mount again.  
Till, like a sea that bursts its banks  
They dash against the bristling ranks  
And now through whirling clouds of dust  
And surging wreaths of smoke  
Is seen the bayonet's furious thrust  
The sabre's dazzling stroke.

With fearful slaughter backward driven  
Their shatter'd columns rent and riven  
The cavalry recoil —  
A shout of triumph rose to heaven,  
And to the Southern ranks is given  
Brief respite from their toil.  
Again the madden'd horses wheel,  
Obedient to the armed heel,  
And charging to the bugle's peal  
They rush against the serried steel  
With tenfold rage and force —  
But as the wave breaks on the rock  
That seems its futile rage to mock,

Still stagger'd backward from the shock  
The baffled Northern horse.

Five times with spirit unsubdued,  
They charged in reckless hardihood  
And still the foe his squares made good,  
And still the stubborn bayonets stood  
With more than spartan fortitude.  
And thicker still the ground was strew'd  
With many a quivering corse.

Though firmly stood the fearless few,  
And proudly still their banner flew  
Full well each brave Confederate knew  
Another charge would pierce them through  
For hollow was the war-like show —  
No strength was left to meet the foe,  
Their rifles clogg'd, their bayonet bent  
And well nigh every cartridge spent.

But Booth has marked their flagging fire  
And his fierce frown of battle-ire  
Is changing to a look more dire  
Like lion turned to bay —  
For that fell smile proves one desire,  
To slay, and slay, and slay.  
Woe to the foe who now presumes  
To face his savage wrath  
When gallant zouaves and tall dragoons  
Lie bleeding in his path;  
Whose cloven heads and bosoms gored  
Bear witness of his vengeful sword.  
Where bristling ranks unbroken frown'd  
Like dark grey rocks with breakers crown'd.  
What though his sword no havoc made,  
His course was but a moment stay'd  
For where the riven columns reel  
In hopeless dis-array  
That slender blade of pliant steel  
Cleaves deep its murderous way.

Once more the charging Federals sped  
Across the rampart of the dead  
To where upon the self-same spot  
Where they had fired their deadliest shot  
The doomed Confederates calmly wait  
The charge which is to seal their fate.  
Why need I tell how patriots die?  
The tale has often met our eye

Of those with Leonidas  
    Braved Xerxes' millions in the pass —  
Of Ghebers that disdained to yield  
    Upon Kadessa's well fought field —  
Of Hasting's, Saxons, brave and true,  
    Of the Old Guard at Waterloo.

Despite their valour true and tried  
    The Southern ranks were scattered wide  
The Federals shout of victory rose,  
    While faster rain'd their sabre-blows,  
And vain the single bayonets force  
    To check a charger's rushing course,  
And weak the fence of rifle butt  
    Against the sabre's sweeping cut —  
The after-carnage has begun  
    And Gettysburg is lost and won.  
A few unbroken ranks of war  
    Still formed around the sevenfold star,  
And there regardless of the shot  
    That played against them fast and hot  
And, meeting with the bayonet's stroke  
    The charging squadrons whirlwind shock  
Linked in close phalanx side by side  
    They fiercely fought and firmly died.  
But vainly, one by one, they fell  
    Around the flag they loved so well  
For dark with dust and torn with shot  
    And stained with many a crimson spot,  
The haughty conquerors bear it home  
    To Washington's imperial dome.

When Booth had seen the battle lost  
    And every hope of freedom cross'd  
His comrades dead and wounded lie  
    Or fiercely fighting but to die  
He turned his panting horse's rein  
    And urged him from that fatal plain;  
Nor does that charger flinch or fail  
    Though fast behind his streaming tail,  
The shower of bullets thick as hail  
    Upon the winter's piercing gale,  
In whizzing tempests came —  
    But came in vain — the rider's hand  
Still waves the broken battle-brand  
    And mocks their surest aim.

\* \* \* \* \*

Far different sights now meet the eye  
Where triumph reigns supreme  
Where captured colours hung on high  
In shot rent fragments stream  
And for the cannon's boom of fear  
And rifles ringing sharp and clear  
And soldiers dying groans.  
Voluptuous music greets the ear  
In soft and melting tones,  
And for the blinding solar rays  
Shed through the battle's sulphurous haze  
The chastened light falls soft and clear  
From many a sparkling chandelier  
The dreadful civil war is past  
America has peace at last,  
Her fertile fields shall now no more  
With brothers blood be stained;  
The long and hard fought war is o'er  
The dear-bought victory's gain'd.

The theatre is filled to-night  
With soldiers brave and ladies bright  
And Lincoln sat in chair of state  
And gaily laughed and spoke elate  
Surrounded by the wise and great  
How could he fear the stroke of fate?  
Or dread the final call  
Invested with despotic power  
By these his courtiers of the hour  
He glanced around well pleased to shower  
His smiles upon them all.  
But forth the young avenger sprung  
And loud the death shot rung  
Throughout the lofty hall  
A thousand eyes have seen the smoke  
That from the pistol's muzzle broke  
But Lincoln felt the ball.

And Booth with one triumphant cry  
Leapt down upon the stage  
And brandishing his weapon high  
With thundering voice and flashing cry  
He dared the audience rage  
"So perish tyrants — there he lies  
Who drenched the land with kindred gore  
Look on him Minions, trust your eyes;  
So perish tyrants evermore."  
Then wildly did the tumult swell

And women shrieked and fainting fell  
Who saw that desperate deed:  
Sprung many a soldier from his seat  
All Lincoln's friends leapt to their feet  
But Booth had reached the open street  
Where stood his trusty steed.  
But moon and stars now reel and swim  
Before his vision, faint and dim  
And scarce his saddle could he keep  
For not till then he knew his limb  
Was shatter'd in his reckless leap.

The courser flew with wings of wind,  
But oft the rider looked behind  
It seemed as while his flight he held  
Dark demons still pursue  
Ten thousand fiends triumphant yell'd  
Behind him as he flew.  
They told him how his dreadful deed  
Would never serve his country's need  
But make her bondage worse;  
And how his hated victim's name  
Would shine upon the scroll of fame  
When his would be a curse.

As through the night he wildly ranged  
Those maddening words were hurl'd  
"The assassin's deed has never changed  
The history of the world."  
And still before his aching eye  
He saw those fatal words on high  
Emblazon'd on the starry sky;  
And on the darken'd earth they shone  
Wherever he might gaze upon,  
In characters of red —  
That message passed o'er land and sea  
Transmitting faith and courage free,  
But thrilling him with dread:  
And lofty England's wise'st peer  
Has caught it with prophetic ear  
And recognized its truth —  
And Booth fled on o'er dale and hill  
Those thundering words pursuing still  
The mad and desperate youth.

And now till welcome death shall bring  
Release from pain and fear  
Shall that Sybilline sentence ring

For ever in his ear,  
Still on he races — onward yet —  
His hands are clench'd his teeth are set,  
And, faint with agonizing pain  
He sinks upon his horse's mane  
Till the brave beast that bore him well  
On many a battle plain,  
Spent with his fearful gallop fell  
No more to rise again.

The moon hung high upon the sky  
And ruled the silent night;  
The midnight hour was calm and still  
And river, forest, plain and hill  
Were bathed in ivory light,  
When suddenly a sombre cloud  
Eclipsed the moon's pale face —  
The rising tempest moan'd aloud  
And blacker grew the inky shroud  
That overhung the place.  
And Booth lay sleepless on the floor  
And sadly thought that never more  
He might behold the Southern shore  
Before his life would close —  
Wrapp'd though he was in mournful thought  
Upon the burdened night-wind brought  
A coming sound with danger fraught  
To him whose life was fiercely sought  
By his relentless foes.  
At last he started from the ground,  
And reached his rifle with a bound;  
Full well he knew the fatal sound  
For, as it came more near,  
The clattering beat of horses' feet  
Rose plainly in his ear  
No time for flight, though dark the night  
For, closing round on left and right  
The dusky figures met his sight —  
He raised his rifle then  
Full levelled at the leader's breast,  
But ere his hand the trigger press'd  
The muzzle sank again —  
"Why should another life be shed  
In such a fruitless strife," he said.  
But as he spoke six jets of flame  
Flash'd redly forth — six bullets came;  
Two struck the splintering wall, the rest

Were buried in his dauntless breast.  
A lightning's flash shone broad and bright,  
And, by its angry, lurid light,  
The troopers gathering round the wall  
Their hapless victim saw  
His rifle drop, and backward fall  
Upon his couch of straw.

Just then the threatening tempest woke,  
And loud the rolling thunder broke,  
As if the voice of Nature spoke  
Against the cruel wrong,  
While from the stable's roof the smoke  
Came issuing thick and strong.  
Too prisoned in volume pent  
The crackling thatch at length gave vent,  
And, fierce as bloodhounds on the scent,  
To seize their prey the soldiers went,  
So vainly had the hero spent  
The efforts of his dying hour  
To save his body from their power.

With maledictions deep and dire  
They dragged him from his bed of fire  
His suffering spirit had not pass'd,  
Though each pulsation seem'd his last;  
The scorching fire had left its trace  
On his burnt hair and ghastly face,  
And paler grew his livid cheek  
The while he gathered strength to speak:—

"I ask no mercy at your hands —  
I know the law my life demands —  
But were existence yours to give  
I would not wish one hour to live;  
My bleeding country's race is run  
And my avenging work is done —  
And when my spirit strays afar  
Where Bothwellhaugh and Brutus are  
'Twill find, I trust, more mercy there  
Than men shall grant my memory here.  
But tell my mother how I died —  
As I have lived — on Freedom's side."

Then steel blue chains of lightning flash'd  
And deafening thunder roar'd and crash'd  
And rushing raindrops swept and dash'd  
Unheeded by them all.  
And thus the gallant patriot dies —  
And thus he breathes his latest sighs

As on the bloodstained grass he lies  
Without a friend to close his eyes  
Or sorrow for his fall;  
But when a trooper rais'd his foot  
And spurned him with his arm'd boot,  
The dying warrior changed his place  
And drew his mantle o'er his face.

Now let the howling tempest roar  
For Booth can feel its force no more;  
Now let the captors bend their steel  
Against the form that cannot feel  
Their tyranny has spent its hour  
And Booth is far beyond their power.

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Above the spot where Lincoln lies  
The tall funereal sculptures rise —  
And awful is the solemn gloom  
That lingers round his stately tomb,  
For well the artist's efforts show  
A grateful nation's pride and woe;  
But nobler is the burial place  
Where human art has left no trace  
And simple wildflowers gently wave  
Above the hapless hero's grave —  
Who with devoted heart and hand  
Still strove to save his native land,  
And failing in his generous aim  
Died to avenge her wrongs and shame.

So may his spirit rest in peace  
Even while his country's woes increase;  
While pale Columbia mourns her lord,  
And poets thus his praise record.

## ELEGY ON LINCOLN.

Lincoln is gone — who ruled the Western Land  
From the Pacific to the Atlantic's brim —  
And cold and nerveless lies the mighty hand  
That struck the fetters from the negro's limb.

Lincoln is gone — and now for ever still  
The gentle, manly, and the feeling heart  
And quench'd in might the endless will  
That never flinch'd from Duty's sternest part.

The Negro mourns for him who wont to stand  
The foremost Champion in fair freedom's train;  
Who took the dusky Ethiope by the hand  
And from his forehead wiped the shameful stain.

The gloomy Indian hears the tale with grief  
Of his Protector's dark untimely end —  
And sternly sorrows for the Pale-face Chief,  
The red man's brother and his constant friend.

Now anarchy and rest overwhelm  
In mid-career our lordly ship of state  
For Lincoln's hand no longer holds the helm  
To guide her passage through the fearful strait.

His foresight deep, his judgment keen and cool,  
Would hush Seditious voice and Discord's jar —  
Oh! For another year of Lincoln's rule  
To blot the footprints of intestine war.

But though we view the blank where late he stood  
Discharging fearlessly his country's trust,  
His name shall number with the great and good  
When his proud tomb has moulder'd in the dust.

When dove-eyed peace shall have eternal birth,  
And spread Millennial bliss along our shore  
And all the nations of the smiling earth  
Shall learn the horrid art of war no more.

Yes! we may search from Boston's busy street  
To far Nebraska's wide untrodden plain  
But no such man as Lincoln may we meet,  
Nor shall his country see his like again.

**FINIS.**

**TIME.**

O Time! Time! Time!  
Thou wondrous mystery!  
Within whose rune and rhyme  
Lies all Man's history  
Before Creation's birth  
Or yet the Heavens were made  
With darkness all was girth,  
Till word Creative said  
"Let there be Light;"  
And lo! from out the deep  
In grandeur and with might  
Rolled back the ages of sleep,  
And born was Night-and-Day,  
And stars together sang  
Their glad harmonic lay  
And all Creation rang  
With "Glory to God in the Highest."  
Now let the strain resound  
And Man to God the nighest  
With Light and Life be crowned,  
Till in the time appointed,  
Unfolding from Man's breast  
Be Life with Love anointed  
And God made manifest.

**K.B.**

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