

**William Grayson, from *The Hireling and the Slave* (1856)**

*As Northerners intensified both their criticism of slavery and their celebration of free labor ideology in the late nineteenth century, Southern slaveholders became increasingly aware of the need to strengthen and defend the slave system. Southern legislators drafted new, stricter slave codes while southern writers and intellectuals constructed new proslavery arguments that defined the institution as a “positive good.” This epic poem by defender of slavery William Grayson suggested that slaves were better off than free wage laborers and presented a white supremacist vision of race slavery as a necessary institution to support civilized society in the American South.*

**PART FIRST.**

FALLEN from primeval innocence and ease,  
When thornless fields employed him but to please,  
The laborer toils; and from his dripping brow  
Moistens the lengthening furrows of the plow;  
In vain he scorns or spurns his altered state, [5]  
Tries each poor shift, and strives to cheat his fate:  
In vain new-shapes his name to shun the ill  
Slave, hireling, help the curse pursues him still;  
Changeless the doom remains, the mincing phrase  
May mock high Heaven, but not reverse its ways. [10]

How small the choice, from cradle to the grave,  
Between the lot of hireling, help, or slave!  
To each alike applies the stern decree  
That man shall labor; whether bond or free,  
For all that toil, the recompense we claim — [15]  
Food, fire, a home and clothing — is the same.  
The manumitted serfs of Europe find  
Unchanged this sad estate of all mankind;  
What blessing to the churl has freedom proved,  
What want supplied, what task or toil removed? [20]  
Hard work and scanty wages still their lot,  
In youth o'erlabored, and in age forgot,  
The mocking boon of freedom they deplore,  
In wants and labors never known before.  
Free but in name — the slaves of endless toil, [25]  
In Britain still they turn, the stubborn soil,  
Spread on each sea her sails for every mart,  
Ply in her cities every useful art;  
But vainly may the peasant toil and groan  
To speed the plow in furrows not his own; [30]  
In vain the art is plied, the sail is spread,  
The day's work offered for the daily bread;  
With hopeless eye, the pauper hireling sees

The homeward sail swell proudly to the breeze,  
Rich fabrics wrought by his unequaled hand, [35]  
Borne by each breeze to every distant land;  
For him, no boon successful commerce yields,  
For him no harvest crowns the joyous fields,  
The streams of wealth that foster pomp and pride,  
No food nor shelter for his wants provide; [40]  
He fails to win, by toil intensely hard,  
The bare subsistence — labor's least reward.  
In squalid hut — a kennel for the poor,  
Or noisome cellar, stretched upon the floor,  
His clothing rags, of filthy straw his bed, [45]  
With offal from the gutter daily fed,  
Thrust out from Nature's board, the hireling lies:  
No place for him that common board supplies,  
No neighbor helps, no charity attends,  
No philanthropic sympathy befriends;  
None heed the needy wretch's dying groan, [50]  
He starves unsuccor'd, perishes unknown.  
These are the miseries, such the wants the cares,  
The bliss that freedom for the serf prepares;  
Vain is his skill in each familiar task,  
Capricious Fashion shifts her Protean mask, [55]

His ancient craft gives work and bread no more,  
And Want and Death sit scowling at his door.  
Close by the hovel, with benignant air,  
To lordly halls illustrious crowds repair —  
The Levite tribes of Christian love that show [60]  
No care nor pity for a neighbor's woe;  
Who meet, each distant evil to deplore,  
But not to clothe or feed their country's poor;  
They waste no thought on common wants or pains,  
On misery hid in filthy courts and lanes, [65]  
On alms that ask no witnesses but Heaven,  
By pious hands to secret suffering given;  
Theirs the bright sunshine of the public eye,  
The pomp and circumstance of charity,  
The crowded meeting, the repeated cheer, [70]  
The sweet applause of prelate, prince, or peer,  
The long report of pious trophies won  
Beyond the rising or the setting sun,  
The mutual smile, the self-complacent air,  
The labored speech and Pharisaic prayer, [75]  
Thanksgivings for their purer hearts and hands,  
Scorn for the publicans of other lands,  
And soft addresses — Sutherland's delight,

That gentle dames at pious parties write —  
These are the cheats that vanity prepares, [80]  
The charmed deceits of her seductive fairs,  
When Exeter expands her portals wide,  
And England's saintly coteries decide  
The proper nostrum for each evil known  
In every land on earth, except their own, [85]  
But never heed the sufferings, wants, or sins  
At home, where all true charity begins.  
There, unconcerned, the philanthropic eye  
Beholds each phase of human misery;  
Sees the worn child compelled in mines to slave [90]  
Through narrow seams of coal, a living grave,  
Driven from the breezy hill, the sunny glade,  
By ruthless hearts, the drudge of labor made,  
Unknown the boyish sport, the hours of play,  
Stripped of the common boon, the light of day, [95]  
Harnessed like brutes, like brutes to tug, and strain,  
And drag, on hands and knees, the loaded wain:  
There crammed in huts, in reeking masses thrown,  
All moral sense and decency unknown,  
With no restraint but what the felon knows, [100]  
With the sole joy that beer or gin bestows,

To gross excess and brutalizing strife,  
The drunken hireling dedicates his life:  
Starved else, by infamy's sad wages fed,  
There women prostitute themselves for bread, [105]  
And mothers, rioting with savage glee,  
For murder'd infants spend the funeral fee;  
Childhood bestows no childish sports or toys,  
Age neither reverence nor repose enjoys,  
Labor with hunger wages ceaseless strife, [110]  
And want and suffering only end with life;  
In crowded huts contagious ills prevail,  
Dull typhus lurks, and deadlier plagues assail,  
Gaunt Famine prowls around his pauper prey,  
And daily sweeps his ghastly hosts away; [115]  
Unburied corpses taint the summer air,  
And crime and outrage revel with despair.  
Torn from the cottage, conscript peasants go  
To distant wars, against an unknown foe,  
On fields of carnage, at ambition's call, [120]  
Perish — the warrior's tool, the monarch's thrall;  
Wasted by plagues, unhonored their remains,  
They fill a ditch on Danube's marshy plains;  
In the night trench of mingled mire and blood,

Swept by cold winds and rains, a ceaseless flood, [125]  
Half fed, half clad, the tentless earth their bed,  
Reeking with gore in mutual slaughter shed,  
Scourged by disease, at every dreary post,  
They fall in myriads on Crimea's coast,  
Or whelmed in snows on Beresina's shore, [130]  
Sleep the long treacherous sleep that wakes no more;  
Worn by the toilsome march, the sleety sky,  
Crouching in groups, the sinking squadrons lie:  
No longer fly the fierce barbarian bands,  
But, rapt in visions of far-distant lands, [135]  
In their last wild delirious fancies see  
The sunny hills — the haunts of infancy,  
Green summer meadows, warm unclouded skies,  
Welcomes of homely joy and glad surprise,  
Till the stern frost-king stops the crimson stream [140]  
Of life, and breaks the dying soldier's dream;  
Home, friends recede before his icy sway,  
The dream of bliss and dreamer fade away,  
With frozen hosts, the snowy waste is spread,  
And howling wolves feast on the unburied dead. [145]  
Far from their humble homes and native land,  
Forced by a landlord's pitiless command,

In uncongenial climes condemned to roam,  
That sheep may batten in the peasant's home,  
The pauper exiles, from the hill that yields [150]  
One parting look on their abandoned fields,  
Behold with tears no manhood can restrain,  
Their ancient hamlet level'd with the plain:  
Then go in crowded ships new ills to find,  
More hideous still than those they left behind; [155]  
Grim Chol'ra thins their ranks, ship-fevers sweep  
Their livid tithes of victims to the deep;  
The sad survivors, on a foreign shore,  
The double loss of homes and friends deplore,  
And beg a stranger's bounty to supply [160]  
The food and shelter that their homes deny.  
Yet homebred misery, such as this, imparts  
Nor grief nor care to philanthropic hearts;  
The tear of sympathy forever flows,  
Though not for Saxon or for Celtic woes; [165]  
Vainly the starving white, at every door,  
Craves help or pity for the hireling poor;  
But that the distant black may softlier fare,  
Eat, sleep, and play, exempt from toil and care,  
All England's meek philanthropists unite [170]



With frantic eagerness, harangue and write;  
By purchased tools diffuse distrust and hate,  
Sow factious strife in each dependent state,  
Cheat with delusive lies the public mind,  
Invent the cruelties they fail to find, [175]  
Slander, in pious garb, with prayer and hymn,  
And blast a people's fortune for a whim.

Cursed by these factious arts, that take the guise  
Of charity to cheat the good and wise,  
The bright Antilles, with each closing year, [180]

See harvests fail, and fortunes disappear;  
The cane no more its golden treasure yields;  
Unsightly weeds deform the fertile fields;  
The negro freeman, thrifty while a slave,

Loosed from restraint, becomes a drone or knave; [185]  
Each effort to improve his nature foils,  
Beggars, steals, or sleeps and starves, but never toils;  
For savage sloth mistakes the freedom won,  
And ends the mere barbarian he begun.

Then, with a face of self-complacent smiles, [190]  
Pleased with the ruin of these hapless isles,  
And charmed with this cheap way of gaining heaven  
By alms at cost of other countries given —

Like Nathan's host, who hospitably gave  
His guest a neighbor's lamb his own to save, [195]  
Clarkson's meek school beholds with eager eyes,  
In other climes, new fields of glory rise,  
And heedless still of home, its care bestows,  
In other lands, on other Negro woes.  
Hesperian lands, beyond the Atlantic wave, [200]  
Home of the poor, and refuge of the brave,  
Who, vainly striving with oppression, fly  
To find new homes beneath a happier sky;  
Hither, to quiet vale or mountain side,  
Where Peace and Nature undisturbed abide, [205]  
In humble scenes unwonted lore to learn,  
Patriot and prince their banished footsteps turn;  
The exiled Bourbon finds a place of rest,  
And Kossuth comes, a nation's thankless guest;  
Here, driven by bigots to their last retreat, [210]  
All forms of faith a safe asylum meet,  
Each as it wills, untouched by former fears,  
Its prayer repeats, its cherished altar rears:  
Scorned by all tongues, assailed by every hand,  
Alien and outcast from his promised land, [215]  
From Carmel's heights and Sion's holier hill,

By God's decree a ceaseless wanderer still,  
The Hebrew finds, his long oppression past,  
A grateful home of equal laws at last;  
The Jesuit's zeal, in this secure abode, [220]  
No hostile edict fears, nor penal code,  
And Luther's followers, in their Western home,  
Like Bachman, scorn the bulls and fires of Rome.

To exile flying from a perjured state,  
From royal bigotry and papal hate, [225]  
The Huguenot, among his ancient foes,  
Found shelter here and undisturbed repose;  
Sad the long look the parting exile gave  
To France receding on the rising wave!

Her daisied meads shall smile for him no more, [230]  
Her orchards furnish no autumnal store,  
With memory's eye alone the wanderer sees  
The vine-clad hills, the old familiar trees,  
The castled steep, the noonday village shade,  
The trim quaint garden where his childhood played; [235]

No more he joins the labor of the fields,  
Or shares the joy the merry vintage yields;  
Gone are the valley homes, by sparkling streams  
That long shall murmur in the exile's dreams,

And temples, where his sires were wont to pray, [240]  
With stern Farel and chivalrous Mornay —  
Scenes with long-treasured memories richly fraught,  
Where Sully counseled, where Coligni fought,  
And Henri's meteor plume in battle shone,  
A beacon-light to victory and a throne. [245]  
These all are lost; but, smiling in the West,  
Hope, still alluring, calms the anxious breast;  
And, dimly rising through the landward haze,  
New forms of beauty court his wistful gaze:  
The level line of strand that brightly shines [250]  
Between the rippling waves and dusky pines,  
A shelving beach that sandy hillocks bound,  
With clumps of palm and fragrant myrtle crowned;  
Low shores, with margins broad of marshy green,  
Bright winding streams the grassy wastes between, [255]  
Wood-crested islands that o'erlook the main,  
Like dark hills rising on a verdant plain;  
Trees of new beauty, climbing to the skies,  
With various verdure meet his wondering eyes:  
Gigantic oaks, the monarchs of the wood, [260]  
Whose stooping branches sweep the rising flood,  
And, robed in solemn draperies of moss,

To stormy winds their proud defiance toss;  
Magnolias bright with glossy leaves and flowers,  
Fragrant as Eden in its happiest hours; [265]  
The gloomy cypress, towering to the skies,  
The maple, loveliest in autumnal dyes,  
The palm armorial, with its tufted head,  
Vines over all in wild luxuriance spread,  
And columned pines, a mystic wood, he sees, [270]  
That sigh and whisper to the passing breeze:  
Here, with determined will and patient toil,  
From wood and swamp he wins the fertile soil;  
To every hardship stern endurance brings,  
And builds a fortune undisturbed by kings; [275]  
Fair fields of wealth and ease his children find,  
Nor heed the homes their fathers left behind.  
Companions of his toil, the axe to wield,  
To guide the plow, and reap the teeming field,  
A sable multitude unceasing pour [280]  
From Niger's banks and Congo's deadly shore;  
No willing travelers they, that widely roam,  
Allured by hope to seek a happier home,  
But victims to the trader's thirst for gold,  
Kidnapped by brothers, and by fathers sold, [285]

The bondsman born, by native masters reared,  
The captive band in recent battle spared;  
For English merchants bought; across the main,  
In British ships, they go for Britain's gain;  
Forced on her subjects in dependent lands, [290]  
By cruel hearts and avaricious hands,  
New tasks they learn, new masters they obey,  
And bow submissive to the white man's sway.  
But Providence, by his overruling will,  
Transmutes to lasting good the transient ill, [295]  
Makes crime itself the means of mercy prove,  
And avarice minister to works of love.  
In this new home, whate'er the negro's fate —  
More bless'd his life than in his native state!  
No mummeries dupe, no Fetich charms affright, [300]  
Nor rites obscene diffuse their moral blight;  
Idolatries, more hateful than the grave,  
With human sacrifice, no more enslave;  
No savage rule its hecatomb supplies  
Of slaves for slaughter when a master dies: [305]  
In sloth and error sunk for countless years  
His race has lived, but light at last appears —  
Celestial light: religion undefiled

Dawns in the heart of Congo's simple child;  
Her glorious truths he hears with glad surprise, [310]  
And lifts his eye with rapture to the skies;  
The noblest thoughts that erring mortals know,  
Waked by her influence, in his bosom glow;  
His nature owns the renovating sway,  
And all the old barbarian melts away. [315]  
And now, with sturdy hand and cheerful heart,  
He learns to master every useful art,  
To forge the axe, to mould the rugged share,  
The ship's brave keel for angry waves prepare:  
The rising wall obeys his plastic will, [320]  
And the loom's fabric owns his ready skill.  
Where once the Indian's keen, unerring aim,  
With shafts of reed transfixed the forest game,  
Where painted warriors late in ambush stood,  
And midnight war-whoops shook the trembling wood, [325]  
The Negro wins, with well-directed toil,  
Its various treasures from the virgin soil;  
Swept by his axe the forests pass away,  
The dense swamp opens to the light of day;  
The deep morass of reeds and fetid mud, [330]  
Now dry, now covered by the rising flood,

In squares arranged by lines of bank and drain,  
Smiles with rich harvests of the golden grain,  
That, wrought from ooze by nature's curious art  
To pearly whiteness, cheers the Negro's heart, [335]  
Smokes on the master's board in goodly show,  
A mimic pyramid of seeming snow,  
And borne by commerce to each distant shore,  
Supplies the world with one enjoyment more.  
On upland slopes, with jungle lately spread, [340]  
The lordly maize uplifts its tasseled head;  
Broad, graceful leaves of waving green appear,  
And shining threads adorn the swelling ear —  
The matchless ear, whose milky stores imparts  
A feast that mocks the daintiest powers of art [345]  
To every taste; whose riper bounty yields  
A grateful feast amid a thousand fields,  
And sent, on mercy's errand, from the slave  
To starving hirelings, saves them from the grave.  
In broader limits, by the loftier maize, [350]  
The silk-like cotton all its wealth displays:  
Through forked leaves, in endless rows unfold  
Gay blossoms tinged with purple dyes and gold;  
To suns autumnal bursting pods disclose



Their fleeces, spotless as descending snows; [355]

These, a rich freight, a thousand ships receive,

A thousand looms with fairy fingers weave;

And hireling multitudes in other lands

Are blessed with raiment from the Negro's hands.

Nor these alone they give; their useful toil [340]

Lures the rich cane to its adopted soil —

The luscious cane, whose genial sweets diffuse

More social joys than Hybla's honeyed dews;

Without whose help no civic feast is made,

No bridal cake delights — without whose aid [345]

China's enchanting cup itself appears

To lose its virtue, and no longer cheers,

Arabia's fragrant berry idly wastes

Its pure aroma on untutored tastes,

Limes of delicious scent and golden rind [350]

Their pungent treasures unregarded find,

Ices refresh the languid belle no more,

And their lost comfits infant worlds deplore.

The weed's soft influence, too, his hands prepare,

That soothes the beggar's grief, the monarch's care, [355]

Cheers the lone scholar at his midnight work,

Subdues alike the Russian and the Turk,

The saint beguiles, the heart of toil revives,  
Ennui itself of half its gloom deprives,  
In fragrant clouds involves the learned and great, [360]  
In golden boxes helps the toils of state,  
And, with strange magic and mysterious charm,  
Hunger can stay, and bores and duns disarm.  
These precious products, in successive years,  
Trained by a master's skill, the Negro rears; [365]  
New life he gives to Europe's busy marts,  
To all the world new comforts and new arts;  
Loom, spinner, merchant, from his hands derive  
Their wealth, and myriads by his labor thrive;  
While slothful millions, hopeless of relief, [370]  
The slaves of pagan priest and brutal chief,  
Harassed by wars upon their native shore,  
Still lead the savage life they led before.  
Instructed thus, and in the only school  
Barbarians ever know — a master's rule, [375]  
The Negro learns each civilizing art  
That softens and subdues the savage heart,  
Assumes the tone of those with whom he lives,  
Acquires the habit that refinement gives,  
And slowly learns, but surely, while a slave, [380]

The lessons that his country never gave.

There tropic suns with fires unceasing pour

A baleful radiance on the deadly shore;

Foul vapors guard it; a remorseless host

Of phrensied fevers sentinel the coast, [385]

Brood on the stream, the forest depths invade,

Lurk with alluring slumber in the shade,

Pursue the stranger that attempts to brave

Their fatal power, and hurl him to the grave.

Science in vain her healing hand applies, [390]

From the dread coast refining Commerce flies,

The savage gloom no foreign lights remove

Of arts or arms that conquer to improve;

Nor yet beneath these unpropitious skies,

Of native growth, can art or science rise; [395]

While states and empires — an august array,

In ruin glorious, flourish and decay;

No sable muses here, with voice divine,

Speak the charmed words that soften and refine,

No black Prometheus with heroic heart, [400]

Wins and bestows the shining gifts of art,

Bondsman of Fetich violence and lust,

A slave of slaves, the Negro licks the dust,

Unchanged since Heaven's creative word outspread  
The seas, and heaved the mountains from their bed. [405]  
Hence is the Negro come, by God's command,  
For wiser teaching to a foreign land;  
If they who brought him were by Mammon driven,  
Still have they served, blind instruments of Heaven;  
And though the way be rough, the agent stern, [410]  
No better mode can human wits discern,  
No happier system wealth or virtue find,  
To tame and elevate the Negro mind:  
Thus mortal purposes, whate'er their mood,  
Are only means with Heaven for working good; [415]  
And wisest they who labor to fulfill,  
With zeal and hope, the all-directing will,  
And in each change that marks the fleeting year,  
Submissive see God's guiding hand appear.  
Such was the lesson that the patriarch taught, [420]  
By brothers sold, a slave to Egypt brought,  
When, throned in state, vicegerent of the land,  
He saw around his guilty brethren stand,  
On each pale, quivering lip, remorse confess'd,  
And fear and shame in each repentant breast; [425]  
No flashing eye rebuked, no scathing word

Of stern reproof the trembling brothers heard;  
Love only glistened in the prophet's eyes,  
And cheering told the purpose of the skies;  
Grieve not your hearts, he said, dismiss your fear, [430]  
It was not you, but Heaven, that sent me here;  
His chosen instrument, I come to save  
Pharaoh's proud hosts and people from the grave,  
From Egypt's ample granaries to give  
Their hoarded stores, and bid the dying live: [435]  
To Israel's race deliverance to impart,  
And soothe the sorrows of the old man's heart:  
This Heaven's high end; to further the design,  
As he commands, your humble task and mine.  
So here, though hid the end from mortal view, [440]  
Heaven's gracious purpose brings the Negro too;  
He comes by God's decree, not chance nor fate,  
Not force, nor fraud, nor grasping scheme of state,  
As Joseph came to Pharaoh's storied land,  
Not by a brother's wrath, but Heaven's command; [445]  
What though humaner Carlisle disapprove,  
Profounder Brougham† his vote of censure move,  
And Clarkson's friends with modest ardor show  
How much more wisely they could rule below,

Prove, with meek arrogance and lowly pride, [450]

What ills they could remove, what bliss provide,

Forestall the Savior's mercy, and devise

A scheme to wipe all tears from mortal eyes;

Yet time shall vindicate Heaven's humbler plan,

"And justify the ways of God to man." [455]

But if, though wise and good the purposed end,

Reproach and scorn the instrument attend;

If, when the final blessing is confess'd,

Still the vile slaver all the world detest;

Arraign the states that sent their ships of late [460]

To barter beads and rum for human freight,

That claimed the right, by treaty, to provide

Slaves for themselves, and half the world beside,

And from the Hebrew learned the craft so well,

Their sable brothers to enslave and sell. [465]

Shame and remorse o'erwhelmed the Hebrew race,

And penitence was stamped on every face;

But modern slavers, more sagacious grown,

In all the wrong, can see no part their own;

They drag the Negro from his native shore, [470]

Make him a slave, and then his fate deplore;

Sell him in distant countries, and when sold,

Revile the buyers, but retain the gold:  
Dextrous to win, in time, by various ways,  
Substantial profit and alluring praise, [475]  
By turns they grow rapacious and humane,  
And seize alike the honor and the gain:  
Had Joseph's brethren known this modern art,  
And played with skill the philanthropic part,  
How had bold Judah raved in freedom's cause, [480]  
How Levi cursed the foul Egyptian laws,  
And Issachar, in speech or long report,  
Brayed at the masters found in Pharaoh's court,  
And taught the king himself the sin to hold  
Enslaved the brother they had lately sold, [485]  
Proving that sins of traffic never lie  
On knaves who sell, but on the dupes that buy.  
Such now the maxims of the purer school  
Of ethic lore, where sons of slavers rule;  
No more allowed the Negro to enslave, [490]  
They damn the master, and for freedom rave,  
Strange modes of morals and of faith unfold,  
Make newer gospels supersede the old,  
Prove that ungodly Paul connived at sin,  
And holier rites, like Mormon's priest, begin; [495]

There, chief and teacher, Gerrit Smith appears,  
There Tappan mourns, like Niobe, all tears,  
Carnage and fire mad Garrison invokes,  
And Hale, with better temper, smirks and jokes;  
There Giddings, with the Negro mania bit, [500]  
Mouths, and mistakes his ribaldry for wit,  
His fustian speeches into market brings,  
And prints and peddles all the paltry things;  
The pest and scorn of legislative halls,  
No rule restrains him, no disgrace appalls; [505]  
Kicked from the House, the creature knows no pain,  
But crawls, contented, to his seat again,  
Wallows with joy in slander's slough once more,  
And plays Thersites happier than before;  
Prompt from his seat —— when distant riots need [510]  
The Senate's aid —— he flies with railway speed,  
Harangues, brags, bullies, then resumes his chair,  
And wears his trophies with a hero's air;  
His colleagues scourge him; but he shrewdly shows  
A profitable use for whips and blows — [515]  
His friends and voters mark the increasing score,  
Count every lash, and honor him the more.  
There supple Sumner, with the Negro cause,



Plays the sly game for office and applause;  
What boots it if the Negro sink or swim? [520]  
He wins the Senate —— 'tis enough for him.  
What though he blast the fortunes of the state  
With fierce dissension and enduring hate?  
He makes his speech, his rhetoric displays,  
Trims the neat trope, and points the sparkling [525]  
    phrase  
With well-turned period, fosters civil strife,  
And barter for a phrase a nation's life;  
Sworn into office, his nice feelings loathe  
The dog-like faithfulness that keeps an oath; [530]  
For rules of right the silly crowd may bawl,  
His loftier spirit scorns and spurns them all;  
He heeds nor court's decree nor Gospel light,  
What Sumner thinks is right alone is right;  
On this sound maxim sires and sons proceed, [535]  
Changed in all else, but still in this agreed;  
The sires all slavers, the humaner son  
Curses the trade, and mourns the mischief done.  
For gold they made the Negroes slaves, and he  
For fame and office seeks to set them free; [540]  
Self still the end in which their creeds unite,

And that which serves the end is always right.

There Greeley, grieving at a brother's woe,

Spits with impartial spite on friend and foe;

His Negro griefs and sympathies produce [545]

No nobler fruits than malice and abuse;

To each fanatical delusion prone,

He damns all creeds and parties but his own,

Brawls, with hot zeal, for every fool and knave,

The foreign felon and the skulking slave; [550]

Even Chaplin, sneaking from his jail, receives

The Tribune's sympathy for punished thieves,

And faction's fiercest rabble always find

A kindred nature in the Tribune's mind;

Heady each, furious impulse to obey, [555]

He raves and ravens like a beast of prey,

To bloody outrage stimulates his friends,

And fires the Capitol for party ends.

There Seward smiles the sweet perennial smile,

Skilled in the tricks of subtlety and guile; [560]

The slyest schemer that the world e'er saw;

Peddler of sentiment and patent law;

Ready for fee or faction to display

His skill in either, if the practice pay,

But void of all that makes the frank and brave, [565]  
And smooth, and soft, and crafty like the slave;  
Soft as Couthon when, versed in civil strife,  
He sent his daily victims to the knife,  
Women proscribed with calm and gentle grace,  
And murdered mildly with a smiling face: [570]  
Parental rule in youth he bravely spurned,  
And higher law with boyish wit discerned;  
A village teacher then, his style betrays  
The pedant practice of those learned days,  
When boys, not demagogues, obeyed his nod, [575]  
His higher law the tear-compelling rod;  
While Georgia's guest, a pleasant life he led,  
And Slavery fed him with her savory bread,  
As now it helps him, in an ampler way,  
With spells and charms that factious hordes obey. [580]  
There Stowe, with prostituted pen, assails  
One half her country in malignant tales;  
Careless, like Trollope, whether truth she tells,  
And anxious only how the libel sells,  
To slander's mart she furnishes supplies, [585]  
And feeds its morbid appetite for lies  
On fictions fashioned with malicious art,

The venal pencil, and malignant heart,  
With fact distorted, inference unsound,  
Creatures in fancy, not in nature found [590]

Chaste Quadroon virgins, saints of sable hue,  
Martyrs, than zealous Paul more tried and true,  
Demoniac masters, sentimental slaves,  
Mulatto cavaliers, and Creole knaves  
Monsters each portrait drawn, each story told I [595]

What then? The book may bring its weight in gold;  
Enough! upon the crafty rule she leans,  
That makes the purpose justify the means,  
Concocts the venom, and, with eager gaze,  
To Glasgow flies for patron, pence, and praise, [600]

And for a slandered country finds rewards  
In smiles or sneers of duchesses and lords.  
For profits and applauses poor as these,  
To the false tale she adds its falser Keys  
Of gathered slanders —— her ignoble aim, [605]

With foes to traffic in her country's shame.  
Strange power of nature, from whose efforts flow  
Such diverse forms as Nightingale and Stowe!  
One glares a torch of discord; one a star  
Of blessing shines amid the wrecks of war; [610]

One prone to libel; one to deeds of love;  
The vulture-spirit one, and one the dove;  
In various joys their various natures deal,  
One leaves her home to wound it, one to heal;  
That to expose its sorrows, not deplore; [615]  
To help and cheer, this seeks a foreign shore.  
Far from her country, where Marmora flows,  
On Mercy's errand England's daughter goes,  
To tend the suffering sick with woman's care,  
To snatch the bleeding soldier from despair; [620]  
Bend o'er his couch, his languid head sustain,  
With tender hand assuage the pangs of pain,  
Watch o'er the dying moments of the brave,  
And smooth, at least, his passage to the grave;  
Love's labor this, and —— hers no common fame! [625]  
With the heart's homage millions bless her name.  
Not such with Stowe, the wish or power to please,  
She finds no joys in gentle deeds like these;  
A moral scavenger, with greedy eye,  
In social ills her coarser labors lie; [630]  
On fields where vice eludes the light of day,  
She hunts up crimes as beagles hunt their prey;  
Gleans every dirty nook —— the felon's jail,

And hangman's mem'ry, for detraction's tale,  
Snuffs up pollution with a pious air, [635]  
Collects a rumor here, a slander there;  
With hatred's ardor gathers Newgate spoils,  
And trades for gold the garbage of her toils.  
In sink and sewer thus, with searching eye,  
Through mud and slime unhappy wretches pry; [640]  
In fetid puddles dabble with delight,  
Search every filthy gathering of the night;  
Fish from its depths, and to the spacious bag  
Convey with care the black, polluted rag;  
With reeking waifs secure the nightly bed, [645]  
And turn their noisome stores to daily bread.  
These use the Negro, a convenient tool,  
That yields substantial gain or party rule,  
Gives what without it they could never know,  
To Chase distinction, courtly friends to Stowe, [650]  
To Parker, themes for miracles of rant,  
And Beecher blesses with new gifts of cant.  
The master's task has been the black to train,  
To form his mind, his passions to restrain;  
With anxious care and patience to impart [655]  
The knowledge that subdues the savage heart,

To give the Gospel lessons that control  
The rudest breast, and renovate the soul ——  
Who does, or gives as much, of all who raise  
Their sland'rous cry for foreign pence or praise; [660]  
Of all the knaves who clamor and declaim  
For party power or philanthropic fame,  
Or use the Negro's fancied wrongs and woes  
As pretty themes for maudlin verse or prose?  
Taught by the master's efforts, by his care [665]  
Fed, clothed, protected many a patient year,  
From trivial numbers now to millions grown,  
With all the white man's useful arts their own,  
Industrious, docile, skilled in wood and field,  
To guide the plow, the sturdy axe to wield, [670]  
The Negroes schooled by slavery embrace  
The highest portion of the Negro race;  
And none the savage native will compare,  
Of barbarous Guinea, with its offspring here.  
If bound to daily labor while he lives, [675]  
His is the daily bread that labor gives;  
Guarded from want, from beggary secure,  
He never feels what hireling crowds endure,  
Nor knows, like them, in hopeless want to crave, [680]

For wife and child, the comforts of the slave,  
Or the sad thought that, when about to die,  
He leaves them to the cold world's charity,  
And sees them slowly seek the poor-house door ——  
The last, vile, hated refuge of the poor. [685]  
Still Europe's saints, that mark the motes alone  
In other's eyes, yet never see their own,  
Grieve that the slave is never taught to write,  
And reads no better than the hireling white;  
Do their own plowmen no instruction lack, [690]  
Have whiter clowns more knowledge than the black?  
Has the French peasant, or the German boor,  
Of learning's treasure any larger store;  
Have Ireland's millions, flying from the rule  
Of those who censure, ever known a school? [695]  
A thousand years and Europe's wealth impart  
No means to mend the hireling's head or heart;  
They build no schools to teach the pauper white,  
Their toiling millions neither read nor write;  
Whence, then, the idle clamor when they rave [700]  
Of schools and teachers for the distant slave?  
And why the soft regret, the coarse attack,  
If Justice punish the offending black?



Are whites not punished? When Utopian times  
Shall drive from earth all miseries and crimes, [705]  
And teach the world the art to do without  
The cat, the gauntlet, and the brutal knout,  
Banish the halter, galley, jails, and chains,  
And strip the law of penalties and pains;  
Here, too, offense and wrong they may prevent, [710]  
And slaves, with hirelings, need no punishment:  
Till then, what lash of slavery will compare  
With the dread scourge that British soldiers bear?  
What gentle rule, in Britain's Isle, prevails,  
How rare her use of gibbets, stocks, and jails! [715]  
How much humaner than a master's whip,  
Her penal colony and convict ship!  
Whose code of law can darker pages show,  
Where blood for smaller misdemeanors flow?  
The trifling theft or trespass, that demands [720]  
For slaves light penance from a master's hands,  
Where Europe's milder punishments are known,  
Incurs the penalty of death alone.  
And yet the master's lighter rule insures  
More order than the sternest code secures; [725]  
No mobs of factious workmen gather here,

No strikes we dread, no lawless riots fear;  
Nuns, from their convent driven, at midnight fly,  
Churches, in flames, ask vengeance from the sky,  
Seditious schemes in bloody tumults end, [730]  
Parsons incite, and senators defend,  
But not where slaves their easy labors ply,  
Safe from the snare, beneath a master's eye;  
In useful tasks engaged, employed their time,  
Untempted by the demagogue, to crime, [735]  
Secure they toil, uncursed their peaceful life,  
With labor's hungry broils and wasteful strife.  
No want to goad, no faction to deplore,  
The slave escapes the perils of the poor.

## PART SECOND.

WHERE hireling millions toil, in doubt and fear,  
For food and clothing all the weary year,  
Content and grateful if their masters give  
The boon they beg —— to labor and to live;  
While dreamers task their idle wits to find [5]  
A short-hand method to enrich mankind,

And Fourier's scheme or Owen's plans entice  
Expectant thousands with some deep device  
For raising wages, for abating toil,  
And reaping crops from ill-attended soil: [10]  
If, while the anxious multitudes appear,  
Now glad with hope, now yielding to despair,  
A seraph form, descending from the skies,  
In mercy sent, should meet their wond'ring eyes,  
And, smiling, offer to each suppliant there [15]  
The promised good that fills the laborer's prayer ——  
Food, clothing, freedom from the wants, the cares,  
The pauper hireling ever feels or fears;  
And, at their death, these blessings to renew,  
That wives and children may enjoy them too, [20]  
That, when disease or age their strength impairs,  
Subsistence and a home should still be theirs —  
What wonder would the gracious boon impart,  
What grateful rapture swell the peasant's heart!  
How freely would the hungry list'ners give [25]  
A life-long labor thus secure to live!  
And yet the life, so unassailed by care,  
So blessed with moderate work, with ample fare,  
With all the good the starving pauper needs,

The happier slave on each plantation leads; [30]  
Safe from harassing doubts and annual fears,  
He dreads no famine in unfruitful years;  
If harvests fail from inauspicious skies,  
The master's providence his food supplies;  
No paupers perish here for want of bread, [35]  
Or lingering live, by foreign bounty fed;  
No exiled trains of homeless peasants go,  
In distant climes, to tell their tales of woe:  
Far other fortune, free from care and strife,  
For work, or bread, attends the Negro's life, [40]  
And Christian slaves may challenge as their own,  
The blessings claimed in fabled states alone —  
The cabin home, not comfortless, though rude,  
Light daily labor, and abundant food,  
The sturdy health that temperate habits yield, [45]  
The cheerful song that rings in every field.  
The long, loud laugh, that freemen seldom share,  
Heaven's boon to bosoms unapproached by care,  
And boisterous jest and humor unrefined,  
That leave, though rough, no painful sting behind; [50]  
While, nestling near, to bless their humble lot,  
Warm social joys surround the Negro's cot,

The evening dance its merriment imparts,  
Love, with his rapture, fills their youthful hearts,  
And placid age, the task of labor done, [55]  
Enjoys the summer shade, the winter sun,  
And, as through life no pauper want he knows,  
Laments no poor-house penance at its close.  
Safe in Ambition's trumpet call to strife,  
No conscript fears harass his quiet life, [60]  
While the crushed peasant bleeds — a worthless thing,  
The broken toy of emperor or king;  
Calm in his peaceful home, the slave prepares  
His garden-spot, and plies his rustic cares;  
The comb and honey that his bees afford, [65]  
The eggs in ample gourd compactly stored,  
The pig, the poultry, with a chapman's art,  
He sells or barterers at the village mart,  
Or, at the master's mansion, never fails  
An ampler price to find and readier sales. [70]  
There, when December's welcome frosts recall  
The friends and inmates of the crowded hall,  
To each glad nursling of the master's race  
He brings his present, with a cheerful face  
And offered hand — of warm, unfeigning heart, [75]

In all his master's joys he claims a part,  
And, true as clansman to the Highland chief,  
Mourns every loss, and grieves in all his grief;  
When Christmas now, with its abundant cheer  
And thornless pleasure, speeds the parting year, [80]  
He shares the common joy — the early morn  
Wakes hunter, clamorous hound, and echoing horn,  
Quick steps are heard, the merry season named,  
The loiterers caught, the wonted forfeit claimed,  
In feasts maturing busy hands appear, [85]  
And jest and laugh assail the ready ear;  
Whose voice, than his, more gayly greets the dawn,  
Whose foot so lightly treads the frosty lawn,  
Whose heart as merrily, where mirth prevails,  
On every side the joyous season hails? [90]  
Around the slaughtered ox — a Christmas prize,  
The slaves assembling stand with eager eyes,  
Rouse, with their dogs, the porker's piercing cry,  
Or drag its squealing tenant from the sty;  
With smile and bow receive their winter dues, [95]  
The strong, warm clothing and substantial shoes,  
Blankets adorned with stripes of border red,  
And caps of wool that warm the woollier head;

Then clear the barn, the ample area fill,  
In the gay jig display their vigorous skill; [100]  
No dainty steps, no mincing measures here —  
Ellsler's trained graces — seem to float in air,  
But hearts of joy and nerves of living steel,  
On floors that spring beneath the bounding reel;  
Proud on his chair, with magisterial glance [105]  
And stamping foot, the fiddler rules the dance;  
Draws, if he nods, the still unwearied bow,  
And gives a joy no bearded bands bestow;  
The triple holiday, on angel wings,  
With every fleeting hour a pleasure brings; [110]  
No ennui clouds, no coming cares annoy,  
Nor wants nor sorrows check the Negro's joy.  
His, too, the Christian privilege to share  
The weekly festival of praise and prayer;  
For him the Sabbath shines with holier light, [115]  
The air grows balmier, and the sky more bright;  
Winter's brief suns with warmer radiance glow,  
With softer breath the gales of autumn blow,  
Spring with new flowers more richly strews the ground,  
And summer spreads a fresher verdure round; [120]  
The early shower is past; the joyous breeze

Shakes patt'ring rain-drops from the rustling trees,  
And with the sun, the fragrant offerings rise  
From Nature's censers to the bounteous skies;  
With cheerful aspect, in his best array, [125]

To the far forest church he takes his way;  
With kind salute the passing neighbor meets,  
With awkward grace the morning traveler greets,  
And joined by crowds, that gather as he goes,  
Seeks the calm joy the Sabbath morn bestows. [130]

There no proud temples to devotion rise,  
With marble domes that emulate the skies,  
But bosomed deep in ancient trees, that spread  
Their limbs o'er mouldering mansions of the dead,  
Moss-cinctured oaks and solemn pines between, [135]

Of modest wood, the house of God is seen,  
By shaded springs, that from the sloping land  
Bubble and sparkle through the silver sand,  
Where high o'er arching laurel blossoms blow,  
Where fragrant bays breathe kindred sweets below, [140]

And elm and ash their blended arms entwine  
With the bright foliage of the mantling vine:  
In quiet chat, before the hour of prayer,  
Masters and slaves in scattered groups appear;



Loosed from the carriage, in the shades around, [145]  
Impatient horses neigh and paw the ground;  
No city discords break the silence here,  
No sounds unmeet offend the listener's ear;  
But rural melodies of flocks and birds,  
The lowing, far and faint, of distant herds, [150]  
The mocking-bird, with minstrel pride elate,  
The partridge whistling for its absent mate,  
The thrush's solitary notes prolong,  
Bold, merry blackbirds swell the general song;  
The crested cardinal, of scarlet hue, [155]  
The jay, with restless wing of softer blue,  
The cawing crow upon the loftiest pine  
Cautious and safe their various voices join.  
When now the pastor lifts his earnest eyes,  
And hands outstretched, a suppliant to the skies, [160]  
No rites of pomp or pride beguile the soul,  
No organs peal, no clouds of incense roll,  
But, line by line, untutored voices raise,  
Like the wild birds, their simple notes of praise,  
And hearts of love, with true devotion, bring [165]  
Incense more pure to Heaven's eternal King;  
On glorious themes their humble thoughts employ,

And rise transported with no earthly joy;  
The blessing said, the service o'er, again  
Their swelling voices raise the sacred strain; [170]  
Lingering, they love to sing of Jordan's shore,  
Where sorrows cease, and toil is known no more.  
Not toil alone the fortune of the slave  
He shares the sports and spoils of wood and wave;  
Through the dense swamp, where wilder forests rise [175]  
In tangled masses, and shut out the skies,  
Where the dark covert shuns the noontide blaze,  
With agile step he threads the pathless maze;  
The hollow gum with searching eye explores,  
Traces the bee to its delicious stores, [180]  
The ringing axe with ceaseless vigor plies,  
And from the hollow scoops the luscious prize.  
When Autumn's parting days grow cold and brief,  
Light hoar-frost sparkles on the fallen leaf,  
The breezeless pines, at rest, no longer sigh, [185]  
Bright, pearl-like clouds hang shining in the sky,  
And on strong pinions, in the clear blue light,  
Exulting falcons wheel their towering flight,  
With short, shrill cry arrest the cheerful flow  
Of song, and hush the frightened fields below. [190]

When to the homestead flocks and herds incline,  
Sonorous conchs recall the rambling swine,  
And from the fleecy field the setting sun  
Sends home the slave, his easy harvest done;  
In field and wood he hunts the frequent hare, [195]  
The wild hog chases to the forest lair;  
Entraps the gobbler; with persuasive smoke  
Beguiles the 'possum from the hollow oak;  
On the tall pine-tree's topmost bough espies  
The crafty coon — a more important prize — [200]  
Detects the dodger's peering eyes, that glow  
With fire reflected from the blaze below;  
Hews down the branchless trunk with practiced hand,  
And drives the climber from his nodding stand:  
Downward at last he springs, with crashing sound, [205]  
Where Jet and Pincher seize him on the ground;  
Yields to the hunter the contested spoil,  
And pays, with feast and fur, the evening toil.  
If breezes sleep, and clouds obscure the light,  
The boatman tries the fortune of the night, [210]  
Launches the swift canoe — on either side  
Dips his light paddle in the sparkling tide;  
By bank and marshy isle, with measured force

And noiseless stroke, directs his quiet course;  
Still, at the bow, a watchful partner stands, [215]  
The leaded meshes ready in his hands,  
Prepared and prompt to cast — the torch's beam  
Gleams like a gliding meteor on the stream;  
Along the shore the flick'ring firelight steals,  
Shines through the deep, and all its wealth reveals; [220]  
The spotted trout its mottled side displays,  
Swift shoals of mullet flash beneath the blaze;  
He marks their rippling course; through cold and wet,  
Lashes the flashing wave with dextrous net,  
With poised harpoon the bass or drum assails, [225]  
And strikes the barb through silv'ry tinted scales.  
On sandy islets, when, in early June,  
With lustrous glory looks the full-orbed moon,  
And, spreading from the eye, her pearly light  
Shines on the billows tremulously bright, [230]  
When swelling tides — the winds and waves at rest —  
Tempt the shy turtle to her simple nest,  
That, scooped in sand, and hid with curious art,  
Waits the quick life that summer suns impart,  
The Negro's watchful step the beach explores, [235]  
In the loose sand detects its secret stores,

Pursues the fugitive's slow, cumbrous flight,  
And wins his crowning trophy from the night.  
No need has he the poacher's doom to fear,  
Himself ensnared, while sedulous to snare; [240]  
To him no keeper closes field or wood,  
Nor laws forbid the riches of the flood;  
Shrimp, oyster, mullet, an Apician feast,  
Fit for the taste of pampered prince or priest,  
He freely takes, nor dreads the partial law [245]  
That seeks the boon of Nature to withdraw  
From common use, for Fortune's sated son,  
A pastime only for his rod or gun,  
Kept for an idler's sport, preserved and fed,  
While hungry thousands cry aloud for bread. [250]  
Still braver sports are his when April showers  
Give life and beauty to the joyous flowers,  
When jasmines, through the wood, to early spring,  
In golden cups, their dewy incense bring,  
White dogwood blossoms sparkle through the trees, [255]  
The grape's wild fragrance scents the morning breeze,  
And with the warmer sun and balmier air,  
The finny myriads to their haunts repair:  
Such sports are his with ready jest and glee,

Where bold Port Royal spreads its mimic sea; [260]  
Far in the north the length'ning bay and sky  
Blent into one its shining waters lie,  
And southward, breaking on the shelving shore,  
Meet the sea-wave, and swell its endless roar;  
On either hand gay groups of islands show [265]  
Their charms reflected in the stream below:  
No sunnier lands, no lovelier isles than these,  
No happier homes the weary traveler sees!  
Hilton's long shore on Ocean's breast reclines,  
And rears her headland of majestic pines; [270]  
Fenced from the billows by her subject isles,  
Touched by the rising sun, St. Helen smiles,  
Gleaming afar across the purple bay,  
Her sand-hills glitter with the morning ray;  
Worn by the tides, reluctant Parris yields [275]  
To waves and shallows her receding fields;  
Dawes centred lies in marshes broad and green,  
Beaufort's dark woods adorn the varying scene,  
And Lemon's oak, in lonely grandeur, rears  
His form — a giant of a thousand years — [280]  
The sole survivor of a Titan race,  
A living monument, he marks the place

Where dauntless hearts, Hibault's ill-fated band,  
Claimed, as their own, the wide imperial land;  
Sent by Coligni's wisdom to explore, [285]  
For peaceful homes, this new-discovered shore.  
They mark each quiet nook, each grassy glade,  
And spreading oak of broad, inviting shade,  
In endless woods, with eager pleasure roam,  
And hail with joy the promised Western home; [290]  
While chiefs and kings the wondrous stranger greet,  
And lay their presents at the white man's feet;  
But vain the hope! To this sequestered place  
Their ancient foes, the fierce Iberian race,  
Through miry swamps and pathless thickets steal, [295]  
Murder the heretic with frantic zeal,  
Pollute, with Christian blood, the virgin sod,  
And prove, by massacre, their love of God.  
With better fortune, near the bloodstained grave,  
Advent'rous Britons, braving wind and wave, [300]  
Guided by Sayle, in merry Charles's reign,  
Sought wealth and empire on these shores again;  
Weary of storm and calm, of seas and skies,  
They watched the rising coast with rapturous eyes,  
Trod with delight the fragrance-breathing strand, [305]

And drew new life and vigor from the land,  
But, warned by spectral visions of the dead,  
From the broad bay and peerless islands fled,  
To safer fields their feeble fortunes bore,  
And built their state on Ashley's sheltered shore [310]  
Far in the west, where sunset's parting beam  
With brighter splendor tints the glassy stream,  
Pinckney's green island-home yet bears the name  
Of one whose virtues share his country's fame,  
A soldier proved, without reproach or fear, [315]  
A statesman skilled new commonwealths to rear,  
To field and forum equally inured,  
What arms had won, his eloquence secured;  
With stern resolve his country to defend,  
He spurned the arrogance of foe and friend; [320]  
War crowned him with the laurels of the brave,  
And civic garlands Peace as amply gave;  
With care he watched the anarchy that waits,  
In ambushed strength, to crush revolting states,  
And strove with zeal, all jealous fears above, [325]  
To bind them fast by ties of social love:  
In this alone his generous spirit saw  
For peace, security, and rule for law,



Safety from border strife, from foreign foe,  
And the long ills that feeble nations know. [330]  
Here, every work of patriot duty wrought,  
His peaceful shades the veteran statesman sought,  
With ready anecdote the livelong day,  
Or playful wit, he charmed the grave and gay,  
And taught the art to brighten and refine, [340]  
With cheerful wisdom, life's unmarked decline.  
With ready sympathy, he loved to view  
The April sports, and to partake them too;  
To watch — at early dawn, when skies are bright,  
And dews lie sparkling in the early light [345]  
On leaf and flower — the sail and glistening oar,  
Launched on the bay from every creek and shore,  
The favorite rock, the noted shoal to reach,  
Their landmarks tracing on the distant beach,  
Far as the eye commands the scene around, [350]  
Gay fleets glide swiftly on the shining Sound;  
With shouts and taunts the daily race is run,  
The sail is furled, the wonted station won,  
The line prepared, the hook with caution tried,  
The various bait with artful care applied: [355]  
All eager — slaves and masters — to behold

Their annual prize, with glittering scales of gold,  
To feel the line through glowing fingers glide,  
Watch where the victim shows his burnished side,  
With patient skill his various efforts foil, [360]  
And seize, in triumph, on the conquered spoil;  
Then boast and jest exultingly proclaim  
New trophies added to the victor's fame,  
And the broad grin and shining face declare  
How true a joy the Negro sportsmen share. [365]  
Now, with declining day, on every hand,  
The loaded boats turn slowly to the land,  
Spread the light sail, or ply the bending oar,  
And seek warm shelter on the wooded shore:  
The boat song's chorus, with its wonted charm, [370]  
Imparts new vigor to each sturdy arm;  
The camp, the hamlet catch the well-known note,  
Expect the spoil, and hail the welcome boat.  
With sharpened appetite, the joyous crews  
Prolong their feast of savory steaks and stews, [375]  
And join, where camp-fires glimmer through the trees,  
The light laugh floating on the western breeze;  
Describe the fish and fortunes of the day,  
How sly the bite, how beautiful the play;

Tell, with grave face, the superstitious charm [380]  
That wrought the fisherman success or harm;  
Recount the feats of fishing or of fun,  
In other days, by older sportsmen done;  
In dreams renew their triumphs through the night,  
And wake to others with the dawning light. [385]  
Not Marshfield's master, in the palmiest day,  
For feast or fish could readier skill display,  
Chowder expound with more consummate art,  
At the full trencher play a manlier part,  
Or, more secure from each intrusive care, [390]  
The joy participate and feast prepare.  
Not Elliott, early trained, with easy skill,  
Old Walton's various offices to fill,  
The sport to lead, the willing ear beguile,  
And charm with rare felicity of style, [395]  
The straining line with nicer art employs,  
With keener zest the manly sport enjoys,  
Or takes the fish and fortunes of the day,  
Sunshine or shower, more buoyantly gay.  
But if the wayward fish refuse the bait, [400]  
If floating lines for slacker tides await,  
Its trick and fun the idle moment brings,

From boat to boat light-hearted laughter rings;  
The novice starts alarmed, his slumber broke  
By the sly veteran's oft-repeated joke, [405]  
Or Dupe or Jester, stretched in dreamless sleep,  
Lie rocked by billows rolling from the deep,  
Fanned by the southern breeze, that on its wings,  
From the blue sea refreshing coolness brings:  
Now roused by hunger, every hand explores [410]  
The well-filled box, and culls its ample stores —  
Fish from the morning feast; the bounteous maize,  
Of grist or flour, an ampler dish displays;  
With appetite unsated to the last,  
They feast, and kings may covet the repast. [415]  
Or more alert the crew, on pleasure bent,  
In the gay race the idle hour is spent;  
The anchors lifted from their oozy bed,  
The long lines coiled, the snowy canvas spread;  
With pennants streaming, on the sparkling bay [420]  
Their speed or skill the swifter boats display;  
The Gull and Falcon stretch their pointed wings,  
Through the light foam the rapid Dolphin springs,  
The peerless Nautilus, with broader sail,  
Skims the green wave, and courts the fresh'ning gale. [425]

But other scenes attract the sportsman's gaze,  
And turn his wandering thoughts to other days,  
When on these streams the Indian's swift canoe,  
Light as the gull, to sport or battle flew;  
Light as the noisy flocks that meet the eye, [430]  
On restless pinions flitting gayly by;  
A tameless ocean-brood that love to rove  
The shore and sea, but shun the quiet grove,  
In idle sport they chase and are pursued,  
With sudden dart surprise their minnow food, [435]  
The rising diver watch, the well-earned prize  
Snatch from his bill with sharp, exulting cries,  
Or in the stream their glossy plumage lave,  
And sit with graceful lightness on the wave.  
Aloft the fish-hawk wings his wary way, [440]  
Stops, turns, and watches the incautious prey;  
Quick, as the fish attracts his piercing eye,  
With fluttered wings a moment poised on high,  
Headlong he plunges with unerring aim,  
In iron claws secures the struggling game, [445]  
Upward again his joyous flight resumes,  
And shakes the water from his ruffled plumes.  
Vain is his joy! The eagle's watch explores

The busy scene from Edings distant shores;  
Perched on the pine or live-oak's blasted height, [450]  
His wing half folded, and prepared for flight,  
With neck outstretched he sits, and flashing eye  
Bent on the hawk that hovers lightly by,  
Sees the bold plunge, the shining victim sees,  
And spreads his dusky pinions to the breeze; [455]  
Swift as the shaft just parted from the bow,  
Or the sharp flash that cleaves the clouds below,  
The hawk perceives the dread aerial king,  
Quails at the shadow of the broad dark wing,  
Ceases in circling sweeps to scale the sky, [460]  
And drops his treasure with indignant cry;  
Swooping with matchless power and rushing sound,  
Before the falling prize can reach the ground,  
In graceful curve, the eagle meets his spoil,  
The plundered product of another's toil, [465]  
Eegains his perch that far o'erlooks the main,  
Feasts with fierce eye, and holds his watch again.  
So the mailed baron, with the dawning light,  
Watched the broad valley from his castled height;  
If far below, dense clouds of mist between, [470]  
The passing burgher s flocks and herds were seen,

The merchant troop from Orient climes returned,  
With pearls and gold by toil and peril earned,  
Down swooped the pennon from the feudal hold,  
And clutched the flocks, the costly gems and gold; [475]  
Safe on the rocky perch, in wassail rude  
Spent the long night, and watch at morn renewed.  
Bright streams and isles, how memory loves to trace  
Its boyish sports in each familiar place,  
By wood and wave with joy renewed to dwell, [480]  
And live again the life once loved so well:  
Still, with the scene, old faces reappear,  
Voices, long silent, meet the musing ear,  
And many a hamlet, gleaming on the shore,  
Recalls a friend whose sports and toils are o'er. [485]  
Can ceaseless cares for power and place impart  
Scenes such as these to charm and mend the heart?  
The blue arch resting on the distant trees,  
The bright wave curling to the ocean breeze,  
The dewy woods that greet the rising sun, [490]  
The clouds that close the golden circuit run,  
Rolled in bright masses of a thousand dyes,  
A pomp and glory in the western skies.  
Here every flower that gems the forest sod

May guide the heart from Nature to its God, [495]

And higher hopes and purer joys bestow

Than the poor slaves of faction ever know,

When demagogues have won, with brazen throat,

The loudest cheer and most triumphant vote.

Even when nor party nor a people's voice, [500]

But Providence itself hath made the choice,

And lifts the man, whom worth and wisdom grace,

To sit in Liberty's supremest place;

Though loved and honored in a nation's eyes,

Though faction's self confess him just and wise, [505]

Still the calm home, where peace and virtue dwell,

Charms with a silent, but a mightier spell;

And Fillmore left, without a sigh, the toys

Of state for homelier but serener joys;

Faithful, like Washington, to order's cause, [510]

And prompt, like him, to vindicate her laws,

Like him, he looked with still reverted eye

To happier scenes than office can supply,

Turned from the noisy hall, the coarse debate,

The curse of patronage and frauds of state, [515]

The caucus juggler and his pliant tool,

The slaves of party and its tyrant rule,



The knavish arts that demagogues employ,  
Lies that supplant, and whispers that destroy;  
Whose work would shame the honest hand of toil, [520]  
Whose love of country means the love of spoil,  
Who, for their party, wrong their nearest friends,  
Betray that party for then: private ends,  
Pursue with subtle craft, by fraud and force,  
The patriot-trade — the scoundrel's last resource; [525]  
Deplore the people's wrong, inflame their rage,  
In factious brawls for fancied ills engage,  
Hot with unmeasured zeal — till office fills  
Their itching palms, and cures all wrongs and ills;  
From these he turned — from falsehood, craft, and strife, [530]  
To the pure joys that wait on private life  
In scenes like this, where forest, stream, and sky  
Speak in charmed accents to the gazer's eye,  
And Nature's voiceless eloquence imparts  
Her hopes and joys to renovated hearts. [535]  
And even here, if Sorrow finds her way,  
If, as they will, these hopes and joys decay,  
Nor talents guard, nor charms of temper save,  
Nor virtues shield the loved one from the grave;  
While worldly turmoil wrings the mourner's heart [540]

Home's quiet scenes a soothing balm impart,  
Faith here has room to spread her heavenward wing,  
Hope strips the baffled conqueror of his sting,  
The heart communes with spirits from above,  
And for a mortal's finds an angel's love; [545]  
By wood and stream, where twilight walks beguile,  
Hears the soft voice, and sees the undying smile.  
He, too, that sorrows for another's woes,  
And early dead, the same sad fortune knows,  
Hears, at the midnight hour, the fevered groan, [550]  
The cry of mortal pain, the dying moan;  
With trembling hand attempts at last to close  
The rayless eyes, the lifeless limbs compose,  
Sees the brave, gentle bosom fill the grave,  
And mourns the son he could have died to save. [555]  
To other griefs that changeful life supplies,  
Griefs of a race, awakened Memory flies,  
And backward as she turns her thoughtful view,  
The vanished Indian seems to live anew;  
Low voices whisper round from stream and bay, [560]  
The mournful tale of nations passed away;  
And names, like spirits of the buried race,  
Of plaintive sweetness, tell their dwelling-place;

On every isle, in every field and wood,  
Shells show, in heaps, where once the wigwam stood; [565]  
Spear-points of flint and arrow-heads are found,  
Fragments of pottery strew the haunted ground,  
And barrows broad, with ancient trees o'erspread,  
Still hold the relics of the warrior dead —  
Relics of tribes and nations that of yore [570]  
Welcomed the Saxon stranger to the shore;  
Then masters of the land, with matchless skill,  
They chased the deer by valley, plain, and hill,  
Through gloomy forests sought a nobler game,  
And won, with pride, the warrior's sterner fame; [575]  
Where moose and elk their fragrant forest home  
In wastes of fir by Madawaska roam;  
Where, on his breast, Potomac loves to trace  
The patriot's home and hallowed resting-place;  
In quiet beauty, where Saluda flows; [580]  
Catawba rushes from his mountain snows;  
Through the lost Eden of the Cherokee,  
Where Tallapoosa seeks the Southern sea;  
Where slow Oscilla winds his gentler tides,  
By cypress shadow where Suwannee glides; [585]  
Where, crowned with woods, the Apalachians rise,

The Blue Ridge blends its summit with the skies,  
Long rolling waves break foaming from the deep,  
And Erie's ocean thunders down the steep;  
Lords of the lake, the shore, the stream, the wood, [590]  
Painted and plumed, the giant warriors stood,  
With presents filled the feeble stranger's hand,  
And hailed his coming to the Red Man's land;  
Now from these homes expelled, in seeming rest,  
A hopeless remnant, cowering in the West, [595]  
They linger till the surge of millions come  
To sweep them headlong from their transient home;  
Vainly the gentle wish, the gen'rous strive  
To save the helpless wanderers that survive,  
Lure them from sloth, from ignorance and strife, [600]  
And make them learn the social arts of life;  
In vain, with adverse will, the Indian tries  
To win the bread that toil or art supplies,  
Like their wild woods before the Saxon's sway,  
The native nations wither and decay; [605]  
The same their doom where wars the forest sweep,  
Like winter torrents rushing to the deep,  
Or where the tides of peace more slowly eat  
As sure a passage to their last retreat;

Where'er their lot, with Puritan or Friend, [610]

Friendship and hatred bring one common end;

Chieftain and brave have vanished from the scene,

And memory hardly tells that they have been.

Such, too, the fate the Negro must deplore,

If slavery guard his subject race no more, [615]

If by weak friends or vicious counsels led

To change his blessings for the hireling's bread.

Cheated by idle hopes, he vainly tries

To tempt the fortune that his strength denies,

Quits the safe port, deserts the peaceful shore, [620]

An unknown sea of peril to explore;

Hard the long toil the hireling bread to gain,

Slight is his power life's battle to maintain;

And war's swift sword, or peace, with slow decay,

Must, like the Indian, sweep his race away. 38 [625]

Swift is the doom where temperate climes invite

To fruitful soils the labors of the white;

Where no foul vapor taints the morning air,

And bracing frosts his wasted strength repair;

Where Europe's hordes, from home and hunger fled, [630]

Task every nerve and ready art for bread,

Rush to each work, the calls for labor yield,

And bear no sable brother in the field;  
There in suburban dens and human sties,  
In foul excesses sunk, the Negro lies; [635]  
A moral pestilence to taint and stain,  
His life a curse, his death a social gain,  
Debased, despised, the Northern Pariah knows  
He shares no good that liberty bestows;  
Spurned from her gifts, with each successive year, [640]  
In drunken want his numbers disappear.  
In tropic climes, where Nature's bounteous hand  
Pours ceaseless blessings on the teeming land,  
And, with the fruits and flowers that she bestows,  
Fierce fevers lurk, the white man's deadliest foes, [645]  
More safe the Negro seems — his sluggish race  
Luxuriates in the hot, congenial place —  
A lotus-bearing paradise, that flows  
With all the lazy joys the Negro knows,  
Where all day long, beneath the tamarisk shade, [650]  
Stretched on his back, in scanty garb arrayed,  
With sated appetite, in sensual ease,  
Fanned into slumber by the listless breeze,  
A careless life of indolence he lives,  
Fed by the fruits perpetual summer gives: [655]

Yet here, unguided by Caucasian skill,  
Unurged to labor by a master will,  
Abandoned to his native sloth, that knows  
No state so blessed as undisturbed repose,  
With no restraint that struggling virtue needs, [660]  
With every vice that lazy pleasure breeds,  
His life to savage indolence he yields,  
To weeds and jungle, the deserted fields;  
Where once the mansion rose, the garden smiled,  
Where art and labor tamed the tropic wild, [665]  
Their hard-wrought trophies sink into decay,  
The wilderness again resumes its sway,  
Rank weeds displace the labors of the spade,  
And reptiles crawl where joyous infants played.  
Such now the Negro's life, such wrecks appear [670]  
Of former affluence, industry, and care,  
On Hayti's plains, where once her golden stores  
Gave their best commerce to the Gallic shores;  
While yet no foul revolt or servile strife  
Marred the calm tenor of the Negro's life, [675]  
And lured his mind — with mimicry elate  
Of titled nobles and imperial state —  
From useful labor, savage wars to wage,

To glut with massacre a demon's rage,  
Forget the Christian in the pagan rite, [680]  
And serve a Negro master for a white.  
But even, in climes like this, a fated power  
In patient ambush waits the coming hour,  
When to new regions war and want shall drive  
Its swarms of hunger from the parent hive, [685]  
And Europe's multitudes again demand  
Its boundless riches from the willing land  
That now, in vain luxuriance, idly lies,  
And yields no harvest to the genial skies,  
Then shall the ape of empire meet its doom, [690]  
Black peer and prince their ancient task resume,  
Renounce the mimicries of war and state,  
And useful labor strive to emulate.  
Why peril, then, the Negro's humble joys,  
Why make him free, if freedom but destroys? [695]  
Why take him from that lot that now bestows  
More than the Negro elsewhere ever knows —  
Home, clothing, food, light labor, and content,  
Childhood in play, and age in quiet spent,  
To vex his life with factious strife and broil, [700]  
To crush his nature with unwonted toil,



To see him, like the Indian tribes, a prey  
To war or peace, destruction or decay?  
Not such his fate Philanthropy replies,  
His horoscope is drawn from happier skies; [705]  
Bonds soon shall cease to be the Negro's lot,  
Mere race-distinctions shall be all forgot,  
And white and black amalgamating, prove  
The charms that Stone admires, of mongrel love,  
Erase the lines that erring nature draws [710]  
To sever races, and rescind her laws;  
Reverse the rule that stupid farmers heed,  
And mend the higher by the coarser breed;  
Or prove the world's long history false, and find  
Wit, wisdom, genius in the Negro mind; [715]  
If not intended thus, in time, to blend  
In one bronze-colored breed, what then the end?  
What purposed good, like that which brought before  
The Hebrew seer to Nile's mysterious shore,  
Brings the dusk children of the burning zone [720]  
To toil in fields and forests not their own?  
They come where summer suns intensely blaze,  
And Celt and Saxon shun the fatal rays;  
Where gay savannas bloom, wild forests rise,

And prairies spread beneath unwholesome skies; [725]

Where Mississippi's broad alluvial lands

Demand the labor of unnumbered hands,

With promised gifts from endless hill and vale,

From fields whose riches mock the traveler's tale,

Where nature blossoms in her tropic pride, [730]

All bounties given, but health alone denied;

They come to cleave the forest from the plain,

From the rank soil to rear the golden grain,

The wealth of hill and valley to disclose,

Make the wild desert blossom as the rose, [735]

To all the world unwonted blessings give,

The naked clothe, and bid the starving live;

Where Amazon's imperial valley lies

Untamed and basking under tropic skies

They come, his secret treasures to unfold — [740]

Spices and silks, and gems and countless gold;

For fields of cane his matted woods displace,

For flocks and herds exchange their reptile race,

With tower and city crown the ocean stream,

And make his valley one Arcadian dream. [745]

Slaves of the plow — when duly tasked they bring.

Like the swart genii of the lamp and ring,

Their priceless gifts — their labors yield in time  
Unbounded blessings to their native clime;  
Though round it, darkly, clouds and mists have rolled, [750]  
Of sloth and ignorance, for years untold,  
Still, in the future, Faith's prophetic eye,  
Beyond the cloud, discerns the promised sky;  
Sees happier lands their sable thousands pour,  
Missions of love, on Congo's suppliant shore, [755]  
Skilled in each useful civilizing art,  
With all the power that knowledge can impart,  
O'er the wild deep, whose heaving billows seem  
Bridged for their passage by assisting steam,  
To Africa, their fatherland, they go, [760]  
Law, industry, instruction to bestow;  
To pour, from Western skies, religious light,  
Drive from each hill or vale its pagan rite,  
Teach brutal hordes a nobler life to plan,  
And change, at last, the savage to the man. [765]  
Exulting millions, through their native land,  
From Gambia's river to Angola's strand,  
Where Niger's fountain-head the traveler shuns,  
And mountain snows are bright with tropic suns,  
See, spreading inward from the Atlantic shore, [770]

Industrial skill and arts unknown before;  
Through the broad valleys populous cities rise,  
With gilded domes, and spires that court the skies,  
Forests, for countless years the tiger's lair,  
Yield their glad acres to the shining share; [775]  
Where once, along the interminable plain,  
The weary traveler dragged his steps with pain,  
In iron lines continuous roads proceed,  
And steam outstrips the ostrich in its speed;  
Timbuctoo's towers and fabled walls, that seem [780]  
The fabric only of a traveler's dream,  
Spread, a broad mart, where commerce brings her stores  
Of gems and gold from earth's remotest shores;  
Wealth, art, refinement, follow in her train,  
Learning applauds a new Augustan reign, [785]  
To tropic suns her fruits and flowers unfold,  
And Libya hails, at last, her age of gold.  
For these great ends hath Heaven's supreme command  
Brought the black savage from his native land,  
Trains for each purpose his barbarian mind, [790]  
By slavery tamed, enlightened, and refined;  
Instructs him, from a master-race, to draw  
Wise modes of polity and forms of law,

Imbues his soul with faith, his heart with love,  
Shapes all his life by dictates from above, [795]  
And, to a grateful world, resolves at last  
The puzzling question of all ages past,  
Revealing to the Christian's gladdened eyes  
How Gospel light may dawn from Libya's skies,  
Disperse the mists that darken and deprave, [800]  
And shine with power to civilize and save.  
Let, then, the master still his course pursue,  
"With heart and hope" perform his mission too;  
Heaven's ruling power confessed, with patient care  
The end subserve, the fitting means prepare, [805]  
In faith unshaken guide, restrain, command,  
With strong and steady, yet indulgent hand,  
Justly, "as in the great Taskmaster's eye,"  
His task perform —— the Negro's wants supply,  
The Negro's hand to useful arts incline, [810]  
His mind enlarge, his moral sense refine,  
With Gospel truth his simple heart engage,  
To his dull eyes unseal its sacred page,  
By gradual steps his feebleness raise,  
Deserve, if not receive, the good man's praise; [815]  
The factious knave defy, and meddling fool,

The pulpit brawler and his lawless tool,  
Scorn the grave cant, the supercilious sneer,  
The mawkish sentiment and maudlin tear,  
Assured that God all human power bestows, [820]  
Controls its uses, and its purpose knows,  
And that each lot on earth to mortals given,  
Its duties duly done, is blessed of Heaven.