



LEAVES OF GRASS

WALT WHITMAN

WALT WHITMAN



LEAVES OF GRASS

\$16.99 U.S.

ISBN-13: 978-1-4236-4774-4

5 1699



9 781423 647744



GIBBS  
SMITH

WALT WHITMAN



LEAVES OF GRASS



GIBBS SMITH

TO ENRICH AND INSPIRE HUMANKIND

# CONTENTS

Preface . . . . .	XIV
INSCRIPTIONS . . . . .	1
One's-Self I Sing . . . . .	1
As I Ponder'd in Silence . . . . .	1
In Cabin'd Ships at Sea . . . . .	2
To Foreign Lands . . . . .	3
To a Historian . . . . .	3
To Thee Old Cause . . . . .	3
Eidólons . . . . .	4
For Him I Sing . . . . .	6
When I Read the Book . . . . .	6
Beginning My Studies . . . . .	6
Beginners . . . . .	7
To the States . . . . .	7
On Journeys Through the States . . . . .	7
To a Certain Cantatrice . . . . .	8
Me Imperturbe . . . . .	8
Savantism . . . . .	8
The Ship Starting . . . . .	8
I Hear America Singing . . . . .	9
What Place Is Besieged? . . . . .	9
Still Though the One I Sing . . . . .	9
Shut Not Your Doors . . . . .	9
Poets to Come . . . . .	10
To You . . . . .	10
Thou Reader . . . . .	10
STARTING FROM PAUMANOK . . . . .	10
SONG OF MYSELF . . . . .	21
CHILDREN OF ADAM . . . . .	72
To the Garden the World . . . . .	72
From Pent-Up Aching Rivers . . . . .	73
I Sing the Body Electric . . . . .	75
A Woman Waits for Me . . . . .	82
Spontaneous Me . . . . .	83
One Hour to Madness and Joy . . . . .	85
Out of the Rolling Ocean the Crowd . . . . .	86
Ages and Ages Returning at Intervals . . . . .	86
We Two, How Long We Were Fool'd . . . . .	87
O Hymen! O Hymenee! . . . . .	87
I Am He That Aches with Love . . . . .	87
Native Moments . . . . .	88
Once I Pass'd Through a Populous City . . . . .	88
I Heard You Solemn-Sweet Pipes of the Organ . . . . .	88
Facing West from California's Shores . . . . .	89

As Adam Early in the Morning . . . . .	89
CALAMUS . . . . .	89
In Paths Untrodden . . . . .	89
Scented Herbage of My Breast . . . . .	90
Whoever You Are Holding Me Now in Hand . . . . .	91
For You, O Democracy . . . . .	93
These I Singing in Spring . . . . .	93
Not Heaving from My Ribb'd Breast Only . . . . .	94
Of the Terrible Doubt of Appearances . . . . .	95
The Base of All Metaphysics . . . . .	95
Recorders Ages Hence . . . . .	96
When I Heard at the Close of the Day . . . . .	97
Are You the New Person Drawn Toward Me? . . . . .	97
Roots and Leaves Themselves Alone . . . . .	98
Not Heat Flames Up and Consumes . . . . .	98
Trickle Drops . . . . .	99
City of Orgies . . . . .	99
Behold This Swarthy Face . . . . .	99
I Saw in Louisiana a Live-Oak Growing . . . . .	100
To a Stranger . . . . .	100
This Moment Yearning and Thoughtful . . . . .	100
I Hear It Was Charged Against Me . . . . .	101
The Prairie-Grass Dividing . . . . .	101
When I Peruse the Conquer'd Fame . . . . .	101
We Two Boys Together Clinging . . . . .	102
A Promise to California . . . . .	102
Here the Frailest Leaves of Me . . . . .	102
No Labor-Saving Machine . . . . .	102
A Glimpse . . . . .	103
A Leaf for Hand in Hand . . . . .	103
Earth, My Likeness . . . . .	103
I Dream'd in a Dream . . . . .	103
What Think You I Take My Pen in Hand? . . . . .	104
To the East and to the West . . . . .	104
Sometimes with One I Love . . . . .	104
To a Western Boy . . . . .	104
Fast Anchor'd Eternal O Love! . . . . .	105
Among the Multitude . . . . .	105
O You Whom I Often and Silently Come . . . . .	105
That Shadow My Likeness . . . . .	105
Full of Life Now . . . . .	105
SALUT AU MONDE! . . . . .	106
SONG OF THE OPEN ROAD . . . . .	115
CROSSING BROOKLYN FERRY . . . . .	124
SONG OF THE ANSWERER . . . . .	129
OUR OLD FEUILLAGE . . . . .	133

A SONG OF JOYS . . . . .	138
SONG OF THE BROAD-AXE . . . . .	144
SONG OF THE EXPOSITION . . . . .	154
SONG OF THE REDWOOD-TREE . . . . .	162
A SONG FOR OCCUPATIONS . . . . .	166
A SONG OF THE ROLLING EARTH . . . . .	173
YOUTH, DAY, OLD AGE AND NIGHT . . . . .	177
BIRDS OF PASSAGE . . . . .	178
Song of the Universal . . . . .	178
Pioneers! O Pioneers! . . . . .	180
To You . . . . .	183
France ( <i>the 18th Year of these States</i> ) . . . . .	185
Myself and Mine . . . . .	186
Year of Meteors ( <i>1859-60</i> ) . . . . .	188
With Antecedents . . . . .	189
A BROADWAY PAGEANT . . . . .	190
SEA-DRIFT . . . . .	194
Out of the Cradle Endlessly Rocking . . . . .	194
As I Ebb'd with the Ocean of Life . . . . .	199
Tears . . . . .	201
To the Man-of-War-Bird . . . . .	202
Aboard at a Ship's Helm . . . . .	202
On the Beach at Night . . . . .	203
The World Below the Brine . . . . .	204
On the Beach at Night Alone . . . . .	204
Song for All Seas, All Ships . . . . .	205
Patroling Barnegat . . . . .	206
After the Sea-Ship . . . . .	206
BY THE ROADSIDE . . . . .	207
A Boston Ballad ( <i>1854</i> ) . . . . .	207
Europe ( <i>The 72d and 73d Years of These States</i> ) . . . . .	209
A Hand-Mirror . . . . .	210
Gods . . . . .	210
Germs . . . . .	211
Thoughts . . . . .	211
When I Heard the Learn'd Astronomer . . . . .	212
Perfections . . . . .	212
O Me! O Life! . . . . .	212
To a President . . . . .	212
I Sit and Look Out . . . . .	213
To Rich Givers . . . . .	213
The Dalliance of the Eagles . . . . .	213
Roaming in Thought ( <i>After reading Hegel</i> ) . . . . .	214
A Farm Picture . . . . .	214
A Child's Amaze . . . . .	214

The Runner . . . . .	214
Beautiful Women . . . . .	214
Mother and Babe . . . . .	214
Thought . . . . .	214
Visor'd . . . . .	215
Thought . . . . .	215
Gliding O'er all . . . . .	215
Hast Never Come to Thee an Hour . . . . .	215
Thought . . . . .	215
To Old Age . . . . .	215
Locations and Times . . . . .	215
Offerings . . . . .	215
To the States ( <i>To Identify the 16th, 17th, or 18th Presidentiad</i> ) . . . . .	216
<b>DRUM-TAPS . . . . .</b>	<b>216</b>
First O Songs for a Prelude . . . . .	216
Eighteen Sixty-One . . . . .	218
Beat! Beat! Drums! . . . . .	219
From Paumanok Starting I Fly Like a Bird . . . . .	220
Song of the Banner at Daybreak . . . . .	220
Rise O Days from Your Fathomless Deeps . . . . .	226
Virginia—The West . . . . .	228
City of Ships . . . . .	228
The Centenarian's Story . . . . .	229
Cavalry Crossing a Ford . . . . .	233
Bivouac on a Mountain Side . . . . .	233
An Army Corps on the March . . . . .	233
By the Bivouac's Fitful Flame . . . . .	234
Come Up from the Fields Father . . . . .	234
Vigil Strange I Kept on the Field One Night . . . . .	235
A March in the Ranks Hard-Prest, and the Road Unknown . . . . .	237
A Sight in Camp in the Daybreak Gray and Dim . . . . .	238
As Toilsome I Wander'd Virginia's Woods . . . . .	238
Not the Pilot . . . . .	239
Year That Trembled and Reel'd Beneath Me . . . . .	239
The Wound-Dresser . . . . .	239
Long, Too Long America . . . . .	242
Give Me the Splendid Silent Sun . . . . .	242
Dirge for Two Veterans . . . . .	244
Over the Carnage Rose Prophetic a Voice . . . . .	245
I Saw Old General at Bay . . . . .	245
The Artilleryman's Vision . . . . .	246
Ethiopia Saluting the Colors . . . . .	247
Not Youth Pertains to Me . . . . .	247
Race of Veterans . . . . .	248
World Take Good Notice . . . . .	248

O Tan-Faced Prairie-Boy . . . . .	248
Look Down Fair Moon . . . . .	248
Reconciliation . . . . .	248
How Solemn As One by One ( <i>Washington City, 1865</i> ) . . . . .	249
As I Lay with My Head in Your Lap Camerado . . . . .	249
Delicate Cluster . . . . .	250
To a Certain Civilian . . . . .	250
Lo, Victress on the Peaks . . . . .	250
Spirit Whose Work Is Done ( <i>Washington City, 1865</i> ) . . . . .	251
Adieu to a Soldier . . . . .	251
Turn O Libertad . . . . .	252
To the Leaven'd Soil They Trod . . . . .	252
<b>MEMORIES OF PRESIDENT LINCOLN . . . . .</b>	<b>253</b>
When Lilacs Last in the Dooryard Bloom'd . . . . .	253
O Captain! My Captain! . . . . .	260
Hush'd Be the Camps To-Day ( <i>May 4, 1865</i> ) . . . . .	261
This Dust Was Once the Man . . . . .	261
<b>BY BLUE ONTARIO'S SHORE . . . . .</b>	<b>262</b>
Reversals . . . . .	275
<b>AUTUMN RIVULETS . . . . .</b>	<b>275</b>
As Consequent, Etc. . . . .	275
The Return of the Heroes . . . . .	276
There Was a Child Went Forth . . . . .	281
Old Ireland . . . . .	282
The City Dead-House . . . . .	283
This Compost . . . . .	284
To a Foil'd European Revolutionaire . . . . .	285
Unnamed Land . . . . .	287
Song of Prudence . . . . .	288
The Singer in the Prison . . . . .	290
Warble for Lilac-Time . . . . .	292
Outlines for a Tomb ( <i>G. P., Buried 1870</i> ) . . . . .	293
Out from Behind This Mask ( <i>To Confront a Portrait</i> ) . . . . .	295
Vocalism . . . . .	296
To Him That Was Crucified . . . . .	297
You Felons on Trial in Courts . . . . .	297
Laws for Creations . . . . .	298
To a Common Prostitute . . . . .	298
I Was Looking a Long While . . . . .	299
Thought . . . . .	299
Miracles . . . . .	299
Sparkles from the Wheel . . . . .	300
To a Pupil . . . . .	301
Unfolded out of the Folds . . . . .	301
What Am I After All . . . . .	302
Kosmos . . . . .	302
Others May Praise What They Like . . . . .	302

Who Learns My Lesson Complete? . . . . .	303
Tests . . . . .	304
The Torch . . . . .	304
O Star of France (1870-71). . . . .	304
The Ox-Tamer . . . . .	305
An Old Man's Thought of School ( <i>For the Inauguration of a Public School, Camden, New Jersey, 1874</i> ) . . . . .	306
Wandering at Morn . . . . .	307
Italian Music in Dakota ( <i>"The Seventeenth—the finest Regimental Band I ever heard."</i> ) . . . . .	308
With All Thy Gifts . . . . .	308
My Picture-Gallery . . . . .	308
The Prairie States . . . . .	309
PROUD MUSIC OF THE STORM. . . . .	309
PASSAGE TO INDIA . . . . .	314
PRAYER OF COLUMBUS . . . . .	322
THE SLEEPERS. . . . .	324
TRANSPPOSITIONS . . . . .	332
TO THINK OF TIME . . . . .	332
WHISPERS OF HEAVENLY DEATH. . . . .	337
Darest Thou Now O Soul . . . . .	337
Whispers of Heavenly Death . . . . .	338
Chanting the Square Deific . . . . .	338
Of Him I Love Day and Night . . . . .	340
Yet, Yet, Ye Downcast Hours . . . . .	340
As If a Phantom Caress'd Me . . . . .	341
Assurances . . . . .	341
Quicksand Years . . . . .	342
That Music Always Round Me . . . . .	342
What Ship Puzzled at Sea . . . . .	343
A Noiseless Patient Spider . . . . .	343
O Living Always, Always Dying . . . . .	343
To One Shortly to Die . . . . .	343
Night on the Prairies . . . . .	344
Thought . . . . .	345
The Last Invocation . . . . .	345
As I Watch the Ploughman Ploughing . . . . .	345
Pensive and Faltering . . . . .	346
THOU MOTHER WITH THY EQUAL BROOD . . . . .	346
A PAUMANOK PICTURE . . . . .	351
FROM NOON TO STARRY NIGHT . . . . .	351
Thou Orb Aloft Full-Dazzling . . . . .	351
Faces . . . . .	352

The Mystic Trumpeter . . . . .	355
To a Locomotive in Winter . . . . .	358
O Magnet-South . . . . .	359
Mannahatta . . . . .	360
All Is Truth. . . . .	361
A Riddle Song . . . . .	362
Excelsior . . . . .	363
Ah Poverties, Wincings, and Sulky Retreats . . . . .	363
Thoughts . . . . .	364
Mediums . . . . .	364
Weave in, My Hardy Life. . . . .	365
Spain, 1873-74. . . . .	365
By Broad Potomac's Shore . . . . .	366
From Far Dakota's Cañons ( <i>June 25, 1876</i> ) . . . . .	366
Old War-Dreams . . . . .	367
Thick-Sprinkled Bunting. . . . .	367
What Best I See in Thee . . . . .	368
Spirit That Form'd This Scene . . . . .	368
As I Walk These Broad Majestic Days . . . . .	369
A Clear Midnight . . . . .	369
SONGS OF PARTING . . . . .	370
As the Time Draws Nigh . . . . .	370
Years of the Modern. . . . .	370
Ashes of Soldiers . . . . .	371
Thoughts . . . . .	373
Song at Sunset . . . . .	374
As at Thy Portals Also Death . . . . .	376
My Legacy . . . . .	376
Pensive on Her Dead Gazing. . . . .	377
Camps of Green . . . . .	378
The Sobbing of the Bells ( <i>Midnight, Sept. 19-20, 1881</i> ) . . . . .	379
As They Draw to a Close . . . . .	379
Joy, Shipmate, Joy! . . . . .	379
The Untold Want . . . . .	379
Portals . . . . .	380
These Carols . . . . .	380
Now Finalè to the Shore . . . . .	380
So Long! . . . . .	380
SANDS AT SEVENTY . . . . .	383
Mannahatta . . . . .	383
Paumanok . . . . .	383
From Montauk Point . . . . .	383
To Those Who've Fail'd . . . . .	383
A Carol Closing Sixty-Nine . . . . .	383
The Bravest Soldiers . . . . .	384
A Font of Type . . . . .	384

As I Sit Writing Here . . . . .	384
My Canary Bird . . . . .	384
Queries to My Seventieth Year . . . . .	384
The Wallabout Martyrs . . . . .	385
The First Dandelion . . . . .	385
America . . . . .	385
Memories . . . . .	385
To-Day and Thee . . . . .	385
After the Dazzle of Day . . . . .	386
Abraham Lincoln, Born Feb. 12, 1809 . . . . .	386
Out of May's Shows Selected . . . . .	386
Halcyon Days . . . . .	386
<b>FANCIES AT NAVESINK . . . . .</b>	<b>386</b>
The Pilot in the Mist . . . . .	386
Had I the Choice . . . . .	387
You Tides with Ceaseless Swell . . . . .	387
Last of Ebb, and Daylight Waning . . . . .	387
And Yet Not You Alone . . . . .	388
Proudly the Flood Comes In . . . . .	388
By That Long Scan of Waves . . . . .	388
Then Last Of All . . . . .	388
Election Day, November, 1884 . . . . .	389
With Husky-Haughty Lips, O Sea! . . . . .	389
Death of General Grant . . . . .	390
Red Jacket ( <i>From Aloft</i> ) . . . . .	390
Washington's Monument February, 1885 . . . . .	391
Of That Blithe Throat of Thine . . . . .	391
Broadway . . . . .	392
To Get the Final Lilt of Songs . . . . .	392
Old Salt Kossabone . . . . .	392
The Dead Tenor . . . . .	393
Continuities . . . . .	393
Yonnonidio . . . . .	394
Life . . . . .	394
"Going Somewhere" . . . . .	394
Small the Theme of My Chant . . . . .	395
True Conquerors . . . . .	395
The United States to Old World Critics . . . . .	395
The Calming Thought of All . . . . .	396
Thanks in Old Age . . . . .	396
Life and Death . . . . .	396
The Voice of the Rain . . . . .	397
Soon Shall the Winter's Foil Be Here . . . . .	397
While Not the Past Forgetting . . . . .	397
The Dying Veteran . . . . .	398
Stronger Lessons . . . . .	398
A Prairie Sunset . . . . .	398

Twenty Years . . . . .	399
Orange Buds by Mail from Florida . . . . .	399
Twilight . . . . .	400
You Lingering Sparse Leaves of Me . . . . .	400
Not Meagre, Latent Boughs Alone . . . . .	400
The Dead Emperor . . . . .	400
As the Greek's Signal Flame . . . . .	400
The Dismantled Ship . . . . .	401
Now Precedent Songs, Farewell . . . . .	401
An Evening Lull . . . . .	401
Old Age's Lambent Peaks . . . . .	401
After the Supper and Talk . . . . .	402
<b>GOOD-BYE MY FANCY . . . . .</b>	<b>402</b>
Sail out for Good, Eidólon Yacht! . . . . .	402
Lingering Last Drops . . . . .	403
Good-Bye My Fancy . . . . .	403
On, On the Same, Ye Jocund Twain! . . . . .	403
My 71st Year . . . . .	403
Apparitions . . . . .	404
The Pallid Wreath . . . . .	404
An Ended Day . . . . .	404
Old Age's Ship & Crafty Death's . . . . .	404
To the Pending Year . . . . .	405
Shakspeare-Bacon's Cipher . . . . .	405
Long, Long Hence . . . . .	405
Bravo, Paris Exposition! . . . . .	405
Interpolation Sounds . . . . .	406
To the Sun-Set Breeze . . . . .	406
Old Chants . . . . .	407
A Christmas Greeting . . . . .	407
Sounds of the Winter . . . . .	408
A Twilight Song . . . . .	408
When the Full-Grown Poet Came . . . . .	409
Osceola . . . . .	409
A Voice from Death . . . . .	409
A Persian Lesson . . . . .	411
The Commonplace . . . . .	411
"The Rounded Catalogue Divine Complete" . . . . .	412
Mirages . . . . .	412
L. of G.'s Purport . . . . .	412
The Unexpress'd . . . . .	413
Grand Is the Seen . . . . .	413
Unseen Buds . . . . .	414
Good-Bye My Fancy! . . . . .	414

## INSCRIPTIONS

### **One's-Self I Sing**

One's-self I sing, a simple separate person,  
Yet utter the word Democratic, the word En-Masse.

Of physiology from top to toe I sing,  
Not physiognomy alone nor brain alone is worthy for the  
Muse, I say the Form complete is worthier far,  
The Female equally with the Male I sing.

Of Life immense in passion, pulse, and power,  
Cheerful, for freest action form'd under the laws divine,  
The Modern Man I sing.

### **As I Ponder'd in Silence**

As I ponder'd in silence,  
Returning upon my poems, considering, lingering long,  
A Phantom arose before me with distrustful aspect,  
Terrible in beauty, age, and power,  
The genius of poets of old lands,  
As to me directing like flame its eyes,  
With finger pointing to many immortal songs,  
And menacing voice, *What singest thou?* it said,  
*Know'st thou not there is but one theme for ever-enduring bards?*  
*And that is the theme of War, the fortune of battles,*  
*The making of perfect soldiers.*

*Be it so, then I answer'd,*  
*I too haughty Shade also sing war, and a longer and greater*  
*one than any,*  
*Waged in my book with varying fortune, with flight, advance*  
*and retreat, victory deferr'd and wavering,*  
*(Yet methinks certain, or as good as certain, at the last,) the*  
*field the world,*  
*For life and death, for the Body and for the eternal Soul,*  
*Lo, I too am come, chanting the chant of battles,*  
*I above all promote brave soldiers.*



**In Cabin'd Ships at Sea**

In cabin'd ships at sea,  
The boundless blue on every side expanding,  
With whistling winds and music of the waves, the large  
    imperious waves,  
Or some lone bark buoy'd on the dense marine,  
Where joyous full of faith, spreading white sails,  
She cleaves the ether mid the sparkle and the foam of day, or  
    under many a star at night,  
By sailors young and old haply will I, a reminiscence of the  
    land, be read,  
In full rapport at last.

*Here are our thoughts, voyagers' thoughts,  
Here not the land, firm land, alone appears, may then by them  
    be said,  
The sky o'erarches here, we feel the undulating deck beneath  
    our feet,  
We feel the long pulsation, ebb and flow of endless motion,  
The tones of unseen mystery, the vague and vast suggestions of  
    the briny world, the liquid-flowing syllables,  
The perfume, the faint creaking of the cordage, the melancholy  
    rhythm,  
The boundless vista and the horizon far and dim are all here,  
And this is ocean's poem.*

Then falter not O book, fulfil your destiny,  
You not a reminiscence of the land alone,  
You too as a lone bark cleaving the ether, purpos'd I know not  
    whither, yet ever full of faith,  
Consort to every ship that sails, sail you!  
Bear forth to them folded my love, (dear mariners, for you I  
    fold it here in every leaf;)  
Speed on my book! spread your white sails my little bark  
    athwart the imperious waves,  
Chant on, sail on, bear o'er the boundless blue from me to  
    every sea,  
This song for mariners and all their ships.

**To Foreign Lands**

I heard that you ask'd for something to prove this puzzle the  
    New World,  
And to define America, her athletic Democracy,  
Therefore I send you my poems that you behold in them what  
    you wanted.

**To a Historian**

You who celebrate bygones,  
Who have explored the outward, the surfaces of the races, the  
    life that has exhibited itself,  
Who have treated of man as the creature of politics, aggre-  
    gates, rulers and priests,  
I, habitan of the Alleghanies, treating of him as he is in him-  
    self in his own rights,  
Pressing the pulse of the life that has seldom exhibited itself,  
    (the great pride of man in himself,)  
Chanter of Personality, outlining what is yet to be,  
I project the history of the future.

**To Thee Old Cause**

To thee old cause!  
Thou peerless, passionate, good cause,  
Thou stern, remorseless, sweet idea,  
Deathless throughout the ages, races, lands,  
After a strange sad war, great war for thee,  
(I think all war through time was really fought, and ever will  
    be really fought, for thee.)  
These chants for thee, the eternal march of thee.  
(A war O soldiers not for itself alone,  
Far, far more stood silently waiting behind, now to advance in  
    this book.)  
Thou orb of many orbs!  
Thou seething principle! thou well-kept, latent germ! thou  
    centre!  
Around the idea of thee the war revolving,  
With all its angry and vehement play of causes,  
(With vast results to come for thrice a thousand years,)  
These recitatives for thee,—my book and the war are one,  
Merged in its spirit I and mine, as the contest hinged on thee,  
As a wheel on its axis turns, this book unwitting to itself,  
Around the idea of thee.

**Eidólons**

I met a seer,  
Passing the hues and objects of the world,  
The fields of art and learning, pleasure, sense,  
    To glean eidólons.

Put in thy chants said he,  
No more the puzzling hour nor day, nor segments, parts, put in,  
Put first before the rest as light for all and entrance-song of all,  
    That of eidólons.

Ever the dim beginning,  
Ever the growth, the rounding of the circle,  
Ever the summit and the merge at last, (to surely start again,)  
    Eidólons! eidólons!

Ever the mutable,  
Ever materials, changing, crumbling, re-cohering,  
Ever the ateliers, the factories divine,  
    Issuing eidólons.

Lo, I or you,  
Or woman, man, or state, known or unknown,  
We seeming solid wealth, strength, beauty build,  
    But really build eidólons.

The ostent evanescent,  
The substance of an artist's mood or savan's studies long,  
Or warrior's, martyr's, hero's toils,  
    To fashion his eidólón.

Of every human life,  
(The units gather'd, posted, not a thought, emotion, deed, left  
out,)  
The whole or large or small summ'd, added up,  
    In its eidólón.

The old, old urge,  
Based on the ancient pinnacles, lo, newer, higher pinnacles,  
From science and the modern still impell'd,  
    The old, old urge, eidólons.

The present now and here,  
America's busy, teeming, intricate whirl,  
Of aggregate and segregate for only thence releasing,  
    To-day's eidólons.

These with the past,  
Of vanish'd lands, of all the reigns of kings across the sea,  
Old conquerors, old campaigns, old sailors' voyages,  
    Joining eidólons.

Densities, growth, facades,  
Strata of mountains, soils, rocks, giant trees,  
Far-born, far-dying, living long, to leave,  
    Eidólons everlasting.

Exaltè, rapt, ecstatic,  
The visible but their womb of birth,  
Of orbic tendencies to shape and shape and shape,  
    The mighty earth-eidolon.

All space, all time,  
(The stars, the terrible perturbations of the suns,  
Swelling, collapsing, ending, serving their longer, shorter use,)  
    Fill'd with eidólons only.

The noiseless myriads,  
The infinite oceans where the rivers empty,  
The separate countless free identities, like eyesight,  
    The true realities, eidólons.

Not this the world,  
Nor these the universes, they the universes,  
Purport and end, ever the permanent life of life,  
    Eidólons, eidólons.

Beyond thy lectures learn'd professor,  
Beyond thy telescope or spectroscope observer keen, beyond all  
mathematics,  
Beyond the doctor's surgery, anatomy, beyond the chemist  
with his chemistry,  
    The entities of entities, eidólons.

Unfix'd yet fix'd,  
Ever shall be, ever have been and are,  
Sweeping the present to the infinite future,  
    Eidólons, eidólons, eidólons.

The prophet and the bard,  
Shall yet maintain themselves, in higher stages yet,  
Shall mediate to the Modern, to Democracy, interpret yet to  
them,  
    God and eidólons.

And thee my soul,  
Joys, ceaseless exercises, exaltations,  
Thy yearning amply fed at last, prepared to meet,  
Thy mates, eidólons.  
Thy body permanent,  
The body lurking there within thy body,  
The only purport of the form thou art, the real I myself,  
An image, an eidólon.  
Thy very songs not in thy songs,  
No special strains to sing, none for itself,  
But from the whole resulting, rising at last and floating,  
A round full-orb'd eidólon.

### **For Him I Sing**

For him I sing,  
I raise the present on the past,  
(As some perennial tree out of its roots, the present on the  
past.)  
With time and space I him dilate and fuse the immortal laws,  
To make himself by them the law unto himself.

### **When I Read the Book**

When I read the book, the biography famous,  
And is this then (said I) what the author calls a man's life?  
And so will some one when I am dead and gone write my life?  
(As if any man really knew aught of my life,  
Why even I myself I often think know little or nothing of my  
real life,  
Only a few hints, a few diffused faint clews and indirections  
I seek for my own use to trace out here.)

### **Beginning My Studies**

Beginning my studies the first step pleas'd me so much,  
The mere fact consciousness, these forms, the power of motion,  
The least insect or animal, the senses, eyesight, love,  
The first step I say awed me and pleas'd me so much,  
I have hardly gone and hardly wish'd to go any farther,  
But stop and loiter all the time to sing it in ecstatic songs.

### **Beginners**

How they are provided for upon the earth, (appearing at  
intervals.)  
How dear and dreadful they are to the earth,  
How they inure to themselves as much as to any—what a  
paradox appears their age,  
How people respond to them, yet know them not,  
How there is something relentless in their fate all times,  
How all times mischoose the objects of their adulation and  
reward,  
And how the same inexorable price must still be paid for the  
same great purchase.

### **To the States**

To the States or any one of them, or any city of the States,  
*Resist much, obey little,*  
Once unquestioning obedience, once fully enslaved,  
Once fully enslaved, no nation, state, city of this earth, ever  
afterward resumes its liberty.

### **On Journeys Through the States**

On journeys through the States we start,  
(Ay through the world, urged by these songs,  
Sailing henceforth to every land, to every sea,)  
We willing learners of all, teachers of all, and lovers of all.  
We have watch'd the seasons dispensing themselves and  
passing on,  
And have said, Why should not a man or woman do as much as  
the seasons, and effuse as much?  
We dwell a while in every city and town,  
We pass through Kanada, the North-east, the vast valley of  
the Mississippi, and the Southern States,  
We confer on equal terms with each of the States,  
We make trial of ourselves and invite men and women to hear,  
We say to ourselves, Remember, fear not, be candid, promulge  
the body and the soul,  
Dwell a while and pass on, be copious, temperate, chaste,  
magnetic,  
And what you effuse may then return as the seasons return,  
And may be just as much as the seasons.

### **To a Certain Cantatrice**

Here, take this gift,  
I was reserving it for some hero, speaker, or general,  
One who should serve the good old cause, the great idea, the  
progress and freedom of the race,  
Some brave confronter of despots, some daring rebel;  
But I see that what I was reserving belongs to you just as  
much as to any.

### **Me Imperturbe**

Me imperturbe, standing at ease in Nature,  
Master of all or mistress of all, aplomb in the midst of irrational  
things,  
Imbued as they, passive, receptive, silent as they,  
Finding my occupation, poverty, notoriety, foibles, crimes, less  
important than I thought,  
Me toward the Mexican sea, or in the Mannahatta or the  
Tennessee, or far north or inland,  
A river man, or a man of the woods or of any farm-life of these  
States or of the coast, or the lakes or Kanada,  
Me wherever my life is lived, O to be self-balanced for  
contingencies,  
To confront night, storms, hunger, ridicule, accidents, rebuffs,  
as the trees and animals do.

### **Savantism**

Thither as I look I see each result and glory retracing itself  
and nestling close, always obligated,  
Thither hours, months, years—thither trades, compacts, estab-  
lishments, even the most minute,  
Thither every-day life, speech, utensils, politics, persons,  
estates;  
Thither we also, I with my leaves and songs, trustful,  
admirant,  
As a father to his father going takes his children along with him.

### **The Ship Starting**

Lo, the unbounded sea,  
On its breast a ship starting, spreading all sails, carrying even  
her moonsails.  
The pennant is flying aloft as she speeds she speeds so  
stately— below emulous waves press forward,  
They surround the ship with shining curving motions and foam.

### **I Hear America Singing**

I hear America singing, the varied carols I hear,  
Those of mechanics, each one singing his as it should be blithe  
and strong,  
The carpenter singing his as he measures his plank or beam,  
The mason singing his as he makes ready for work, or leaves  
off work,  
The boatman singing what belongs to him in his boat, the  
deckhand singing on the steamboat deck,  
The shoemaker singing as he sits on his bench, the hatter  
singing as he stands,  
The wood-cutter's song, the ploughboy's on his way in the  
morning, or at noon intermission or at sundown,  
The delicious singing of the mother, or of the young wife at  
work, or of the girl sewing or washing,  
Each singing what belongs to him or her and to none else,  
The day what belongs to the day—at night the party of young  
fellows, robust, friendly,  
Singing with open mouths their strong melodious songs.

### **What Place Is Besieged?**

What place is besieged, and vainly tries to raise the siege?  
Lo, I send to that place a commander, swift, brave, immortal,  
And with him horse and foot, and parks of artillery,  
And artillery-men, the deadliest that ever fired gun.

### **Still Though the One I Sing**

Still though the one I sing,  
(One, yet of contradictions made,) I dedicate to Nationality,  
I leave in him revolt, (O latent right of insurrection! O  
quenchless, indispensable fire!)

### **Shut Not Your Doors**

Shut not your doors to me proud libraries,  
For that which was lacking on all your well-fill'd shelves, yet  
needed most, I bring,  
Forth from the war emerging, a book I have made,  
The words of my book nothing, the drift of it every thing,  
A book separate, not link'd with the rest nor felt by the intellect,  
But you ye untold latencies will thrill to every page.