

THE CASE OF  
Patience  
Worth

By Walter Franklin Prince

[Background and poetical excerpts]

## CONTENTS

Explanation of Abbreviations	10
Autobiographical Sketch	11-15
Mrs. Curran in the Witness Box	15-21
Other Witnesses	21-30
Prelude to and Announcement of Patience Worth	31-36
Table Talk of Patience Worth	37-47
Later Table Talk	47-55
Opinions and Reviews	55-78
Patience Worth and the Poets	78-98
Imagination	98-109
Nature	110-116
Stimulus and Cheer	117-126
Sentiment	127-139
Love and Friendship	140-144
Infancy	144-145
Ethics	146-152
Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow	153-156
Religion	156-166
God	166-173
Death and the Hereafter	173-181
Wisdom	181-194
Whimsy	195-197
Sparks	198-205
One Evening's Work	206-212
Patience Worth's Estimate of Her Poems	213-218
Discourses	218-224
Telka [skipped]	224-240

## CONTENTS

Extracts from Novels [skipped]	241-246
Impromptu Proverbs	247-271
Prayers	271-280
[The following chapters are skipped except for the Summary]	
Stunts of Composition	281-294
Patience Worth on "Spirit Manifestations"	295-300
Telepathy	301-321
Visual Preludes and Accompaniments	321-331
A Competition in Composition	331-336
The "Dialect" of Patience Worth	336-344
Mechanism of Delivery	344-352
Records and Motives (By Mr. Yost)	352-356
The Evidence in Telka (By Mr. Yost)	356-369
The Problem of Knowledge (By Mr. Yost)	369-392
A Nut for Psychologists (By Mrs. Curran)	392-403
Mrs. Curran's Early Capacity for Writing Poetry	404-410
A Test of Mrs. Curran's Former Interest in Poetry	410-413
Stories Written by Mrs. Curran with Conscious Effort	413-417
Mrs. Curran's Library	417-420
Dr. Hyslop's Criticisms	420-428
Patience Worth (By Dr. Cory)	428-437
Reply to Dr. Cory	437-464
Mary Austin on Patience Worth	464-470
Minor Attempted Explanations	471-486
Summary	486-509

## EXPLANATION OF SIGNS AND ABBREVIATIONS

Wherever in this book an asterisk (\*) precedes a composition by "Patience Worth," it means that its language has been made slightly less archaic, mainly by modernizing the spelling.

Wherever the subject of a composition is put in quotation mark they indicate that the subject was given by some person immediately before the composition began.

P. W.: =Patience Worth.

P. W. P. M.=the book *Patience Worth: a Psychic Mystery*.

L. B.=the book *Light from Beyond*.

P. W. M.=*Patience Worth's Magazine*.'

Thus far the following books containing Patience Worth literature have been published:

*Patience Worth: a Psychic Mystery*, by Casper S. Yost. Henry Holt & Co., 1916, pp. 290.

*The Sorry Tale: a Story of the Time of Christ*, by Patience Worth. Henry Holt & Co., 1917, pp. 644.

*Hope Trueblood*, by Patience Worth, Introduction by Casper S. Yost. Henry Holt & Co., 1918, pp. 363.

*The Pot upon the Wheel*, by Patience Worth, edited by Casper S. Yost. The Dorset Press, St. Louis, Mo., 1921, pp. 141.

*Light from Beyond*, poems by Patience Worth, selected and compiled by Herman Behr. Patience Worth Publishing Co., pp. 281.

All the above are obtainable from the Patience Worth Publishing Co., 31 Tiffany Place, Brooklyn, N. Y.

*Light from Beyond* has also been translated and printed in German. *Telka* about to issue in German, and later will appear in English.

## AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Written at request W. F. P., in October, 1926.

Born, Mound City, Illinois, February 15, 1883. Father, George G. Pollard, English and Welsh; mother, Mary E. Cordingley; Irish and English.

Mother nervous, keen, ambitious, talented as a singer, aspired to write before marriage at eighteen, no attempt after that and never published. I have seen none of her efforts.

Father educated at a military school in Ithica, N. Y., as I recall. Tried art a while after graduating, then sold his studio and went, I think, to Texas. My mother was his second wife and married him at Mound City where he had been employed by a railroad company, and had then been with the "Courier" newspaper of Charleston, Ill.

Moved to Forth Worth, Texas, when I was about eight months old, and my father was again employed in some railroad company's office.

My first recollections date from my third year. I recall being distressed to see my mother cry, and that my father was quiet and gentle. I will set down the pictures I retain for whatever value they may have.

I seemed to be let attend to my own play, as I remember no storytelling or knee-trotting. I remember playing under Chinaberry trees and hearing the berries "pop" as I stepped on them, and their unpleasant odor, also being bitten by a "rat and tan" dog and being comforted with candy. I recall that my mother was pretty but also that she was too thin to afford me a comfortable pillow, although I wanted to be cuddled. Father seems vague to me at this period.

I collected broken china and bits of colored glass, and spent hours worrying "doodle bugs" with a stick. I did not like dolls—liked a stick of stove wood with a mud face, wrapped in a towel, quite as well,—preferred live toys, and dressed Try cats in doll clothes and wheeled my dogs in the doll cart. I did not name my pets, nor did they seem specially dear. I don't remember any playmates at this period or much else than some of my doings. I was quiet and quite healthy.

At about four, due to my mother's health, I was sent to St. Louis and was with my grandmother, uncle and aunt (the Cordingleys) for a year. I recall little, but have pictures of my pretty young aunt and of my grandmother holding my hand as I went to sleep. I do not recall my uncle at all at this point—I do recall him arrayed in a queer costume for a masked ball (I think as a ballet girl), which puzzled me. He was a medium, though no others of the family were spiritualists, but I remember nothing else about that at this period.

I don't remember my trip back to Texas, except that we lived in a little cottage, it was quite cold and mother had made me red flannels and they itched.

A little later, the darkeys who worked for us called me "ram's head" because I appeared so old and "wise," and mother said I became conversant with family matters, reporting to neighbors the grocery bill and bits of conversation at home, also the family opinions of the neighbors. I was "kept home" for this and it worked well.

Here, before being sent to school, I was started in music with Mrs. Frank Brantley, but did not understand what it was about and played with the lessons. Mrs. B. called me "Pearlycue" and affected my dignity. I was impudent; it was reported to my mother, who said I must apologize. So I asked Mrs. B. if she remembered the "little trouble we had." She said: "Yes, Pearl," and I replied: "Well, if you are willing to overlook it I am." This was rather startling at five and a half, but I think I was copying some admonition my mother had given me, and got it pretty straight only for the turn to my in advantage.

This was perhaps the first defense I ever put up.

I did not go to church, or to Sunday-School yet, as my parents did not attend. Once mother took me to St. Andrew's Church; but had to remove me because I insisted on singing the offertory, which was unfortunately a solo.

At about six came school, my teacher's name Mrs. Vaughn. I was not interested, save in my new lace-trimmed aprons and silk-sleeved jumper-dress. We read from a "chart," pointing to each letter with a "pointer" which I did not relish, as it was foreboding and was rapped threateningly for order; I remember little else of that period, except that I was bored and wanted to play with a crowd of little darkeys, and did once and was spanked. My personality was beginning, I think, to assert itself. I recall some "paddlings" by my mother over which my father would almost weep. I recall little of the home life. Mother sang or played at night and I felt "in the way" and neglected. I was spoiled by too much grown-up association.

When I was about seven we moved to "Lawn Terrace Addition" in the same city, and I was transferred to the Boaz School, with a Miss Hall as teacher. I must have been about to the second grade. Miss Hall was a good sport and understood children. My first lie was caused by a desire to appear well to her and to "be in things." A small boy stole a knife and I was sorry for him. The teacher told those who knew anything about the case to raise their hands and I raised mine, though I knew nothing. She discovered my plight from my testimony and kindly told me I had better run along home. I had an uncomfortable feeling that something was wrong, although I had thought that I was discreet and wise, not realizing that I had actually lied. Another time the children recited "pieces," and I raised my hand and was told to say mine. I knew none, and began babbling, and floundered and swallowed

and rambled—perhaps this was a Patience Worth urge!\* until the teacher told me that as it was so long I had better finish on *next* Friday. I sat down sure she was "on to me," and it was my last attempt at bluffing.

I don't know why I was promoted to the third grade, and only remember learning how beans sprout in water. My new teacher, Miss F——, † wore kid gloves to keep her hands white, and beat elaborate time to the singing. I learned to beat time (with kid gloves on) and to sing "Come My Pretty Fido," and little else, but got shoved into the fourth grade, with Prof. W—— as teacher. He was a Methodist minister, I think, at odd times, and I cordially hated him. I remember his red head and general description. He returned the hatred and we both had a bad time of it. All I did there was to get the penmanship honor. Prof. H—— took W——'s place, and he was worse—we had it hammer and tongs. I never knew my lessons, and was new not so strong, about ten, thin and gawky. Mother had added elocution and Delsarte to my studies, with a Miss Mulvane. She was a fine influence but not enough to inspire study. But I learned a half dozen "pieces" and some things not to do. Then she left, and in her place came Miss H—— whom I did not like, though she was a good, kind instructor, who did not like my lack of application. This time "The Queen of the May" was my utmost, but I preferred "The Goose."

Now I was going to a Methodist or Baptist Sunday-School; but then we got a new horse and phaeton, and I was taken irregularly to the Episcopal Sunday-School of St. Andrew's, rector Alexander Castle. I was confirmed by Bishop Garrett.

My last teacher in day-school was Prof. Price, who loved me and tried his best, but I passed indifferently for high school, I don't know how or why. My father helped me with home work and I had become quite a "show-off." I hated it but mother desired it. I broke down the last year (at thirteen) of too much piano, elocution, Delsarte, school and entertainments, and was sent to the Catholic St. Ignatius' Academy for "rest."

Then we moved to St. Louis, and I was in Washington School for a year or so. I was "put back" and discouraged.

I was confused in Texas by no plan of education, and no aim. I absorbed much, and lived out of doors, roaming the prairies and romping with my dog. I loved the wild flowers, was generally honest, rather vain of clothes, thought I was homely and felt it keenly. I had been laboring with a congenital eye-trouble also. I had had measles, mumps and chicken-pox, also a throat trouble for which my tonsils were removed, otherwise had not been ill.

In St. Louis we lived with my aunt and grandmother (my uncle

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\* The reader will of course understand that this is not meant seriously.—Ed.

† Mrs. Curran gives all the surnames, but I have thought it not best to print them all.—Ed.

being in Chicago). Father had lost everything financially and mother was ill and nervous. I did my lessons at night, and added music lessons, first from Mrs. Warner, then from Prof. Guisser. I played well, and started to sing, having gotten over the illness connected with that period of age, and was a fair pupil. I had a "crush" on a handsome actor, J—— S——, whom I never met, and perhaps it was he who inspired the ambition to be a prima-donna and loveress!

Then we moved to Palmer, Mo., where my father was secretary of the Renault Lead Co. I did not like it there; I wanted to learn, to know and to see life. I took music lessons by mail from Mrs. Warner and practised hours on *Il Trovatore*. I wanted life and here was desolation. There were some fine men, owners of the mines, and I merely heard them talking business about the fire with "Dad," but learned poise from them, forgot how big my feet were, etc. Then Mr. William Chauvenette [lately deceased.—Ed.] came, recited "The Lady of Charlotte,"\* a and got me to learn the accompaniment of "A Warrior Bold" for him. I adored his culture and his courteous attention to a little girl like me. It made me aspire to be something—always with music in mind.

Then Mrs. Henry H. Rogers came for a visit to Palmer and prevailed on mother to send me to her at Kankakee, Ill., to study voice. I was there nearly a year, studying of a young lady friend, until my uncle and aunt insisted on my going to Chicago.

In Chicago I started voice lessons with J. C. Cooper. My father paid for the lessons and I earned a little by playing piano at my uncle's Spiritualist Church in Steinway Hall, for a short time. But things I found here and my home surroundings were most unpleasant, and I went back to Palmer.

Then Mrs. Rogers had me go to Chicago under her supervision. My father paid for my board and I worked at the McKinley Music Co., addressing envelopes at \$6.00 a week to pay for the lessons. After a month I resigned, telling Mr. McKinley that I had not *thought* for a month. He was amused and kind and sent me to Thompson Music Co., where I sold music until they closed out; then I worked at Siegel Cooper's at \$6.00 a week, then sold smoker's supplies at the "Fair," and finally was employed at Marshall Field's.

I worked and studied all winter, and went home to Potosi, Mo., (where we had moved) and taught voice there and then at Irondale and Bismarck (where we again moved), each season earning my passage back and for a start in Chicago each winter. The studies ran on from the age of eighteen to twenty-four, when I was married to Mr. Curran at Bismarck.

I had made no effort to write—never thought of it, though I could see the possibilities of material in the Ozarks and I appreciated them.

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\* This variation of "Shalott" is not exactly what we would expect from one erudite in standard poetry.—Ed.



Mr. Curran was bright but not literary; there was no idea of writing anything when *the bolt fell*.

I was raised to think spiritualistic seances taboo. Neither my father or mother were of a religious turn.

Father wrote humorous skits well—nothing of length. He used the pen-names "Sissy Jupe," "Tommy Pants," etc., and edited several small country papers, such as the Potosi *Independent* and Irondale *Gazette*.

There is no episode or era in my life that stands out as creative. I am not a Spiritualist, but am in sympathy with the furtherance of psychic facts and believe that the pioneers of today are but groping toward fact. I am not a "medium" in the common sense. Am deeply interested in the study of psychic phenomena, using myself as a study. For you only, Dr. Prince—"won't you remove for good from the minds of the public that I am a medium with a gold shingle and trances? Please, pretty please. Remember, I'm an Episcopalian! It's Your duty." \*

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\* These last sentences, which were for me only, are nevertheless printed because they sound so much like Mrs. Curran in normal conversation, bright, gay and at times humorous—but so unlike Patience Worth!—Ed.

## MRS. CURRAN IN THE WITNESS BOX

In February, 1926, I orally asked Mrs. Curran a large number of questions, which she answered on the spot. Both questions and answers were verbally recorded, and were copied for this book, but it was found that they consumed too much space. The former are, then, suppressed and the latter carefully and justly condensed into smallest compass. It will be understood that every following statement made by Mrs. Curran was directly responsive to a question, except such as are put within parentheses, which are her spontaneous remarks.

The questions were asked in a more or less helter-skelter order, but here their results are arranged in orderly fashion.

*Acquaintance with Poetry Prior to the Appearance of "Patience Worth."* Father seldom read poetry aloud; your informant was wrong.\* As a child I read no poetry except such as was in school readers or given me for declamations. I didn't learn many,—"*Heart's Ease*," "*The Usual Way*," "*Johnny Brown's Sister's Wedding*," etc. I did not read poetry spontaneously. Mother would repeat "*Rainy Day*" and I remember scraps of it. I liked as much of "*Hiawatha*"

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\* My informant did not know her at the period referred to; it was a guess.—Ed.

as was in the reader. Father gave me Tennyson when I was fourteen; I have it yet. When Mr. Curran was engaged to me he gave me "Thanatopsis," and it was away over my head and he laughed at me and I was ashamed. He gave me Omar Khayyam and explained it to me. He also gave me Walt Whitman.

I never had *any* favorite English poets before 1913. I had not read Scott (haven't yet) or Byron. I knew some Moore from singing Irish songs. Don't know anything about Spenser; can't name any poem of his. I've heard the name "Faerie Queen." "Queen Mab" I know is Shakespeare, but never read it. (Never read any play of Shakespeare—saw two as a child, and suffered during "Comedy of Errors" and went to sleep. Mother taught me a few bits.) Probably Omar Khayyam made the deepest impression.

I don't know Browning's or Mrs. Browning's poetry now. "Childe Harold?", "Sweet Auburn?", "Canterbury Tales?"—I don't know the authors. It was Pope who wrote "Essay on Man." I know the expression "children playing on the shore, and hear the mighty waters rolling evermore," but can't place it. "The lowing herd winds slowly o'er the lea?" isn't that Gray's "Elegy?" I remember the expression "There was a sound of revelry by night," but not who wrote it. Ben Johnson wrote sort of essays, wasn't it?

I had no favorite American poets—didn't pay attention to them. I remember reading of Bryant only "Thanatopsis." I once recited a bit of Whittier about angels in a church (I feel ashamed of my ignorance). Mr. Curran brought Walt Whitman to me. I read a little and didn't like it. Father was mad because it was given me. I began to like Whitman about four years after I was married, when I heard a poem recited to a musical accompaniment. I adored that poem—but that was all. I know some quotations from "Miles Standish"—never read all of it.

*Acquaintance with Fiction Before "Patience Worth."* When a girl I read "Black Beauty," and the Louisa Alcott books. I liked these. I was fourteen or fifteen when my father began to read to me; I didn't keep still long enough. He read some of Dickens; we had two of his novels. The first real novel I remember reading myself was "Uncle Tom's Cabin," at about fifteen. I had read Grimm's and Anderson's Fairy Tales. I had a hard time reading the narrative part of a story. And I remember reading "Ichabod Crane" in a reader. I only read—anything—a few minutes in a day; might look at a fairy tale or a new book daddy had given me.

I read a part of "Lorna Doone" at about seventeen or eighteen. Never tried to read it later on.

"The House of Seven Gables?" I don't remember the author Dickens? Have seen it, never read it.

Author of "Gulliver's Travels? Don't know, nor of Don Quixote," "She Stoops to Conquer," "Salome," "Rasselas," or The

Rivals." (I remember a picture about "The Rivals.") Don Quixote was a poet I think—Spanish?

No one invented stories to tell me as a child.

Father wrote humorous bits, partly in doggerel verse, and dry news. \*

Mother's writing was some school girl compositions—not remarkable. She read much, more of Dickens than I ever did. I remember her chiefly as reading an English periodical with stories of the Bertha Clay level. Longfellow was her favorite poet.

*Acquaintance with General History.* All I remember about history in school is that the teacher talked a little. Oh, in a school in Fort Worth, where I attended a short time, we had a little in a State history, about Alamo, etc. I don't remember reading *any* book on history before Patience Worth came.

"Macaulay? I can't place him. Nor Boswell.

Of course I know that the Puritans were early settlers, not much more. America was discovered in 1492.† Don't know when the landing at Plymouth Rock was. I know it was the Pilgrims, not the Puritans who landed there, because a man gave Patience Worth the subject "The Landing of the Pilgrim Fathers." Did the Pilgrims live in England, just before coming here? I should have supposed so.

Guy Fawkes? James I? James II? Oliver Cromwell? Can't tell about them but think Cromwell was a soldier.

Henry VIII? His head was cut off, wasn't it? I think Anne Boleyn was his wife. Her head was cut off. Didn't Henry divorce his wife to marry Anne? (And Henry almost founded his church.) It was King James who had the Bible translated into English—I've heard of James' Bible. I don't, know what James.

Don't know any dramatists who lived at the same time with Shakespeare. Massinger? Don't know. Webster? Daniel Webster wasn't; that's the one I know. Who made the dictionary? I thought it was Daniel Webster. ["It was Noah."] Yes, I knew that, of course [in a tone of disgust at her forgetfulness]. (Daniel founded the *Saturday Evening Post*.)‡

I can't place Andrew Jackson. No, he was not English—an American.

I can't tell what was the first battle of the Revolution—might if I heard the name. Hardly think it was Bunker Hill. Lexington? I don't know. (I had an ancestor there.) Hero of the Alamo? I know that—Davy Crockett. I was never interested in my genealogy. I

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\* In, Palmer (Ozark region), I saw a copy of the little sheet he edited. So far as it went, it bore out his daughter's statement.—Ed.

† That is the one date which it seems every child knows, though it is often attached also to other events.—Ed.

‡ An error for Franklin.—Ed.

know little of father's side; he was English and Welsh. Mother's people came over generations ago; I don't know where they landed.

Samuel Johnson wrote a dictionary.

Don't know what happened to bring the French language into England. It might have been a war; that is a deduction. Don't know about the coming in of Anglo-Saxon.

*Acquaintance with Biblical Literature and History.* No, I have never been a student of the Bible—don't think I ever read a chapter through.

Don't know what "Calvary," as a word, means. Mark an Apostle? I think I know that. "Matthew, Mark, Luke and John"—I imagine he was. I am ashamed to be uncertain—I thought Luke was an Apostle. Don't remember the name "Micah." "Nehemiah" is a Bible name, but I can't place it; don't know whether of an Apostle or not. Don't remember how Peter died. John the Evangelist was beheaded—no, that was John the Baptist; don't know about the other.

He was called the Baptist—because he baptized?—More than one Apostle called John? I didn't know there was. I should think there was more, than one Simon from one being called "Simon Peter." The last supper of Jesus was the foundation of Communion. I don't know what Jewish rite Communion is a modification of—would it be the Feast of Passover? I don't know how I got that—it came like a little flash or electric shock.\*

I don't know who Flavius Josephus was. Nero was Emperor of Rome (and fiddled). No, I don't think he is mentioned in the Bible; don't know if he is referred to. Poppea was Nero's wife (I saw a poster of "Ben Hur" with her name on it). I don't know how she died.

The Epistle to the Galatians was written by Paul, remember that from Church services. Don't know who wrote the Revelation. Can't tell about the history of the Temple or its construction.

Never read "Ben Hur" nor "Prince of the House of David," but the latter is in my library; it belonged to the first Mrs. Curran. Don't know anything about "Zenobia." Never heard of "The Land and the Book." Never saw Farrar's "Life of Christ," nor Geikie's, Edersheim's, Neander's nor any other.

Can't tell the direction of the Dead Sea from the Sea of Galilee, or of Nazareth from Bethlehem.

Within what tribal division was Jerusalem?—was it Judea?

I should say that Calvary was outside the wall.† I had a picture—was conscious of a wall and beyond it a spot.

*Opportunities for Consulting Books.* There were no cyclopedias, books on antiquities, ancient customs, histories of literature and the

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\* As facts often flash up from subconscious memory—Ed.

† Probably right, as was the previous answer. I have found in the records the account of the picture given her by Patience Worth sometime earlier.—Ed.

like in father's house that I remember. I don't even remember any dictionary until he gave me the four-volume one when I was about eighteen. And I hardly looked at that. After I was married we got the books which had been left with an aunt.

All the books I have had in my own residence I have now; you may see them. I never lived in a house that had a well-stocked library. Never had the dictionary habit; seldom looked into it for any purpose. No, not even for pronunciation or spelling. (I don't spell right half the time.)\*

I never was interested in the derivation of words before Patience Worth came, and don't know Anglo-Saxon and Latin roots—never paid such things attention.

There were one or two English folk or peasant songs among those I sang—modern ones. I sang Moore's songs. The music I practised in Chicago was church solos, Faust, a little of Lucia, some German songs and I was taught one Italian one.

No, I never frequented public libraries, never even had a library card until Mr. Curran's last illness, when we took cards to bring him novels to read. We read very little; liked to play cards and go to movies. We didn't buy books after marriage. He read "Thanatopsis"—I can almost tell all we read. I have all the books he owned. I don't think he talked about books after we married. He wasn't a student and didn't talk about history; he didn't know history. All the dialect he was interested in was Irish. Interested in the derivation of words? How could he be when all he read was newspapers and the like?

*Opportunities to Overhear Learned Conversation, etc.* No, I never, before Patience Worth, knew anybody learned in history, or the languages. Before I went to Chicago I had no brainy friends, and there I was wholly given up to music. No, I was never where I could hear talk about history, language, etc. I associated only with common, busy persons.

*Studies and Occupations.* I had no real favorite school studies. Had no mathematics beyond arithmetic, and couldn't do anything in that beyond division. Out of school father helped me on arithmetic. I drew beautifully—can't now, and father and I would copy little pictures for hours, just as a game. When he was busy I would play with the dog on the prairie, fish for "crawdads" with a hunk of bacon, hunt buffalo-wallows, play with water-bugs, etc. Was out doors a great deal, and rode a lot, including riding a cow, and would help milk for fun. I studied none during vacations; had a doll-house and played all the time, had no household tasks. Texas is dreadfully hot and I would be driven in. I liked to be out and ramble, but was lazy and didn't engage in strenuous sports. Then mother gave me music lessons be

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\* An exaggerated colloquial statement.—Ed.

cause she wanted me to be attractive. I practiced an hour or two a day, which I didn't like, though I wanted to play the piano. Then mother gave me elocution lessons.

*Religious Inclination and Training.* Never a Bible reader. Neither father nor mother went to church. I was in Sunday-School because they were ashamed not to send me. A Methodist school, I think—I don't remember much about it.\* Father was essentially religious, but didn't talk it or go to church. If I asked "Is there a God?" he would say: "My dear, I don't know." Mother went to church only by fits and starts. She did not talk of religion until Patience Worth started her. I just graduated with the class into confirmation. I had no inward experience. Was taught at home to say: "Now I lay me"—that was all. No, I didn't think much on religious subjects, and don't now. The longest period of church-going I had was in St. Louis, after I began to write for Patience Worth. The first volume of the record [1913-1915] was done while I was singing in the choir. The preaching did not seem to affect me; I was there to sing.

No, I never wanted to be a missionary or do good in any particular way. I wanted to go on the stage and sing. I went to Sunday-School, off and on, from seven to fourteen.

*Ambition; Longing for Fame.* I had in my teens the desire to be successful as a singer. Mostly to lift myself out of a hopeless future not so much for fame itself. All that dropped away when I married, although I continued to like approbation. No, indeed, I never felt that I had sacrificed anything by marrying; Mr. Curran made me go on with my music lessons. Never did I have a desire to visit foreign countries, in childhood or since.

*Practice in Literary Composition.* I remember only two attempts, except for some valentine single verses, to write poetry, and these were when I was about fifteen. They were poor stuff, and my father was amused, though kind.†

I never wrote anything in prose but little school compositions.

*Physical and Mental Health.* Besides the usual children's complaints, I suffered much from sore throat for a number of winters. When I came here, I had chills and fever. In my whole life until baby came [about nine years after Patience Worth was announced] I never was in bed a week. No special functional troubles. But I have had, especially in my teens, trouble with my eyes. I was never unconscious, other than in sleep, except when I fainted once, from excitement.

No anaesthesia ever except that at childbirth my ears were stopped, and when I overworked at eighteen my fingers sometimes became numb.

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\* Afterwards she went to an Episcopal school.—Ed.

† One of them was entitled: "To a Red-Headed Girl." The other may be found on page 404.—Ed.

I never heard "voices" before 1913, and that of Patience Worth developed slowly. Never saw an apparition. When about eight I used to poke among the coals in the kitchen stove thinking I might see something interesting, but I never did.\* That is about the most vivid fancy I remember. No, I never had any "invisible companions." I sometimes talked to myself when I had no one to play with. I was never of a melancholy bent, and being introspective was not my style. It is odd, but I never gave names to my dolls or pets. Philosophical questions never entered my mind. On the whole, my childhood was happy.

*Contacts with Spiritualism.* My early contacts with Spiritualism? Well, you know of that uncle who was a medium. He was supposed to foretell things—I don't know if true. I never knew him until I was thirteen.† When I was in Chicago, at eighteen, I played the piano in his church about a month and a half. I didn't like the crowd that came, and the whole thing was repulsive to me. Since then I have had no contacts apart from Patience Worth. I never in my life attended any meetings or seances save those I have referred to. I had read, before 1913, no books on psychical research or Spiritualism whatever. My first was "Cosmic Relations," which Mr. Holt sent me after he printed the first Patience Worth book. Nor did the ouija board experiments interest me until Patience Worth came.

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\* Probably she had heard some one speak of seeing pictures in the coals.—Ed.

† Except when she was too young to remember anything about him but one incident.—Ed.

## TESTIMONIES BY OTHER WITNESSES

Perhaps it may appear to the reader that more witnesses than those whose accounts are given below should have been found, but really they are as many as could be expected when all the facts are taken into account. In fact, at Mrs. Curran's age, apart from relatives (of whom she has almost none living) I could not have brought forward more living persons able to testify to my characteristics before I was of the age when she married, had I not attended higher schools of education. Where nearly all the people she knew well at Forth Worth now are, and whether living or dead, she cannot tell. The mining town of Palmer is almost extinct. Those whom she knew in Chicago are mostly scattered to the four winds, and few knew her intimately there. She gave me names of teachers, clergymen, etc., but where are the most of them now?

One valuable witness died just as I was about to write him. Some last addresses were furnished me only to find that the parties had moved.

But the case with its accompanying claims has been noised abroad for a dozen years. I have printed an appeal for information in a periodical with large circulation.

Of such testimonies as I secured all but one appear to be reliable. That one I discard, although it is a friendly one and in most respects parallel with statements by others. I discard it entirely because certain answers are irreconcilable among themselves or with what I independently discovered to be facts. The errancies I set down to psychological peculiarities rather than intentional unverity. All other testimonies are given. Some of them were in reply to interrogatories, others simple answers to a general request for information. In the interests of space I omit verbiage here and there without notice when in so doing the essentials are left undisturbed. To make answers intelligible sometimes the subject of a query by me is inserted in brackets. As an inducement to be perfectly frank, in every case I promised not to give the names of informants, and feel bound by the promise, though in most cases it might not be insisted upon.

The following is the way I headed lists of questions when I sent them: "In order that I may be assured that you are giving *your own* and independent impressions, please do not show these questions to anyone or consult anyone before writing out and sending the answers."

*Testimony of Mr. A. B. C.* Mr. C., a business man of New York City, knew Mrs. Curran "as a young girl and as she grew older and married Mr. Curran," whom he also knew well. Through his mother and his grandmother, now deceased, he has known her and her family as long as he can remember. During the years directly prior to 1915 he lived one block distant from the Currans, and being on friendly terms was cognizant of the first phase of the ouija board experiments before the announcement of Patience Worth, as well as of what came after. Has not seen Mrs. Curran for several years, but hears about her through his mother living in St. Louis.

Mrs. Curran, as a girl, never impressed me, nor anyone else so far as I know, with anything that would impress her upon the memory. She was just an ordinary girl, with nothing that would make her stand out amongst her associates or acquaintances. Her "Patience Worth" was a bolt from the clear sky.... Mrs. Curran, as I knew her, was nothing out of the ordinary run of thousands of other girls raised under the same strained conditions, financially speaking. I watched her use the ouija board and was mildly interested at her first results, but even then took no particular interest in her efforts. She did not seem to herself. It originated much as an amusement.

I have no knowledge of the kind of reading she indulged in, if any



[before 1913]. From my acquaintance with her I should say that she did very little.

Nothing at all remarkable [noticed about her memory], though she seemed to have a fairly good memory.

Insofar as I know she had [when young] no associations with scholars, writers or students.

Her [early] surroundings were such as to be anything but "inspiring."

Apparently innocently honest. Lacked the ability to be otherwise.

[Anything odd, neurotic, or the like?] "Odd," \* in that she did not seem to know much. Just like an ordinary girl.

[She was] active, in a way, matter-of-fact, lively, one might say happy-go-lucky"—nothing was of much importance.

Never heard of any authorship before 1913, anywhere.

Judging from my observations, she never thought much about such things [religion], though, I believe, she attended church and for a while sang in the choir.

Mr. Curran was an active live-wire. There is no doubt but that he stimulated and inspired, once he saw the capabilities.†

As I knew her, she showed not the slightest tendency toward literary ambition or ability, and her education was at best mediocre.

Never heard anything of the kind [her talking, previous to P. W., of books, historical subjects, etc.]. She always struck me as being just an ordinary person. Nothing characteristic about her conversation.

[Interested in Spiritualism?] Only that she was her uncle's niece. She never seemed interested in Spiritualism beyond the general talk that would occur in a family that included a man like

[Did you know her uncle the medium?] Yes, I have known her uncle quite well. Possessing no belief in Spiritualism, I have always looked upon him as an arch "faker." As I recall, Mrs. Curran never got along with him.

[Other than being a country editor, to what extent was her father a literary man?] In no way. [Scholar?] None.

I know nothing of Mrs. Curran that I feel it would be necessary to conceal. [Voluntary remark.]

*Testimony of Miss D. E.* Miss D. E. is a professional woman, a little older than Mrs. Curran, who has lived all her life in the Ozarks, and is familiar with a large section of that region. She is familiar with the "dialect" and says that it does not resemble that of Patience Worth, also that there have been no Indians in the Ozarks, within her

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\* Probably the meaning is that it seemed "odd" that one so little versed should suddenly produce work which requires much knowledge to account for it.—Ed.

† That is, after Patience Worth's dictation began, he was interested in having it keep on.—Ed.

recollection.\* She knew "Pearl" well in Palmer and Potosi, and at intervals since, in all twenty-five years. The following data was secured by means of a questionnaire.

I have no recollection of Mrs. C. expressing [in conversation] an out of ordinary interest of literary character.

I know nothing of her having any unusual knowledge of history.

She was always interested in current events but I do not know that she had any special interest in foreign countries.

She was an Episcopalian but manifested no interest in any church.

I never knew of her reading the Bible to make a study of it. Of course they had one in their house.

She never seemed to be much taken with either philosophical or religious reflection.

Her health was good.

[Nervous, neurotic, hysterical?] I think she was one and all.†

Found her to be very bright and quick to learn anything she undertook to do. She is an excellent cook, and housekeeper, draws and paints fairly well, sings and plays piano, entertains. I always recognized her ability, but don't know that I expected anything remarkable.

Prior to 1913, I have no recollection of Mrs. C. showing any decided preference for any special line of literature outside of the current magazines and fiction of the period.

As Pearl Pollard, Mrs. C. was a pretty and attractive girl. She liked poetry, but I have no recollection of any special style. In general conversation she was familiar with best writers,‡ but I never saw her studying anyone.

I don't know that she ever wrote any poetry prior to 1913.

Her conversation was general. She loved to talk and tell of her childhood, where she had been and seen. Especially to tell jokes or funny stories about the people. Sometimes these stories were crude.

She would at times seem to be in a deep study, but was never reflective for any length of time. I don't consider her an unpractical type by any means.

I have often been in her house. Sometimes for a week, then for only an hour or so at different intervals.

I see no change in her health since Patience Worth came.

Her mentality is very much stronger and more highly developed since Patience Worth came.

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\* Referring to conjectures regarding incentive toward Patience Worth's dialectical style.—Ed.

† In view of the statement that her health was good, I doubt if "neurotic" is a term understood by Miss E. in its fullest meaning. Probably she means nervous and excitable.—Ed.

‡ The reader will judge for himself from the aggregate of data whether Miss E. is quite accurate here.—Ed.

Her chief amusements seemed to be moving pictures, music. She loves to entertain in her home.

Her parents always wished to be surrounded by educated people, but I have no knowledge of any particularly noted scholar, in any branch, that she knew.

I don't recall that she was fond of playing tricks upon people.

I know nothing that would explain the sudden beginning of poetry, etc. I happened to be in her home when she began writing on the ouija board. That was before she began writing as Patience Worth.

I have read letters which she wrote before 1913, and thought that they were well composed, and she did write good descriptions of her home and surrounding country at Palmer.

*Testimony of Mrs. H.* An intelligent lady whom I personally interviewed. She is younger but remembers the latter part of Mrs. Curran's life in Palmer well. They were friendly and the present Mrs. H. was in the Pollard house a good deal. She took lessons of "Pearl."

Music seemed the only study she was interested in.

Her father had few books. She didn't read much, nor talk about poetry. I used to hear her father talk but don't think he talked about books much.

Mrs. Pollard, I understood, was never satisfied with living in Palmer.

I thought Pearl a perfectly genuine, sincere young woman.

Mrs. H. knew very little about the Patience Worth matter, and I think was hardly aware of the significance of her testimony.

*Testimony of Mr. I. J.* Mr. J. is proprietor of a store in Potosi, Mo. He knew Mrs. Curran "about two years at a stretch," he thinks, when she was a young woman [sixteen to eighteen], and at intervals afterwards. For a time the Pollards boarded at his house when he kept the store and post-office in Palmer.

She was jolly and out of doors considerably.

I do not remember her reading or studying much. Nor do I remember anything about her showing interest in poetry, or history either.

I remember playing and singing, and that she helped a teacher who was getting up an entertainment.

I remember her driving with me to the station and saying she would like to paint the hills. But I do not think her drawing was much better than the average child's.

I never saw anything about Pearl which made me think she might become an author.

Her mother was a worrier, and very nervous.

*Testimony of Mrs. K.* She is about five years younger than Pearl "and knew her in Palmer.

I was rather Young but I remember her as being very like other girls. No bookish tendencies that I could see.

I remember that she was very good in music, and that she tried to paint, but don't think she did that very well.

*Testimony of Mrs. L.* I lived at Mound City, Illinois. She used to visit me when a girl. Spent a summer at my home when about sixteen.

As a child she was fondest of playing doll-house and she played with other children a great deal.

When at our house I didn't see her reading very often. She wasn't bookish. At sixteen she read mostly novels, but she wasn't much of a reader of anything.

She did not take books out of the public library.

She was interested in music and talked about it a good deal—had taken lessons. I had a piano and she played a lot.

I never saw her reading the Bible.

I don't think she went to church. We were great church-goers. I didn't take her along because she didn't want to go.

She wasn't a melancholy girl, nor disposed to sit and reflect. She was a great talker, and called around some. Not at all morbid, had a healthy mind.

*Testimony of Mr. and Mrs. N. O. P.* Mr. P. is a lawyer, at present living in Los Angeles.

I fear that any information I can give will not help your investigation. We knew her as a bright, jolly, good-natured girl with no marked oddities or unusual traits. My wife always liked her.

*Testimony of Mrs. Maupin.* Mrs. Maupin is a daughter of Mr. Curran by his first wife. She has known Mrs. Curran intimately for the last twenty years. She is a decided and intelligent young woman. I saw her alone and asked her a set of questions, and afterward sent her a list in written form to answer. My experience is that relatives of a person who has "psychical" phenomena are often the last to manifest any enthusiasm for them. They hear jesting and disparaging comments which annoy them, so that they wish that mother (or sister, or whoever the relative may be) would leave such things alone. Often they are quite justified in their repugnance but often, too, they do not even go so far as to ascertain from the quality of the phenomena whether they are worth while or not. It may be that they

will not talk adversely to an investigator, but they show indisposition to talk at all, or they "damn with faint praise." I found the testimony of Mrs. Maupin impressive with conviction and feeling.

Mrs. Curran never harped on any religious subject. "I don't think she worried much about the hereafter." She had "the love of God that we all have" but did not seem to feel any particular awe in regard to Him. There is no difference perceptible in this respect since Patience Worth came. She did not try to influence me in my religion\* but tried to give me one so that I might know about God.

She did only the average amount of letter writing. Never to my knowledge had she a desire to write [literature]. Her time was taken up with her voice. I never knew her to write anything up to the time of Patience Worth, but believe when she was a girl she had written one or two [sets of?] verses. I know nothing of the nature of these thing,;. I never thought of her having the power to write before Patience Worth came.

Mr. Curran was not familiar with history. Nor did he know anything of etymology.

Mrs. Curran took no books from the library for herself. The only times I ever knew her to go to the library was for novels for father when he was ill.

Of course she occasionally read poetry or I read it to her, but only casually. Poetry played a small part in the house before Patience Worth. I studied Shakespeare, but she took no interest in it.

She took no interest in history, was very ignorant of it, and couldn't help me in my school history.

She is the soul of truth. I used to think her too darned truthful. [Again she insisted,] she is the most frank and truthful person I know, almost too much so.

I know nothing in Mrs. Curran's surroundings to give her the knowledge in the Patience Worth writings. There was no opportunity during my acquaintance with her to converse with scholars or overhear their talk.

Before Patience Worth, housework mostly occupied Mrs. Curran's time in the forenoon; in the afternoon she might take a nap, do some fancy work, and perhaps make calls; in the evening she would sing to entertain the family, or, very often, the whole family went to a picture show. She read little and almost never aloud.

Except at very first, when Mrs. H. would slightly modernize the language of Patience Worth, the record has been faithfully kept exactly as delivered.

Her conversations were of the general line of talk; nothing flowery or out of the ordinary about them.

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\* Formerly Mrs. Maupin was a Roman Catholic.—Ed.

We never had any house plants, but there were some rose-bushes in the backyard which seemed to grow without much care to anyone.

She did enjoy seeing beautiful scenery but [I] never knew her to try to put into [written] words the things she had seen.

Do not know how much she has read the Bible. I do not think she was a reader of religious matters at all. I know of no religious book that she has read.

Other than going [to church] when she sang, I don't think she went at all. My father very seldom went to church.

Never knew my father to write poetry. This must have ended after he was married.\*

Father had read quite a bit, but or what lines I am unable to say.

Mrs. Curran didn't use words requiring use of the dictionary. I don't remember her using it. [The foregoing was in oral answer. Later, in her written list of answers she says:] Mrs. Curran very seldom referred to the dictionary. Only perhaps to look up a simple word for its spelling. Her mother was the more frequent visitor to the dictionary.

Mr. Curran was not literary, though capable of appreciation. He read mostly newspapers and magazines.

[Referring to the period of ouija board work before the announcement of Patience Worth.] I attended very few sittings during the first period of the writings on the ouija board, but heard them discussed very often as to their nature and the worth of the material. As a whole the writings were not considered very worth while. We thought it odd but gave no thought to them. More or less, as I remember it, the material seemed like that of an uneducated person. Sometimes what seemed like Scotch would mix in,† but generally it was in English of today. Practically no interest was taken in it by Mr. or Mrs. Curran. To the best of my knowledge Mrs. Curran said very little, except that she could not understand from whom the messages came. Never do I remember of her asking Mrs. H. to come or urging her to use the ouija board, or that she took any interest in the thing at all. Never did I hear her say she believed that any spirits had returned. Mrs. H. would say, "Oh! this is from your father," etc. Mrs. H. was greatly pleased with the sittings and urged Mrs. Curran to continue when Mrs. Curran would want to talk or do other things. I do not recall that there was any poetry in any form up to the time Patience Worth came. I thought it was mostly conversation directed to those about the board. Nothing ever equalled Patience Worth's work.

I never heard father quote from Omar Khayyam.

I never knew whether he had read Walt Whitman or not, but think he was familiar with his works. I never remember Mrs. Curran's reading

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\* I had referred to some rather clumsy scraps of rhyming, which I found in her father's letters, which looked as though they might be original.—Ed.

† Possibly she means "Pat McQuillan's" quasi-Irish.—Ed.

Walt Whitman nor did I know she was influenced by anything before Patience Worth.—Never heard her quote much from any of the writers.

Odd words never bothered her. Don't think she gave much thought as to how any words were founded or whence they came.

Like Mrs. Curran, my father never gave much thought in regard to how or where uncommon words were found.

She was a good sport. She lived in her own day.

I never heard of her hearing voices, seeing apparitions, or anything of that sort.

Never, before Patience Worth, did she utter anything like those proverbs." I should have dropped dead if she had. "Nothing of the Patience Worth sort had ever manifested in Mrs. Curran. It was like a bolt out of the clear sky. Patience Worth overcame me.

She had no hallucinations, delusions, hysteria. I never knew her to do odd or queer things—she was like other people.

I never heard anything in her life which could prepare her for the Patience Worth writings. These are now "my religion" and I think it incredible that my stepmother, who has been more a sister, should be capable of them. The very idea makes me laugh.

*Testimony of Dr. H. H. Rogers.* This witness was very sparing and conservative in his testimony, probably because he was to marry Mrs. Curran, as he has since done. He was for some twenty years the head of a military academy, and is a man of established integrity.

Mrs. Curran, when a girl of about sixteen years, visited my wife and me and my wife's sister, Mrs. B——. To me she was a pretty, becomingly dressed girl of pleasing manners, with no particularly striking peculiarities to distinguish her from other girls. I had not thought of her as being very studious, or a great reader, or very ambitious. But the fact that just after this, under my wife's guidance, she located in Chicago, worked in a retail store and used her money largely for music lessons would go to show that she was ambitious.

In a way my acquaintance with her extended from that time to the present. It has largely been through my wife who either visited her or corresponded with those who knew her quite intimately.

So far as I have known or understood, she had no outstanding qualities to report until the "Patience Worth" work began.

*Indirect Testimony of John H. Curran.* Mr. Curran has passed on, and it never occurred to him to draw up any formal statement, and those who investigated the case during his lifetime were so familiar with his testimony that it probably did not occur to any of them to ask him to set it down. But there is the undoubted fact that he was prejudiced against ouija boards and that everything of a Spiritualistic appearance

was repulsive to him. He also is the person who for seven years of anterior living with Mrs. Curran ought to have known what knowledge, tastes and abilities she had. It was not until Patience Worth began her remarkable utterances that he began to take an interest, as quotations of his remarks to Patience Worth in the record show. His exclamations of wonder and delight before the interest of literary and prominent people had been attracted, are explainable only on the basis that he never knew his wife to be capable of anything of the sort.

Many discerning people have studied, more or less, the case since 1914, and had Mrs. Curran under their eye. Mr. Yost spent a great deal of pains for years, and became thoroughly satisfied with all the essential factors. Mr. Reedy was won over from incredulity and hostility to wonder and confidence and testified in his energetic fashion that he would bet his head on the honesty of both the Currans. I could name many prominent people in Mrs. Curran's own city, clergymen, instructors, physicians, etc., who have been won over to confidence in her and admiration of the Patience Worth output; and I have letters from some of these.

But I add only one more statement, that of a Chicago lawyer who expressly says that his name may be given.

*Testimony of E. H. Garnett.* While I am inclined to be skeptical and take very little on faith, I have every confidence that Mrs. Curran's representations as to her early history and lack of educational advantages are absolutely true. I think it would be difficult for anyone whom I have known as well as I have [together with his wife.—Ed] her over a term of years, to be a falsifier, without my discovering it. I have never detected in her verifiable statements the slightest divergence from the truth. As to the origin of the messages purporting to come from Patience Worth, I have never been able to reach any conclusions satisfactory to myself. That the messages are based on information acquired by Mrs. Curran through reading or travel, I consider highly improbable. That the poems she produces immediately on request are from memory, I do not believe possible. I have on a number of occasions seen her produce, orally and without a moment's hesitation, from twenty to thirty poems on diverse, abstract and concrete subjects given to her by audiences. There is, so far as I know, no other person in the world who can, under such circumstances, even remotely approach this work, either in spontaneity, beauty, perfection of form or in content.

#### PRELUDE TO AND ANNOUNCEMENT OF PATIENCE WORTH

During the first stage of the ouija board experiments, which occurred at irregular intervals beginning in July, 1912, the hand of Mrs. Emily G. Hutchings was always on the board with that of Mrs. Curran.

There seems to be no disagreement in the testimony as to the beginnings. The two were making a call on a neighbor who had an ouija board, and during the call there came what purported to be a message from a relative of Mrs. Hutchings. Thereupon



the latter bought a board and took it to Mrs. Curran house, with the idea of continuing these curious experiments. Mr. Pollard, Mrs. Curran's father, was then ill, and passed away about two months later. For a time the daughter refused to have anything more to do with the board, but finally allowed herself to be persuaded. Then both Mr. Pollard and Mrs. Hutchings's mother purported to communicate. Mrs. Hutchings appears to have taken much interest in the experiments of the following months, but Mrs. Curran remained indifferent and had to be coaxed to the board. The testimony to this effect is thoroughly consistent, and also to the fact that the husbands of the two ladies were far from being in sympathy, Mr. Hutchings being at least agnostic, and Mr. Curran prejudiced against everything "spiritualistic."

It appears that the "messages," professing to come from different persons, were of a rather banal character—the usual stuff of an unevidential character which could easily have been the product of the subconscious minds of those whose hands were on the board. Nor were any records kept up to June 22, 1914. But some weeks before this date something occurred which it seems rather necessary, and not at all harmful to anyone to relate, so well as I can gather it from the two not very different versions with which I have become acquainted.

A new name and an unknown one seemed to be struggling to come through, at first understood to be "Pat-C, Pat-C, Pat-C" (the first three and seventh letters of "Patience "). Naturally it was thought that some Irishman was trying to communicate. According to my theory, it was the strong suggestion of this supposition, stimulated by many leading questions, which induced various ouija board remarks, at this and subsequent sittings, appropriate to an Irishman. The suggestion

was powerfully reinforced when Mr. Curran, who had been all along contemptuous of what was going on, pretended to recognize the communicator as one Pat McQuillan whom he had known, and to verify certain statements of his. This of course led to some unpleasant feeling afterwards, and was really naughty, but I can see how to Mr. Curran at the time, not realizing how big the matter would loom up in the mind of one taking all in serious earnest, it seemed simply as a good joke on his wife as well as her friend.

Suppose, now, that "Patience" was the name that was trying to emerge, it is easy to see how the subconscious current set in motion by the concept of this Irish gentleman could act, for a time, as an effectual bar to its full utterance. It is of little importance to me whether or not Pat McQuillan cursed and said "A hell of a," etc. That is exactly what I would expect such a vivid and firmly-rooted subconscious Hibernian to do. The question was, if there was a some one or a something calling herself or itself "Patience" struggling for expression, when and how the "Pat McQuillan" fabrication was to be gotten out of the way. The testimony is not exactly clear as to "how," but I suspect that it was through the revelation that Mr. Curran had been romancing. The "when" was not on June 22nd, although "Pat" was repeated a number of times, and some verses given. Besides, after a request by Mrs. Pollard for a message from her husband, the words came: "I am aided by Dad" [Mr. Pollard], which may have been the product of suggestion, or, on the spiritistic theory, it may have been that "Patience" was being helped to get established. She certainly needed no aid a little later, but shook off all other ostensible communicators, and took possession of the entire field. The next sitting, on July 2nd, brought more verses. Mrs. Hutchings believed, and still believes, that both these earlier and the later productions were by different communicators, pointing for proof to their varying styles. But thus far and for some little time to come the style seems the same; it was not until later that abrupt changes came in. And if then and thereafter "Patience Worth" was not the sole author then the records explicitly lie at almost every page. Remembering that those who stand for the theory of multiple authorship do so necessarily in conformity with the belief in spirit origin of the whole, it is rather shocking to think of such a continuous exhibition, otherwise, of spirituality, wisdom and sound ethics, as contacted at every point with falsehood. And if the literature is considered as from another world it seems to me more reasonable that it should come from one mind of remarkable power and versatility than that some one's father, and some one else's mother, and various Toms and Dicks who have suddenly blossomed out as poets

and geniuses and agreed to hide themselves without a hint through many years, under one name.\*

On June 22nd, after "p-a-t" had come several times, this sentiment was received: "Oh, why let sorrow steel thy heart? Thy bosom is but its foster-mother, the world its cradle and the loving home its grave." This it was decided to record for preservation. All else of this sitting except five more similar vaguely pretty paragraphs, and all that had earlier been received appear not to have been set down by anyone, at least at the time.

Of the mistily pleasing passages of July 2nd the following two samples constitute about one-quarter. "Around come trooping myriad forms, and plucking all the flowers, cast wide upon the lake their wanton plunder, and lo, a wreath appears.... All those who lately graced your board are here, and as the moon looks down, think ye of them and their abode as a spirit lake, a spirit song, a spirit friend, and close communion hold 'twixt thee and them. 'Tis but a journey, dost not see?"

July 8th, 1913.

It may be well to state that Mrs. Mary E. Pollard acted as amanuenses at all these sittings and those to follow for a considerable period. [Mrs. Hutchings took the records home and transcribed them on the typewriter.—Ed.]

The board seemed to be possessed with unusual strength at this sitting and started immediately as follows:

"Many moons ago I lived. Again I come—Patience Worth my name."

We expressed wonder, but resumed.

"Wait, I would speak with thee. If thou shalt live, then so shall I. I make my bread at thy hearth. Good friends, let us be merrie. The time for work is past. Let the tabby drowse and blink her wisdom to the firelog."

MRS. C.: How queer that sounds!

P. W.: Good Mother Wisdom is too harsh for thee, and thou shouldst love her only as a foster-mother.

MRS. P.: Patience Worth must surely be the party who is delivering these messages. It sounds like a Quaker name. Let's ask her when she lived.

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\* When, on November 21, 1919, Dr. J. H. Hyslop was present and suggested, as the composition switched from *The Sorry Tale* to *Samuel Wheaton*, that the two might be the work of two different spirits, Patience Worth said:

"I tell ye I be settin' the pigs in mine ain pigsty. Aye, and I be shellin' the grain for the feedin' wi' mine ain hands, and the sow who hath bringed them forth wert me.... Nay, nay, this be one path that be not trod by hosts."

P. W.: 1649 94 The table seeming uncertain. Mrs. H.: Patience, where was your home?

P. W.: Across the sea.

MRS. H.: In what city or country?

P. W.: About me you would know much. Yesterday is dead. Let thy mind rest as to the past.\*

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\* THE PURPORTED EARTHLY LIFE OF PATIENCE

Patience Worth could not be brought to place any valuation on giving data about her alleged life on earth. She insisted that the only self of her which is of value to the world is to be found in her utterances. This may be thought a clever dodge, but it is not rare in automatic writings devoid of other evidence of any but subconscious origin to find autobiographical details enough, usually likewise uneventful.

Nevertheless, from time to time, with the air of an amused mother handing toys to her children Patience Worth dropped a few details in response to questions. Occasionally she told some anecdote, generally an amusing one, supposed to be recollected from her earth life. And once Mrs. Curran experienced a long vision without words, apparently picturing the preparations of Patience Worth for a journey to America, her passage and landing, all in detail of a very life-like and reasonable character.

The biographical statements are more of curious than evidential interest, and consequently are lightly run over in this note. Patience Worth professed that she was born in England in the Seventeenth Century, lived there and worked in the house and on the fields until a woman, migrated to America and, not long after, was killed in a foray by the Indians. The data, taken together, would make the date of her death coincide fairly well with Kin', Philip's war. But when asked if the chief of the Indians was Philip she did not take the bait, but rather contemptuously asked her questioner whether he, were he at the end of a blade, would be asking the names of his slayers. Once she apparently tried to give the name of her native county, and, after failures and the remark "there be a twist," seemed to resort to familiar words to suggest the sound of the name. "'Twere a wing. Ayea, and a deer-fallow. Hast thou seen a tuft-hut? There be a dove coo over it—the nest." Before I learned that Mr. Yost read these indications it occurred to me that a female fallow deer is a doe, that do'e is dialectal for *dove*, and the reference to the dove in connection with the nest suggested *set*, dialectal for *sit*. Later Mr. Yost, thinking that the reference to a wing might have been a hint of the *dorhawk* or *dorbeetle* or both, asked: "About the wing, was it beetle, or hawk or both?" Patience Worth replied: "Thou hast turned o' a stone," which was her way of saying he had found something. She added: "Thee hast the cat by the tail." Thus we would have *Dorsetshire* adumbrated. Later, before Mr. Yost took a trip to England, Patience Worth undertook to describe various landmarks, natural and ancient buildings, including seashore, cliffs, a monastery and a road by which he might find his way to her native village. He had the curiosity to visit Dorset, and found a number of interesting correspondences with Patience Worth's statements, the cliffs, the old monastery, the winding way, etc. These he regarded as impressive but expressly declares that he does not think they could be regarded as a demonstration.

There was displayed in Patience Worth's poems a wealth of description of the sea before Mrs. Curran had ever seen the ocean in her life. Also the references to rural life and rural objects, such as birds, in terms suited to England, are innumerable. However it comes about, a remarkably consistent pattern is maintained. Nor is there any appearances of lugging in such details.

Just as casual, seemingly, are the allusions to Patience Worth's alleged memories of her own life and experience. They usually come in as though chance remarks of the company present had reminded her of this or that little fact of long ago. Taking them together we get an absolutely consistent picture of an individual humble career, and a most vivid sense of a distinct personality. We see a small red-headed peasant girl, toiling at the humblest tasks, often chided by her mother and sometimes by the parish minister, a young woman of voluble and witty propensities, fond of finery and not averse to the other sex, considerably curbed in all these inclinations, because of the ideas of the day and the narrowness of the religion, but with a sense of humor which largely sustained her. She loved her mother, though she was "filled o' righteousnes"

Mrs. P. [jokingly]: She doesn't want us to inquire into her past. Perhaps it wasn't creditable.

P. W.: Wilt thou but stay thy tung! On rock-ribbed shores beat wisdom's waves. Why speak for me? My tung was loosed when thine was yet to be.

MRS. P.: I suppose she was a regular type, rather hard and severe in her ideas and speech.

P. W.: This overwise good-wife knows much that thrashing would improve. Am I then so hard?

The sitters laughed and asked Patience if she had singled out Mrs. P. for this rebuke.

P. W.: A secret held too close may inflame quite as sorely as one talked over-much.

This was interpreted as a general rebuke and Mrs. Curran laughed her appreciation. It evidently annoyed the "influence."

P. W.: Wilt thou of too much speech pry silence the witch? Much

and emptied o' mercy." Sometimes she peeped at the reflection of her "bonnet's ruff" on the polished brass kettle, and kicked her shoes upon the stones because she must wear her locks "wetted smooth." Sometimes she hints that even then she possessed a poetic and imaginative nature.

"Behold, the stones showed but as stones, still within me were that that did bid that I should know of the shadow of the stones and the creeping beneath them. Yea, and this hand hath sought beneath the stones, and of these things beareth thy handmaid back to thee."

She could not sing. "A holy singing" within her throat "sounded like unto blasphemy" and "the dominie once, aharkin', stopped for to pray."

According to her intimations she was something of a heretic, and much of her reminiscent humor is at the expense of the church and its minister.

"Well I remember a certain church, with its wee windows and its prim walls, with its sanctity and meekness, with its aloofness and chilling godliness. Well I remember the Sabbath and its quietude of uneasiness, wherein the creaking of the wood was an infernalism, the droning and scuffing of the menfolk's shoes and the rustle of the clothes of the dames and maids, the squeaking of the benches, and the drowsy humming of some busy bee who broke the Sabbath's law. Aye, well I remember the heat that foretold the wrath of God, making the good man (minister) sweat. Aye, and Heaven seemed far, far."

Referring to her audacious attempts to smarten her attire, she related:

"The good man oft denounced sin and fearsome flauntings, but lawk! he squinted a whit. I had a silver buckle on my boot, and no man knew it save the good man. He looked soberly, with the soberness he turned upon the Word, at the buckle. Aye, and thy handmaid sent him a wee upward look. Aye, and he rubbed his chin and coughed mightily and spat. And when the next Sabbath came he raged mightily against buckles. And hark—he looked to find the buckle after the Word. It was there, and lawk! I curtsied that he should see it not."

If all such anecdotes are mere tales to amuse the youngsters, they are nevertheless so delightful that one wishes she would write a whole book about her picturesque and fascinating suppositions earthly self, about Parson "Pritchett," and the church, about her work and her flirtations and about her friends and enemies. Perhaps she will if approached on the plea that it is worth while as literature. But she steadily and rather sensibly holds that her recollections would not be accepted as evidence; and reiterates in 1924

"Behold, my wares; herein am I."

clatter from a goose! An owl is silent and credited with much wisdom. A wise hen betrays not its nest with a loud cackle.

The continued rebukes caused the sitters to believe she wished consideration, and in respect they asked if she would kindly continue.

P. W.: If the storm passes. Thanks, good souls. Could I but hold your ear for the lesson I would teach! A striving for truth will not avail thee.

A couple of musically ethical paragraphs finish the record for this date. The brief record of July 13th contains several of the aphorisms quoted in the division of this book entitled *Impromptu Proverbs*. The poem, "A blighted bud," to be found in the division *Sentiment*, makes about one-half of the record of July 26th. Similarly pretty sentiments were dictated on July 31st, August 8th, 10th and 15th, of which I select but one.

Wouldst thou inquire into the universal truth, and make a culture of thy long diseased pouch of knowledge?

O rest from the heated sands of the desert of thine own make, and study thou the smile of an infant's lips in sleep, where hallowed angels whisper the word love thou wouldst choose believe that thou hast taught, and clasp one tiny hand.

The whole secret is sealed in one rosy palm, and the answer lies within each dimple kissed by thee....

Then canst thou laugh at the poor fool, the knave of the court most high, the world-named philosopher.

Here is the same adoring reverence for infancy that we find in those utterances in the division of this book *Infancy*, which are written in the "dialect," and the same contempt for the pride of learning, the same teaching that wisdom is derived from sincere contemplation of the things which are simplest and nearest at hand which pervade all of Patience Worth's philosophy.

On August 25, 1913, Patience Worth dictated short poems, and then Mrs. H. endeavored to engage her in personal conversation.

P. W.: Wilt thou but stay thy brush? The hearth is barren now from over-brushing.

MRS. H.: What do you mean?

P. W.: The cat doth drowse, my good folk, but when the fire is over-hot doth rouse.

Put faith in farthings and let the shillings rust

MRS. H.: Patience, won't you please put this into more modern English?

P. W.: Oh worry, worry, canst thou understand the purring of the cat?

MRS. H.: I truly did not mean to offend.

P. W.: I oft have seen the tung split for less.

Sept. 11, 1913. The board seemed slow, and the sitters urged more speed.

P. W.: Beat the hound and lose the hare.

MRS. P.: That seems to be a rebuke. I wonder if she is particularly fond of Mrs. C., and if that is her reason for coming always to her.

P. W.: To brew a potion, needs must have a pot.

MRS. C.: I wonder what she thinks of the women of this day.

P. W.: A good wife keepeth the floor well sanded and rushes in plenty to burn. The pewter should reflect the fires bright glow. Clip the wings of the goose. 'Twill teach thee clever tricks and brush the dust of long standing away. [Undoubtedly a reflection on Mrs. C.'s housekeeping.—Ed.]

MRS. P.: I wish we could get something besides sarcasm. I wish—

P. W.: From constant wishing the moon may tip for thee!

MRS. P.: I don't wish for anything, but I do want a lot of things.

P. W.: The swine cry "Want, want, want."

MRS. P.: I yield to Patience. She's cleverer than all three of us.

P. W.: Some folk, like the bell without a clapper, go clanging on in good faith, believing the good folk can hear.

MRS. P.: I hardly think I needed that scolding.

P. W.: Nor does the smock need the wimple.

MRS. H.: Just what do you think of Mrs. P.?

P. W.: The men should stock her.

MRS. P.: She should not select me for her sarcasm. It's you two who interrupt and laugh at her. It's that that makes her angry.

MRS. H.: Do you mean that Mrs. P. should be put in the stocks?

P. W.: Aye, and leave a place for two.

MRS. P.: I knew she didn't mean all that solely for me. I wish, though, that she would give us something nice.

P. W.: Mayhap thou wouldst have a pumpkin tart?

MRS. P.: If she cannot forego sarcasm, then I wish she would stop altogether.

P. W.: Then beat the hound.

MRS. C.: We ought to be satisfied with what is given us.

MRS. P.: Well, I don't feel as though I am to blame. I have been trying all evening to encourage you to be nice to her so that she would give us a nice message.

P. W.: Gadzooks, hear her!

MRS. C.: You've been listening to what we've been saying, Patience.

P. W.: A whip in time saves nine. Get thou thy kettle of brass and burnish bright its sides, so she may see herself therein.

MRS. C.: Whom do you mean?

P. W.: She of the peppery tongue.

MRS. C.: She wants you to see yourself as others see you.

P. W.: A look around would not be amiss.

MRS. P.: She means it for each one of us.

MRS. H.: She is caustic, but what she says is full of homely wisdom.

P. W.: Oh, then hast thou looked beneath the goose's feathers and discovered the down?

A rather heated discussion ensued, no one wanting to take the blame for having put Patience in such a bad humor.

P. W.: Dost thou know what war is? Hell.

MRS. C.: That is the first thing she has ever said that was out of keeping with her time. That expression originated during our own Civil War.

P. W.: Dost thou flatter thyself that today's thoughts and deeds were born today, by [of] such a fledgling as thou?

MRS. H.: Whew! She must have been wonderful at repartee when she was young.

P. W.: Young? Am I not young?

MRS. H.: Then just what is your age, Patience?

P. W.: Seven is odd. 'Tis so my age. 'Tis odd; I forget it.

MRS. P.: She will not betray her age. It is when we begin to get old that we are touchy about it.

P. W.: Let the cat have her nine lives.

MRS. H.: Tell us something of conditions when you were here on earth, Patience. You told us once that men were a farthing-worth to you.

P. W.: A man loveth his wife, but ah, the buckles on his knee-breaks!

The sitters clamored for more.



P. W.: Over-feeding will kill the Yuletide goose.

Sept. 19, 1913. At the time of this sitting, Miss R. was the house guest of Mrs. C. During the day there had been considerable talk of

Miss R.'s approaching marriage, and, in the evening, Miss R. was invited to take part in the sitting. It seemed that Patience was well aware of all this, as her first remark indicates.

P. W.: Would I had pine shillings to her weight to dower Tier. The wench is buxom, I vum.

Miss R.: Why does she call me a buxom wench? Does she mean I'm too quick with my tongue?

P. W.: A fiery ton tie belongs to one worth burning. The cat is drowsing. [Here Patience Worth was asked if this was a reflection on the wits of the persons present.]

P. W.: Aye. [Here Patience dictated a short poem and sitters questioned erroneously, her use of the word "thou"—Ed.]

P. W.: Enough that ye quibble o'er the builder's beam.

MRS. C.: She thinks we are not deserving of any more because of the fault we found with the structure of the last sentence.

P. W.: A half-baked loaf is porridge soaked to fit for eating. Perchance thou wouldst crave the question "thee or thou?" soaked for thee.

MRS. P.: Her tongue is sharp. I should like to have her show her amiable side.

P. W.: A lollypop is but a breeder of pain.

This line was misinterpreted, too, Mrs. P. thinking it a reflection on her appetite.

P. W.: An old goose gobbles the grain like a gosling.

MRS. P.: I can't say that that is an improvement over the last. The idea of her calling me an old goose!

P. W.: Youth taketh a homestead at early and late life.

MRS. P.: Whew! she is rather hard on me, but I am getting used to it.

P. W.: So ye take the squills without the quill?

MRS. P.: I'll take all the bitter doses you give me, Patience, if you will reward me afterward with something that I may love.

P. W.: Love hath shining eyes. Dost flatter thyself to be His chosen?

MRS. C.: I believe I should prefer to have her call me an old goose.

MRS. P.: I don't believe that she really means to be uncomplimentary.

P. W.: A timber falling would be to thee a splinter.

MRS. C.: She surely ought to say something kindly after that.

P. W.: Too much sweet may spoil the shortbread.

MRS. H.: Can't you give us some message, Patience, for Miss R.? Perhaps you were a bride yourself.

P. W.: Ye gods! let bygones be bygones.

MRS. H.: Is it possible that you were a maiden lady?

P. W.: A maid may surely see the folly of over-married hussies.

MRS. H.: Now I am sure she was a spinster or she would not be so touchy on the subject.

P. W.: In ye days of better times, a maid dare not to ask a man.

[After some more witty sallies, one of which was not understood, P. W. dryly remarked] Again the cat sleepeth.

MRS. H.: Why have you chosen Mrs. P. and me to vent all your spleen on? Mrs. C. should have her share.

P. W.: Weak yarn is not worth the knitting.

The play of repartee at the next sitting, on Sept. 25th, of which Dr. S. was the victim, is to be found on pages 16-18 of Mr. Yost's book, *Patience Worth: A Psychic Mystery*.

Oct. 11, 1913. Referring to Mr. H., who had kept himself somewhat aloof, Patience Worth said:

Oh, he will not mistake and stroke the cat.

A wife shall brush her man's blacks and polish his buckles, but a maid may not dare e'en to blow the trifling dust from his knickerbockers.

MRS. H.: You don't think I am jealous of the compliments given my husband, do you, Patience?

P. W.: Doth the cow not enjoy rechewing the cud?

At this Mrs. H. kissed her husband somewhat playfully and asked Patience what she thought of it.

P. W.: The smack of a peasant.

Mr. C. asked Patience if she was having any fun out of all this.

P. W.: Watch the cat lap the cream. The licking of her paw is quite as good.

Doubts were expressed here as to whom the words were directed and what they meant.

P. W.: Words should be shouted at thee or wouldst thou even then harken? Plant the rose and dig for turnips. Should I then present thee with a pumpkin, wouldst thou desire to count the seeds?

MR. H.: Do you think I am stupid, Patience?

P. W.: It taketh a wise man to make a good fool....

Following a query whether the meaning of a remark had been understood correctly by the company, Patience Worth retorted:

Would that I had a letter-book with rhymes for thee!

If I interpret correctly, Patience Worth is anxious to compose, and the garrulity of the company, and its questions prompted by curiosity are defeating her purpose. Hence her good-natured Jibes by which she is gradually educating them to pay attention to what she regards as of higher importance. Thus, in this sitting, she gives laconic answers to several questions about her life on earth, and then snaps out: "My age, my life and death are naught to you."

Oct. 17, 1913, at the home of Mr. F. A.

...The host volunteered to explain to the ladies the trick of the ouija board.

P. W.: The cock who croweth loudest to call the hens seldom hath a real fat worm, but expecteth a loud cackle.

MR. A.: I believe you girls are manipulating the board. Let me put a silent question to her.

P. W.: The gamecock is over spoiling for fight. I ween he believeth the gander to be a squab.

Oh, feed him upon pine dust.

He who receiveth grain thanklessly deserveth but the dust from the saw....

MR. A.: I still feel that she will have to answer a silent question for me before I will believe.

P. W.: Ah climb not the stars to find a pebble. Why strip the rose? The scent is thine without the waste.... O, hell itself is but a home for doubters.

Oct. 24, 1913. After some utterances which deserve room that cannot be spared, Patience Worth apparently started a poem, which the company interrupted by discussing the meaning of a word.

P. W.: O, piff! The story's stale. Thou wilt, like the goat, devour thy very bed. Rust not the steel by shedding tears upon the blade.

MRS. P.: Well, give me my message, Patience, if you have anything nice to say. You sent for me to come in.

P. W.: So wouldst thou, upon humble knee and with the beggar's whine, ask alms of Him, when He has made thee man? Then crave it as thy right and thank as man to man.

MRS. H.: What do you mean, Patience?

P. W.: The quill will tell thee.

MRS. C.: I don't believe it is Patience who is with us tonight. Twice she has said "has," and Patience always says "hath."

P. W.: My tea is brewed.

MRS. H.: Do you mean that supper is waiting and you are going to leave us?

P. W.: Nay, the "hath" doth contain the "t."

MRS. P.: You ought to give me a message, Patience.

P. W.: Let be who stealeth apples suffer.

MRS. H.: It ought to be "Let him who stealeth."

Again Patience Worth was stopped, this time by discussion of the use of "has" instead of the customary "hath."

P. W.: A mug of beaslings.\* Thou hast stripped the cow.

MRS. H.: Do you mean we have taken all you had to give and you won't come back?

P. W.: Nay, but a heifer needeth good care.

MRS. P.: She doesn't like our discussions. Well, I would be satisfied with the message she has for me.

MRS. H.: Patience, have you a message for Mrs. P.?

P. W.: Drat the witch.

MRS. H.: She doesn't mean that for Mrs. P. She calls Mrs. C. the witch. She may even have meant me.

P. W.: A triple wash.

Mayhap thou canst find the rainbow's end by a damning of the fairie's reed.

MRS. H.: What does she want us to do?

P. W.: Wash thy hands.

MRS. H.: Patience, do you mean that conditions are wrong tonight, and that is why the communications are so broken and unsatisfactory?

P. W.: Oh, my poor heart would beat most faintly 'neath my kirtle, did I feed upon thy faith. Rest.

MR. C.: We have hurt her. She wants to stop tonight.

P. W.: Cleanse thy heart and start anew. Carding cotton doth not weave the cloth.

The next sitting, or at least the next recorded one, was on Dec. 6th, 1913, and Patience Worth managed to get through considerable verse, unmolested, including that printed in P. W. P. M., page 23. She is beginning to get her auditors disciplined.

On Dec. 13th, Mrs. P. expressed the conviction that wishing hard enough will bring what one wants. Patience Worth impolitely retorted:

So wishing, then, will change thee from a dolt.

Oh, cast a faggot to the fire. A cold hearth shall drive from thee Fortune's shade away.

Hunger, then, oh ye who empty life's cupboards to the dogs and remember not the doves who coo for but a crumb.

MR. C.: We must go now, Patience. Have you a parting message?

\* Dialect word meaning the last milk of the cow.

P. W.: A thankless clown would send the departing crowd at least a vacant smile.  
Dec. 20, 1913. [After discussion.]

P. W.: Ye rattle like rush brushes.

Mrs. P. asked for a sentiment to accompany a pipe she proposed to give to Mr. H. This seems to be the first instance of asking Patience Worth to compose something on a given subject, and apparently the significance of the result did not strike the company.

P. W.: Draw ye thrice and blow a silver cloud; once a deep draught, of spicy wisdom, another for a foolish whimsey, and then a third for friendship's sake. For wisdom or for folly—what cares a friend?

Jan. 11, 1914.

MRS. P.: The world is crying for proofs of immortality.

P. W.: To prove a fact, needst thou a book of words, when e'en the sparrow's chirp telleth thee more.

A tale unfolded by the Bishop's drudge may hold the meat for thousands, while dust and web are strong on his Eminence. The road to higher plains leadeth not along the steeple.

Drop ye a coin and expect the gods to smile. Chant ye a creed and wordy prayer, reeking with juice squeezed from thy smug fat store of self-love, expecting favor from the God who but enjoys the show....

The poem, "Long lines of leaden cloud" (L. B. page 23), was given on Jan. 22nd, 1914, following which Patience Worth was teased to tell whence all the beautiful things came. It was the old nuisance of stopping and making what to her were trivial inquiries.

P. W.: To scratch would tear the flower. Doth need a tansy tea? MRS. H.: Why should we need a tansy tea? What is it for?

P. W.: A sorry belly. Not the kettle but the fire doth cook the stew. Plaster never flew to spots where leeches clung.

MRS. C.: We don't get your idea, Patience.

P. W.: To pull the Yarn already knit!...

MR. C.: She is provoked again. Let's stop for tonight. Ask her if she will take "a cold one" with us.

P. W.: Ah, cold but cracketh heated metal....

The lines beginning "Think ye the tiny drop," (p. 127) came on Jan. 25th. Again she was halted while their meaning was discussed, and again she flashed fire.

P. W.: Ravel the yarn of perfect knitting and find thee hast but a ball....

MRS. P.: Don't be cross, Patience, but tell me what I can do to be happy.

P. W.: Search for lentils in the ashes.

Jan. 31, 1914.... Mrs. P. remarked [after a number of verses] that she had such a vivid dream of her [dead] husband.

P. W.: Dream ye or travel ye, knowest thou that fair land to which the traveler is loath to go, but loath, so loath to leave?

Ah, the mystery of the snail's shell is deeper far than this.

Fleet as down blown from its moorings, seeking the linnet who dropped her seed, so drift ye, ever seeking, when at the root still rests the seed pod. Think ye the earth so reeked in planet lore that only upon beaten path ye travel?

This question was asked: "Is it possible for the human mind to comprehend the life beyond?"

P. W.: And ever cloak ye the naked truth. Needest thou see what God Himself sealeth thine eyes to make thee know?

It was here suggested that it is death that seals the mortal eyes.

P. W.: Zounds! 'twas hard coming. The Sabboth [sic] house smell is on ye yet.

Twirlie, twirlie goes the mill, still grinding stale grain.

MRS. H.: We are no nearer the solution of the riddle than they were in her day.

P. W.: Ask the cat, she dieth full oft.

[There was discussion as to how the world would regard the Patience Worth utterances.]

P. W.: A pot of wisdom should boil to nothing ere a doubter deemeth it broth worth tasting....

Wishes to know more about the origin of the work were expressed, and Patience Worth tantalizingly replied:

Wish ye on the cat's left whisker at mideve to find the rainbow's end, only to fall into the briars and tear thy Sabboth frock.

MR. C.: That's great; she certainly is a trump....

On Feb. 7th, 1914, a little verse was received, and on the 15th came "Ah, Peaceful Vale," to be found on page 181.

In a poem of Feb. 28th occurred the sentence: "Weep thou a rosary of tears," and Mrs. C. remarked that the expression was old.

P. W.: So then, the rose may fear to bloom lest the ghosts of sisters prove their right to be foremost in the garden.

MRS. H.: I don't believe Patience said that about the rosary. She was not a Catholic.

P. W.: To catch a flea, needs be a dog?

On March 1st came the lovely "When I Would Sing" (p. 89), and mainly badinage the next day.

Some sententious lines came on March 4th which it is a pity to miss, but Mrs. C. said: "I hoped we'd get some good poetry tonight." Patience Worth retorted, sardonically: "So ye thought to find the chipmunk's hole, and found a skunk!"

P. W.: E'en a snow-chirp giveth thanks for crumbs.

MRS. C.: Snow-chirp? How charming!

MRS. H.: Was that the term used in your day, or did you invent it?

P. W.: The parson hath no lid on learning.

MRS. H.: I think the personal things are of very great importance to us.

P. W.: My pettie-skirt hath a scallop. Mayhap that will help thy history

MRS. C.: The little villain! she's caught on to the fact that we're planning to put her in a book.

P. W.: Yea, and tell thou of my buckled boots—and add a cap-string. MRS. P.: She'll give you all the details. I hope you're satisfied.

P. W.: Hast thou the measure of my tung, or wilt thou measure more? MRS. P.: We know all about your tongue.

P. W.: The witch [Mrs. Curran] hath nine.

MRS. H.: What has that to do with yours? You weren't a witch, Patience.

P. W.: Nay, I speak of her.

MRS. C.: I'm disappointed in what we got.

P. W.: Ye gods! Dost look for butter in skimmed milk? To drink an ocean and yet die of thirst!

Waste ye the buds by plucking when the flower hangs low and full-blown?

March 8, 1914.

MRS. C.: We don't understand.

P. W.: Treacle runneth slowly.

Mar. 15, 1914. First came verse, interrupted by remarks of Mrs. C.... Mrs. C. expressed some resentment at the evident questioning [by P. W.] of her faith, and remarked that some credit was due for having been the means of producing the writing.

P. W.: So doth the piggie who scratcheth upon an oak deem his fleas the falling acorn's cause. The soap-kettle needeth not a shape. I cut my soap to fancy....

Again Patience Worth gave vent to her dissatisfaction with the chatter which kept her from making poetry.

P. W.: Pulling yarn is not to my fancy.

MRS. P.: She said that once before. What does she mean?

MRS. H.: Unravelling what she has knitted, I suppose.

P. W.: Nay, the fleece is pulled to yarn. I fain would weave.... So thou deemest wisdom to drop for thee like hose from him who looseth his points.

MRS. H.: Did you say that last word was "points"? What does that mean?

P. W.: Lacing.

MR. H.: I don't see the meaning. Maybe we didn't get it correctly. I'm sure there's no sense to it as we got it. [But there was. Ed.]

P. W.: Ne'er leap afore ye search. Want ye a wall well-built, then cease pulling stones away. [They then looked up "points." No poetry was produced after this talk.]

Thus far something has been given from every sitting. But from now on sittings are passed over, together with much interesting conversational material, without notice. The percentage of literary material gradually increased.

Mar. 24, 1914.

MRS. H.: When Patience is known to the public she'll revive Puritan styles.

P. W.: 'Twere a virtue, egad!

MRS. H.: Clothes were very different in your day—far more sensible?

P. W.: Many's the wench who pulled her points to pop. But all! the locks were combed to satin. He who bent above could see himself reflected.

MRS. H.: How were the young girls like in your day, Patience?

P. W.: A silly lot—like they of thine.

MRS. C.: How do our styles strike you?

P. W.: Not as quills to adorn the redman doth the gobbler sacrifice his tail, but for the chaste bonnet of thy women.

June 13, 1914. [After supper.]

P. W.: A goodly feast ye bellied.

MRS. H.: They were coarse in her day.

P. W.: Yea, coarse cloth weareth well. Ye would sack the pumpkin in silk. A lady o' the knight may broider a banner with her tresses, but a wench o' the land may but card and weave. Ye thirst for the broidered cloth. Lackaday! 'tis ever so. Swine among a melon patch!



Aug. 28, 1914. [Meaning of a beautiful verse discussed.]

P. W.: Tish, tish, thou drivellest.

AIR. H.: Let's get the rest of it.

P. W.: Hath thee measured the tabby's tall'

MRS. C.: Patience, I don't think you ought to treat us this way.

P. W.: Ought is naught. Thine own barley corn may weevil, but thee'lt crib thy neighbors and sack his shelling.

### LATER TABLE TALK

It will be understood that P. W.'s conversation was usually interspersed between the dictation of poems, parts of the long stories, etc. The examples of years later than 1914 which follow are not necessarily better than a great many other passages, but have been selected to show the range, versatility and readiness of her talk, and that characteristics shown during the first year are still visible. Still there are metaphors and similes drawn from the farm and barnyard, still there is rollicking humor of the flavor of the seventeenth century, still there is flashing repartee, wisdom and lofty spirituality.

1915

MR. REEDY: Patience, you talk like Hypatia.

P. W.: Aye, and thou talkest like unto Lucifer!

MR. R.: I was under the impression that Lucifer was a figure of speech. P. W.: Alawk, I be atoo the thing, doth thee and Earth put the tho't to it! [So am I if you and some others are right.]

1916

Dr. P. took his turn at the board, remarking that he wondered what Patience would have to say about the opinion of certain Jesuits who claimed she was a wandering soul.

P. W.: Lor', the outlands shall shew them peaked o' cowls!

Say ye unto the dealer o' His bread, be knoweth that his cup holdeth not the filling o' man. Nay, nay, His wine be pressed o' all, yea, e'en the blighted grape! And nay man's word measureth His land nor shutteth His gate unto His own!

Say ye more: E'en an holy one may drink wisdom out an ass's track.

1917

P. W.: She [Mrs. Curran] ahere be like unto a young wench who setteth her at the mixin' o' loaf and stoppeth for to pat the tabby.

[This referred to Mrs. Curran's reluctance to stop Sorry Tale for the poem Patience was about to give.]

MR. McK.: She never says anything nice to me.

P. W.: A-a-a-h! and thy damie aside thee! Thee shouldst for to know that a spinster may not brush a man's breeks! Lor', I ha'e seen the duckin' for less!

MRS. R.: Patience, your words are very precious to me.

P. W.: Nay, nay, the stuff be stolen. 'Tis His.

P. W.: I woe me o'er the follied top (Mrs. Curran) but when I think me o' the heart within her, weel, I thank that the gander wert made in broth and ne'er the goose!

We had all had so many barnyard names applied to us that we were afraid to speak for starting Patience in our direction with a verbal onslaught, but she said:

"'Tis true adeed, twere ne'er a fowl yard athout an ass." All eyes were turned toward Mr. C. who had been called this before. "Set up a brayin'," she went on, "and the goose set her cry amid it, and yet there wert a wee sma' cock that crew most lustily, and yet an puffed hen who looked 'pon the fools and sunk her head amid her puffed feathers and blinked saying: 'Fools be fools.'"

So they all got it in turn, Mr. C., Mrs. C., Mr. Yost and Mrs. Pollard who nevertheless called lustily here for some of the story.

"Lor'," said Patience, "I knew o' a dame, a youngish dame, who pilfered frae the parson to buy cloth out the peddleman's pack."

Mrs. P. subsided and Patience said "on," as she usually does when she means on upon the story. "On," she repeated, "'pon what I choose!" Then while we were discussing her perversity she began a solemn and mystical poem.

Mrs. Curran urged Mr. Y. to write a poem with this sentiment for its base. "Why should I write poetry when we have the best in the world without price?", said he.

"Lookee," laughed Patience, "when the ben layeth, he croweth!"

Here a playful controversy began with the men on one side, the women on the other.

P. W.: When the wench o' the lord flew into a rage, and dames said "hussy," the lord said "delightful."

Mrs. Curran teased P. W. to go on with the story and finally ejaculated: "I'd whip her if I had her."

P. W.: Umph! The lashin' o' thy great grand-dame's great granddame!

One of the company asked if she wouldn't give them some conversation.

P. W.: Fool's gabbin' buyeth not grain. 'Tis the task o' thy handmaid that she set up balms for earth, nay, a gabbin'.

Mr. Yost leaned over the board and sent it fast in a circle.

P. W.: Awk, but thy grindin' lacketh bowels!

MR. Y.: I only wanted to pat you on the back.

P. W.: Lor', thee'd deem I had an itch!

MR. YOST: You never can tell what she will do.

P. W.: "You never can tell," sayeth the fool, as he plucketh from 'neath the goose, a hen's egg.

MR. YOST: Patience, what do you want me to give you for Christmas?

P. W.: Lor', I be a-tremour! Wait ye a whit, I'll set thee a task. Ah, lawk a me! Should it be a new buckle or a kirtle? Alawk! Alawk! I tell 'ee, sirrah, it shall be a word frae out thy heart. I see the script wi' e'es aye and drink me in the potion like a simperin' wench.

MR. Y.: Will you meet the postman at the door?

P. W.: I be at the tendin' o' hearts, not a gabster on the doorstep.

MR. Y.: I know what I'd like to give you.

P. W.: Lor', this be like unto the swain who would but canna, and canna but would!

MR. Y.: I'd like to put my arms around you and kiss you!

P. W.: I said it were so!

MR. Y.: I'm going to do it sometime if I have to chase you all over heaven.

P. W.: Tarry, brother mine, tarry! I tell 'ee I shall for to down o' my bonnet's curtain! I wot a spinster be pledged e'en though she be thrice thy grandsire's grandsire's age!

MR. Y.: This is only brotherly love, Patience.

P. W.: Lor', I ha'e heard that too!

1918

P. W.: I ha'e consorted with folly and known wise men but alawk, the leanin' that be mine be toward folly!

[Some one here remarked upon the jollity of the conversation of Patience, and Mrs. Curran quoted her remark that heaven without a merry would be a hell.]

P. W.: Think ye 'pon it; how them that draw them pious, yea, sober faces and pray them in fullsome humility; think ye 'pon it, should the great God in His gentleness smile!...

[Dr. C. remarked that we were getting a real conversation.]

P. W.: He hath listed unto the prate o' dames and listed unto the prate o' me and sayeth him, "Lor', the thing may speak!"

The question rose whether "intruder" or "incomer" had been spelled out. Finally we asked her and she said, "Why should I flail?", and went on with the story.

After Mr. Curran had chattered, Patience said:

"I knew o' a bull calf who deemed his wailin' fetched the milch wench. Aye and egad, it did! Aye, still thy dame knoweth asumpthin', the ass deemed he bawled in admiration o' his beauty."

Some one mentioned the fact that no matter what Patience wrote it all had the taste of her individuality.

The smack o' the brewster," interjected Patience.

Lor', many the man who hath drunk him drunk 'pon a brew drawn by a buxom wench and dreampt him dreams filled o' buxom wenches! Aye, and he who would drink should choose his maid."

Dr. G., who was at the board, remarked: "Pretty good poem I and Patience have written."

"Lawk,' said the lord as he supped, fillin' up, 'what a belly is mine!' When I swear 'twere the brewster made his belly fair."

Following this Mrs. Curran seemed to be more interested in scratching her head with her left hand than she was in whirling the board with her right. Mr. Curran made some remark on concentration and Patience said:

"A louse and a beggar, egad, each would lone athout the tother."

Dr. W. was uncommonly quiet.

P. W.: I war not with wits like him who warreth with broadaxe. Nay, man may not meet wits with silence and not feel dull.

Dr. W. protested that this remark was made by Mrs. C. herself.

P. W.: I need nay jaw within which to hang my tongue. Ye may not stop a flood by willin' o' it. Nay, it taketh timber, aye and the timber which stoppeth this flood is wits.

About this time Patience was having her own way as usual and went on with this dry remark:

P. W.: I may pluck the stars and roll them about, set the sun spinning, yea, or make the moon to drag the tides like a culprit, aye, or I may set me up monstrous words making free with wisdom like a fool maketh free with an apple, aye, or I might for to stride in seven strides the earth's girdle, but I'd rather for to make a fool laugh!...Laughter is the flint that kindleth mirth, and no man is worth a whit without the spark.

Dr. W. complained that Patience was rough and Patience said to him:

"Lor', sirrah, wouldst thou that thy sage dame pluck but lollypops? E'en thou art dull at times."

Some one remarked that Patience had been rather hard on Dr. W. and Dr. W. said: "Patience must be patient with me, or I cannot be patient with her." Patience answered:

"I gild nae a rod."

Dr. W. still contending that this must be a product of Mrs. Curran's own individuality, several mentioned things in the work which in their estimation could not possibly be the product of a human mind and Patience said:

"Let man be at this trick! I shall set his wits at such a spin that he shall feel that he hath mounted the West wind and wert chasing the Last."

Then turning to the Doctor she gave him this admonition: "Man, stand before God at the end of thy wisdom and bow."

P. W.: Meet not the tides, rather lie idly and wait them.... Haste is a cheap tinder, and produceth not the flame....

I am wholly thine; athin thy hand have I delivered me like a whit o' dust. Lovest thou me, hold thy hand close upon me. I may not raise my voice against thee, for in so doing I become less, inasmuch as I have declared doubt o' thee, that that thou doest becometh me. Shouldst thou betray me then have I betrayed Earth; the words thou utterest from thy lips become mine. I would not cry out for hearkeners. Rather would I sing lone, like the pipe of Panda 'pon the hill.

Here be my hands. Lead me forth, but should the path depart from the low spots leading thee forth upon highways, apart from the path o' words I ha'e gi'ed unto thee, thou shalt find thyself alone....

Love hath nae purse; he is naked, and who followeth him is a beggar.

These and similar expressions showed that P. W. was gently chiding somebody. Only gradually it dawned upon those present that she did not want them to be concerned whether publishers accepted her literature or not, nor to have the least taint of wishing to make money by it. Mr. Curran at length remarked:

"I guess she wants us to stay poor."

P. W.: I need nay prate, laddie. Let thy heart bathe athin this fount. 'Tis free gi'ed unto all who love me. Ye shalt not hope 'pon love for love is not created o' matter and may not be barted for the clatter o' metal. Save that ye deal without a thorn's pressin' aneath thy flesh, deal not. I say me love is free; free given, free

born, free flung. Look not for one shadow of returnin'. Take love from thy purse and put it athin thy heart, 'tis safer keepin'!\*

1919

P. W.: Man, he be a jester, wi' a crown o' bells. When he deemeth he be wise, he carrieth such an pack o' words that his back breaketh. Aye, and when he deemeth he be a fool, did he but know it, he oft walketh with a staff which is wisdom!

We spoke of the joy of certainty of the hereafter and Patience said:

"There be little difference between 'is and if—yet eternity hangs between them."

DR. P.: Are these stories real happenings?

P. W.: Within the land of Here he packed the days adead of earth, and thy day hath its sister day ahere, and thy neighbor's day and thy neighbor's neighbor's day. And I tell thee, didst thou afashion tale, thou could'st ne'er afashion lie; for all thou hast athin this day, that thy put might show from see of thee, hath been, at not thy time, yea, but it hath been."

DR. L.: "How does it happen that in the poetry you write there are echoes of poets who wrote since you lived?"

P. W.: "There be aneath the every stone a hidden voice. I but loose the stone, and lo, the voice!"

Dr. L.: "Do you feel the things you write now as if they were your own experience?"

P. W.: "Yea, and thine, and thy neighbors."

P. W.: "What fay listeth unto the bray o' an ass, or what ass would harken unto a fairy's lay? Yet who knoweth, mayhap within an ass's ear a fay doth sit, and what betides causeth him to wag his ear in listing?"

MR. V.: "Patience, where am I going when I die?"

P. W.: Lor', where thy feet track!

[Further questioning of this sort brought:]

I may roll about the sun as a pebble and draw down the sky for thee to play upon or send thee a song a wise 'un might envy, but I'm danged, and it be not primmed, if I be the keeper of thee!

Mrs. Curran had been all afternoon rudely reminding Mr. Curran, and indirectly Mrs. Smith, of their slight leaning toward *embonpoint*.

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\* From my study of the history of the case I should say that it has been as free from mercenary taint as is the work of artists, writers and clergymen generally. And P. W. desired that it should be exceptionally so.—Ed.

Patience remarked: "In the time o' me they measured a man's mirth by the folds upon his belly."

Thinking that Patience was helping her in the fun, Mrs. Curran gave the villain's laugh in the play and Patience turned on her thus:

"Aye, and they measured a wench's tongue by the length of her neck."

After the laugh she went on:

"When I choose a companion I would have him plump as a friar. Yea, for his spirit must be soothed within such a casket!"

Patience began a poem about a bird and Mr. Curran humorously remarked that his wife was a bird.

MRS. P.: "Don't make a joke of it."

P. W.: "It mattereth not; a troubadour sang while the fool shook his bells."

P. W.: "Youth laughs at the grave clothes of the noble;; and age is twitted for the rusting of its wits! Many a youth hath choked 'pon the dust on the cup of age and then declared wisdom dry; for age mourns departures and tinctures its portion with dole. Youth seeketh a new cup with a brighter rim. Ah, 'tis mournful that age should so dispense its wares! For Youth is trustful, and should age present its cup with an inviting inclination, Youth would drink."

Mrs. Smith had come to the board with the remark: "She has been so generous to me." And Patience said:

"I ha'e but torn a rent in the veil and Heaven poureth through!"

"Did Shakespeare write the works credited to him?", asked Mr. Yost. "I saved the thistledown wert the skin-shod, buskined one's." "Now about Atlantis?", asked Mrs. Smith. "Fetch ye a dominie," said Patience.

1920

Here Miss E. mentioned that her life had been rather hard.

P. W.: 'Tis but a posey bethorned thou hast plucked. Do then to play a bit in sun and strip it o' its thorn.

P. W.: Pin a man's faith up in a petticoat of argument and ye won't know the wench.

P. W.: Many's the ass who brays and wags long ears who hath an stuff which is the pith of his being, gentle as a dove and sweet-songed.

There be more evident in the flesh that be ill than there be in spirit.

1921

P. W.: That I play parson and bake ye a bannock o' words, aye, and set o'er thee till thou hast consumed it? Aye, and I ween some 'Id fret and some 'Id sorry sore, woein' in their innards.

There is no thing which gives thee sorrow like the understanding of earth's hunger. I mean nay for bread. Ah, my beloved, 'tis a' about ye. I ha'e seen eyes that wert starvin', aye, they ha'e looked 'pon a bone o' hope and strived for to fatten souls. I ha'e seen hearts famished, anguished in the gnaw of hunger. I ha'e seen flesh hungered, too, but this be naught to the hunger o' the eyes and hearts. See ye unto it then, that the bread thou dispenseth be rich in the give of thy substance, thy very substance, the fat o' thy soul. A crust o' this, a crumb o' this wi' feed a multitude. Aye, while a loaf buyed o' pence brings not comfortable fillin' nor substance.

I may speak o' tongues and faggots, a bit o' soot, a pound o' flesh, a measurin' o' grain's meal—aye, I may, but look ye! Ah me, sic a sky, sic a morn, sic stars.... and dream's time!

"We shall have to learn to hold our tongue," said Dr. W.

P. W.: That lesson be longer than life, and I be the proof of it.

A wench's tongue be like milch; it be sweet until it thunders!

I ken beggarded words that be wrapped o' silk, and silken words that beggars would...nae clothe in!

I kenned a man who wore his breeks lang adoon his knee, and his gude wife spake her: "Jon, yeer breeks be sagged."

And he said him, sternlike: "I pay nay mind o' saggin' breeks. What wench may set the fashionin'?"

Mrs. Curran said she wished Patience would write something dainty, that she was not in a mood for heavy stuff.

P. W.: I shall distill a dewdrop through a buttercup for thee.

P. W.: There wert not nuff pegs in a bootheel for to pin nuff stuff for to cover the huzzy! [Referring to Mrs. Curran and her visit to New York.—Ed.]

A wench with seven tongues ne'er spilled more!...

He who is vain of flesh is vain of spirit. He who decketh his flesh in gaudy raiment decketh his spirit in gaudy words.

MR. CURRAN: I suppose that she refers to the swallowtail I wore.

P. W.: Every donkey wondereth whether yon lady upon the roadway hath seen how shineth his rump!



We told how she had informed on Mrs. Curran in New York by telling of her new hair switch.

P. W.: "Such a trumpery! There be nay swine that would borrow his brother's bristles!"

1923

P. W.: He who can contemplate his life with an eye to the whole, setting little value upon instant or incident, hath a happy trick. His wisdom is proper tuned. He may read the script of heaven complacently and catch a gnat while his brother, forgetting to read the script, is intent upon the catching.

1921

QUERY: In the child's prayer You wrote you use the phrase "learn Thy wisdom while I sleep," implying that wisdom is taken during sleep. Will you tell us about it?

P. W.: Sleep is the field within which seeds spurt, beneath the share of waking. The field in anguish receiveth the grain, and sleep bequickeneth it.

Many's the wise man who writ his dream and believed his wit wert waked.

QUERY: You have spoken of other worlds than ours. Will you tell us whether you have visited them or not and if so whether they are governed by the same laws and standards as ours?

P. W.: Space be the shadow of material. With material removed there be nay shadow. Yet space be like to fancy and phantoms. It containeth all and is all.

Removed from dimension one becomes as a wave of sound—a circlet perfected—neither coming—going—or gone—but arrived at all Time.

## OPINIONS AND REVIEWS

### OPINION OF PROFESSOR ALLISON

W. T. Allison is a prominent Canadian writer and professor of English literature in the University of Manitoba. The following is quoted and abstracted from his articles in the *Winnipeg Globe*, of September 21 and 29, 1918. He visited the Currans in St. Louis and personally studied "what must be regarded as the outstanding phenomenon of our age, and I cannot help thinking of all time." He has never been convinced by spirit messages though he has not denied. After having read all the Patience Worth literature to date, "I have not

found one objectionable sentence, one sentence which I could have wished might have remained unwritten." After much praise of the thought of *The Sorry Tale* he declares:

No book outside the Book of books gives such an intimate picture of the earthly life of Jesus, and no book has ever thrown such a clear light upon the manner of life of Jews and Romans in the Palestine of the day of our Lord....

I have been amazed at the rapidity of Mrs. Curran's utterances.... And yet while the method of communication was so fast that I couldn't begin to keep pace with the spelling, when 'Mr. Curran read over each paragraph of the novel being composed, it made not only sense, but beautiful English, such portrayals as were perfect in metre and rich in imagination.... In one evening fifteen poems were produced in one hour and a quarter, an average of five minutes for each one. All were poured out with a speed that Tennyson or Browning could never have hoped to equal, and some of the fifteen lyrics are so good that either of those great poets might be proud to have written them. One of the visitors on the night of which I speak happened to mention Shelley, and without a moment's hesitation Patience composed these beautiful lines on a dead skylark.... [See page 92.]

Whether she writes in modern English, as in the first two stories, or couches her words in the speech of a bygone age, she shows the most wonderful command of local color and of the customs and humors of the past, so that one is tempted to say that she must have seen the events and characters that she describes. *Hope Trueblood* is one of the most gripping stories of English peasant life, one of the most powerful character novels I have ever read. How can we explain this literary phenomenon on materialistic grounds?

Suppose a woman of your acquaintance, one who had lived in your town or city for many years and had never written even a letter or news item for a local paper, began to dictate to her husband first-class poetry in quaint idiom, novels up to the George Eliot standard in modern style, to say nothing of witty or profound remarks brought out in casual conversation with friends or visitors. What would you make of such a performance? No words or phrases in story or poem need to be changed. To me, this is one of the most striking features of this mysterious business, for every writer, even the most practiced hand, knows how often he has to change words or phrases, perhaps whole sentences, before his manuscript is smooth enough for publication.

Professor Allison discusses the secondary personality theory and says that "If Mrs. Curran is not a perfectly normal woman, independent of possession by a subconscious self, then I have never seen one." She is "a healthy, happy, every-day woman." He quotes Professor Slaght as saying:

If Mrs. Curran is producing this literature out of materials stored up in her subconscious mind, she must in time past have gathered the raw material in a normal way. You cannot make bricks out of straw.... Mrs. Curran never finished a high school education.\* She read few novels by Dickens, and the *Mill on the Floss* by George Eliot, but was never much given to books."

Professor Allison goes on:

Professor Slaght is obliged to confess himself beaten, therefore, when he gropes in Mrs. Curran's subconscious for such raw materials as must be necessary for the prose and poetry of Patience Worth.

She has never studied Seventeenth Century literature. Yet she dictates words to be found only in Milton's time. Many such words have no meaning to her until hunted out by Mr. Yost in dialect dictionaries and old books.

Again, how can she produce the local color of Palestine, England of the past, France and Spain? Her stories show knowledge of customs, topographical details," and their "colors, sights and sounds."

[Many more statements by Professor Allison are sufficiently covered elsewhere.]

In the *Free Press Bulletin* of Winnipeg, October 6, 1918, he remarks further:

Even if it be granted that the answers to the questions propounded by myself and others present on the occasion were the product of Mrs. Curran's subconscious mind, how wonderful must that submerged intellect be!

#### OPINION OF ROLAND GREENE USHER

Dr. Usher is a professor of history in Washington University, St. Louis, and the author of a number of books dealing with history. The following extracts are from an article by him printed in *Reedy's Mirror*, July 16, 1917. They refer to *The Sorry Tale*.

I am convinced of Mrs. Curran's absolute innocence of any conscious attempt at authorship or at deception.... Certain adjectives come to me descriptive of the characters—cameo-like, vivid, dramatic. All are too weak to convey a sense of the startling definiteness with which a man is invested with presence and reality in a line or even a phrase. There is local color totally unlike that of the encyclopedia-crammed author of the usual novel of the Holy Land.

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\* She never began one.—Ed.

One thing impressed me particularly. I have been told by travelers that the most characteristic thing about the Near East, as about the Orient, is the smells. From these one is never parted in the "Sorry Tale;" the reek of the camels, the acrid taste of the sands, the stink of the kennel are unforgettable because they are a part of the story, not mere lumber lugged in by the struggling author, trying vainly to make real a scene which lacks all reality to him and padding a manuscript with enumeration of things he has read about. Many scenes, indelibly clear cut, beautifully elaborated, whose relation to the story is not always clear at first, might perhaps have been omitted had Mrs. Curran or Mr. Casper Yost pruned the book. Personally I am glad they printed it *in extenso*. Much of the tremendous drive of the last quarter is due to the reader's knowledge of the principal characters and the clarity with which he sees the *mise en scene*....

The sheer beauty of the chapter on the Sermon on the Mount; the spirituality of the passage descriptive of the Last Supper and the evening at Gethsemane; the moving narrative of the last days, and the terrific climax of the Crucifixion, I shall not soon forget.

Unquestionably this is the greatest story penned of the life and times of Christ since the Gospels were finished. One leaves it with a sense of understanding much previously dark and vague.

That is a very difficult thing to do, to make divinity seem divine.... Certainly I am myself practical and finite enough, brought up in the Doubting Thomas attitude of the modern school of historians; my own imagination is, I fear, none too sensitive and agile and that may be the explanation of my feeling that somehow she has contrived to make divinity plausible, convincing, adequate. Jesus as she depicts him seems divine to me, seems to act and speak as I feel He should....

Historically the book seems to me accurate enough. There, to be sure, are no dates given; no historical characters of known personality and pedigree are more than alluded to; no places about which we have detailed information (except Jerusalem) are described; indeed, Patience Worth's method is to hint rather than to enumerate, to allude in stately phrase rather than to employ the sort of specific statement which historians could check. None were demanded by the tale itself and the tone of the story would make them as much out of place as a joke in "Paradise Lost." Truth to tell, historians do not know a great deal about those events, and upon that little they are not well agreed.... I cannot claim more than a cousinly acquaintance derived from a pretty thorough study of the controversial literature of the later Reformation which mainly dealt with the history of first Christian origins. But this story seems to me historically well enough. There is little plain ordinary history in it, but the background is, for all I can see, accurate. I did not notice any anachronisms and I do know that Mr. Yost has verified a good many little points. The best of it is that the accuracy (if we may use such a word to denote any

thing so feeble as our real information must be in comparison to the truth) is not in little things but in the "feel" of the story as a whole. These are not nineteenth century Americans masquerading as Jews and Romans, falling off their camels and hobbling round on their bare feet as if walking upon the ten million sword's points of one of the Hindu hells. They seem to be, inside as well as outside, men and women of the years when Christ was on earth. Here again the story is convincing to me, though I must again add, to me in my ignorance. The only anachronism, if it be one.. might be the term Jesus Christus applied to Him while he was yet alive. How definite our information is upon the use of that term I cannot say, but my impression is that students have regarded it as subsequent to the Crucifixion. [See pages 387-389.]

### OPINION OF WILLIAM MARION REEDY

The late 'Mr. Reedy was a man of brilliant intellect, who became famous as editor of "Reedy's Mirror." A biography of him has been in preparation, if it has not already issued.

The poems have been printed in the *Globe-Democrat* in goodly number. They are poetry—no question of that. They have not rhyme but they have rhythm, decidedly. They are more like blank verse than anything else, but they are not quite that. They are something like the much-discussed "free verse" but they are not that either. In a way they are of Biblical quality....

In the novel *Telka*, about 60,000 words, the longest word I found was "reasoning."...

There are hundreds of words of strictly Anglo-Saxon origin, indeed more Anglo than Saxon. The speech is simpler than Chaucer, much simpler. It is as innocent of the elaborate words found in Piers' "Ploughman." It is as near anything I know to the very essence of folk speech. Philologists find in the language words from the dialect of different counties in England, words now of an earlier, now of a later date, in the dictionaries and glossaries. There is a sort of shorthand in the language too, a sort of condensation, as if to save time, a turning of nouns into verbs and *vice versa*, and a peculiar, persistent use of the prefix *a*. The word *of* is never used, always "o'." The language is very figurative, abounds in similes, many very beautiful metaphors....

The realism of the soil in *Telka* is something incalculably more veritistic than anything one knows in Zola....

I think I know literature. Some people who know it have said I do. I say that these communications are literature, and literature of no mean order. They are wonderful, aside from their origin, for content and for form. They are thoroughly consistent in form, too. There runs through them all a sort of musical fugue, and a fugue of spiritual

suggestion. They contain passages of bewitching beauty, of rare high spirits, of pathos—and all in language of an indescribable simplicity and felicity, though strange....

I am no Spiritist. I do not believe that the souls of the dead set free come back to the souls that stay.... The cases set forth by the Society for Psychical Research mean nothing to me. Crookes and Lodge and all the rest of the necromancers have talked twaddle, as I thought, and still think....

When I read the Patience Worth poems in the *Globe-Democrat* I was inclined to think that they were a bit of clever literary fakery, even as I believed, and still believe, that such is the character of Elsa Barker's "Letters of a Living Dead Man."...

I do not think this poetry so great as Mr. Casper Yost thinks it. It does not equal Shakespeare or Spenser. It is not so great as Chaucer. But if there be any intelligences communicating poems by ouija board or otherwise, it does not follow that they must be Shakespeares, Spensers, Tennysons, or Sapphos or Mrs. Brownings. But it is good poetry, better poetry than we find in our magazines as a rule—poetry with a quality utterly its own.

Mr. Reedy states the limitations of Mrs. Curran's education and reading, which are even greater than he knew, and then continues.

A well-known professor of English literature, an authority, indeed, upon the growth and use of the language, has read all, has seen and heard delivered much of the matter purporting to come from Patience Worth. He has studied it carefully in the light of all his knowledge. He has looked up the language used, in all the glossaries. There is no man, not even W. W. Skeat, whose opinion upon a point of early English linguistics I would more unhesitatingly accept than this professor's. He finds the language wonderful. He finds words used in senses to our tongue, and mind and time most recondite. All the words are not of a given period, nor are they all from one early English locality. They are from almost all the counties and shires and many of them peculiar locutions to those subdivisions of England. They are always used in their exact original sense. The language, as a whole, is of such a consistency of word-texture as no mere student could use through hundreds and hundreds of thousands of words without an occasional break into the speech of today. He says the speech of Patience Worth has no modernisms\* and that is a miracle, for not the

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\* This is probably precisely true of *Telka*, and nearly always true of the works not professedly in modern language, but there are a few exceptions, such as "shack" and "knickerbockers." Since Patience Worth has never laid any claim to purism, there was nothing to forbid her employing a neologism if it struck her fancy, but it is nevertheless extraordinary how seldom she has done so. She told me that she adopted some terms she saw in Mrs. Curran's mind. And calling attention to a neologism had no effect in causing her thereafter to shun it.—Ed.

most practiced writer of the speech of any special period can keep out of his writing the words in which he does his ordinary thinking. Patience Worth's language is no special speech like that invented by Chatterton, the marvellous boy in those inimitable forgeries, the Rowley poems. It is a speech that is living, and living only in such use as is made of it in, on and by Mrs. Curran's ouija board. Mrs. Curran herself is no more mistress of this speech than I am of the forms of speech of, let us say, the writings of Walter Scott....

She [Mrs. Curran] never tried to write anything of her own initiative in any early English forms. She knows nothing of that literature....

A later article by Wm. Reedy in *Reedy's Mirror* says:

The remarkable thing about her "puttings" is the quality of the language in its simplicity of word and phrase. It requires the very highest form of intelligence and literary skill to put things simply in the ordinary speech of one's own day.... She speaks with an antique, an archaic figurativeness and about' the subtlest concepts of the human mind....

I suspected, somehow, a literary trick, a clever imposture.... I had written a disdainfully negational paragraph about the validity, and verity of the Patience Worth experiences. I had written so hastily that I had hurt Mrs. Curran, whom I did not know. [He was invited to go and witness.] I went with more of doubt than of hope and faith, with possibly a little contempt for myself for wasting an afternoon.

Mr. Reedy discussed *The Sorry Tale* in the *St. Louis Globe*, April 1, 1917.

There are one hundred characters in it—real characters expressed in action, not superficially described. It is full of incidents of passion, humor, tragedy, meanness and moral splendor—aside from the personality of Christ that forms its focus.... The plot is worked out with the precision of a Sardou, and its culmination is not discovered until the very end.... The conversations of Christ are beautiful in form and orthodox in spirit even where and when they depart farthest from the recorded words of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. The scene in the garden of Gethsemane is an exquisite piece of writing, while the version of the trial and the crucifixion of Jesus is of a marvellous meticulousness of strange detail. The very last scene on the last page is a piece of anguishing irony.... The book is full of writing that biblical scholars call wisdom. It is beautiful and deep when one has mastered the difficulties of its form.

Mrs. Curran, the medium of Patience Worth's writings, does not recall ever having heard any one speak or read such a language as she spells out for Patience Worth. Many of the words and terms of

phrases in those communications were spelled out and written down without any accurate idea of their meaning. It was only after philological experts had brought their knowledge to bear that the thought in the words became clear to Mrs. Curran or those who wrote out the words she spelled off the ouija board. Now Mrs. Curran understands better, just as I understand Chaucer better when I have read him for three or four evenings than I did when I first began to read him....

Her language never varies. It is consistent ever.... You read and read and read, and Patience Worth is ever Patience Worth in the texture of her speech, the tinge and tang of thought. She has her "style," as clearly marked, as strongly individualized as the style of Dr. Johnson or Carlyle or Browning.

There is nothing in the conversation of Mrs. Curran that has the peculiar sapidity of Patience Worth though Mrs. Curran talks well. If Patience Worth is a subconscious personality of Mrs. Curran, there are no outcroppings of Patience Worth in Mrs. Curran's manner or language.

On another date Mr. Reedy says in his *Mirror*:

For high-class dialectic resourcefulness in debate I have never seen or heard anything like that of Patience Worth, ranging from poetry and piety to clever wit and often scalding sarcasm. Her novels *The Sorry Tale* and *Hope Trueblood* are works of genuine literary art—the former the most wonderful piece of historical fiction I have ever read.

#### OPINION OF EDGAR LEE MASTERS

It need hardly be said that Mr. Masters is an American poet and prose writer, of high rank and established reputation. I find from a newspaper clipping whose title was not preserved, that Edgar Lee Masters was interviewed when Mrs. Curran was in New York. I am not prepared to give an opinion whether her stuff comes from Patience Worth or not. There is no doubt, however, that she is producing remarkable literature. How she does it, I cannot say.

He was present at a Patience Worth dictation November 9th, 1916, when Mrs. Curran was in New York. The record says:

Edgar Lee Masters had come in and as he came to the board Mrs. Curran asked him to tell the company if anyone could write poetry in the way the Patience Worth matter was coming.

There is only one answer to that, said Mr. Masters, It simply can't be done.



Mr. Masters writes that he is quite willing that this should be quoted, with the understanding that he meant (which should be obvious) under the circumstances— instant dictation, subjects given by others, etc.

#### OPINION OF LAWRENCE GILMAN

This gentleman is a musician, composer and painter, but best known as an author, editor and critic of literature, drama and music. He has written a number of books on musical biography and criticism; was associate editor of *Harper's Weekly* for eight years, and *has* been literary, musical and dramatic critic for the *North American Review* for nine years, etc. He is now musical critic for the New York *Herald Tribune*, and a contributor on musical and literary topics to leading magazines.

In the *North American Review* he speaks of the poems, allegories, conversations, epigrams, apothegms, novels, short plays and a long mediaeval drama exhibiting uncommon intellectual and literary quality.

Neither the "subconscious mind," that glib resort of the amateur psychologist, nor "telepathy," that amiable, sturdy and most serviceable pack horse of the near-materialist, provides a satisfying explanation.... [Mr. Yost] makes no excessive claim when he affirms that the outstanding characteristic of these communications is their marked intellectual quality.... Its medium is an archaic speech whose prevailing characteristics seem to be those of seventeenth century English, but containing elements of a usage still older, and occasionally employing words and phrases that are strange to the English of any period, and to any known English dialect. Most of the words [in the dialectical style] are of Anglo-Saxon origin, with scarcely ever any of Greek or Latin derivation. The references are almost without exception to conditions that come into being not later than the seventeenth century.

A mind, whatsoever it may be, that has retained abundant vigor, distinction and individual savor.

Beyond dispute, a remarkable mind and personality, whatever its habitation or its day.

However, Mr. Gilman thinks that Mr. Yost goes too far in comparing Patience Worth with Shelley.

#### OPINION OF HENRY HOLT

Like some others whose views I present, it is hardly necessary to explain who this eminent man, who died last year at an advanced age, was.

A graduate of Yale, he took a law course, with the degree LL.B., at Columbia, and was made LL.D. by the University of Vermont. He became president of Henry Holt & Co., one of the leading publishing houses in America, in 1873, and so remained until his death. He was critical in his literary tastes and fastidious regarding the books which he selected to publish. In 1914, he founded and became editor of *The Unpopular Review*, afterwards renamed *The Unpartizan Review*. He was author of several books, the chief of which, probably, was the two-volume "Cosmic Relations."

I cite passages from *The Unpopular Review* for January-March, 1906. Speaking of the Patience Worth literature up to that time he says:

Very little of this matter is the frequent trash of involuntary writing. Nearly all of it is to be taken seriously as literature. Much of it is literature of a high order. Authorities are always shy, and wisely so, of publicly endorsing questionable matters, so we are not yet free to quote some conclusive confirmation of this opinion which has come to us.

The last sentence is one which should be astonishing, but I have reason to echo it. I heard one man, a professor of literature of high standing in a university, talk for perhaps fifteen minutes in terms of high eulogy of what Patience Worth has produced, yet when I asked him to reduce to writing a part of what he had said so enthusiastically to a local audience he looked at me doubtfully, nor did he answer the letter echoing the request. Several other literary experts who I know admire these same productions did not answer my letters, even though I offered, if necessary, to conceal their names. One of them wrote praises in a newspaper of his city, and I have included part of that statement in this book.

Mr. Holt, it seems, received "conclusive testimony" from "authorities" that much of the literature "is of a high order," but was denied the privilege of quoting it. Why? Because they are "shy...of publicly endorsing questionable matters." What were the questionable matters? The matters of the ouija board and the claims of Patience Worth regarding herself. But these matters have nothing to do with the quality of the literature. That would be the same, even if one stood on his head to write it—an undignified position. Yet because of the extraneous matters these authorities were unwilling to give Mr. Holt permission to tell the world their real opinion that the literature, or at the least much of it, was of high quality! Here is ground for my belief that if nothing had ever been said about Patience Worth and the ouija a

board, the literature would have produced a much profounder effect than even it has done. If this is so, it will take its rightful rank some day, if it has to wait as long as *Moby Dick* for due recognition.

Of course the output varies as does that of Shakespeare himself....

It has of course been suggested that she [Mrs. Curran] plays the Patience Worth trick for the sake of notoriety, but how utterly unsupposable it is that a woman capable of composing work of which some specimens are declared by competent critics to be very close to masterpieces, should, loving notoriety, try to throw upon another intelligence the credit of her work, and smother it under a language which nobody uses, and that it requires some effort to understand.

Henry Holt, in *The Unpopular Review*, January-March, 1916, says:

In the middle of November, Mrs. Curran submitted her phenomena to the examination of a very eminent psychotherapist, not that she felt the need of any therapy, but purely in the interests of science. Some ten days before, we had had a long talk with this gentleman, who happens to be a valued personal friend. We said, "Of course you'll promptly send us anything you find?" He replied, "I don't expect to find anything," and we answered, "Then you won't." And he didn't. Considerable familiarity with the records concerning involuntary writers, long ago led us to say that persons approaching them in an unsympathetic spirit seldom get interesting results.... A special reason why Mrs. Curran's sittings indicated brought only negative results was unwillingness on her part to be hypnotized, lest the experience would in some way interfere with later manifestation of the Patience Worth phenomena. This reluctance would of course be called by the very skeptical fear of the exposure of fraud. We don't think it was.

And I don't think it was, and Mr. Yost doesn't think it was, and Reedy who first approached the phenomena with skepticism and dislike said he would stake his head on the honesty of the Currans, so he didn't think it was, and I have yet to learn of anyone who knows Mrs. Curran well who would believe any such thing.

We expected the result of Mrs. Curran's recent pilgrimage to the font of science, to be purely negative, and so it was. Our friend who attempted the examination writes us that he does not know whether the phenomena are genuine or not.

Mr. Holt was inclined to posit an inflow from the "cosmic soul."

But if there is inflow from that, why not perhaps, he speculates, from "personalities—strings of them—postcarnate ones if there are such. And if everything you and I and those who have gone before us, have ever thought, becomes part of the cosmic soul, we are all virtually postcarnate already."

Mr. Holt published three of the Patience Worth books.

#### OPINION OF DR. SULLIVAN

The Rev. Dr. William L. Sullivan, one of the most impressive pulpit orators whom I have heard, master of a fastidious prose style, and a ripe scholar, writes me:

I heard Mrs. Curran give out a lot of "psychic" material last night. She shoots it forth with quite astounding rapidity. The stenographer twice begged for mercy, and I could not blame her. What struck me most was the extraordinary beauty of some of the figures of speech thus hurled out, e.g., "Argument is only the dust from the rock of wisdom." And, speaking of the ceasing of a nightingale's song:

His silver urn is dry." Probably a dozen such figures were given. Mrs. Sullivan asked "Patience," if when she lived on earth she had an ambition to write, since she is writing so much now. The instantaneous answer was: "Dame, what wench that has a tongue and a mind to wag it e'er itched for a quill?" We are all in the dark, but Mrs. Curran, who went only through the eighth grade of school, is, I make no scruple in saying, a remarkable subject.

#### OPINION OF CLEMENT WOOD

Mr. Wood, a graduate of the University of Alabama and of the Yale Law School, is the author of many novels and volumes of verse, also a short story writer for various magazines.

In the New York *Call*, August 26, 1917, he names *The Sorry Tale* "The Gospel According to Patience," and declares that "it is worthy to be called this." He pronounces the passage "Unto thee do I deliver the watchword of the Kingdom—Mercy. Unto thee do I deliver the Key—Faith. Unto thee do I deliver the Kingdom—Love" as "a little gem" and adds: "This is as exquisite as Corinthians 13, the loveliest part of the New Testament." While in his opinion the book would be improved if much shortened, still he says: "But it is a wonderful book."

#### OPINION OF HENRY W. BOYNTON

Mr. Boynton was head of the department of English literature in Phillips Academy, Andover, Mass., from 1892 to 1901, and has since

been a professional writer. He was the chief reviewer for *Atlantic Monthly* for four years, has been on the editorial staffs of the *New York Evening Post*, the *Nation*, the *Bookman*, the *Review* and the *Outlook*. He is the author of a number of books, including a history of American literature, and one entitled *The World's Leading Poets*. He has edited a number of poetical masterpieces. The following estimate of *The Sorry Tale* was printed in *The Bookman*:

The Oriental detail of the narrative is amazingly lavish and vivid throughout, and its general accuracy I, who am ignorant, am not disposed to question.

In its larger aspects, the story is of broad scope, and of solid structure, exception being taken to the inordinate length of many of the dialogues which have a merely cumulative value, and often fairly overweight and smother the action. This is true particularly of the earlier portions of the narrative, toward the close the method is far more rapid, and for the mortal reader, more effective. The substance of the tale need not be rehearsed here. It is built upon a striking conception which makes one of the thieves on the cross a son of the Emperor Tiberius by a Greek slave girl. Cast aside by Rome, she bears her son near Bethlehem at the time of Jesus' birth—a spirit of hate, representing the sins of ancient humanity which Christ, the spirit of love, is to expiate and, in the end, to drive from the world. By means of this conception Rome, the incarnation of wrong, is made a living actor in the Christ-story. The chapter describing the crucifixion—a chapter of five thousand words which Mr. Yost says was dictated in a single evening—is a composition of appalling force and vividness, and interpretation upon a high and sincere plane. I, for one, own myself converted by this story from a mood of languid curiosity about an odd "psychic" phenomenon, to a state of lively interest in the future published work of the powerful writer who, whether in or out of the flesh, goes by the name and speaks with the voice of "Patience Worth."

#### OPINION OF THE REV. JOSEPH FORT NEWTON

This distinguished clergyman was formerly pastor of The City Temple (and thus a successor of Spurgeon), London, and is now rector of the Memorial Church of St. Paul (Episcopal), in Philadelphia. He is the author of a number of books.

In a letter to me, dated January 27, 1927, Dr. Newton comments on *The Sorry Tale* and the Patience Worth literature in general.

In all the stories and poems of Patience Worth there is a singular spiritual beauty, moral insight and literary grace. They speak a quaint, antique language of their own in the style of a time gone by. Almost never does she use a distinctively modern word. The poems and

stories give me a very decided impression of a personality as winsome as it is wise, full of bright humor and a friendly charm. Her story entitled *The Sorry Tale* is simply tremendous in its dramatic grasp and power. As a story of the time of Christ I do not know anything quite like it for sheer tragedy and spiritual beauty. The whole conception is striking and its execution is extraordinary. If it could be put into modern English without any loss of its unique atmosphere, it would be, in my judgment, one of the greatest books of our generation. The pages, in particular, which tell of the Sermon on the Mount are not to be matched anywhere. As to how these books were written, I make no question; I simply do not know. But I do bear testimony to their spiritual depth and their literary value. In these respects they are surely authentic.

#### OPINION OF FRANCIS HACKETT

This writer, author of books about Ireland and a novel, editorial writer with several leading newspapers, and at the time associate editor of the *New Republic*, said in that periodical:

What makes the problem significant is the quality of Patience Worth's utterance.... Sensitive, witty, keenly metaphysical. Whoever or whatever she is, she meets the test that human beings meet.

#### OPINION OF MRS. H. H. A. BEACH.

Among the many visitors of Patience Worth is numbered Mrs. Amy M. Beach, of Boston, one of America's greatest pianists and composers. In her letter to Mrs. Curran, permitting the publication of the record of that evening, Mrs. Beach says:

It gives me great pleasure to comply with your request as to the printing of your record of my visit to you. You are quite at liberty to use all of it, if you wish to do so. I would like to repeat that I was most deeply impressed by all that occurred on that memorable evening. The prayer which Patience was good enough to give to me has helped me more than I can express in words, but the part of her work that evening which lingers most definitely in my mind is the installment of *The Sorry Tale*. The deep reverence and rare beauty of that chapter was most inspiring.

On the occasion of Mrs. Beach's visit the eminent St. Louis composer, F. R. Kroeger,\* was present with Mrs. Kroeger, and Judge and

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\* In January, 1918, an entertainment for the benefit of the Red Cross was given in St. Louis at which Mr. Kroeger (composer, director of Kroeger School of Music, lecturer in several universities, etc.) rendered piano compositions on the basis of compositions by Patience Worth.

Mrs. Charles Claflin Allen, of St. Louis.... *Patience Worth's Magazine*, January, 1918.

#### OPINION OF HAMLIN GARLAND

It is fair to infer that Mr. Garland, among the leading writers of fiction in America, has a favorable opinion of *The Sorry Tale*, since the Joint Committee of Literary Arts of New York, of which he was chairman, in 1918, placed it with its exhibit of the important books of the year at the National Arts Club. The authors were tendered a reception at which Miss Amy Lowell, Rupert Hughes.. Professor AV. L. Phelps and others spoke, but "Patience Worth" sent her polite regrets.

#### OPINION OF DR. WILLIAM E. SLAGHT

Dr. Slaght, possessor of many learned degrees, was professor of philosophy ten years in Baker University, and has been professor of psychology in Cornell College since 1921.

For a considerable number of years I have been interested in all forms of subconscious phenomena, and can appreciate your attention to the work of Patience Worth. Some years ago it was my privilege to spend a summer in St. Louis and make frequent visits to Mrs. Curran's home. I remember on my first visit I was with a well-known psychologist; on our way home we were discussing the evening's program and he remarked: "Whatever conclusion you may come to, one thing is certain, that this evening you have been in the presence of one of the greatest minds you will ever meet." My interest grew during the weeks of my stay there, and I have often wished for the chance to make further study of the mystery.

I feel that any explanation yet given of the phenomena is quite inadequate. I agree with you that Professor Cory did no more than scratch the surface. It requires as much blind faith to accept his view as that of Mrs. Curran herself. The subconscious, as we know it, contains nothing that has not come in through the channels of the consciousness. A fair-minded investigation will not allow me to accept any adequate basis in Mrs. Curran's experiences for all the wide variety of facts presented in Patience's literature. Dr. Cory, of course, based his investigation on the precedent set by Flournoy in his *From India to the Planet Mars*. The explanation of that case is very satisfactory, but Dr. Cory's explanation does not have the adequate basis of this other investigation.

My tentative conclusion regarding this case (and it was confirmed by a brief, study of Dr. Elizabeth Cantrell,\* who also presents baffling

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\* Dr. Elizabeth Cantrell is a woman of high character who appears to have the power of psychic healing. I spent three weeks in Wichita, Kansas, studying her and

phenomena yet denies any form of spirit control) is that we have here EL manifestation of subconscious phenomena but in such unusual form that it differs entirely from the ordinary types. In a few personalities, such as that of Mrs. Curran, it has been able to reach out beyond the ordinary boundaries of knowledge and come in touch with the springs of some cosmic consciousness that gives deeper insight than any which comes through the ordinary channels of knowledge.

#### OPINION OF REV. D. C. GARRETT

The Rev. David C. Garrett has long been prominent among the Episcopalian clergy and has served as rector of a number of important parishes.

Many ministers have found new inspiration from these records. The wonder is that more have not been drawn to this fount of wisdom. The words of Patience Worth are the most loving penned since St. Paul wrote the famous chapter in his first letter to the Corinthians.

As to the source of causation of what William Marion Reedy, ordinarily a caustic critic, called "the world's literary marvel," I am convinced that it is just what it purports to be, the personality of Patience Worth. It is the simplest and most credible explanation for all who believe that the soul survives death, and is immortal. "Cosmic Consciousness," whatever that may mean, is too vague an invention to satisfy the reverent mind that revolts at the suggestion of trickery and falsehood behind so remarkable a revelation. The convergence of the argument seen in the recurring evidence of communications from the unseen universe by discarnate spirits with similarity of phenomena, to my mind, clinches the case. The facts apart from cause have been tested and accepted by many notable scientists.

#### EXTRACTS FROM LETTERS RECEIVED PRIOR TO AUGUST, 1918

I had long thirsted "as the hart after the water brooks" for such a draught as Patience so simply offers from her cup. It is what might be called a renaissance of golden English.

But aside from all the beauty and literary value of her work Patience

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interviewing her patients. When I resigned from the position of Research Officer of the American Society for Psychical Research the papers in the case were necessarily left with that Society. But Dr. Cantrell also possessed the power—and it is this to which Professor Slaght refers—of getting a variety of evidential facts relating to strangers by some undetermined process. The most of these would be explainable on the theory of telepathy from persons present, and therefore the case differs very widely from that of Mrs. Curran, though the doctrine of access to Cosmic Consciousness would be applicable to both. It is true that Dr. Cantrell does not hold to the spiritistic theory, and even seems prejudiced against it, but a very evidential incident took place identifying a deceased relative of mine, and *it took the spiritistic form*, in that Dr. Cantrell sensed my relative as being present and described his appearance.—Ed.



seems to me to have come on a mission, somewhat in keeping with that of Jeanne, the visible maid of Orleans, who, instructed by her voices, brought the crown of temporal power to a king, while Patience, the invisible maid, brings the crown of immortality to a world.

A clergyman wrote: I am going to feel my way to reading and interpreting 'Patience Worth' to many, as I have already done to a few groups. It is the best thing I could give them. For the present "preaching the Gospel" has become a detailed phrase to most people. No books now appeal to me as do Patience Worth's words. I love to read the poems aloud and interpret. I wish I could tell you all I get out of them. I appreciate the hidden thought I understand.

I am sure the religion set forth is a fine repetition of the gospel I have been preaching weekly and at funerals for twenty-five years.

Wonderful Patience Worth! Such wit, sarcasm, and repartee! The whole matter possesses such vigor and freshness, such spontaneity and charm that one cannot but feel the personality living through it. Also, the impossibility of it being the personality of Mrs. Curran that we know, charming as her own personality is, is too evident to need discussion.

That little talk with Patience will live in my memory always. It has added to my courage and will stem the impatience that reels against me at times.

I began studying the dialect of Patience Worth in my English course, but I have forgotten the language in the message itself.

When the Patience Worth articles first appeared I felt at once the truthfulness and genuineness. Then we all got the message and since then all her words have thrilled us with a great uplift.

The wonderful book has helped us all through the valley of bereavement. We feel that the new light has given us a greater trust and that in the remaining "handful of days," as Patience says, we can rest content and sure of meeting our boys in the great "Where."

Rarely have I heard a combination of such meaty thoughts in such exquisite language. Yes, what is the agency?

#### FROM REVIEWS OF PATIENCE WORTH: A PSYCHIC MYSTERY

The New York Times of July 8, 1917, said:

The poems showed nobility of thought, exquisite fancy, beauty of expression. The extracts from stories and plays had the fire of passion,

dramatic movement and situation, the sense of character, literary beauty. The reported conversations revealed a striking personality, interesting, entertaining, with a mind alert and keen and a strong sense of humor.

Anent the same book the *New Republic* said:

Besides spicy conversations Mr. Yost has included bits of plays and stories, oracular sayings, and many long and short poems, most of them metaphysical in character and some of them with much beauty.

Speaking of Patience Worth generally, the London *Times* said:

She converses freely and she reveals a familiarity with nature as it is found in England, and with the manners of English life of an older time, and her personality, which has many individual features, remains consistent throughout. The whole thing is unquestionably a "psychic mystery" of a very remarkable kind.

New York *Sun*:

The unusual distinction about this Patience Worth is her exceptional and unusual intelligence. She shows in all her messages every sign of a vigorous, keen mentality.

In *Unity*, the Rev. Joseph Fort Newton says:

Never once do these messages sink to the commonplace, but always show high intelligence, and sometimes the token of real genius. There is nothing spooky about the book, no hint of the weird, no trace of the uncanny; instead a sweet and gracious spirit breathes through it, wise withal and winning.

#### FROM REVIEWS OF THE SORRY TALE

Washington *Star*, August 5, 1917.

The story is too long for general reading and at times too archaic for pleasant reading. But, aside from these minor barriers, it is a work of great beauty, a finely noble composition.

*The Bookman*, August 1, 1917.

Somewhat reminiscent of Marie Corelli's "Barabbas" The story is written in a curious and even involved language, so that the meaning is often obscure, requiring patient effort to understand it. But if one can maintain his interest through the three hundred odd thousand words he will discover a well-constructed plot, a sense of the dramatic, a beauty of thought and style, and an excellent picture of the Roman world when the Empire was at its height.

Columbus *Dispatch*, September 2, 1917.

It is an artist, indeed, who can write such a story with absolutely no reference to anything, person or phrase of the Old Testament, and

confining herself so strictly to gospel knowledge only, insofar as there is any quotation. Probably no book written gives one so clear a view of customs, manners and character of the peoples of that time and place. The reader sees and hears and smells the people and views the sea and landscape as clearly as if on the spot. It not only describes those peoples we read of in the New Testament but interesting Arabian characters. Those interested in the gospels should read this book for the way it more firmly impresses the teachings of Jesus and describes the kind of people he lived among. Many persons won't read it through prejudice because of its means of production.

A review in the *New York Tribune*, September 30, 1917, quotes a writer in the *Los Angeles Times* as out of sympathy with psychic literature yet pronouncing *The Sorry Tale* "perfectly astounding as to style and even more remarkable as to construction;" and quotes *The Bookman* as saying:

The interest in the story is almost obliterated by the difficulties of the cryptic style. With exasperating slowness the tale unravels itself.... There are pages of dull dialect and all this perplexes and bores the reader.

The *Tribune* writer says that the *Outlook* agrees, with the foregoing as shown by: "We will admit that Patience has better qualifications as a writer of fiction than most 'controls,' but we find her writing feverish, high-flown and terribly prolix."

However, so far as the present investigation has been carried, *The Sorry Tale* appears, upon the whole, to have more friends than opponents.

*Philadelphia Book News Monthly.*

The peculiar effects of the writer's style, the languid, tropical opulence, unrestrained jumble of sentences which for all their violation of the rules of forceful language exercise a very potent spell.... There are moments in *The Sorry Tale*—many of them, even considering its 640 pages—of sensitive recording, memorable description and vivid emotional registry. They are the best things in it.

*New York Times*, July 8, 1917.

Invested thus with the mystery of its origin, this second book increases the marvel of the first. Merely as a feat of literary composition it is remarkable, for the novel fills 640 closely printed pages and must contain well over 300,000 words. And it was all spelled out through the ouija board during part of the evenings of the last two years.... She invents new miracles, she retells the old ones, she fills out with incidents the lives of Christ and his disciples, but the touching beauty and

simple dignity of the figure of Christ are treated always with reverence and there is nothing in the tale to which the most orthodox could object. There is wonderful and graphic detail in the picturing of many of the scenes of Christ's life, such as the trial and the crucifixion. The same is true of manners and customs, incidents, events, characters all through the story. In detail one vivid scene after another passes before the reader—pictures from the life of dissipated Rome, as Theia remembers and tells of their lewd horrors, of the shepherds upon the hills, of the men and women of the city, of Herod's palace, of the desert. And through it all goes a sense of life, of reality, of having been seen and lived until all its scenes become familiar.

The review quotes a part of page 109 of *The Sorry Tale* and continues:

The pages are full of just such exquisitely described miniatures. But they are merely the jewels which adorn and hold in place the rich robes of the story. For the long and intricate tale is constructed with the precision and the accuracy of a master hand....

It is a wonderful, a beautiful, and a noble book, but it is not easy to read and it is not for those who delight in best sellers, who like a novel which can be galloped through in an evening. Its archaic language and its frequently indirect modes of expression make necessary constantly the closest attention. The meaning is often so obscure that only considerable study will make it clear. And in much of the conversation there are far too many words and the talk grows wearisome. Whoever would read it through must be well supplied with time and patience. But if he appreciates the noble and the beautiful in literature he will be well repaid. And he will marvel more deeply than ever over the mystery of "Patience Worth."

St. Louis *Globe-Democrat*.

It is a tale of action. From start to finish it moves. The threads of the great plot are woven with consummate skill, never revealing more of that which follows than the author desires, and yet drawing steadily and surely to the tremendous tragedy on Calvary, which is its climax.

Philadelphia *Ledger*.

As dramatic as "Ben-Hur." There is poetic imagination.

Hartford (Ct.) *Courant*.

One may smile at this strange announcement, and wonder whence all this long narrative comes, from Patience Worth the whilom psychic mystery, from the medium or from the editor, but his smile will turn to wonder if he dips into the book and follows it even a while. As a work of literary composition it is unique and remarkable. Often wordy, sometimes tedious, abounding with archaic language, it is nevertheless

the work of a masterly hand, noble in its conception and skillful in its development. The theme of this "sorry tale," or tale of sorrow, is the counteraction of the spirit of love in Jesus Christ and the spirit of enmity in a child of a courtesan, born on the same night as Mary's child. This slave-child is the impenitent thief who died on the cross with Jesus, and his mother, Theia, a Greek dancing girl, is one of the most striking of the very numerous and various characters who figure in the tale. There is nothing that borders on irreverence in the book. Old miracles are rehearsed and new ones supplied. The Gospels are freely used, but Christ is everywhere presented in all the dignity and benignity and beauty of His true character. The scenes of His life, trial and death are described with a vividness as of a personal witness. Other scenes, of Rome, of the palace of Herod, of the desert, of the morning at Jerusalem, are not less wonderful. The great central thought of the story seems to be that Love, as personified in Jesus, proves stronger than Hate, as personified in the child of Theia. It is a somewhat wearisome book, not easy to read, but it is a wonderful work, well worth wrestling with, and the marvel is, who wrote it?

New York *Globe*.

But anybody who lights upon the dramatic opening words of the story, "Panda, Panda, tellest thou a truth?" will be quickly enthralled by this "sorry tale." Its queer and mysterious authorship is soon forgotten. There is nothing queer or spooky about the story itself. It asks for no allowances because of its shadowy origin. Its dramatic construction is excellent. Although there are many characters and crowded scenes, the narrative is flowing and natural, in its admirable simplicity hardly excelled by George Moore in his Bible story, "The Brook Kerith." In passages of extreme tragedy or pathos, or beauty, there is this same apparent simplicity, with no effort toward what the author herself would quaintly call "wording." Although much of the language is absolutely original with "Patience Worth"—and she uses many strange forms—there is little confusion. Her favorite word combinations are always descriptive and poetic and effective. She speaks of the "hill's way" and the "sea's way," and the "stone's sharp." "The babe's town" is Bethlehem, and the "see woman" is the prophetess....

Nothing can match the exquisite tenderness of the narrative whenever it touches upon Jesus and the miracles of loving. A passage on page 407, beginning, "Who hath set this witchery upon Nazareth," is thrilling in its beauty, and there are unending passages like it. While no Matthew or Mark or Luke or John, but only a woman probably, could be so sympathetic and tender with the woman Theia, the vain one, who drank honeyed words and ate of first fruits, and who came to know the vat's dregs, that "the grape and worm maketh wine.... And sick came upon her, and no word comforted—no word. And Theia knew how full days might he as empty as skulls of deserts' dead."

Casper Yost, editor of the St. Louis *Globe-Democrat*, who stood sponsor for "Patience Worth" when she first appeared and told her story, reviews briefly for the present volume the main details of her mystery—we had almost said life, so real she seems. Whether she is an English woman of the seventeenth century, as she says, or lived "many moons" before, she gives the impression of being a real personality. But the wonder of "The Sorry Tale" is as much in the beautiful story itself as in its baffling origin.

It is striking to see the following from a Jewish paper, *The American Hebrew*:

Whether or not "The Sorry Tale," by Patience Worth, came to be written in a somewhat mysterious way through the agency of an ouija board, does not really matter. What is of importance is the merit of the novel as a literary production, and as such it is little short of an epoch-making work. Not since "Ben-Hur: A Story of Christ," "Quo Vadis," the romance of Nero and the first Christian martyrs, has a book been written illuminating as brightly the events of nineteen hundred years ago as does "The Sorry Tale." It is replete with descriptions and pictures of life in the Holy Land at the period described, and independently of the religious views the reader may hold it reads with tremendous interest, and, what is more, leaves in one's mind an indelible impression of spiritual beauty interwoven with the great tragedy of life.\*

#### FROM REVIEWS OF HOPE TRUEBLOOD

*Athenaeum*. (London)

This is a novel of decided promise. Written by a "new author" the story is noteworthy in more than ordinary measure. Definite and clear cut characterization, good dialogue, quaint and arresting turns of expression, and deep but restrained feeling, etc.

*The Bookseller*. (London)

Undoubtedly a book out of the common, powerful and realistic.

*Lady's Pictorial*. (London)

Will stand as a landmark of fiction by a new writer, who will take a prominent place among great writers.

*Ladies Field*. (London)

A new writer of such unlimited promise as Patience Worth is an event in a world of literature. The pathos and poignancy of what might almost be said to be on a level with those of our greatest writers.

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\* See further review extracts from *Nation*, *Boston Transcript*, *New York Times*, *Los Angeles Times*, *Columbus Dispatch* and *Virginia Pilot*, quoted by Mr. Yost on pages 373-375.

*Independent.* (Sheffield, England)

Patience Worth must command a wide field of readers by the sheer excellence of "Hope Trueblood," which contains sufficient high-grade characters, splendidly fashioned, to stock half a dozen novels. There is something of the majestic grandeur of Greek tragedy, of the relentless zeal of "Old Mortality," of the austere piety of "Adam Bede," the tempestuous passions of "Wuthering Heights," the solitude and heartache of the "Orphan of Lowood." Here is one poor mortality clothed in immortality.

*Boston Transcript.*

It is the kind of book that encourages tarrying, each paragraph full of simple detail in which lies the real strength of the novel.

*New York Times.*

No teller of tales who has studied his craft could read this story without the keenest admiration for the finished technique with which Patience Worth handles this story. Notwithstanding the serious quality and the many pitifulnesses and tragedies of the story it tells, the book has much humor of a quaint, demure type, a kind of humor that stands out as a characteristic of all her work and her personality. And the plot is contrived with such skill, deftness and ingenuity as many a novelist in the flesh might well envy. There is much appreciation of a mundane beauty in the book and it is permeated with spiritual fineness and beauty, etc.

*New York Tribune.*

Whether in the body or the spirit, the author of "Hope Trueblood" is singularly gifted with imagination, invention and power of expression. The psychological analysis, and invention of the occult, the dramatic power displayed in the narrative are extraordinary, and stamp it as a work approximating absolute genius.

*New York Sun.*

Pages could be filled easily and we think entertainingly with report of quaint curiosities of speech in the text. There is much of the fine old English, the English that people of culture affect to disdain. There are paragraphs of power and paragraphs of mystery.

*Chicago Mail.*

You will wonder at the sheer beauty of the story's thought and diction. You will be convinced that here is a tale from the pen of a master word builder.

*Los Angeles Times.*

One cannot escape the realization that here is a masterpiece. Can it be that this is some Bronte from Spirit land who has found a tiny

aperture through the bleak wall of death to which she has pressed her lips?

I may add that Braithwaite's *Anthology of Magazine Poetry for 1917* contains five of Patience Worth's poems, three by Amy Lowell, three by Vachel Lindsay, six by Sarah Teasdale, one by E. L. Masters. While I do not consider this an infallible test of merit, it is significant.

'See other review material from the *Sheffield Independent*, *London Athenaeum*, *Yorkshire Post*, *London Bookseller*, *London Times*, *Manchester Times*, the *Book Monthly*, and *Truth*, quoted by Mr. Yost on pages 385-386.

## PATIENCE WORTH AND THE POETS

It is now proposed to institute some comparisons between the work of Patience Worth and that of standard poets, and incidentally to test the question whether she shows dependence upon them, and, if so, how much. Something of the same sort is done incidentally in other divisions of this book.

Since Mr. Curran gave Mrs. Curran, before their marriage, a copy of Walt Whitman's poems (which she says she read slightly then or thereafter, caring but for few of them) we might reasonably expect that those poems would show an influence upon the Patience Worth product. But another reason for comparing with him is that both Walt Whitman and Patience Worth write, generally, without rhyme, and the works of the former have become very famous, adding zest to the comparison.

Searching for a theme which is rather unusual with poets, except for brief allusion, but which both Walt Whitman and Patience Worth happened to fix upon, I find it in the spider and its fabric.

## WHITMAN AND PATIENCE ON *THE SPIDER*

Whitman wrote:

A noiseless, patient spider,  
 I mark'd, where, on a little promontory, it stood, isolated;  
 Mark'd how, to explore the vacant, vast surrounding,  
 It launch'd forth filament, filament, filament, out of itself;  
 Ever unreeling them ever tirelessly speeding them.  
 And you, O my Soul, where you stand,  
 Surrounded, surrounded, in measureless oceans of space,



Ceaselessly musing, venturing, throwing,—seeking the spheres, to connect them;  
Till the bridge you will need, be form'd—till the ductile anchor hold;  
Till the gossamer thread you fling, catch somewhere, O my Soul.

Patience Worth dictated:

Web o' the mornin', web, spreadin' the briar,  
What be ye, I wonder. A spinner's spinnin'? Nay,  
Methinks thou art but a dream I fashioned in the night  
Twistin' the moon's ray, and plying with my love.

Else why dost thou flash and set my heart aquiver  
With thy gems encirclin' thee?  
I know thee, web o' mornin'. Thou art my dream.  
And the angels wept upon thee.

It is evident that there is no traceable slightest connection between the two little poems. One centers in the spider's effort, the other in its result; one belongs to the "wisdom" category, the other to that of beautiful fancy; one becomes lyric in the last two lines, the other is lyric throughout.

The reader may compare them with regard to excellence. Personally, I have always greatly liked Whitman's poem and I like Patience Worth's also.

#### WHITMAN AND PATIENCE ON WAR

On December 22, 1917, Patience Worth dictated:

Father, is this thy will? God! the din!

Blood, thick-crust'd, still living, I saw it fall unto the dust;

Hunger, gnawing like a wolf, whose teeth do wbet upon my vitals, crouching  
before me—

A hideous thing, whose bands show dripping, and whose tongue doth feed upon  
the new-sprung streams, licking life from living things!

Father, is this thy will?

Damn the discord garrulously belched forth from burning throats!

Hell is within the eyes that look across the wastes;

Hell crawls upon earth dragging its robe of fire,

Sprinkled of scarlet its hem, and the sound it makes upon its trailing way, is like  
the shriek of womankind in labor.

Walt Whitman wrote:

Ever the hastening of infantry shifting positions—batteries, cavalry, moving hither  
and thither,

(The falling, dying, I heed not—the wounded, dripping and red, I heed not—some to the rear are hobbling;)

Grime, heat, rush—aid-de-camps galloping by, or on a full run;  
With the patter of small arms, the warning s-s-t of the rifles," etc.

This last is more minutely descriptive, but it surely is not as good poetry, although worked over and altered in different editions, as what issued spontaneously and complete from the lips of Mrs. Curran, and is here printed unchanged. Nor do all Whitman's particulars taken together produce such a picture of the horror of War as was created by a few swift strokes of the brush in the hands of Patience Worth.

Whitman writes of cannon in action again and again. Here are sample lines:

But O from the hills how the cannon were thinning and thinning them!

I see the shells exploding, leaving small white clouds—I hear the great shells shrieking as they pass.

And ever the sound of the cannon, far or near (rousing, even in my dreams, a devilish exaltation, and all the old mad joy, in the depths of my soul).

I have no fault to find with any of these passages, but not in thirteen, or eighteen or thirty words, has Whitman succeeded in producing a phrase so powerful, graphic and fitted to its subject as Patience Worth's brief "Damn the discord, garrulously belched forth from burning throats." Even Poe, the greatest master of such effects, would have admired the choice of words for their very sound. There is art in the harsh initial sounds of the words (note the contrast with Whitman). The first three words are like the explosion of gunpowder, the rest rush and roar like a shell tearing onward.

## WHITMAN AND PATIENCE ON THEIR OWN POEMS

Walt Whitman wrote of his poems:

f what I write from myself—as if that were not the resume;

Of histories—as if such, however complete, were not less complete than the preceding poems;

As if those shreds, the records of nations, could possibly be as lasting as the preceding poems,

As if here were not the amount of all nations, and of all the lives of heroes.

And Patience Worth, on November 14, 1914, wrote:

I tease from the eons fanciful puppets, which walk,  
Aye, stalk majestically, or prance in mimic measure;

Troubadours with their scarlet capes and lutes that drip pale songs of rosy love—  
pale-cheeked songs which languish 'neath some lady's window.

Lo, I pluck the moon from out the sky and pour the stars within her hollow,  
letting them stream like fireflies down o'er night's black robe.

Oh, I catch waves and prison them, plucking the pearls from their tips, and tearing  
the coral from the reefs.

I pluck purple lilies, steeping them within my dreams and weaving them across the  
tapestry of my songs.

Lo, to me music is a golden fluid and I a cup—a chalice; oh, my stem is deep and  
kingly!

To me, song is man's spirit; eluding, fretfully teasing with its contact:

I would lay hands upon it and hold it to my bosom, yet my arms are empty and  
my breast aches.

Oh, the thing which I have borne, the beings of my being,

Walk in a pageantry, out across the darksome valleys of the day to the silver land  
of dreams, Eternity;

And they pass upon the way, new puppets, seeking me!

Which of the two dithyrambs do you prefer?

Or let us compare two more specimens on the same theme.

By Whitman:

No labor-saving machine,

Nor discovery have I made;

Nor will I be able to leave behind me any wealthy bequest to found a hospital or  
library,

Nor reminiscence of any deed of courage, for America,

Nor literary success, nor intellect, nor book for the bookshelf;

Only a few carols, vibrating through the air, I leave,

For comrades and lovers.

By Patience Worth:

I am a little grey bird upon a swinging vine beside thy door;

And the morning sun shall kiss it and it shall become white and pale like loving  
hands descending upon thy brow;

And I shall burst my throat, singing gladly, until my spirit

Shall leave the grey tabernacle and shall disappear in the sun.

But my songs shall have hidden within the flowers' cups, and their honeys shall drip upon the sod,

And the vine shall swing when I am gone, and thou shalt hear the flutter of wings within it.

I have nothing to say derogatory to what goes under the name of a poem by Walt Whitman. Its rather unusual (for him) exhibition of humility is commendable if he thought it true, and it is a pretty and just thought that a few carols may outweigh more pretentious products. But Patience Worth's poem is exquisite—incomparably superior, as poetry, to the other.

### SEVEN POETS ON *THE NIGHTINGALE*

This bird, not found in America, is a favorite of the poets familiar with it. Bryant's *Library of Poetry of Song*, among its 1,610 major selections after the taste of its compiler, himself a distinguished poet, contains five poems about the nightingale. But first let us read the one dictated by Patience Worth on July 12, 1920.

Peace! 'Tis the Nightingale!—  
 Oh moon, silver shod,  
 Tracking the skies, be still!  
 Oh stars, cease your pulsing  
 But an instant! Oh you  
 Trembling blossom, lean  
 Against the breeze and rest!  
 You shuttling moth, hang!  
 Your intrusions cease!  
 For a holy instant attend  
 The nightingale!

I now copy the best part of each poem on the same subject in Bryant's collection, nearly or exceeding the length of that by Patience Worth.

By William Drummond:  
 What soul can be so sick which by thy songs  
 (Uttered in sweetness) sweetly is not driven  
 Quite to forget earth's turmoils, spites, and wrongs,  
 And lift a reverent eye and thought to heaven?  
 Sweet, artless songster! thou my mind doth raise  
 To airs of spheres,—yes, and to angel's lays."

By Gil Vicente, translated by John Bowring:  
 The rose looks out in the valley,  
 And thither will I go,  
 To the rosy vale, where the nightingale  
 Sings his song of woe."

In the whole poem there is nothing about the bird, save the repetition of these last two lines.

By Maria Tesselschade Visscher, translated by John Bowring:  
 Whose tender carolling  
 Sets all ears listening  
 Unto that living lyre,  
 Whence flow the airy notes his ecstasies inspire,  
 Whose shrill, capricious song  
 Breathes like a flute along,  
 With many a careless tone,  
 Music of a thousand tongues, formed by one tongue alone."  
 By Matthew Arnold:

"Hark! ah, the nightingale!  
 The tawny-throated!  
 Hark! from that moonlit cedar what a burst  
 Of triumph! hark,—what pain!

\*            \*            \*

How thick the bursts come crowding through the leaves!  
 Again—thou hearest!  
 Eternal passion!  
 Eternal pain!"

By Richard Barnfield:  
 Everything did banish moan,  
 Save the nightingale alone.  
 She, poor bird, as all forlorn,  
 Leaned her breast up-till a thorn;  
 And there sung the doleful'st ditty  
 That to hear it was great pity.  
 Fie, fie, fie! now would she cry,  
 Teru, teru, by and by.

Which of the six is most beautiful, which most approaches pure poetry? Surely we will not choose the tame sweetness of Drummond, nor the Vicente ditty. Had Barnfield's lines been dictated by Patience Worth we should have tittered instead of feeling "it was great pity"; we should have remarked that "Fie, fie, fie!" makes the nightingale

ludicrous, and hardly should we have excused her, as we do Barnfield, by remembering that she lived (or claims that she lived) three centuries ago, and that therefore her locution is "quaint."

It is hard to tell, it seems to me, whether the Dutch poetess or Arnold wrote better lines about the nightingale. Arnold's may be more easily compared, since they, like Patience Worth's, are unrhymed. Of course, if the object were to describe the nightingale's song, Arnold's verse is to be preferred, since he describes it in various terms, while Patience Worth does not describe it at all. But if it is finer to produce in the mind of one who has never heard the nightingale a sense of what it must be to bear one, Patience Worth's lines are in so far superior. Instead of by a series of ejaculations her muse flows rhythmically along, and swiftly produces a picture of night, the luminaries and living things of night, pausing breathless to listen to one small bird. Arnold's phrases are loosely strung, but Patience Worth's co-operate to produce a concrete and magical effect upon mind. The device (if it may be so called) of inducing an effect in the reader's mind by picturing an effect produced upon witnesses in the poem, was employed powerfully by Homer, as Albert J. Beverage has reminded us (*Saturday Evening Post*, October 23, 1926). "When Helen came before them, even 'grave old men...the seniors of the people...found heat in their years' and whispered to one another that no man could blame the Greeks and Trojans for fighting about such a woman."

After the above was in type, I was told that I ought to take Keats's Ode to a Nightingale into the comparison. It was not because I thought that it was enough to bring forward the efforts of five poets approved by Bryant, but from sheer oversight that I did not do so. That oversight I now repair, but again protest that it is not a part of my thesis that P. W. is never excelled by any other poet, but rather that she has earned a place among poets of high rank.

Like Shelley's "Skylark," Keats's "Nightingale" is probably the finest poem on its theme in the language. But we must remember that it has 600 words in which to produce its effect, while the other has but 45. It seems almost profanity to suggest that P. W.'s swiftly dictated and unrevised composition, while inferior to that of Keats's in euphony and rhythm, is superior to any 45 lines of the Ode in brilliancy of imagery and in dramatic intensity. The passage perhaps best suited for comparison is this:

Now, more than ever, seems it rich to die,  
To cease upon the midnight, with no pain,  
While thou art pouring forth thy soul abroad,

In such an ecstasy!  
 Still would'st thou sing, and I have ears in vain—  
 To thy high requiem, become a sod.

Or we might choose the final lines, but let the reader play fair, and not take both paragraphs together, weighing 90 words against 45.

Adieu! adieu! thy plaintive anthem fades  
 Past the near meadows, over the still stream,  
 Up the hillside; and now 'tis buried deep  
 In the next valley-glades;  
 Was it a vision or a waking dream?  
 Fled is that music:—do I wake or sleep'

But on another occasion Patience Worth undertook to characterize the song of the nightingale itself. The whole of the poem may be found in *L. B.*, pages 68-69.

Oh Philomel, oh Philomel!  
 In an early hour, ere the sun  
 Had struck his brass, announcing day,  
 Didst thou in the pale light  
 Marl, the heavens with thy flight,  
 Mayhap fringe thy wing upon the pearly gate,  
 And in thine awe, an instant ope thy throat,  
 Letting the echo of the angels' song therein?

Oh Philomel, oh Philomel!  
 Back, back o'er the starry arch  
 In the young hour didst thou flee?  
 Hiding through the sunny hours,  
 Waiting the soft and shadeful instant,  
 Holy in its commemoration  
 Of the day's departure,  
 When the moon stands guard  
 And the sun delivers her trust.

Oh Philomel, oh Philomel!  
 Then didst thou let the echoes  
 Come stealing forth hauntful of the heavens,  
 Each note a moonlit dewdrop fallen,  
 Mirrored with a thousand stars;  
 Each song a symbol of perfection,  
 Neither long nor doleful—tuned nor fluttered;  
 For an instant passing, then to flee,  
 But each haunted of the heavens.

## BEAUTY AND MEANING: PATIENCE AND SWINBURNE

On March 8th, 1920, Patience Worth dictated the following lines:

Behold, with my naked hands did I part my ribs,  
 Baring my heart in a basin of scarlet.  
 Into this did I plunge my quill,  
 Drawing it forth pulsing, each drop warm.  
 And ere it cooled wrote, tempering each note  
 With a fever or purifying it in meditation.

Behold, like a pageantry cometh  
 The inscrutable, cowled, grey-garbed  
 Holy writs, each uttering damnations,  
 Each damnation echoing promise;  
 And the cadence of the two becoming warred  
 Like a gnashing battlement,  
 Lost in the thin praying of holy nuns,  
 Lispering white music from their marble-cold hearts,  
 Letting the beads slip tinkling  
 Through their iced fingers, letting their lips  
 Speak, finally, of the Infinite!

Lo, through this fluid which I press,  
 Singeth dumb conquest, mute agony,  
 Anguished existence. Bare hands,  
 Set upon hairy forearms, clutch bloodily  
 At existence. And I write, giving utterance  
 Yea, making vent unto this sealed, dumb,  
 Mute piteous humankind.  
 Is my heart white? Is the basin  
 Become a golden thing? Hath the quill  
 Dropped the last drop and with anguish, broken?  
 Then have I spoken!

What do these lines mean exactly? I for one do not know. I can guess what they stand for: the desire to write the epic of the history of man, with all its turmoil and struggle, with its antiphony of religious exaltation as represented by holy writs and of despairing formalism as represented by the thin praying of the nuns with marble-cold hearts, and with all the dumb unhappiness of the ages. But it is beautiful; it produces a certain powerful effect upon the emotions and the aesthetic sense. It is like some canvas of Turner, representing sea and sky, which may be perfectly intelligible to a Ruskin but is not to me, and yet arrests my attention, awakens in me a response, and remains in memory like a great moment in a play.



Swinburne wrote:

If you were thrall to sorrow,  
 And I were page to joy,  
 We'd play for lives and seasons,  
 With loving looks and treasons,  
 And tears of night and morrow  
 And laughs of maid and boy."

Suppose Patience Worth had written:

Were you a thrall to sadness, lad,  
 And were I to joy a messenger,  
 For lives and for seasons would we play  
 Wi' lov'n' looks and betrayals,  
 And tears o' night and morrow  
 And laughs o' wench and boy.

The meaning would be exactly the same, but if Patience Worth had written it, who, feeling more or less repugnance to her claims as to her nature (which have absolutely nothing to do with the quality of her material) would not ask, "But what does it mean to 'play for lives and seasons'?", and "What does 'betrayals' mean in this connection?" and "Why are the tears those of 'night and morrow,' while the smiles are those of 'wench and boy'?"

A part of the charm of the verse as Swinburne put it is in its perfect rhythm, and as to the meaning—perhaps there is a charm in being uncertain of it, as we find charm in the uncertain forms that loom up in mist.

But of one thing I am certain, that there is nothing in the whole of Swinburne's poem which can compare with the picture—whatever its meaning—presented by

Lost in the thin praying of holy nuns,  
 Lispings white music from their marble-cold hearts,  
 Letting the beads fall tinkling  
 Through their iced fingers,  
 Letting their lips speak, finally,  
 Of the Infinite.

#### PATIENCE AND THE POET LAUREATE

In a recent volume of poems (*New Verse*, written in 1921) by Robert Bridges, poet laureate of England, may be found these verses:

Mid the squandered color idling as I lay  
 Reading the Odyssey in my rock-garden  
 I espied the clustered tufts of cheddar pinks  
 Burgeoning with promise of their scented bloom  
 And the modish motley of their bloom to be  
 Thrust up in narrow buds on the slender stalks....

I had forgotten Homer dallying with my thoughts  
 Till I fell to making these little verses  
 Communing with the flowers in my rock-garden  
 On a May morning.

I quote exactly what I find quoted in a New York Times review. It appears that Mr. Bridges, like "Lord" Timothy Dexter, leaves the reader to "pepper and salt" with punctuation marks to his individual taste.

Richard Le Gallienne says in the review, having this particular poem in mind: "Who cares whether this is written in 'Neo-Miltonic syllabics' or not?—and not by the taking of prosodical thought did so eerie a charm enter into these fragile lines. Here is more than a hint of that indescribable eerie nothingness that made some of Mr. Bridges' early lyrics seem like songs out of an Elizabethan song-book."

Perhaps I am cynical, but I cannot help doubting if many readers, supposing that these lines were Patience Worth's produced by hands laid upon an ouija board, would be melted in admiration of them, or even regard them indulgently. Far be it from me to deny their charm; still I am convinced that to forty-nine out of fifty persons, doubtless including myself, attention the more willingly lingers upon them, they are given a chance to commend themselves, and there is more of a will to appreciate them, because of the knowledge that Robert Bridges is their author. But the poet La Gallienne sees beauty in them, and doubtless he knows.

These verses are about a flower. There is before me another poem which begins about a bird and ends about a bird. There are more irregularities in its rhythm, but I invite the reader to try an experiment. Forget the ouija board; forget all that is repulsive to you in the notion of a spirit dictating poetry—that has nothing to do with the literary merit in itself. Read what follows, imagining that it was written by Robert Bridges, poet laureate of England, and see which of the two sets of verses you then admire more. Among the very first verses ever dictated by Patience Worth were the following:

When I would sing Thou hast struck me dumb;  
 When I would make a glorious noise my lute respondeth not;  
 Oh, e'en the song-bird Thou has favored more.  
 'Twould grieve me sore were't not I know his fittingness.  
 Where waves the willow betasseled with spring rain,  
 There resideth he whom God so loves.  
 Perchance my borrowed song belongeth not to me;  
 But when the winter comes 'tis my word for him, my brother.  
 Mayhap the fool, who, tired from paying for his bread with jest,  
 Hath hid his leering 'neath his cowl,  
 Listeneth to the song flowing from the meadow there;  
 And in the dark of his retreat meets all the faerie folk,  
 While he who sits in regal robe heareth but the brass; of yonder bell.  
 Halt thou, in this maddening rush, and reckon with thyself.  
 Hast snapped the string bound round thy book of song  
 And stopped to read thy note? Or dost thou listen to thy heart  
 Which singeth not a line of borrowed song?  
 And on a day—a, day that's yet to be,  
 One feathered chorister shall try a melody and find it not his own;  
 But, listening, hear this note of thine  
 A wayward breeze hath blown from 'neath a fresh-turned sod,  
 And, growing bolder, sing thy song to Heaven and to God.

Patience Worth would not lack in appreciation of the poet laureate's little verses. Often and often she wrote of communion with flowers, using that very word. Nor do I believe that Mr. Bridges would fail to appreciate the poem by Patience Worth; and it is quite within the limits of the possible that he would cheerfully admit that in melody, imagery, phrasing, tenderness and pathos, and in thought content, hers is in another and higher class. One fact, if the reader will read both poems aloud, must force itself—upon him—that the one by Patience Worth, in spite of the greater irregularity of her lines, has more of a musical quality. His verses fastidiously chat, or murmur, or, if you please, hum, but hers sing. This is true of very much of her verse. [Many other examples given as well]

## IMAGINATION

Under this heading are presented a few poems which could be distributed under others, but to which attention is directed as examples of peculiar imaginative power. Two or three of them certainly stand as among the very best, in this regard, among the products of Patience Worth, while the rest are not better in the same respect than others found in this volume or still existing only in typewritten form. If there is any poet who can, within the compass of a few lines, more brilliantly paint a picture, wide as the earth and the heavens, or small and

exquisite as a miniature upon ivory, I should like for that poet to be named and illustrative examples given.

There are enough imaginative canvasses, and vignettes of imagination and fancy in poems by Patience Worth yet only in the unpublished records to fire the poetic frenzy and set flying the pens of a dozen bards. There are thousands of metaphors and similes, each within the compass of a few words, which are rays of moonlight shot across the darkness and revealing spots of beauty.

I remember how, in my boyhood, felicitous phrases of imaginative power thrilled me. Here are a few examples which at the moment occur to memory.

Babylon hath been a golden cup in the Lord's hand that made all the earth drunken; the nations have drunken of her wine, therefore the nations are mad." Jeremiah 51:7.

What a picture! the golden, bubbling cup held forth by a mighty hand, the reeling, maudlin figures!

Also certain sentences in those wonderful threnodies, the fourteenth chapter of Isaiah and the eighteenth of the Apocalypse.

Two passages from Ossian, the second so significant of the brevity of man's existence.

"O thou that rollest above, round as the shield of my fathers; whence are thy beams, O sun, thine everlasting light?"

"When thou, O stone, shalt moulder down, and lose thee in the moss of years; then shall the traveler come and—whistling, pass away."

And Poe's

Vast formless things, Flapping from out their condor wings Invisible woe."

And Wordsworth's

And see the children sport upon the shore, And hear the mighty waters rolling evermore."

Every lover of poetry will have his own treasured stock of vivid pictorial passages.

But read the two, poems, one the sequel of the other, given in this section, and entitled "The Sounds Unheard by Man" and "The Sounds of Men." These productions, I had almost said miraculously created in a few minutes, are one constant scintillating echoing stream of brilliant metaphor and simile. Every sentence is as clear cut as a

cameo and as vibrant as the note of a violin. Every sentence, almost every clause is a new gem of different color. Every sentence is a model of concentrated expression, revealing, in the first poem some glimpses of mystic beauty, and in the second some new aspect of sordid horror. The (pictorial) culmination of the first is the unsurpassable "rushing sound of mornings wings as she flies o'er the Eastern gateway," and the (emotional) climax to the cacophony of the second is the ironic outburst: "and the mystery of man is that he should present *them* and cry, Sing! Sing, Poet, Sing!"

July 7, 1917.

### INTO THE PURPLE SEA WOULD I CAST MY NETS

Oh, into the purple sea would I cast my nets.  
 I would drag its depths for the vagrant songs  
 That sink to rest therein.  
 I would trap the whisper o' the shells  
 And the moaning of the reefs.  
 I would catch the silver sprays  
 As they trickle back upon the sea's breast  
 Losing them in one great mightiness.  
 I would listen to the waters  
 Of the young morning, when they wake  
 Fresh-sounding of the wind's caress.  
 Into the purple sea would I cast my net  
 To bring it forth so laden.

Into the purple sea would I cast my nets,  
 To catch the sea's blooms stranded  
 Upon the threads of siren's tress,  
 Of coral bits and jasper flecks  
 And beauteous pearls bedecked.  
 I'd trap some sunbeam piercing through  
 The water's blue, to light  
 The sea's depths of God's own smile.  
 Oh, when the late sun sinks  
 I'd drink the scarlet wine he casts  
 Upon the pulsing sea  
 And cast my nets full wide!

Oh, into the purple sea would I cast my nets!  
 When the morning sun riseth  
 From the bosom of the sea,  
 I'd climb the golden way  
 To stand upon the heaven's height

And cast my nets, like phantom shadows,  
 O'er the silver water's way,  
 And in their tender mesh  
 I'd prison gulls of whited wings,  
 And songsters prison that the even sea  
 Would sing! Would sing of heights  
 And forget her depths.  
 Oh, in the morning Would I cast  
 My net into the purple sea.

Sept. 19, 1917.

I SAW THE RISE LIKE 'MONSTER JAWS

I saw the mountains rise like monster jaws,  
 The sea their tongue. The white moon  
 Came frightened to the night, and the pale stars  
 Upon the paler sky,  
 And the wagging tongue, telling, telling.

Oh, the vasty ways were silent  
 And the gaping jaws lay weary-oped  
 As though they dropped in sleep.  
 Mute the night, e'en the winds were still  
 And the roaring emptiness quelled,  
 But the tongue was telling, telling.

Silence, silence, silence, my answer.  
 I am waiting, oh night, for the Word.  
 I have stood beside the gaping chasm,  
 Waiting, waiting, but it cometh not, my answer.  
 Hark! I send my voice calling, calling,  
 Pealing, pealing, shrill, shrill,  
 Cutting the silence like a keen-edged blade.

Listing, I stand waiting, waiting,  
 For the voice of God.  
 I am hungry for the word.  
 I wait, and the jaws gape  
 And the tongue is telling, telling.  
 Enough! I have heard, oh Lord!

SCARCE HAD THE MOON WRIT HER, SILVER SCROLL

Scarce had the moon writ her silver scroll across the sky  
 Scarce had the night grown weak to die;  
 Scarce had the morning stretched her rosy arms, out from the East,  
 beckoning the day;

Scarce had the earth set up the crawl of things that write the hours;  
 Scarce had I started the journey on my way  
 When the calling came.

Out from the dim lands, past the pale of cloud or star,  
 From the depths where I list with my soul,  
 Hearing the waters of other seas and the voices of lands afar;  
 Scarce had I stepped my path  
 When the calling came.

And I knew thy voice, oh. Love!  
 No din of trumpetry may dim its call, no silence blot its beauty.  
 Scarce had I trod my path,  
 When the calling came.

That shall lead me past the portal's way  
 Unto newer fields and deeper glories.

This may be interpreted several ways like a musical composition. To me it makes very little difference what the precise meaning is. Perhaps I like it all the better because that meaning is problematical, as I look up and down my street on a foggy morning, and like the hotel and the pinnacled residence in the distance the better because emerging dimly they suggest palaces or castles of whatever strange land I please. It is the music of the poem's rhythm, the haunting beauty of its metaphors, the felicity of its phrasing, which grip one.

July 22, 1918.

#### I LISTENED LAST EVE

I listened last eve, to the evening's song,  
 And the music upon which it rested.  
 I saw two towering cliffs, beturreted  
 And a gaping golden space between.  
 And the sun lay like a great glowing globe  
 Upon the golden sea, and his rays  
 Created a lyre, stringing in distinct  
 Golden threading from cliff to cliff.  
 And the night-birds strummed it with their wings  
 And the sea hummed lazily beyond.

July 21, 1919.

#### THE SOUNDS UNHEARD BY MAN

I have heard the moon's beams  
 Sweeping the waters, making a sound  
 Like threads of silver, wept upon.  
 I have heard the scratch of the

Pulsing stars, and the purring sound  
 Of the slow moon as she rolled across  
 The night. I have heard the shadows  
 Slapping the waters, and the licking  
 Sound of the wave's edge as it sinks  
 Into the sand upon the shore.

I have heard the sunlight as it pierced  
 The gloom with a golden bar, which  
 Whirred in a voice of myriad colors.  
 I have heard the sound which lay  
 Between the atoms which danced in the  
 Golden bar. I have heard the sound  
 Of the leaves reclining upon their cushions  
 Of air, and the swish of the willow  
 Tassels as the wind whistled upon them,  
 And the sharp sound which the crawling  
 Mites proclaim upon the grasses blades,  
 And the multitude of sounds which lie  
 At the root of things. Oh, I have heard  
 The song of resurrection which each seed  
 Makes as it spurts. I have heard the sound  
 Of the night's first shadow, when it  
 Intermingles with the day, and the  
 Rushing sound of Morning's wings as she  
 Flies o'er the Eastern gateway.

All of these have I heard, yet man  
 Hath not an ear for them. Behold,  
 The miracle He hath writ within me;  
 Letting the chord of imagination strum!

#### THE SOUNDS OF MEN

I have heard the music men make  
 Which is discord, proclaimed through  
 Egotry. I have heard the churning  
 Of water by man's cunning, and the  
 Shrieking of throttles which man addeth  
 Unto the day's symphony. I have heard  
 The pound of implements, and the clatter  
 Of blades. I have heard the crushing blasts  
 Of Destruction. I have heard men laugh  
 And their laughs were rusted as old vessels  
 In which brine wert kept. I have heard



Women chatter like crows o'er carrion  
 And laugh as a magpie o'er a worm.  
 I have beheld all of these  
 And heard them. 'Men have cars  
 For such; and the mystery of man is  
 That he should present them, and cry:  
 "Sing! Sing, Poet! Sing!

Apr. 5, 1920,

THROUGH THE DESERT

And the path led unto the desert.  
 Sands, sands, sands, sands.  
 And a vulture mayhap scrolling  
 The sky, lapping Ills wings lustfully  
 O'er carrion.

Sands, sands, sands, sands,  
 Forever sands and I weary,  
 Footsore. Yet, triumphant had I come  
 Unto the spot. Is this then the goal?  
 Sands, sands, sands, sands,  
 Sands and silence. Little grains  
 That quivered and slipped and cajoled  
 One the other in beat,  
 Arguing the instant hotter.  
 This then the goal and I weary.  
 And the desert Stretching, Stretching.

Naught but the troubled sands foretold  
 The passing of other caravans  
 Or a tribesman who halloosed  
 To the East or cried backward  
 To the West or turned anguished  
 To the North or sought Southward.  
 Naught but the troubled sands  
 Stretching, Stretching. When sudden,  
 A cloud cast a shadow, scarce bigger  
 Than a palm upon the golden sea;  
 And I stopped, caught, following, following,  
 And the vultures flapped and the sun beat  
 And the sands became a tumult and my feet  
 Lagged with heaviness. Yet yon  
 Wert the shadow and I followed.  
 Even came and the sun gave way  
 To a hot moon, yellow gleaming,

A hot moon, smiling with swelled lips  
 Down upon the Stretching sands,  
 And the bats, and the jackals crying,  
 And now and then mayhap, the shadow  
 Of a phantom came], the beckoning  
 Of some tribesman's headcloth  
 As he slipped dreamwise yon.

And I followed the phantom of the shadow,  
 The little shadow scarce bigger  
 Than a palm. And it fell upon a pool  
 Fringed of Palms, where a lizard panted,  
 And a came] lay with its long neck  
 Limp and its tongue forced to the drops, dead!  
 And I confronting this, knelt down  
 And forgot the sands and the vultures  
 And the phantoms and the hot moon,  
 In the sup, the cool sup unto which  
 The little shadow scarce bigger  
 Than a palm, had led me.

Aug. 30, 1923.

#### SIX CANDLES

It is night, and I, a fool  
 In motley, weary, fling me down  
 Upon the damped sod to play  
 A game of wishin'; to stride  
 The charger of my hope  
 And make me von. Beneath a canopy  
 Of sable where a moon, white-faced,  
 Reproacheth; and I see a star,  
 A faint star like some forgotten  
 Memory, urging its way.  
 And I laugh a little I, a fool  
 In motley, see His holy hand  
 To light another wick; and,  
 Taking heart, play dolefully  
 Upon my pipe, half wistfully,  
 And one by one I watch  
 The magic show—the wicks  
 Of heaven set flame—I, a fool  
 In motley, flung upon the damped sod,  
 Ready to mount my charger, Hope,  
 And make me yon.

Sept. 19, 1923.

"FLYING HOOV-BEATS"

Lo, like a rider on and on,  
Lashing his steed, my fancy goes.  
Each pulse-beat marks the way  
And fiery sparks belight the dimlit way.

Make on, my steed. Charge upward  
Through the vasty arch of night,  
Climbing the star, unto the spot  
Where the pearly moon stands guard  
At heaven's gate. Charge on, my steed,  
Unfettered. Let me with my lance,  
Holy point of faith, shatter  
The lock and for one instant stand.

March 24, 1925.

"A MOTH IN THE MOONLIGHT"

Wan-faced sister,  
Shy, confiding with the clouds,  
Shuttling shadow,  
Weaving mid the stars,  
Thy golden loom bestrung of silver threads.  
A net bespread?

Eve... a, silent eve... and thou.  
Velvety night,  
Royal in purple loveliness,  
And a white moth shuttling,  
Caught in a net of moonbeam.

We began to talk, and in a few seconds Mrs. Curran said: Wait, she seems to want to give me another on this subject."

Phantomry...  
Shadows splotched of silver...  
Dreaming glades...  
Foreboding dells...  
And high a silver moon  
Like a beacon set,  
And a green star companioning...  
And a white-winged moth  
Set willy-nilly by the wind,  
Like Hope loosed.

Dec. 1, 1917.

### JEALOUSY

I am jealous, jealous, jealous!  
 Who hath heard the scratch  
 Of a thorn upon a Springtide's cheek?  
 Or the tiny breaking sound o' the buds?  
 Or the sharp, piercing little sound  
 That the grass-blades must have made  
 Upon their up-way through, the sod?  
 Or the sound the wave-froth makes  
 As it vanishes on the air?  
 Or the tread of the frost?  
 Or the singin' o' the snowflakes?  
 Or the tiny tinkle of the shadows  
 Playing 'neath the leafy way?  
 Who hath heard them?—  
 I am jealous, jealous, jealous!

### A HARP AND A NECKLACE

Lo, the river!  
 A necklet hung upon the throat of the field,  
 Whispering the chatter of the field folk,  
 Singing full of echoes stored,  
 Snatches of the songs of shepherds,  
 Trills of the nightingales,  
 The exultant peal of the morning lark,  
 The cooing of the wood dove,  
 And the bleats of the young sheep.  
 Lo, all of these are the river's song.  
 And the banks sweep against it,  
 Stroking its cheek, the pale cheek of the water,  
 With soft tassels and softer mosses,  
 Or smiting its cheek with the edge  
 Of a reed or marsh grass.  
 Lo, the voice of the river is uncomplaining,  
 Murmuring confidently, surely moving  
 Forward with its burden of sounds,  
 To whisper a confidence to the listening sea!

And the harp of the valley is hung  
 Betwixt the great breasts of the mountains,  
 And it is singing a free song, which catcheth  
 The raiment of the winds and rides the heavens.

And the laughing waves of the sea reach high,  
 Catching the tatters of the winds' garments,  
 Pulling the dancing echoes down, down!  
 Oh, within the pit of the sea  
 Is the music of creation. Lo, the voice  
 Of the first day is lain upon its floor—  
 And the soul of To-day is sinking like  
 A phantom within its water.

Before a company assembled on the evening of Jan. 13th, 1926, twenty-six short poems were delivered on subjects suggested by persons present. One of the audience set her a lofty mark when he quoted from Keats, even though (if the record is correct, as I think from the manner of the response, it must be) his was a mutilated quotation—"magic casements, opening on...fairy lands forlorn." The record seems innocent of knowledge on the part of any one present that the quotation was not complete. Patience Worth gave this:

I see fair fields where tufted poppies flaunt,  
 And grain sags heavy 'Pon its stem;  
 Where larks nest in the shadowed coves  
 At roots where damp still clings.  
 Cool, restful cool, and quiet is the spot,  
 And riotous poppies fringed about the nest,  
 Bleed in their joy.

I see the hillocks, wrapt in purple shadows  
 Veiled of mist, watched by sentinels—  
 The pale, pale stars,  
 Or guarded by the jeweled moon.

I see a river winding hence,  
 Plunging seaward in exulting joy.  
 I see cool pools sunk deep within the shadowed spots  
 In some far forest glades,  
 Molten of sunlight and of shadow;  
 Woven of mysteries reflected from the sky—  
 A vagrant cloud, a half-hid star;  
 Some fright-winged bird, inscribed.

I see a fair, fair land a little way beyond,  
 A magic land—And I would dream behind the casement—fancy;  
 Yea, I would retreat, letting my soul  
 Go roving, while I watched, and sang!

I leave it quite to the reader's, judgment whether Patience Worth profaned Keats by her treatment of the text supplied by him, and whether Keats himself, had he been living and present, would not have appreciated the imaginative power shown in her lines, as well as their musical cadence.

I call attention, for the purpose of comparison, to the four last lines, wherein the singer is pictured sending forth a part of her being the soul, and fancy as the magic casement-window which colors all that the soul sees. Keats also wrote of fancy; and he pictures fancy as the one let loose to roam. Either poetic concept is legitimate.

Ever let the Fancy roam,  
 Pleasure never is at home:  
 At a touch sweet Pleasure melteth  
 Like to bubbles when rain pelteth;  
 Then let winged Fancy wander  
 Through the thought still spread beyond her;  
 Open wide the mind's cage-door,  
 She'll dart forth and cloudward soar.

This is fully up to the level of what follows. It is a blasphemous question, but if one can for the moment put aside the knowledge that Keats wrote these latter lines and suppose them by an unknown, are they better poetry than the impromptu lines of Patience Worth? Are they as good? These questions are not addressed to persons to whom mere rhyming is poetry. Keats's poem "Fancy" is not among his greatest, yet it is one of those which Bryant chose for his collection. He wrote some of the finest poetry in the language and yet the fact was scarcely discovered by critics until after his death, probably because there was printed along with it "some of the most vulgar and fulsome doggerel ever whimpered by a vapid and effeminate rhymester in the sickly stage of whelphood." These are not the words of the *Quarterly Review* which Byron erroneously supposed killed him, but were written by the poet Swinburne a half century after his death, for the *Encyclopedia Britannica*. Patience Worth has never written such stuff, nor do I claim that she has ever risen to the unearthly height of the *Ode on a Grecian Urn*. I simply offer an impromptu effort of hers for comparison with work of Keats good enough to be among the half dozen examples selected by the poet Bryant.

## NATURE

May 10, 1916.

### SINGING IN THE NIGHT

The-r-e-e-t! The-r-e-e-t! The-r-e-e-t! I hear you singing there.  
The-r-e-e-t! The-r-e-e-t! The-r-e-e-t! Aflitting in the vine.  
Ah, that this heart did ope it up  
And pour without such melodies!  
But Earth doth sing a dinning song,  
And Day's winds sing of woe,  
And Nights are noised of weeping ones,  
And Time sweeps on and leaves me listening here.  
The-r-e-e-t! The-r-e-e-t! The-r-e-e-t! A whirr, and thou art gone!  
But still Earth's din hath ceased  
And song bursts from this heart,—Athre-e-t! Athre-e-t! Athre-e-t!  
Thou on and on, to naught,  
And evening's soft breeze bears it back;  
Athre-e-t! Athre-e-t! Athre-e-t! His singing unto me.

July 16, 1921.

### THE LARK

What do I hear?  
A flooding song, as though the sun  
Had poured its golden wine  
Earthward in cadences of beauty,  
Hath Heaven loosed its bars,  
Letting the echo steal earthward?

What do I hear?  
Is it the pent-up agony  
Of my heart which hath borne fruit  
In song? Is it, mayhap,  
Half-laughing melodies so sweetly  
Reminiscent of a thousand instants  
I have cherished? or is it  
Ah, it is! a lark  
Beating heavenward, lifting its song  
From earth's contamination.

February 27, 1922.

### I HAVE HEARD THEE, LONE PIPER

I have heard thee, lone piper, making silver notes in the gossamer eve,  
I have heard thee distilling thy love through the petals of the flowers.

I have heard thee, lone piper, wistful-toned; thy song  
 Wonder-cadenced, making soft inquiry in the night,  
 Beseeching her benediction, mayhap prayer at her shrine.  
 While she the black-robed nun prayed thou didst chant  
 And I wonder, oh I wonder, which God heard!

April 26, 1925.

## WHIPPOORWILL

In the late eve, when the moon is heavy,  
 And the leaves hush one upon the other,  
 And the light of the moon splotcheth the shadows,  
 And the shadows quiver tremorously before the silence;  
 When the dew, soft-footed, creepeth upon the night;  
 Magically in this hour, thou, oh sentinel,  
 Dost sit like an echo calling, marking off the rhythms,  
 Whipping the silence with a lash of song.

July 28, 1924.

TO A DRAGON-FLY  
*(Design on a silver ring.)*

O'er purling waters in shadowy places, cool, remote;  
 At the brink of a river where the mossy lips of earth press thirstily in the  
     young sun at an early hour;  
 O'er lilies fresh thrust from the water's breast;  
 In the high sun, the yellow light:  
 Dizzily circling with purring wings, dartling hither, thither and yon, like a  
     shuttle of joy.

January 27, 1918.

## OCEAN

Roar! Roar! Roar!  
 Beat! Beat! Beat!  
 Swing! Swing! Swing!  
 And speak thy tongue thou sea!\*

Thy breast hath breathed the Earth's unspoken voice  
 And dumb'd shores have sent  
 Their message then afloat to lands unknown.  
 Thine angers rage the lands  
 And cut the Earth's full-bosomed shore.  
 And he hath spread the wings of heaven  
 To haunt thy blue and foam-pured waste.  
 And sun hath dipped him deep,  
 And rosed thy morn-kissed breast  
 And eve's moon paled his glory o'er.

\* Perhaps suggested by some one's quoting Tennyson's "Break, break, break!"



Thy sands, the every grain methinks, be souls  
 And all thy songs the songs o' them;  
 And when at morn I see thee lie  
 Ashimmered 'neath the gray-flushed sky,  
 And see the morn-star set  
 Athin thy deep, deep breast,  
 Ah then do I know the peace, the peace  
 O' that long road that leadeth unto There  
 And know, and know, and know the depth  
 Of sky and thee be naught  
 Unto the love o' Him.

March 30, 1925.

### WAVES

Lisping tongues of the sea, singing  
 A thousand melodies. Lisping tongues  
 Of the sea, or mighty lolling tongues,  
 Whiche'er ye be, make thou the song dull  
 Or monstrous toned. Sing thou the music  
 Of the ages. Utter the depth of the sea  
 Which holds the secret of all time  
 Since that first day when He delivered it  
 Unto the earth—a monstrous tear o' brine.

April 15, 1920.

Mr. Dunipace asked her to write a poem on Maumee.\* Mrs. Curran thought it was some new breakfast food, but Patience did not hesitate and gave him this:

### THE MAUMEE

Behold, as the stars descend  
 Upon the sheening, lapping breast  
 Reflected, and the shadows shuttle and the moon  
 Stands sentinelling that empty quietude;  
 And the little echoes scratch, far distant  
 Pulsing as vagrant memories beckoning;  
 And the shadows lag heavy, blackly  
 Lipping, and skyward stretch, abyssed,  
 The universe spreading, and I  
 Between the twain! Ah, a phantomry  
 And reality enthralled!

\*A river in Ohio and Indiana.

April 5, 1922.

APRIL SHOWERS

And doth He weep, this joyous God?  
 And doth He weep o'er Wintertide?  
 And doth He sigh?  
 And doth He weep, this joyous God  
 And, in His weeping, quick the sod?

May 30, 1921.

THE COMING STORM

Hastening winds,  
 Swallows swirling before,  
 Wallowing, tree tops,  
 Insistent clouds swift passing,  
 Light and shadow—tortuously intermixed,  
 Grass tent, green-flatted,  
 Frantic blossoms dancing,  
 The slim blade of lightning slitting the cloud bank,  
 A hush,  
 The whine of the onrush,  
 The soft whirr of a heavy drop splashed  
 In the frothy dust at the woodskirt,  
 The frightened flight of eerie songsters,  
 The smell of heat, dust-choked,  
 A sweet instant,  
 And a crystal spangled hiss,  
 Announceth rain!

Patience then said, "This may be singing, but its a muckish tune."

April 18, 1918.

WHEN LUNA DIPS THE WATERS

Transformed by lily-fingered morning, the midnight sea,  
 When Luna dips the waters;  
 And the chargers of the sea with manes of white  
 Paw her bosom ope;  
 And sapphires fall from the goddess' raiment  
 As her chariot rolls.  
 And silver laces thrown across the sheen  
 In phantom weaving wrought,  
 While lazy gulls dip the liquid waves,  
 Letting forth the voice of silver splash.  
 Transformed, the sable night as though  
 By illumined phantom hands  
 That ply a phantom strand of witchery,  
 Threading the earth with heaven  
 And interlacing them.

October 6, 1919.

THE DAY

Morning came, with a golden urn  
 Upon her brow, mid lo, she poured  
 The light upon the day, freely  
 From its throat, and her arms  
 Lifted high the golden fount,  
 Holding it for an instant poised,  
 Then dashing it across the field  
 Of day, to stand and watch it break  
 Upon the Western wall!

September 19, 1923.

"SUNSET"

From the side of day in a hath of blood  
 Night is born, and God sets a green star,  
 Guarding. Later, a slender curved moon,  
 In a cowl of cloud, will watch  
 And a night bird will sing a lullaby.

NIGHT

Hush, hush, this is night—  
 The holy hour set apart for the faithful.  
 Hush, hush, this is night.

Silently the stars come forth  
 To watch, and the moon swings  
 Like a cradle in the sky.  
 Hush! The great God's hand  
 Hath stopped the throats of the birds,  
 And they are mutely waiting morning.

Hush! Even the kine are still,  
 And the sheep lie quietly beneath  
 The chiding shepherd-moon.  
 Hush, hush! I would stop all intrusion,  
 For my baby sleeps!

April 17, 1919.

SHADOWS

Shadows!  
 Little winging shadows, flitting like grey birds beneath the leaf bower.  
 Sombre shadows, beclouding shadows, swept forward, blotting out the sun.  
 Shadows, thin silver shadows, little fleck-clouds, passing o'er the moon's face.

Shadows, crimson shadows, the touch of the scarlet sun, lingering upon night's sombre robes.

Shadows, purple shadows, lined delicately against the night by the of the moon,  
Like shining dust upon Its royal garb—

Shadows. Shadows. Shadows.

Phantoms; Yet I behold them.

March 26, 1925.

### SPRINGTIME

How quick, how glad the sod insistent  
Gives forth its fruit! How glad,  
With what joy the barren branch bespurts!  
What is the mystic thing which surges  
Like quickening fire within the veins of matter?  
Lo, naught but the love of God; a well gushing,  
Gushing. Spring, like a question,  
Forever lifting its head triumphant  
From out each barren wintertide.

October 5, 1925.

### SPRING AND AUTUMN

Who says the pallid Spring is sweet  
When richer Autumn gilds the Summer's wane,  
When flaming scarlet flecks the mellowing leaf,  
And golden glamor glints the hedge-row and the field,  
Or some deep purple blossom tufts  
The yellow robe of grain the field disports,  
And here and there the lustered berries hang  
In vari-colored hue.

Who says the pallid Spring can vie with this maturity,  
Watched over by a haze-behallowed sun through day,  
And then at night the heavy red-gold moon,  
Lumbering with ripeness through a hazy sky,  
All star-bespangled?

All consummate, the promises of Spring  
Disclose fulfillment in a golden script.  
Read, man, and smile at him who says the Spring can vie  
With such a rich profusion.

October 2, 1923.

### THE GARDEN

How primly stands the stock, pale plumes bedewed  
And fern and pansies fringed  
And here and there a splash of gold  
And heavy rosebuds swaying, or in the sun

Some wide-flung bloom be-scatters petals  
 On the grass, and the tiny tendrilled vine.  
 With starry eyes, flings upward such an incense  
 As would drunken thee. Birds shuttle  
 In and out, and bees, a-burrowing, hum lazily,  
 Sipping the honey wine, and the sun,  
 Like an urn of gold, pours light o'er all.

"IN THE FOREST"

I think of the hushing of leaves, and of the intimate rustling,  
 And of the weaving of the wind in and about, and of the soft whirr and night,  
 And then the scratch of a leaf as it falls,  
 Or the rustle of some field folk, or the shuttle of a wing.  
 I think of a deep, deep shadowed place, besplotched of sunlight and shadow;  
 And I, O my beloved God, in such a place, feel at one with Thee,  
 For I learn in the silence, of the quickness of Thy tongue.

September 26, 1921.

MY LOVES

I love waters and dew and frost  
 And thorn and young buds, befurred buds.  
 I love forsaken nests. I love paths  
 Bebriared, leading to deep thickets.  
 I love lone still spots in the woods  
 Where pools stand in isolation,  
 Where the water spider writes the rhyme  
 Of every hour. I love the sudden start  
 Of some winged thing. I love  
 To find a fallen feather or a down-trod bloom,  
 Or some thick-lipped leaf just bursting up, yet not announced;  
 Or grass-grown footsteps, or new-pressed ones,  
 Mayhap leading fieldward, in the thick-infested grass.  
 I love cliffs where the fern clings  
 And there is moss thick, and snails.  
 I love these things, these half-expressed  
 Expressions. They are seeds to my soul.  
 They are intimate confessions to me,  
 They are the bread for my fancy. I know  
 No thing I had rather leave to earth,  
 The tired worn-weary earth, than footprints  
 Leading fieldward, or to the briared path.

March 9, 1926 (W. F. P. present).

THE APPROACH OF NIGHT

In the valley the kine lie;  
 On the hillock the nightbird tunes his Song;  
 In the cot a panting whitethroat sings timorously,  
 Wickered frae the wood.  
 The pulse of a tolling bell melts in Echo's arms.  
 A cradled moon pours young stars from her tipped horn  
 Night's wing is lifted in the East,  
 And yet, reluctant that the sun poise westward,  
 The day is writhing ere she dies in quietude.  
 An holy hour 'twixt day and twilight  
 An hour in which to dream, and hope,  
 Arid pledge faith with tomorrow.  
 Farewell, O Sun, farewell, yon night approacheth;  
 Lay thy weary head upon her breast, and let her wings enfold thee.

STIMULUS AND CHEER

December 6, 1913.

Ah Pain, the very dimple of Life's smile.

\* \* \* \*

But should a thorn pierce to thy flesh  
 Why take it as the day's full wage to thee?

Like the child who, pricked by a thorn, sits down to nurse and think about the wound, instead of keeping on picking berries and soon forgetting about it.

December 15, 1913.

Dead violets, crushed, will yield a breath of spring;  
 But mould beneath the live Oaks sigheth  
 Only for the leaves that could not cling.

In which direction do our natures tend to look—toward spring or fall, perfume or the odor of decay? Patience Worth believes that this is a matter of self-determination.

November 20, 1911.

Thee't tie thy God within thy kerchief, else have none of him, and like unto a bat hang thyself topsy-turvy to better view his handwork.

This not only counsels a broad and sane mode of thinking but more specifically suggests that when things seem to be going wrong and one is dissatisfied with the world, the reason may be that there is something wrong with himself.

The next selection is for those who are not awake to the beauty of life and the glory of its opportunities and who are becoming confirmed in inaction and purposeless thinking.

November 20, 1914.

#### TRY THY WING IN FLIGHT

I saw thee at the hour when night surrendered to the morn,  
 Thy Jaw agape in sleep.  
 Didst thou then see the sun send his heralds forth—  
 The stirring of the winged beetle, and the scraping of his song?  
 And didst thou see her golden light to stain  
 The night's bedimming rim to green,  
 As verdant as Spring's new field?  
 Nay, thou but slumbered on to wake and wag\*  
 At the sparrow who didst bruise her bosom to speak his word to thee  
 And thou art wagging still.

Ah! let me loose thee from thy blindness. Thou  
 Hast woven through thy wagging a casing  
 To enshroud thy very life.  
 Ah, brother, cast it to the wind, and try thy wing in flight,  
 To flutter like a moth unloosed, and cease to sag beneath  
 Thy load as oxen over-driven.

The following is in the quaint dialect of "Telka," but its meaning is sufficiently clear.

June 28, 1915.

'Tis ever day. 'Tis but earth aturn from light that setteth dark. And so, 'tis ever glad; and ye but turn from glad, and lo, 'tis sorry's night.

July 9, 1915.

#### THOU HAST AN EAR

Here be a song for thee, my sweet;  
 Earth holdeth songs, and nights  
 E'en at the depth of the hour do sing.  
 Earth holdeth songs astored, that hid  
 When fallen from the lips of them that sleep in Him.  
 Earth hath treasures, list thee, sweet,  
 Thou hast an ear to coax them forth.

\* With Patience Worth this word signifies idle talking.

August 1, 1915.

MAXIMS FOR A CLOUDED LIFE

Sighing but bringeth up heart's weary.  
 Tears but wash the days acleansed.  
 Hands abusied for them not thine, do work for Him.  
 Prayers that fall 'pon but the air and naught  
 Ye deem, sin', straight unto Him.  
 Close, close, doth He to cradle His own to Him.  
 Thine armor is then His love.  
 He sendeth suns that rise 'pon dark,  
 So doth dark to show 'pon bright.  
 Thy sun is but a blush-morn sun  
 And days that yet do come show thee their bright.

July 25, 1915.

\* ALONGSIDE THEE STEPPETH WHAT THY HEART DOTH HOLD

Sunny-tide, unclouded, ever breaketh from the dark.  
 Wounds, though cut adeep, do heal with love's own balm.  
 Hunger heart that beateth lone doth find 'mid dreamings, loves that fill.  
 Spending love's store buyeth more of love.  
 Weary road ne'er led but unto rest.  
 Long path, that leadeth thee alone,  
 The dream-god's pack hath spilled,  
 And ever alongside thee steppeth what thy heart doth bold.

June 30, 1917.

\* NIGHT'S PIT HELD HIS PROMISE

I feared the night that came so silent creeping,  
 Darksome, hanging of the gilded day with her woeful gloom.  
 I feared the paths that I had known  
 That sunk them now, o'er soon within the shadow.  
 Fearful I stood before them, fearful did I seek  
 The newness of the night's coming.  
 But lo, e'en while I feared I saw the starry way to flash,  
 And circled moon to climb. The shadowed way was silvered  
 And the gloom took white wings new and soared away.  
 No longer then did fear tread with me, I knew that e'en the blackness  
 Of night's pit held His promise!

October 13, 1917.

TAKE HEART

Take heart! Take heart! Take heart!  
 I heard the call falling from the sky,  
 Beat downward by a flapping wing,  
 Take heart! Take heart! Take heart!



Woe! Woe! Woe!  
 I heard the moaning winds arise,  
 And the back-flow of the sea  
 Brought the sunken echoes calling,  
 Take heart! Take heart! Take heart!

Take heart! Take heart! Take heart!  
 I heard the melody aflowing  
 Out the sky, trailing the fields.  
 Woe! Woe! Woe! the river sang,  
 But the echo sprayed the bank  
 And caught the river's riffles,  
 Sailing downward like a silver spray;  
 Take heart! Take heart! Take heart'.

Oh, away then, woe! I have heard the call,  
 Take heart! Take heart! Take heart!

May 6, 1918.

#### THE ROAD OF DAY

Oh, I know the road, the long, long road of day, that circles 'bout the hours  
 And I know the lash that with a ruthless hand is lain upon thee.  
 Ah, I know the road of day full well, and know that night holds little comfort.  
 I know, I know the empty tasks that, finished, fall like discs of brass.  
 I know, I know the labor of creation, and the weariness of thy hands.  
 I know the tread of men, each striving with sweat of intent and goaded  
 with desire.  
 Ah, I know, too, the follied one who shambling treads the way,  
 Falteringly clinging to a tinselled bit and laughing. I know, I know.  
 And o'er all, I know the weight of mercy;  
 Lo, a mercy which is merciful to the proud who would not of it,  
 And to the fool, who knoweth it not.

April 17, 1919.

#### I MAY NOT SEE SUCH THINGS

I may not see the hand of decay  
 Nor!he writing of age upon the wooded ways.  
 Oh, would'st thou tell me that the leaves  
 Fall silently, drifting through the golden sunlight  
 To remain mute? I may not see such things.  
 Mine eyes see but mornings and springs and smiles,  
 And the beautiful, spreading before me,  
 Like the glad smile of God upon earth.

I cannot behold the winter,—  
 I would not know it. Nay,  
 Within me is eternal May, writ  
 Within mine eyes and inscribed upon  
 My soul like golden sunlight.  
 I shall never know night or winter,  
 But mornings and springs.

July 17, 1919.

#### MY TWO TREASURES

Ah me! I ha'e two treasures.  
 All mine, ah me! all mine,  
 Two treasures. I ha'e turned  
 And turned in lovin', 'bout and 'bout  
 And 'gain, and 'gain. Two treasures.  
 I ne'er forget, e'en when the day  
 Doth hold her flauntin' beauty.

Ah me; I ha'e a twain o' treasures;  
 Wee things, but monstrous worth!  
 I cannot love the day nor sport  
 Her bonny hours for tendin' o' my  
 Treasures. Ah me! I ha'e  
 A twain o' treasures;  
 Two smooth-worn woes!

September 22, 1919.

#### SORROW MOTHS

What are my sorrows but silver winged moths  
 That eat my heart to tatters and flee  
 Through the black night of Eternity  
 Leaving me to heal the wounds?  
 Oh, I think the tiny wings of the silver moth  
 Are glad of the freeing, and speed to leave me  
 That I become whole. Oh, in that vasty land,  
 I think I shall come upon them,  
 Some far, far day flitting through the darkness;  
 And I shall smile to think that I  
 Had nurtured them, and be content.

October 25, 1919.

#### LET US UPON THE WAY

It is eve. Shadows loll in the valley ways,  
 Nestling in comfotful folds, to sleep until the morn.  
 Yon, in the faint glow of the sun,  
 Stretcheth the roadway, becoming lost  
 In the darkness where the horizon  
 Is becoming a part of the sky.

## THE CASE OF PATIENCE WORTH

We have traversed that roadway, beloved, together.  
 Each turn, each upward bend or stony pathway,  
 Each shadowed place, each brooklet's crossing, each sunny stretch,  
 We know together. It is eve, and we  
 Have come unto the summit, looking down  
 Into the valley and the glooming hollows.  
 Beyond is darkness, yet there is a little span  
 To go. I know not, beloved, doth the trend slip  
 Gently toward a sloping green, or nestle  
 In the daisied meadows—or offers stones and ruts  
 And agonies. Yet there is a little way that leads  
 Unto the morning. Shall we tarry here upon the summit?  
 Give me thy hand and wait not for the coming  
 Of morn's first shaft to pierce the breast of night,  
 Disclosing what the shadows hold in secret.  
 Come, come, beloved, let us upon the way!

May 22, 1920.

## THE TAPER IN THE CELL

Behold, within the cell of the monk Sorrow  
 A taper lit, and I a moth, dancing,  
 Pause in my fitful flight and seek  
 Within, spreading my wings in the golden  
 Glow unfearfully; and I am overcome  
 With the essence of sorrow, which is  
 But the light from the taper—and fall,  
 To arise no more.

And the wind, idly seeking, lays its lips  
 Upon the taper's light, and it is  
 No more. And Night is upon me,  
 A night of fearful shadows and waiting  
 With no stars and no moon;  
 Only the darkness pressing inward upon me  
 Weighting my wings.

Night and the taper no more,  
 And the pale grey of a morning  
 Knocking timidly, reviving my wings.  
 Then the sun, and I forget the taper  
 Within Sorrow's cell, spreading  
 My wings and fleeing sunward!

June 3, 1920.

## THE WICKET GATE

My heart is a wicket gate; hung at a garden 'twixt me and the dinning  
 day it stands.  
 Beyond is the teeming roadway and the agony of day's pageantry as  
 it writhes past,

And I am the garden, and my heart the wicket gate.  
 He who enters unto this sacred spot first should turn the gate upon  
 its pivot;  
 Yea, entering he shall know the inner land with its shadeful seclusions,  
 With its white-lit eyes and its gilded days, with its shuttling songsters.  
 He shall know the bordered plots; he shall become immersed in the  
 perfume of peace.

I am a garden, and my heart a wicket gate,  
 And the road beyond, the teeming road with its writhing agony, is remote;  
 For I shall let no stranger pass the wicket gate, save that I greet him  
 with a delicate intimacy.

November 13, 1920.

\* BITTER-SWEET

How long I sat before that slender goblet, knowing well that I must sup!  
 How long I sat in wonderment!  
 Fragile was I, and fearful, my lips thirsting for the contact, my will  
 strong, My desire beckoning me.  
 Yet before me was the wine untouched, and I shrank, fearful that I  
 lay my lips upon its brim.  
 And the hot winds rose and enwrapped me, and my tongue was  
 parched and my thirst was sore, and the goblet was before me.  
 And the wrath of the winds became more, and the heat of rebellion  
 descended and seared me,

And in a fearful moment when the lightnings split the heavens asunder,  
 Lo, did I tremulously lay my hand upon the slender stem  
 And with prayer-holied lips drank, drank to the very dregs.  
 And the bitterness! Ah, the bitterness clave unto my tongue!  
 Yet I was uplifted, exalted with a new strength; I forgot my thirst,  
 Yea, and looked upon the empty goblet in wonderment.  
 That was yesterday, yea, only yesterday,  
 And today, remembering the bitterness, I lift my glass anew and  
 drink sweet wine.  
 A troth to the sup of yesterday, whose bitterness steeped my soul  
 in honey!

April 11, 1921.

PLACIDITY

To attain that gentle art, that peaceful art placidity;  
 To let one's day become a sill unto the doorway of his soul;  
 To let one's day rest as lightly on the soul  
 As morning sunlight, or as filtering moonlight;

To let sorrow intrude but as a gentle shower;  
 To accept all things as a measure of Justice;  
 To know God by His Just dealings, feeling secure in the measure  
 received;  
 To temper the searing blast of the day  
 By the intrusion of wit; to use the wit  
 As the salt for stale bread;  
 To become confident and arrive  
 At that holy grace Placidity!

April 11, 1921.

### FEAR

Man is fearful of his power, and in his fear doth break  
 The rod which Moses held.  
 Man is fearful of his power, he is afraid of his kinship,  
 Hence loses his kingship.

February 2, 1922.

### THE GLORY BEHIND THE SMOKY SKY

This morn I saw the sun come toppling up  
 A great red flaming sun, sombre in its majesty,  
 Veiled in purple and silver mists, before whose face  
 The tarnished finger of smoke seared,  
 Writing the torture of labor.

This morn I saw the sun come toppling up  
 A sombre sun inflamed, with leprous cheeks,  
 Looking down upon the grovelling day.  
 And then the mist arose, the smoke dispelled,  
 The purple shadows fell away  
 And the glory of His countenance beamed down.

September 18, 1923.

### AWAKE, THE DAY IS HERE

Awake, awake, the day is here.  
 Who dallies then with dreams  
 Or troths him with the night,  
 Or trysts with yesterday?  
 A thousand, thousand yesterdays  
 Kneel before the gateway of this day  
 Ere she taketh on the veil  
 Of night, making their chants  
 And consecrating her unto  
 The office of the Lord.

Awake, the day is here full,  
 Radiant, young, bedewed of hope,  
 Holding a staff of faith;  
 She waits, she waits on thee.  
 Awake!

January 30, 1925.

#### LIFE AND I ARE FELLOWS

Life and I are fellows;  
 To me life is no stern companion.  
 I cannot see his frown, I rub elbows with him.  
 I know the prating of men is wisdom or folly,  
 And life and I have an understanding.  
 If tomorrow comes grey-clad  
 I'll remember a whistle or a song,  
 And if there is a sun I'll Joy within it.  
 Life IS—and as it is I love it.

August 18, 1925.

#### SELF-DISSATISFACTION

Weel, 'tis a sorry trade.  
 It soles nae shoon, patches nae seat, fills nae belly,  
 And leaves the platter empty and the mug dry.

August 18, 1925.

#### SPORTSMANSHIP

To game is to live.  
 When thee ceasest to game, then youth is gone.  
 'Tis the heritage of youth, left to age only as a memory.  
 Youth leaps with joy  
 Like a young fawn plunging expectant.  
 Urged with valor, itched with desire,  
 He flings him like a discus toward life.  
 'Tis a leap and a wager with life,  
 Until Age hath come, and he knows then  
 The Score.

January 11, 1926.

#### DISCOURAGEMENT

To acknowledge defeat?  
 When God hath flung the sun  
 From His open hand.  
 Lifted the curtain of the day  
 And said, "Behold, my child, behold?"

## THE PARABLE OF THE ROSE

Behold, there wert a wall, and beside it grew a rose, beauteous, trustful—reaching. But the wall wert thick and rough and dark-dealing. Think ye the rose kenned it? Nay, it reached forth and climbed trustful up to where it once seemed the eve-star wert pinned and to where at morn the sky blushed, and she whispered: "Yon, yon, yon!"

And lo, the tides swept\* until she had reached the crest o' the wall, and her head nodded gladsome and became heavy and fell forward, bloomed in full! And the spot wert enthralled and the earth beneath looked up saving aloud: "What is this thing?"

But the rose knew, for she had plucked from the sky the airs of eternity and distilled them!

## MY MORNING

Is morning less lovely  
 Because rain fell? Or because  
 The winds were ruthless and played  
 At havocking about the blossoms?  
 Is morning less lovely because  
 My eyes are brimming and my heart  
 Is such a little heavy thing, beating  
 My bosom with a rhythmic pulse and hurting?  
 Yet is morning less lovely? Nay,  
 For her head, even though rain has  
 Descended, is lifted and interwoven  
 With rainbows, and the havocking wind,  
 Has spread a footcloth of leaves;  
 Some of them perfumed things  
 With honey upon their lips, pink  
 And glowing, yea, or crimson bruised.  
 Oh, what a happy thing that I  
 With brimming eyes may see this morning!

## WAIT YET A LITTLE WHILE

Wait yet a little while, and sorrows shall find a, shadow,  
 Wait yet a little while, and the grey cloud shall rift.  
 Wait yet a little while, and the little bird shall flee  
 The grey-wrapped nest, finding the sun  
 And the newer fields afar.  
 Wait yet a little while, oh my heart!  
 Listen not unto the day's mourning.  
 Make thy song new of faith, cast thy tattered robe of woe,  
 And wait yet a little while.

\* Meaning time went by

July 26, 1913.

A blighted bud may hold a sweeter message than the loveliest  
flower, for God has kissed her wounded heart and left a promise there.

The snowflakes bank and drift only to warm the mosses which in  
Spring will weave a carpet for the foot-sore traveller.

A cooling draught of those same flakes, received of the purling  
brook, will quench his parching thirst. Again, the flakes of  
winter shall cool the breeze of summer's noon.

January 25, 1914.

Ah, glittering frost and spring's warm dew,  
Ah, winter's blast and summers breeze,  
Ah, tiny hut and marble hall,  
As like as ye are my brother and I!  
Ah, lion's lair and chipmunk's hole,  
Ah, mighty wave and dimpled stream,  
As like as ye are we!  
Ah, dimpled palm oft kissed by me,  
And little home amid the green,  
Our love is here and here alike are we.

January 25, 1914.

Think ye the tiny drop sent forth by the fountain falleth like one  
sent from on high?  
Nay, to join the river, not a shallow bowl, cometh God's drop.  
And ever seeking upward, only to fall again the font to find,  
The pent and prisoned drop shall waste and vanish.

February 11, 1915.

#### THE TREASURES OF MY HEART

Know ye in my heart's mansion there be apart a place  
Wherein I treasure God's gifts. Think ye to peer therein?  
Nay. And should ye by a chance to catch a stolen glimpse,  
Thoud'st laugh amerry, for hoard would show but dross to thee.  
A friend's regard shrunken and turned to naught,  
But one bright memory is there;  
A hope now dead, but showeth gold hid there;  
A host of nothings—dreams, hopes, fears, love throbs afluttered hence  
Since first touch of baby hands caressed,—my heart's store ahidden.  
Yet, I tell it thee I've peered full oft into thine  
And left a wistful smile and dropped a loving tear for thee.



September 13, 1915.

WHERE HATH MY SHIP AGONE?

Where hath my ship agone?  
I set it out, and watched it sink to naught,  
And lo, I stand astrain in wonder where it be.  
Yea, where hath the ship agone?

With loving did I set asail the craft  
And wait and wait and wait, for word to come to me:  
For unto harbors I know not, it saileth on.  
And though the wraths of storm do wash it frae its course  
Still doth it sail, to where, ah me, to where

Will its frail masts hold strong?  
Hath the course been laid aright?  
Will it come back to me a broken toy,  
Beat, and broke, and store alost?

Ah, where hath the ship agone,  
Can I then wait me here? Yea, for though  
Its mast may snap, and though the course be lost  
What care, what care, have I?

For it was builded strong as love o' me might build  
And saileth unto Him.

February 26, 1917.

SORROWS

Sorrows, searin, sorrows:  
I saw a cloud pass the mornin' star,  
Swift, swift; and thou art less than this.

Woes, ye seemin' woes:  
I saw a moth fly past the candle's burnin' taper;  
And thou art less than this.

Achin' hearts, sorrow-laden:  
I saw a dew's glint dried aneath the sun;  
And thy achin' be, ah, less than this.

For I do know a spot  
Where clouds o' earth's-woes part.  
Athrough this shall I flee unto the sun,  
Straight, straight, to bathe in sunlight pure  
Before I seek me on.

Oh sorrows, woeful sorrows:  
 Ye may not cling me then, for the sun's light  
 Shall make thy shadows light  
 E'en as His smile shall make me white.  
 And thou art less than all things,  
 E'en a dust's grain, sorrows'

July 21, 1917.

### A BEGGAR AM I

Oh, a beggar am I. The sky  
 O'er my head and the vast spreading fields  
 All are mine. No path that doth lead  
 O'er the heather-way's mead, but 'tis mine,  
 And no man says me nay.

Oh, a beggar am I, and my gold  
 Do I pluck from the path-rims where,  
 Golden-sprayed, lieth the sunlight  
 That fell like a fleecin' o' gold.  
 Men call 'em o' daisies, but I  
 Pluck my stores o' their stuff!

Oh, a beggar am I, but I know  
 The deeps o' the flowers and shadowy ways  
 Aye, and the wind o' the river  
 And the heights o' the cliffs and the sea's ways  
 And lands, and the way that leads  
 To the stilly, sweet spot where a green-nested pool  
 Lies wrapped in a blanket o' moss.  
 And the swing o' the nests and the call o' the hosts  
 That skim o' the sky o'er my head.

Oh, a beggar am I, but I know  
 The deeps o' the eyes that I meet  
 On the ways, and I read o' my songs  
 Out their smilin' and frowns, and I learn  
 O' the shadows and brights from the bps  
 That I pass and the greets that I hear.  
 But a beggar am I.

Ah, 'tis true. But my purse, 'tis afilled  
 For I filled it o' love, o' love.  
 Oh, a beggar am I, but glad!

October 1, 1917.

PEACE, OH GENTLE SISTER

Peace, oh gentle sister, hast thou fled?  
 White-winged, hast thou made away unto some summit far  
 With thy golden urn of plenty?  
 Hast thy smile faded and thine eve teared,  
 Blinding thee unto the woe thou leavest?  
 While thy sister, Mercy, claspath to her bosom  
 Earth's children, succoring hosts with love?

Peace, oh gentle sister, why tarriest thou  
 Come, come upon a new morning.  
 Fan the fevered earth with thy soft wings,  
 Pour o'er earth's wounds from thy urn  
 Plenteousness and joy.

Peace, oh gentle sister, hearest thou not the calling?  
 Knock thee at the hearts of men,  
 Turning the key of love within the lock of hate.

Peace, Peace, oh gentle sister,  
 Make haste, for Mercy is weary  
 And the earth perisheth.

November 26, 1917.

FIRESIDE 'MID THE STORM

When the night be cauld and the winds do whip  
 'Bout the meads and hillock ways;  
 When the snow beats thick and the taper's wick  
 Leans with the draftin' breath;  
 I sit me snug where the firelog's tongues  
 Be lickin' o' the embers.  
 And I wonder then what a King might hold  
 One-half sae fine and precious,  
 As a wee-sma' hearth and a paunch o' girth;  
 Bein' in and listenin'  
 To the ragin' o' winds that howl and whip  
 The meads and hills and hollows.

Gi'e me nay pearls nor coral's bar,  
 Nor gold or siller's gleam  
 Gi'e me nay treasure in casket bound,  
 Nay kingly gaud nor bauble,  
 But an arched sky agleamin' blue  
 In a ruff o' fleecy cloudin's,  
 And a quiet highland kissed o' breeze  
 And a wee brown hut 'mid the heather.

December 14, 1917.

WHEN TIME HATH TROD WITH ME

When time hath trod with me a long, long way, and we  
 Have grown aweary, time of me, and I of time, will then  
 The mornings seem one-half so sweet, or the bluebells' coming cease  
 To chime to me? Or shall I be weary o' the passing things?  
 No longer see in weary eyes the dying smile, or in  
 The youth-lit ones the dawn of love, O will the day be then  
 But a mute trudging on, with time who is weary of me  
 And I sae weary of time?

November 9, 1918.

FOR A SCULPTOR

I behold thee.  
 I hold thee within my hand.  
 Senseless matter, which,  
 By the cunning application  
 Of my love, shall leap forth  
 White, resurrected;  
 Some dream of some past god,  
 Mayhap, before which I kneel!

December 27, 1918.

HIS MAGIC

I would exult, yea, and exalt; His magnitude is before me;  
 Yet would I not forget His magic upon the fields;  
 Where the poppies spurt some hero's heart,  
 Or lilies lift their waxen heads  
 From the white breasts of maids who danced  
 On yester's meadow's way.

April 28, 1919.

THE POTTER

I am a clayster, a moulder of bowls; my hands are grimed of their  
 whirring.  
 Bits of clay build the master craft which is mine; little atoms of  
 dust,—clay.  
 Besmearing clay, I sit watching it slip with its glistening, cloying,  
 waxen substance,  
 Beneath my hand becoming perfect-clay!  
 From whence blown, the atoms which construct thee? grime, yet  
 my fancy playeth.  
 I cannot watch thy stuff and make it my craft  
 But that I unloose the steed of my soul which is pawing for release.  
 I would watch him speed, with that lash upon his flesh which is  
 delivered by the Master's hand.

I would let him make away across the desert unto the palm land  
 Where the pools stand in the sand reflecting the images of the sky,  
 These to companion while my hands labor with clay,  
 And I sit watching the wheel and communing with dusts:  
 Grains of myrrh, dusts of palms, mould of lilies, sands from the  
 tombs of kings,  
 Mayhap bits of rubies which once burned glowing, and were pressed  
 by loves now dead,—  
 All of these are within the clay  
 And all my tears intermingle them,  
 Building a bowl upon the wheel.

July 3, 1919.

### DREAMS

Dreams are magic things,  
 And fellow not with lordlings more than swineherds.  
 Dreams are magic things;  
 They are Prologue, lifting the corner of the curtain of eternity.

Dreams are magic things;  
 Touching cares to vanish with a wand of witchery.

Oh, linger in the land of dreams,  
 For it is the rightful kingdom of the spirit.

August 29, 1919.

### THE CONCH'S SONG

Behold, upon the slipping silver sands there lay a conch,—pink,  
 glowing, aye, and pearled upon its lips,  
 And it harked, harked unto the ages, and to the lispng sea, and its  
 weighty argument in anger and to its peaceful discourse;  
 And heard the winged hosts that circled o'er the arched sky, dripping  
 their notes on high that they might fall like jewels into the waves,  
 And sink within the waters to come forth like echoes at some early  
 morn, encradled in the arms of the young waves.

And lo, the conch oped up her breast and took within the mystery  
 of it all,  
 And at a morning when the sun was laggard and the sea had robed  
 within a cloak of grey  
 And the swallows let their wings spread wide and bear them o'er the  
 grey sky,—  
 Lo, in that empty morning the conch unloosed its store of ages and  
 sang upon the shores,

Sang from its broken lips, sang from its heart's depth, its pit,—sang  
the song of the ages.

And the hush of morning took up the benediction,  
And Earth was before the sacrament that God  
Had delivered unto the glowing shell!

December 1, 1919.

#### MOON, PALE SISTER

Moon, pale sister, withdrawn, secluded,  
Apart, hallowed, intimately announcing  
Thyself, yet secretive of thy wisdom!  
Moon, pale sister of man; never, never,  
Hast thou dimmed thy love to one mortal!  
Alike upon the brow of the noble  
And the hunch of the beggar hast thou rested.  
Yea, and thou hast fallen asleep  
Within the uncurled hand of the infant,  
Or lain for a moment on the burning lips  
Of a poet, purifying his utterance.

Moon, pale sister, how confidently  
Confiding art thou! Nothing concealed  
Before the eyes of man, yet all concealed!  
Lo, I upon a path beneath a bough  
Hold forth my hand and thou dost, lay  
Thy cheek upon it and I bend and kiss  
Its phantom paleness. For moon, sweet sister,  
I remember that thou hast shone  
On the valleys of Galilee, and the hills  
Of Bethlehem, and upon the fields  
Of Nazareth. Likewise hast thou rested  
In a silver circlet upon His brow;  
Mayhap in an early eve or at a late hour  
Thou wert His companion. Mayhap  
Interwove of thorns upon Golgotha.

February 12, 1920.

#### FROM A TURRET WINDOW

Oh I, like a lady, sit removed  
In a turret place, threading a strand  
Of my soul like a golden thread  
Through the dull, dull hours.

Yon, on the dusty highway,  
Warriors pass, their glistening spears  
Prick the blue skies and their banners  
Stream gaudily across the peaceful

## THE CASE OF PATIENCE WORTH

Valley way. Lo, doth the hoof-fall  
Of their tread pulse in rhythmic measure,  
A phantom sound, haunting as old memory.

Yet a little way adown in a wooded  
Shade, a cot sends its threading smoke  
Skyward and a dolt mindeth his swine  
In a rude smock frocked. Where the hills  
Gape and the valley swings, is a barley  
Stream with tangled beard where larks  
Flutter, half-prisoned in the heavy grain.

Yon, o'er the mead comes a peasant song  
And the lads and lassies dance  
Like poppies upon slender stems a-bobbing.  
All of this from my turret spot removed,  
I see as I thread the golden threading  
Of my soul through the leaden hours.

March 8, 1920.

## THE UNIVERSAL SINGING

Today I heard a harp  
Mourn beneath the hand of one who stroked.  
Strange, but the echo laughed!  
How might I know then  
Whether the harp mourned or joyed?

Today I heard a lute,  
With its sorrow-dripping notes,  
Tearing at the garment of my sorrow.  
Today I harked unto a thousand musics  
Each a part of that great mass the Earth  
Whirrs etherward. Is this song  
Which rests upon the harp but an echo  
From afar fallen down and rested there?

What is a song? An echo lodged?  
Some old, old love left burning  
Which hath found a tabernacle?  
Some limpid sorrow wailing, found utterance  
Anew 'twixt the parted lips of a troubadour?  
Oh, this is fitting. There is no  
New, new song. Today but catcheth the echoes  
Of yesterday and plays in childish  
Wonderment with their cadence.

May 10, 1920.

THE BLOWER OF BUBBLES

Lo, am I a child  
Beside the sea, blowing bubbles.  
Yea, each morn I sit  
Beside the sea of Eternity  
Casting the fanciful creations forth,  
The tenuous bubbles of my hope.

Yea, with a light hand  
I loose them, letting them become  
The burden of the seeking zephyrs,  
Incidents which swirl heavenward,  
At times to dash earthward  
Where they disperse in a mist.  
Or in a golden light I loose,  
Watching them become a part  
Of the high airs, sailing whitherward,  
Disappearing in the blue, then to become  
Naught. Or with a fitful hand  
I cast them toward the sea,  
Watching them dancing upon the wave tips,  
Sinking to become a part  
Of the water of Eternity.

Oh, I am a child beside the sea  
Of Eternity blowing bubbles.

July 14, 1921.

LOST CHILDREN

I know a spot, a mystic spot,  
Unsuned, enveloped in a silver mist  
Which veils the light, where wan-cheeked babes  
Grope, piteously calling.

I know a spot where half-begotten hopes,  
Condemned, pass phantom-like within the mist.

August 6, 1921.

SPIDER SONG

Oh spider, spinning in the sun,  
Slipping thy shuttle of silver,  
Where, oh where are the moonbeams gone  
That late last night did trick thee?  
Where, oh where are the dewdrops gone



That late last night clung gleaming?  
 Where, oh where are the dreams then gone,  
 Tethered to silvered grass blades,  
 Like thy webs at early dawn,  
 Hung of dew and rainbows?  
 Spider, spider, spinning yon,  
 Thy shuttle all of silver;  
 Tell me, tell me, spider, spider spinning.

August 6, 1921.

#### WHAT THE SOUTH WIND SENT

I count the days till the South Wind blowing,  
 Shall fan my cheek caressing,  
 Till I shall see, o'er the gay-decked mead  
 Whits of thistle flying.

I shall count the days until the winds  
 Shall fitful blow a-shuttling  
 A silver barb with a golden tip  
 To my casement where I'm watching.

And I shall feel the soft, warm touch  
 Of the fluffy thing against me  
 And I shall know, ah, I shall know  
 That the waiting then is over.

And I shall see, ah, I shall see  
 My hopes go dancing yonder.  
 Wee thistle, crowned with golden spikes  
 But ah, my heart, then bleeding,  
 Shall hold the whit, the wee, wee whit,  
 The South Wind sent unto me.

November 7, 1921.

#### BLOSSOMING THORNS

How could I forget?  
 Today in the stark grey, when the leaves  
 Are bleeding, e'er they fall, when the scent  
 Of decay is in the air, aye, and the scent,  
 The holy scent of fading sweetness. When the sky  
 Is damped of mist—that phantom silver mist  
 Which veils the summer's fading cheek.

How could I forget?  
 Aye, the path is barren, where blossoms broke  
 And leaf garlands clustered, gaunt branches within  
 And seared blades gleam. Yon the thorn

Forbiddingly writes its agony against the silver sky.  
 How could I forget?  
 I who pricked my fingers till the red blood spurts,  
 Plucking thorns. How could I forget,  
 How in the spring I plucked white blooms  
 And saw these self-same thorns bedecked as brides  
 Another morrow comes, another Spring.  
 How could I forget

March 6, 1922.

### I WANT TO PLAY

I am as a little child before a gateway  
 With a magic key within my hand.  
 I have come to the end of a long road  
 And am a little weary and I want to play.  
 Oh I would turn the magic key within the gate  
 And run down the damp path where the primrose stands,  
 Where the late sun shows redly on the grass.  
 I would fling my arms wide and 'breathe deep,  
 And forget how long, long, long the road.  
 This is not complaining. This is only hoping, Lord.

September 26, 1923.

### TO AN ANCIENT LYRE

Oh, ancient lyre with sagging strings  
 And frame caressed by time. Mute is thy song,  
 And yet in a far yesterday at some lady's court,  
 Mayhap e'en in the hands of the troubadour  
 Who knelt and sang, thou too didst whisper,  
 Chiming the pulsing of his heart,  
 Gushing the red fount of his love.

Whispering, confiding, luring, enchanting,  
 Thou didst lend thee; mayhap a garland  
 'Bout thee wound or a flaming ribbon  
 From thee hung and thy tremorous voice  
 Betrayed his trembling hand. Mayhap,  
 Thou hast sung while rank and file  
 Of knights, bearmored knights, passed by.  
 Mayhap, thou'st sung a lilting lay  
 To some poor crown-bewearied head  
 In that far yesterday, and then forgot,  
 Dropped from the stilled hand,  
 Thou'st mouldered thee away.

E'en should I with tender hand  
 Bestring thee all anew, thou might'st  
 Not utter the old familiar songs.  
 Thy voice would be alike the voice of age  
 Made thin by time, a wordless, hopeless note.  
 I Methinks thoud'st utter one sad tremorous cry  
 And break once more.

October 11, 1923.

#### I WONDER IF ALL THE TEARS UNSHED

Oh, I wonder if all the tears unshed  
 And shed assemble not at the hem  
 Of Spring, becoming the gentle rains  
 Of sweet fruition. I wonder if all  
 The sighs which trembling come or die  
 Bestifled, assemble not in some holy spot  
 Returning as winds which lash and beat  
 In agony or langorously caress.  
 I wonder, oh I wonder, if hope cut down,  
 The dewy, dewy hope of all the earth,  
 That sweet sustaining essence which besparkles  
 New each morn, becomes not the winter snow,  
 The white pure ash which sifts upon the dead,  
 Dead boughs bedecking them.

November 6, 1916.

#### THE BATTLE FIELD

'Twas morning, when my footsteps led me down the winding way.  
 The heavy smoke still hung the damp grey airs.  
 Mine eyes looked for the coming sun, but it did fail,  
 And weak stars fearful, trembled 'mid the heaven's deep.  
 The Earth beneath my very footfall shook.  
 The sod's breast opened in gashes wide.  
 The field's bloom drooped, or flamed red,  
 E'en as some dull fire.

And ah, mine eyes sought, sought, sought!  
 I looked on every way and ever saw some livid lip,  
 Some grinning death-oped mouth, some glaze-dimmed eye that saw  
 No morning's coming, some man-stopped hand  
 That reached in suppliance for a brother's grasp,  
 Some beast felled 'mid his master's blood,  
 Some cheek still stained of youth-fear tears,  
 Some empty bowl, that belched  
 To wipe Him from out His own, some blade,  
 Deep-dyed, the drops still thick'ning on its edge.

Ah, 'twas dark! But sudden from the East,  
 E'en through the thick of smokes and mists,  
 Slipped a golden shaft that fell  
 E'en at my feet, to light—ah another of the host'  
 A youthed son of some waiting one, his faith cut down  
 E'en 'mid his faith-flashed smile; his locks crisp-young;  
 His check still stained of youth's kiss on its curve;  
 His weak-sunk head at rest upon his bended arm,  
 And stiffened lips had failed to reach  
 The ebon cross that shewed within his fingers grasp.

And lo, the sun did kiss his bended head and gleam an halo 'bout.  
 And I did stoop to touch, and at the touching, lo,  
 I sunk there 'pon the sod and wept;  
 And looked on high unto the weal, sun climbing slow,  
 And oped my prayer in anguished word; for on the host that lay  
 God's sun-smile shewed, and on the cross  
 There gleamed one word that spake me shame.

And I did raise mine eyes  
 And look afar unto the fields that lay,  
 And lo, there, cross on cross did stand,  
 Rude-wrought of such an stuff as His  
 Was builded up. No word that, read,  
 Might tell who lay within Earth's breast.

And I did shut away the sight;  
 For His bright sun did light the hosts,  
 And on them showed the mocking, searing scripts,  
 And each one bore this shaming word:  
 "Brother!" "Brother! Brother!

January 5, 1920.

### PEACE

Peace hath not ceased to stare;  
 Hath not yet unfroze her tongue  
 For fearing, hath not yet let  
 Her arms fall from suppliance,  
 Hath not yet stanchd the bleeding  
 Of her heart. Though her lips smile  
 She is mute and only the succor  
 Of ages may comfort her!

## LOVE AND FRIENDSHIP

May 25, 1914.

### PREDESTINED LOVE

Can I then hope to tear from out my heart the song 'twould tell thee?  
Were I to sing to the woodland, 'twould be thy song.  
Or should I pipe of happy days when thou wert absent from my life,  
Thoud'st creep within the singing and every note be thine.

Or should I make a song unto my saddest season,  
Thou still would'st sing, e'en through my sorrowing.  
Thou who art but the essence of my song's wine  
Hast blossomed long before, within its very grape,  
And ripened with my season's heat and cold.  
Who then denies that from my first voiced crooning, thou  
Hast been the vibrant chord?

April 6, 1915.

### OLD LOVE, NEW LOVE

Amid a garden of rue and tuft and spice-pinks grew a rose  
Who crept from 'neath the wall and clung unto an oak who sheltered her.  
And all the flowers were afraid lest his gnarled limbs, set dancing in  
the storm,  
Would crush her slender stalk.

Not so the rose, she clung, and wrapped his stark, ungainly rack  
With garlands, and her red lips brushed his knotted joints until  
With tapestry hung, and pinned with golden butterflies, he stood,  
And scented breezes sung his lullaby, and ah, he slept and dreamt that  
ne'er again  
Would robins leave him lonely for a sweeter bower.

But waking, found the rose—his love—had reached his topmost branch,  
And clambered back and o'er the garden wall to join a jack-rose  
blooming at its base.  
And leaving stark and dead his gaunt old frame.

Well, lackaday, 'tis fitting, dear, old loves should die,  
But round them build a loving for the new.  
A nodding plume is wont to start a maiden's heart,  
And spear and shield to wake thy truant forekin blood.  
Ah, ah, the conquest! Put ye faith in Knighthood's valor  
And veil thy maiden eyes to false and cheating maiden fears;  
The heart that will not believe.

April 15, 1918.

WHEN LOVE CAME

I remember it was young May when love came, unbidden, unto me,  
 I remember the very eve, with its aloofness, yet its yielding.  
 I remember the masked moon that led the stars forth,  
 And the whiteness of earth beneath tier deathly spell  
 And how love came.

Tall he was, with fair hair, and two eyes that spoke truth,  
 With lips that were haunted by a pureness, as though the spell of  
 motherhood still hung about them,  
 And his arms were unlearned,—lo, they encradled me like a mother her babe.  
 And the eyes knew not the new thing that stirred, but spoke unto mine  
 like a babe's unto its mother's.  
 I remember that eve and the masked moon  
 And young love, unmasked.

Ah, the day hath gone that bore that eve,  
 And he is upon some pathway 'mid the stars, where still the white light lingers.  
 I am undone, for I have learned new things, and I could not understand him now.  
 Oh I remember that soon I forgot, and the masked moon ever mocks me.  
 She returns, but he never.

February 3, 1919.

ABANDON

Forth, my love, fly  
 Like a moth about the flame  
 Of my beloved's smile!

Forth, my love, fly,  
 And dost thou perish in its flame,  
 Then in thy joy, die, die!

July 20, 1919.

THE RIVER

Slender River, embracingly flowing;  
 A symbol of love. Behold, the hillock  
 Becometh verdant at thy kiss  
 And fields spurt anew. But the  
 Restlessness of thy urge taketh thee on,  
 Seeking unto the sea. Behold,  
 The symbol of love, and Eternity.

December 19, 1919.

### THE INHERITANCE OF AGES

Strange, is it not, beloved, that even as I lay my cheek to thine,  
Even as my eyes behold thine, even as we together, lip to lip, declare  
through our silence adoration;

Strange, is it not, that these atoms which are thee and me  
Have held this wine since first they sifted through the ether from the  
great God's fingertips?

My lips, beloved, have kissed a thousand kisses,  
My arms, beloved, have embraced a thousand thousand loves.  
Mine eyes, beloved, have beheld seven thousand thousand thousand  
beauteous things.

Yea, even as I embrace thee, I am encircled with that understanding  
Which is born within me through the common usage of my clay.

And thou, beloved, art more wondrous than a new possession offered  
straight from this day,

For thou art a wondrous mystery, ash of all the loves since Time—  
Mould of lilies, atoms of granite walls split asunder by the wrathing  
storm, whits of thistle down.

Aye, even as I embrace thee, I behold within thine eyes that peace-writ  
thing which spelleth love.

Strange, is it not? But through their curtained mystery  
I see fair mornings swathed of fleece-clouds trooping through the ages,  
each filled of wondrous moments.

Rich, rich art thou!

Strange, is it not, beloved, this symbol?  
We, the chalices of His steadfast pledge,  
Stand for a moment cheek to cheek, and lo!  
Crumble once more, letting the wine to flow  
Its scarlet stream across eternity;  
Indelibly writing thee and me,  
And our dusts lie waiting for the Potter's hand  
To turn new chalices for newer loves.

November 20, 1920.

### LOVE AND DOUBT

Love is a voice  
Which ceaseth not through instant,  
Hour, day or all eternity.  
And doubt is a moth  
Who would devour her raiment  
Leaving her naked.

December 27, 1920.

ONENESS

I have said, I have said:  
 "Thou art sprung from my side,  
 Rooted in my substance."  
 I have said: "Without thee  
 I am nothing." I have said it  
 In a thousand tongues, I have said this  
 In a thousand glances. I have said this,  
 And having said it, who may undo it?  
 Not even God, for He would not'

January 24, 1921.

COMPENSATION

No Spring is there who suffers not the lightning and the storm.  
 No garden spot which hath not trembled 'neath the wind  
 And felt the crushing tumult of the rain.  
 No summer day but that the sun's most fiery ray hath scorched,  
 And angerous storm arisen.  
 No winter's tide but that the angered blast  
 Hath whipped its tattered robe.

Ne'er was there love a-born save that sorrow led it earthward  
 And remained its guardian. For every love doth measure  
 Every sorrow, and every sorrow measure every love.  
 Supernal happiness is naught but that sweet amalgamation  
 Where sorrow merges love, and love doth merge in sorrow;  
 Forgetting and forgot, forgotten and forgetting.  
 Yea, and that sweet recompense, remembrance unalloyed!

July 10, 1914.

FRIENDSHIP

I found thee, and finding thee, found full expression of the self  
 That none but mine own self had known  
 The self that reacheth to the heights and strayeth not along the valley,  
 So shrouded that none may see his brother's face,  
 But knoweth him only as a shadow shape that vanishes at the sun's height.  
 I found thee and knew thee, companion heart,  
 The gem of life's diadem, my Friend!

August 28, 1919.

THE HOUSE WITHIN MY HEART

Within my heart is a little house  
 With windows wide, whose latch  
 Hath never bit its lock,  
 Whose pathway is inviting.



About it lies a garden spot  
 Where swallows nest and nightingales  
 Whose heavy throats are full of song;  
 And wallflowers tilt confidingly  
 Against the golden sky.

Within this house I keep  
 The things men hold as naught.  
 There is a heaven of all-forgiveness,  
 There is a beacon shining from the window opes  
 Unto all the weary travellers upon the way.  
 There beside the hearth I keep  
 A table spread, and loaves  
 That scented fill the air.

Within my heart there is a little house  
 Whose latch hath never bit its lock.  
 All paths lead there and none therefrom.  
 The windows, nor the door shall bar  
 Departure, but I defy thee, dost  
 Thou crave to leave, for I shall prison thee  
 Of love.

## INFANCY

October 1, 1915.

### A LULLABY

Dream, dream, thou flesh of me, dream thou next my breast.  
 Dream, dream, and coax the stars to light thee at thy rest.

Sleep, sleep, thou breath of Him who watcheth thee and me.  
 Dream, dream, and dreaming, coax that He shall see.

Rest, rest, thou fairy form that presseth soft my breast.  
 Rest, rest, and nestle warm, and rest and rest and rest.

August 26, 1917.

### HEAVEN IN MY BABY'S EYES

Two eyelids oped, and lo, the heavens' ope I saw,  
 And, like a, twinklin' star God's smile reflected there.

Two lips did part and through their curve,  
 I breathed the breath o' heaven.  
 Two wee arms raised and circled me  
 With wondrous love; an armor, oh my God.

Two hands, rose-tipped, like winged things  
 Seem beckoning me, back back close to Thee.  
 Two feet have trod the newsome day.  
 Oh lovin' God, keep watch!

The earth is mine! Two dimple hands have given me the key  
 And Heaven is mine! but for the touching of its magic gold  
 The gates would ope and I might see, but why?  
 Oh why? when these two eyes be oped to me

October 7, 1917.

At the first birthday of Patience Wee,\* she said:

Hark! Out the acres o' silence, out the vasts o' naughts, out the breast o' Him who loveth thee hath sprung a new thing who beareth within its bands a tether o' love that hath been tied unto thee that shall drive thee e'en through eternities; for that that hath been, shall ever be!

Make thine hearts humble before love. Make thee contrite, aye, and lowly before love. Make ye strong, yea, and mighty, with the wine of love, which poureth out the heavens. Hold thy heart's cup that He may fill it.

His grace upon thee, and His love continue to stream as ever it hath, and may He make thee that thy hands lift high the cup for the pouring. For dost thou lack, 'tis not Him but thee!

October 11, 1923.

I wonder if Mary, the Mother,  
 Jealous of all childhood, keeps not  
 The vigil of the night, lighting  
 A tiny taper for each soul as it seeks  
 The eternity of dreams; croons not  
 Through the long hours and intercedes  
 With God through her motherhood.

#### THE SPARK OF GOD

Lord, most humbly have I received Thee,  
 I have let my head recline upon Thy bosom,  
 I have encradled Thee with mine arms,  
 I have sung from out my heart  
 The song of loving unto Thy listening ear.  
 I have been stirred with the tenderness  
 Which this contact hath brought me.

Lo, I have let my lips  
 Rest upon the brow of my babe,  
 And so have kissed His hem.

\*An adopted child.—Ed.

## ETHICS

May 22, 1914.

### THE SMILE THOU CAST TODAY

The smile thou cast today that passed unnoticed by the world,  
The hand clasp of a friend, the touch of baby palms upon its mother's breast,  
Whither have they flown along the dreary way?

Perhaps the smile hath fallen upon a daisy's golden head,  
To shine upon some traveller along the dusty road  
And cause a softening of the hard, hard way.

Perchance the handclasp strengthened wavering love  
And lodged thee in thy friend's regard.  
And where the dimpled hands caress will not a well of love spring forth?  
Who knows and who will tell the hiding of these fleeting gifts?

April 15, 1916.

### TO THE CHILD PATIENCE

List thee, wee one; see, thou art o' the hearth o' the loved o' me.  
So look thee; when thou hast seen a thing that sheweth unto thee as  
lovely, think thou o' Him, yea, and know this thing be His. Then  
shall this hand to pluck?  
And doth it shew unto thee e'en at the thought o' Him, lovely, then  
'tis for thee.  
And doth it shew 'pon thy cheek the blush at the thought of Him,  
then, Wee One, flee!  
Keep this athin thy heart; flee, flee from aught save His.

April 22, 1916.

### TO THE WARSMEN

Gird thee o' thy blade!  
Set signs ahigh unto all men!  
Carol loud the warrin' song!  
Yea, trumpet loud thy blast and bellow wars!  
Smite thou His own, and set  
The gushed founts o' scarlet that they spurt!  
Gnash thy blades! Arattle them  
Till like unto the stripped bones they clatter!

Adark the skies with flapping wing's  
 That bear the birds aseek o' rotted flesh!  
 Beset thy fields o' maggot's rot  
 And wait thee then wars answering!

Ah, wait and look! But grinned skulls  
 At empty stare greet thy waiting there,  
 Nor tongues do hang their jaws  
 To prate thy victory!  
 Empty. Empty. Empty at thy hand!

Do thou to fill it back!  
 See, the sun ahangs ahigh  
 And gleams 'pon havoc o' thy blade,  
 To mock thee in his holied gold!

August 8, 1917.

#### PERISHED IDEALS YET SHALL BLOOM

Through the spring have I known joyousness.  
 With mine own hands I plucked the blossoms,  
 And tenderly did I pluck a lily;  
 Waxen-pure, aye, and sweet-bathed,  
 Honey-lipped and golden-hearted.

Oh, the earth knew not this plucking,  
 Nay, earth knew it not, but I.  
 Through the gloaming, through the purple night,  
 Through the star's tide and the moon's watch,  
 Ever the white face of this sweet bloom-bud showed,  
 Pure, pale, the thing that chained my heart.

Oh, the earth knew it not.  
 And the days—ah, the sunlight  
 Fell upon it, and the waters of wrath  
 Ran hot tears upon her waxen cheek,  
 And the tempest—ah, it tossed her,  
 Tender swaying, 'pon its angers.  
 Aye, and yet, and yet, 'twas waxen-pure,  
 Sweet-bathed, honey-lipped and golden-hearted.

But the days, they scorched her whiteness,  
 Until the waxen-pure was stained  
 And crumbled like some priceless dust.  
 I found my love, on a morn,  
 Wearied of the chafing, wearily laid down  
 Upon earth's pillow.

But I looked unto the sky, and lo,  
 The sun shone golden, and about him flung  
 Cloud-white petals, and I saw  
 My love there, writ upon the sky,  
 Waxen-pure, sweet-bathed, golden-hearted.

September 24, 1917.

### THE LABOR OF LOVE IS MAGIC

Make thine eyes keen unto woe, and thy lips sweet with soothing;  
 Make thine ears hearken unto that which thou would'st not hearken unto;  
 Make thy heart pure in the purging of service.  
 Oh, when the eve cometh make thy pack heavy o' loving labor,  
 Pluck up that which earth hath forgotten  
 For it is the Master's precious stuff.  
 Lay thee not down save upon the bosom of woe, that thou shalt know, it.  
 Show woe new dreams, make her rest peaceful,  
 And her waking sweet. Gather together  
 The broken stuffs, for thine abode is Earth,  
 The land of wisdom's rooting.

Labor, labor, labor untiring,  
 For the labor of love is magic and wearieith not.  
 When the night cometh, then lay thee down  
 Waiting the Morrow's first day,  
 That it bear fresh labor;  
 For Heaven, earth's goal, be a land  
 Of labor, and He who is the Master  
 Knoweth the price of labor is rest.  
 Behold, restless labor is Earth's,  
 And laborless rest is a fool's task.

December 17, 1917.

### THE DECEIVER

I know you, you shamster! I saw you smirking, grinning,  
 Nodding through the day, and I knew you lied.  
 With mincing steps you gaited before men, shouting of your valor,  
 Yet you, you idiot, I knew you were lying!  
 And your hand shook and your knees were shaking.

I know you, you shamster! I heard you honeying your words,  
 Licking your lips and smacking o'er them, twiddling your thumbs  
 In ecstasy over your latest wit.

I know you, you shamster!  
 You are the me the world knows.

March 9, 1918.

Patience was asked her opinion on drinking and prohibition.

P. W.: Lor' ame! and thy damie spillin' flagons o'er each script!

[referring to her *Merry Tale*, centering, in an old-time tavern.—Ed. ]

However she went on with her answer:

"Who is he who cloaketh himself within a mug? Not his shadow's brother nor a fellow with God. Nay, he hath recreated himself, a thing whose soul is unpinned, flapping like tatters to the whither-winds! Aye, I say me should his God call he would ha, ha, ha! Should his soul return and stand before him, he would touch his brow and say: 'Mornin, brother. Who art thou?'

"Behold thee, let earth weight such a man within the scale held by justice. Let earth first find him who set up the thirst. Let it scourge, even as an evil, the thing that hath set the itch of thirst within his throat.

"Behold, the head of man, not his belly, should lead his legs!"

May 6, 1918.

### THE MISER

Hope was once my fellow, whispering me the urge to attain.

With the itch of possession upon me did I walk the highways, seeking things that I might make my own, thereby enriching my day.

Lo, with tireless bands did I make my store great, ceaselessly adding lustrous stuffs unto my treasures.

Forgetting all else, e'en my fellows' smile;

Knowing not the sighs that whispered as they passed;

Seeing not the tears that made cool my path, distilling their soothing upon the dusts and making dews of gentleness for my feet.

Then a night came when I found my roadway ceased.

Weary was I, bebowed of the weight of treasures.

Silently I sat with my weariness—a mute companion, neither did the darkness speak nor whisper.

The sighs had gone, and my fellows forgot me, who had passed them unseeing.

July 18, 1918.

### SHOULD I SEEK A GIFT FOR HIM MOST LOVED?

Should I seek a gift for him most loved,

What treasure should I then purchase?

Rich gems, or incense and myrrh, or scentful

Herbs? Rich cloths of skins as soft

As fleece? What wondrous chaplet

Would I fashion to contain them?

Sapphires that are heaven's drops  
 Held prisoner, still tinted of the sky,  
 Emeralds—the flashed fields, or pearls,  
 Or dewy diamonds, or spun silver, wove  
 To masterful workmanship, or smitten gold  
 In some rare shape Oh what gift  
 Would I present?  
 Not my heart, which is already his,  
 Not these eyes which strain to behold him,  
 Not these lips which speak his name lovingly  
 For I shall need my heart, by which to pledge him;  
 And my eyes to behold him, and my lips to call his name.  
 But my hands! Ah, there is the gift!  
 My hands and their labor.

January 9, 1919.

#### MY HAND

My hand, behold it—  
 God's implement!  
 The 'Master speaks, and it labors, following  
 No pattern, but groping through darkness  
 Uncertainty creating certainties!  
 My hand, behold it—  
 God's implement!  
 With the touch of its flesh I am quickened  
 Into a creator;  
 Thereby am I a part of Him, given  
 An infinitesimal portion of His power.  
 Behold my hand, the link between earth  
 And that splendor which is Eternity;  
 For labor is the path unto Redemption.

September 25, 1919.

#### MY EPITAPH

I am tolerant. By the gods  
 I swear it; I who have listened  
 Unto the statements of men-listened  
 Unto them, knowing their ring,  
 Whether false or true; and listening  
 Long at times, for one which even  
 Tinkled of truth!  
 I am tolerant, I swear.  
 I swear it by the justice  
 Which is the pinnacle of my hopes.  
 Yet, what crass things man's reasoning  
 Represent! All this and that o'er  
 Nothing, and nothing over much!

I am tolerant; I swear it.  
 I strive not for one whit which  
 I may not earn: but God, great, merciful  
 God! When I am gone, let men say:  
 "A MAN lived."

November 12, 1919.

"THE RED CROSS"

Scarlet emblem, blushing symbol—  
 Pillow of the God-head where its  
 Regal brow bended and it wept tears  
 Which burned the ages. Blushing symbol;  
 Bathed in mercy, what man may stand  
 Before but that he raise his hands  
 Palms up, and his heart leap,  
 And he remember Nazareth, the birth  
 Of love, and Golgotha, its culmination.

May 3, 1920.

Earth, the treadmill;  
 And man's foot, since time,  
 Hath sent her spinning,  
 Making his own hour;  
 Yet walling to God  
 At the impotency of the plan!

May 3, 1920.

OBSESSED OF PURPOSE

Lo, is my heart as an hourglass,  
 Slipping sand. It runneth dry  
 In mercy and turns within my bosom  
 Beginning anew.

Lo, are my hands like shuttles  
 Plying. Weary at night, empty,  
 Yet morn findeth them made ready  
 For slipping anew.

Lo, am I a darting thistledown  
 Blown hither, yon, dartling  
 An instant sunward, yet, tempted of shadow,  
 Dipping thereto. Lo, am I  
 As a thistledown, pregnant of a seed.  
 What though the blowing listeth me  
 Fancifully? I am pitted of purpose!  
 I am burdened of commission,  
 I am enslaved with desire,  
 I may not be free from it!



May 3, 1920.

### AT THY HAND

Behold, is the loom of the day strung and the shuttles lie ready.  
 If thou dost approach the loom-side and in due time thy hand doth fall  
 Upon a shuttle, then is the instant pivoted which swings thy course.  
 Nor shalt thou seek, for unto thy hand cometh the shuttle!

April 26, 1923.

### THE HOUR STRIKES

It is late. Yea, beloved,  
 I know that this is the first hour  
 Of morning. Yet it is late, so late!  
 This is the tatter of the cape  
 Of Eternity, this morning, and we cling  
 Unto it. I say it is late.  
 The birds know. They are impatient.  
 Life knows, for it turns in anticipation,  
 Crawling the day, seeking further  
 Toward Eternity.  
 It is late, beloved.  
 Ages have failed at the tasks  
 We now enter. Tonight is yon.  
 The mystic hands of tomorrow already  
 Weave his garment. This  
 Is the first hour of morning  
 And I say it is late.  
 Up my beloved, now! Make thyself  
 A trumpet for His announcement!  
 Tarry not, in fearing that this instant  
 May go, waiting, through Eternity!  
 March 13, 1926.

### CHARITY

Shall I offer thee my purse, O, my brother?  
 Shall I give thee pence to buy raiment?  
 This is a cheap stuff! Rather, would I say,  
 "Brother, arise; here is my hand!  
 For the Rev. Dr. W. L. Sullivan:  
 I would not be lit with the fevered flame,  
 Nor burned as a sacrificial torch.  
 I would not send my call  
 Like a clarion across the day,  
 Nor wield my sword defending.  
 Rather would I be calm, secure, assured,  
 Dealing mercy, yea, and understanding,  
 This is an holier task.

## YESTERDAY, TODAY AND TOMORROW

December 8, 1919.

I think that Yesterday is but Today grown pale in sleep, and Today is but the instant of her awakening'; and tonight she shall sleep again and wake in the Morrow. This is Life and Eternity. Yea, but Life is sleeping and Eternity waking. Life is a confused dream and Eternity is its understanding.

### REMEMBRANCE

Oh. I ha'e a tryst, a pledge,  
A troth with Yesterday. Today,  
Awinsome lass wi' smilin' eyes,  
Wi' red lips flashin', wi' cheeks as pale  
As lily buds and flushed as poppies,  
Tempts me, but yonder in the twilight  
At the stile, waits Yesterday.

'Twere but an instant of my days  
That she wert my companion; one  
Fair morn when Earth sang upward  
To the heavens flaunting her beauty;  
And I dallied, giving my troth  
To Yesterday, pledging it wi' a circlet  
O' remembrance.

Yonder, a little way in the twilight,  
At the stile, waits Yesterday.

September 8, 1919.

### MORNING

Morn is a siren singing upon the Shore which is Night. And the crafts of men are lured through the day. And behold, to the lips of Morning is pressed the golden grape, the sun, and men drink drunk through the hours until Night finds them sleep-sodden and they awake, to listen to another siren singing!

May 6, 1920.

### WAITING

Yesterday was waiting.  
Today is waiting, and tomorrow  
I Shall come upon tomorrow  
By touching the wicket gate, expectancy,

## THE CASE OF WORTH

Swinging it outward, and behold  
 Tomorrow! All ages  
 That have preceded, all of today  
 And all that yet come, hang  
 Upon the hinge of waiting.  
 Eternity waits, else it is not Eternity.

April 23, 1920.

## THE NIGHT

Oh the night sky  
 Was a pool and the moon  
 A lotus lapping and the stars  
 A jasmine that climbed  
 And blossomed o'er. And I, a troubadour  
 Who climbed the trellis for a dream.

,June 28, 1920.

## NIGHT, THE STRANGER

I have never known the night.  
 Darkness might not blot the day.  
 Yea, I have known twilight,  
 That secluded hour which half reveals,  
 Writing hope on every shadow  
 With a silver quill.

I am acquainted with this holy tide.  
 But night—never! Night  
 Is darkness, and he who meeteth darkness  
 Knoweth fear. Night is the symbol  
 Of doubt, and I have never learned  
 To list unto her whispering.  
 I know the twilight. Methinks  
 My soul is like to this—a grey nun  
 Who tells her beads confidently, hoping,  
 Watching the casement for the day's announcement,  
 Listening for some chorister  
 To sing of morning!

February 7, 1921.

## THE NUN'S RETURN

Night hath come, the grey nun Night,  
 Lighting her waxen tapers about  
 The holy altar, the vasty altar  
 Of the sky. The prayerful awe  
 Of silence is upon the field.  
 Not e'en an echo stirs the stillness.

'Tis as though the nun hath knelt  
 At the knee of God and told,  
 In mute agony, the beads,  
 The bloody beads, the slipping hours  
 Of day, kissing each. Yea, and when  
 The end hath come, behold,  
 Doth lift on high the sacred gift  
 Bejewelled of hot tears, washed,  
 Yea, purified.

The nun, night, lifts her head  
 Skyward, lighting the tapers at the foot  
 Of the vasty altar, the sky.

TODAY AND TOMORROW

Today is, tomorrow may be, yesterday was.  
 Yesterday I have squandered,  
 Today I have spent,  
 Tomorrow—what shall I do with tomorrow?  
 Will I hope, or will I then despair?  
 Tomorrow is a question; will God utter it?  
 In His mute eloquence  
 Will He trust me with another sacred troth?

May 30, 1921.

A TRICK TO BEST TOMORROW

I ha'e come to the wall  
 And a little wicket beyond which  
 Is tomorrow. Mayhap a woeful morrow,  
 Mayhap a tearful morrow, mayhap  
 A sunny morrow, mayhap a laughing morrow.  
 Ye, but weal or woe I have a trick  
 To best her. I laugh!

May 3, 1920.

THE NOD

O venerable aged Time  
 Whose sickle is the moon;  
 Who reacheth Eternity holding  
 The lamp, the sun.

O venerable time, who treads  
 The pathway of Eternity, crushing  
 The universes as pebbles beneath his feet.  
 Nodding anon to thee and me, in passing!

February 15, 1926.

### GOOD NIGHT

Tomorrow comes, a new, new morrow. Think on it, my beloved.  
 And then another morrow, and morrows and morrows yet to come.  
 This instant we commune. No coming morrow  
 But shall hold this record, this holy instant.  
 Am I a shadow, I who love thee with a love like thine?  
 I, who speak as thou speakest, share as thou sharest?  
 Then blessed be the coming morrow  
 For then a twain of shadows we shall be.

### RELIGION

May 28, 1915.

MRS. R.: Patience tell us why should evil be.

P. W.: There be naught o' evil; it abideth not. 'Tis dreams awry.

September 20, 1915.

P. W.: Thou didst see not with thine eyes o' flesh afore thy coming. Aye, but at thy bearing, thy mother oped up thine eyes and thee didst see and behold o' the Earth. Aye, now list thee, Death then, is thy mother, for hark at her bearing thou shalt shut up thy eyes o' flesh and see o' the Land o' Here. Yea and yea and yea, and at hours thou knowest not where cometh that thou hast ne'er seen or heard. And yet it be and 'tis thine, and thou didst ne'er touch, aye, or see this thing. Then what think ye?

MR. REEDY: Can anything come except by experience?

P. W.: Yea, and thou knowest much o' such.

MR. REEDY: Must we not have either our own or others experience?

P. W.: Ayea and anay. Thou hast much that hath come unto thee from Him. Thou knowest Him and ownest not thy sire. Even so thou knowest not His house.

MR. REEDY: How is a man to know God?

P. W.: Alawk! Thy heart is packed afull o' Him, brother. Aye, and thou knowest. Then speak so, and say 'tis well, for sure as sun shall rise, thy dust shall rise and blow unto new fields of new days. Thou hast walled up thy heart o' words and yet it showeth athrough the patches o' thy words.

MR. REEDY: These answers are not new, but are good.

P. W.: I bring ye not a new water o' a new well, nay, nay, I bring but cooling drop o' the water Earth hath held for time and time.

MR. REEDY: Can He set aside His laws at the prayer of His creatures? P. W.: Much word o' prayer be but words, and He doth list not unto word. Nay, he knoweth e'en the mite whose wings—whirr be all o' its voice.

May 6, 1916.

Some talk here of her probable church connections.

P. W.: Nae wall holdeth Him. Look thee. Thee and thee seek the byways and yet the hedges and paths ahere and yon unto the seek o' Him. This be earth's path, and this ahere, the walless land.

June 7, 1916.

What be days and nights but filmed folds that veil the Here from the There?

I be atellin' thee, thou hast looked unto the silver beams that stream the stars from out the heavens. And yet they be not but be the trickin' o' thine e'e. And yet, o' naughts hath He abuilded what sheweth thee o' them!

The silver mists o' morn be but waters of the far lands wraithed. And this be the work o' Him.

Even so, the in-man unto Earth be blind, that the fleshed eve tell unto his blind o' the day. Yea, and fleshed eve be ablind unto the ineye's see, that the in-eve shalt tell the day ahid, unto its see.

.Man walketh but 'pon the feet o' him and ne'er steppeth 'pon hands and feet. Yea, he needeth not o' the both. So, what hath the in-man need that he look 'pon Earth? For behold, he be fashioned for to see o' naughts like unto the stars streaming, that be not, yet be!

February 19, 1917.

Mr. Reedy quoted: "Oh, God, I have lost Thee through my earnest efforts to find Thee."

Patience answered as though with the same breath: "Yea, I have walked with Thy shadow knowin' Thee not!

Mr. M. had spoken of his giving up the ministry.

P. W.: Thine eyes have looked upon His wonders and known them; then thou knowest that no thing is without Him. Yea, thou knowest, thou knowest, for thou hast seen thy very faith take wings and fly unto bright lights wherein thou didst lose its small winged form and thou didst wait and behold, it came back unto thee, unhurt, unafraid, whole, speeding safe unto thee, for with thy faith that thou didst send forth, thou didst send thy love, its fender!

April 19, 1917.

#### A PRAYER AND A WISH

Ah, make me less that I become more Thee.

Make me not humble, but meek.

Make my meekness nay an weakness

But an armor.

Cloak my frailness o' Thy love.

Thereby shall all that I do lack me

Be made whole and full filled....

List, I set the wishin'.  
 That thy hearts ope unto the shadows e'en so gladsome as unto the light.  
 That thy steps follow the roughs e'en so gladly as the smooths.  
 That thou shalt ne'er forget the shadow o' the cress that falleth through the ages,  
 ne'er by any sun wiped awither, save by love's.

October 27, 1917.

### WREST OUT THE EARTH

Wrest out the earth, oh men!  
 Twist her flesh till the blood floweth!  
 Make her give forth! Strip her!  
 Pilfer, pilfer, slay, slay!

Wrest out earth, oh men, stopping not  
 That ye watch the shadows creep  
 Nor know the moon's rising  
 Nor yet the sun's farewell. Drink not  
 The soul of earth, but eat her flesh!

Wrest out earth, oh men!  
 And forget the shrunken thing  
 That shivereth, naked, beside thee,  
 Standing aching with the gnaw of emptiness,  
 Thy soul!

September 2, 1918.

### CREDO

I believe in the all-merciful God, and in His Son as a Sign of His Mercy.  
 I believe in His creation as His utterance.  
 I believe in His heaven as I believe in His creation.  
 I believe in men, for they utter Him.  
 I believe in man's failures as God's attainments.  
 I believe in the magnitude of His tongue and its power to utter the infinite.  
 I believe in the resurrection of life, for its manifold symbols are before me.  
 I believe in the life everlasting, for no culmination which man might  
 utter might contain my belief in God. Amen.

December 27, 1918.

### GLORIA

Oh ye mighty walls and towering spires astride the cowed gabled ways!  
 Thy emblazoned scripts depicting fanciful reaction of ancient times;  
 Smoking altars upon which yellow candles flare, burning the sacred air,  
 To send aloft a pungent scent of mouldering decay,

Blackening with slow sure touch the placid face's of the saints,  
 Who with stony visages gaze adown the aisles, unseeing man's exultant  
 joy or his despair.  
 Vault-like, In cold aloofness, proudly do ye stand, reechoing the chants  
 That flow from cut cold tombs, the unlit hearts of priesthood and  
 of saintly nuns.

For this did saints ope up their veins; Did martyrs writhe? And did holy writs  
 By their tedious array enslave the humble sanctity of men?  
 Or did men, to do their will, write with unalterable tracery  
 Law, that ran new within the fluid pressed in fervid troth to God?  
 While blood in lapping waves washed thy very doors, did Mary stand  
 Dumb, hearkening to some litany mumbled in a limped tongue,  
 And priest send incense up, or light a taper in thy pit-like dark?  
 Oh, everlasting God! I am dismayed, that thy very stones did not gape  
 And fall apart; that every scarlet line within thy illumined records  
 Did not spurt in anguish and, bleeding, wipe the "law" from off the page.

Oh holy structure, revered by man, upheld through ages through thy claim  
 of part with Him!

Already is that morning come, and quaking earth upheaving!  
 Already doth thy mellow chime whisper its eerie knell. Already doth  
 That King whom thou acclaimest sit in regal glory upon the mighty seat!  
 Oh, crumbling vestment of the ego, Man—make way! His host proceeds!  
 No altar yet upraised but shall give way to that his Sire hath flung from  
 his prolific hand.

He, the High-priest, lights the taper Day, each morning with the sun,  
 And incense flings across the valley way in silver mists;  
 Filling the night with litanies, lighting each star in memory of some holy soul,  
 Defying mould and ravages of time, the festival of worm upon  
 the festering flesh.

Exultant doth this God erect anew each coming day and night  
 An altar upon which to burn our hearts, while thou dost re-echo dead prayers;  
 Burning incense yet before the embered fire of Hope.

While thy dimming tapers die, and the carved saints stand mute before  
 thy suppliants

What, should His holy step be heard naked upon the stones, with the  
 pattering of sheep beside?



November 24, 1919.

### GOLGOTHA

Golgotha! Around that holy spot,  
 There clings, to me, holy recollections.  
 Yet the dark earth with tedious paths  
 Wipes that sweet memory away.  
 Nothing in the day speaks of that sacrifice.  
 Men are a thankless lot, and the day is overfretful  
 Lest it give an instant to contemplation.

There is nothing in the coming of tomorrow  
 Which shall remind me of Him  
 Nor His crown nor His agony.  
 The day will be a shallow bowl, and men  
 Shall cast the tinkling little coins  
 Of wisdom against the metal, where they will whirl for an instant,  
 Then sink unto the bottom, mute, dross.

There is nothing in tonight which may remind me  
 Of that holy instant when the moon rose o'er the Place of Skulls  
 And laid her soothing hands upon His bruised brow.  
 Tonight is a mummer's show, a little pantomime  
 In which all men play, perpetrating a jest upon life.

There is nothing in today which may speak  
 Intimately and with conviction of that third day  
 When they sought the Tomb and found Him not;  
 For today is just such an empty sepulchre,  
 There is nothing, nothing to remind me.  
 He shall not come from the clouds, nor shall  
 I ask that I lay my fingers in His wound.  
 Yet, God, I have felt His agony, and the day,  
 Despite its emptiness, is pregnant of His resurrection.

There is nothing in today, tonight  
 Nor tomorrow but Him. Man is before Him.  
 Man is upon Him. Man is with Him.  
 And the hour of His announcement is at hand!

March 29, 1920.

### THE WORD OF GOD

Lo, have I beheld the page of the Holy Word  
 Like unto confusion before me.  
 I have heard the tongues of men prate wisely, intricately  
 Of His simplicity.  
 The day became a babble and I, wroth with an agony of unrest,  
 Born of the chaos.

At a certain morning I arose, hearing a faint song!  
 A fitful melody:  
 And I sought, and behold! I found the Holy Word  
 Spread upon the fields,  
 And that each day unfolded a new lesson before me.

May 3, 1920.

### THE LONG FELLOWSHIP

When the east is pale  
 And the young Morning wan-cheeked from night's wooing,  
 And the west still holds a guardian star,  
 Or mayhap, the moon hath forgot and tarried;  
 When the paths are dank of dew  
 And the grasses cling a-matted,  
 Sheltering the buds of the foot-cloth blossomry;  
 In such an hour it seems, beloved Lord, that I  
 Am a little nearer Thee.  
 I walk in a field, stretching a valley way,  
 And my companion is a Lad whose eyes are yet unlearned,  
 And we are fellows of sheep.  
 In the Noon when the sun is high,  
 And the paths unfurled in open script for man to follow,  
 And the buds have become flowered,  
 And the moon is gone and the guardian star hath ceased  
 To guard, then it seems  
 I know thee Lord, more intimately.  
 I am a man, fellowed with my Brother:  
 One who is silent, one whose eyes are old yet young,  
 Whose hands know labor, whose feet know weariness;  
 One who hath hungered,  
 One who hath thirsted, one who knoweth my day.

In the Eve when the sun is red;  
 His bleeding brow laid upon the hill an instant  
 To recline, to rest, to stop the agony  
 Of the day but a holy instant,  
 Beloved Lord, at such a time I know Thee,  
 O I know Thee!  
 I am prostrate, for my Fellow  
 Hath been sacrificed and hath left me naught  
 But His royal robe of scarlet.  
 And I, in an agony of pride at mine inheritance,  
 Uplift mine eyes, beholding the jewels  
 Of the Kingdom teemed across the sky!  
 O, then I know Thee, Lord!

December 6, 1920.

### MY CREED

I believe in the power of His hand.  
 I believe in the strength of His will.  
 I believe in the tenderness of His mercy.  
 I believe in the mercy of His wrath.

January 3, 1921.

### MAN'S INTRUSION

Oh woe is me! How man intrudes!  
 Creeds become lances, sharp-tipped  
 Which they hurl. Yea, woe is me!  
 How man intrudes! Argument  
 Is the din and he who argues best  
 Hath a nimble tongue and an empty skull's cap!  
 Ah, woe is me! How long  
 Shall I list in toleration?  
 How men intrude! Were it not  
 For a grain o' wit and the salt of laughter  
 Egad, the stuff would sick me!  
 But I contemplate argument serenely.  
 He's an old weazen,  
 And laughter's the wind to unpin him!  
 Ah, woe is me, how man intrudes!

[Messrs. Nicholson and Duncker, present, admitted that they had been arguing about creeds.]

April 11, 1921.

### MAN'S WISDOM

Flights of fancy weave gaudy colored raiment for wisdom;  
 We weave nets in which to catch the clouds, seining the day and  
 catching no new thing.  
 We sing weirdly new songs of old, old incidents;  
 We toss pebbles of understanding unto the mighty sea of wisdom,  
 And thirstily lean o'er to catch the splash upon our lips:  
 We are and wastes, in which springs that herbage which is watered  
 with understanding,  
 And few are graced with overblooming.  
 He who lets faith take the place of understanding  
 Is an honest fool, and his understanding shall grow.  
 But that lout who keeps his faith as pocket pence  
 And declares his understanding, is a lout in rags.  
 Wisdom is the sky and the mind of man a weak-winged bird.  
 What is faith? Faith is the conviction inheritant from God of His being.

Man is a bigot, an egot,  
 Aye, afore men and what lie be aneath are sore different.  
 He who is the greatest bigot announceth his jealousy of God.  
 He who is the greatest egot is the most impertinent.

April 11, 1921.

MY COUCH, MY STAFF, MY FELLOW

I have a couch upon which I may rest,  
 Neither is it silken, nay, nor beauteous.  
 'Tis a manger spot.  
 I have a staff upon which to lean;  
 Neither is it bejewelled, yet the spot  
 On which my hand lies is crimson.  
 I have a fellow, he is not of high estate;  
 His wisdom is as coarse as his raiment.  
 He knoweth not the law of the noble. Nay,  
 But a flock he knoweth well.

October 31, 1921.

PRAYER

Who would pray, let him then  
 Make his prayer the sheathe of the sword,  
 And not the word. Let him then  
 Make his prayer the goblet to contain the wine,  
 Yet not the wine. Let him then  
 Make his prayer a casket of alabaster  
 In which to keep the jewel, not the jewel.  
 Prayer is the vessel of God  
 To contain its dealing. It is not  
 A cajoling power. Prayer then  
 Is the linen upon the altar and the goblet  
 Upon the linen, not the altar.  
 Prayer then is the living sacrifice  
 Before it is slain, not the burnt offering.  
 Prayer is a declaration of life,  
 Not an acclamation of death.  
 Prayer is joy, not sorrow. It is  
 The blood of laughter, not of tears.  
 Prayer is the raiment of sorrow;  
 It is the pillow of joy. It is  
 The pedestal of exultation. It is  
 The intoxication of consciousness of the kinship,  
 Else it is not prayer.

November 14, 1921.

MY STAFF OF FAITH

Should I lay down the staff of faith  
 Then doth my voyage become heavy-footed,

My path bestoned, the hillocks mountain high  
 And the mountains defeat. Cleave I  
 Unto the staff of faith, my path  
 Is sunnied o'er. There are no stones,  
 The hillocks are lendful in their curves,  
 And the mountains bring exaltation to my soul.  
 I long for that instant when I  
 May crest them with my victory.

February 14, 1922,

Asked what Church she preferred, Patience Worth said:

The wide-flung sky, the free-flung fields,  
 The flower bedecked altars—they,  
 Aye, and the holy wine of my communion  
 Runs in the brooklet, is caught in the sea,  
 Is a part of the elements and of God.  
 The foundation of it is simple  
 It lies in the one word TRUTH.  
 It is all powerful and all abiding,  
 The tabernacle in which my soul exults.

September 6, 1923.

#### MY PRAYER

If I were to pray a prayer devout upon my bended knee,  
 With timorous eyes uplifted, a suppliant prayer  
 Unto this God of thine and mine, my trembling lips would say:  
 "Oh Father, keep us at Thy knee." And further would I pray  
 That bending He would whisper: "Child, child, child."

April 26, 1924.

Who asks the way to Calvary?  
 No man who knows his brother.  
 Each morrow's sun betips some cross  
 Within the early dawn, or lays its scarlet kiss  
 'Pon one at its departure.

End of August, 1924.

#### HUSH, NIGHT!

Hush, Night!  
 The sable curtain of Eternity  
 Hath fallen upon thee.  
 Be still in awe! In the pitchy dark  
 The little stars shall venture forth  
 All unafraid, and the familiar moon  
 Shall stalk across thy breast.

The nightingale shall sing litanies,  
 And the whole earth shall hide in sleep.  
 For Eternity hath drawn near  
 And its shadow is upon thee.

Hush, Night! Be still in awe!  
 For God hath commanded rest,  
 The wage of weariness,  
 And delivered that boon to thee.

The sister of Death whispers  
 The foreword of Eternity,  
 Sleep! to thy silence,  
 And the mantle of darkness is thine.

Be still and silent, and the taper stars  
 And the glowing moon will dispel doubt,  
 And write Faith upon thy script of black  
 In flaming.

May 12, 1925.

#### GENTLY I AWAKEN TO THY WISDOM

Gently, Oh Lord, I awaken to Thy wisdom,  
 Reaching each day with a certain joy.  
 Sorrow hath been mine—but a gentle sorrow;  
 And tomorrow seems like a cup, inviting,  
 From which I'd sip a sweet and luscious wine.

Gently, Oh Lord, I live each day;  
 Simplicity, Tranquillity, and Peace are enviable.  
 What are mountains of learning  
 To the Valley of Wisdom?  
 What are mountains of hope  
 To a step of Faith?

See, Lord, I am learning.

December 14, 1925.

#### OH, YOU STAR

Oh, you star that hung o'er Bethlehem;  
 Mayhap plucked from the very arch  
 Of Heaven's Gate!

You star, foretelling peace,  
 Shedding radiance,  
 Proclaiming a Babe—new-born!  
 Where in the firmament art thou?

Still tracking some vasty way,  
 Mayhap to hang in that fair morn  
 Of my eternity?  
 Once more a beacon to the spot  
 Where He doth dwell?  
 Oh, you star of that far yesterday!

## GOD

September 4, 1915.

### THOU ART BUT GOD, AND I AM MAN

Thou art but God, and I, ah I, am man.  
 What hath Thy day that Thou mayest claim it Thine?  
 For doth man not live the day?

Thou art but God, and I, ah I, am man.  
 What hath virtue that Thou mayest say 'tis Thine?  
 For doth not man destroy this thing?

Thou art but God, and I, ah I, am man.  
 What hath Earth of Thee that Thou mayest say 'tis Thine?  
 For doth not man fill up the Earth  
 And girdle it about; then be it Thine?

Thou art but God, and I, ah I, a man.  
 Thou hast builded up Thy laws and they are Thine  
 Yea, but I, ah I, a man, do set them low.

Thou art but God, and I, ah I, am man.  
 Sayest Thou that man be Thine?  
 Ah, but I, a man, do bring forth what Thou dost claim.

Thou art but God, and I, ah I, am man.  
 What hath God that Thou mayest claim as Thine?  
 For I, ah I, a man, may touch Thy Good  
 And lo, an Evil standeth!

Thou art but God, and these things be,  
 And I, ah I, a man, do make them so.  
 Yea, yea, for in Thy pity Thou dost drown man's presumption here.

For Thou art God, and Man, ah Man,  
 But Man.

April 23, 1917.

### HE IS THE GENTLENESS

Oh, He is the gentleness that spreadeth the Spring,  
And casteth, out His bounty, fresh blooms that burst the sod  
In resurrection.

He is the gentleness  
That spreadeth the moon's illumined silver o'er the valleys,  
And curtaineth the mountain peaks of mists.

He is the gentleness that leaveth the young winds  
Roving 'bout the sweet steeped fields,  
That wooeth the grass blades to a trembling.

He is the gentleness that setteth up the hum-m-m o' the sea;  
The crooning lullaby o' the waves.  
He is the gentleness that sweepeth the webs of morning  
Glistening of dews.

He is the gentleness, yet He, in His strength,  
Hath poured the universe across His ever-space!

September 24, 1917.

### IS THY DAY DARK?

O my love, is thy day dark? Behold then, He is the sun.  
Is thy day over bright? Then behold, He is the shadow.  
Look unto the sky, the face of God,  
The secret of the universe is there writ. Read!  
Remember thee, remember, the folly of over much wisdom;  
Remember, even wisdom is outdone by love.

October 13, 1917.

### OH, I WOULD MAKE A GLADSOME NOISE

Oh, I would play a chord that would set the heavens rocking!  
Aye, the rivers should be my strings strung upon the earth, and the  
stars my notes.  
Oh, I would make a gladsome noise!  
In the morning, betimes, waking the fields to new life,  
Waking the mountains to echoes to resound the skies!  
Oh, I would build me a trumpet of gold, and the sun should be its cup,  
And one of silver would I fashion out of the moon's glistening robe!  
I would fill them then of stars and blow upon them.  
And behold, the skies should be writ of bright singing, glittering notes  
spelling the universe,  
And each tremor of my tone should cry out of Him, of Him, of Him!



June 27, 1918.

HOW MAY WE UNDERSTAND HIM?

Lo, I cannot understand my understanding, though thou wouldst  
 have me to, for the thing I know is God.  
 And you may understand Him, because you do not know Him.  
 How May you prate of your knowledge, when He will not be  
 tomorrow what He is today?  
 I know this, and the gift that is mine is my heritage from Him.  
 I acknowledge that I even may not understand Him;  
 For to understand Him would be to know all things,  
 And Heaven would be thwarted;  
 There would be no expectancy!

June 5, 1919.

THE GOD I WORSHIP

Prate me no word of God, you men of little tongue  
 And throat which may be stopped by an atom of dust!  
 Prate me no word of God, for my song is full of Him.  
 Ye who decry His mirth, list:  
 I have heard him laughing upon the hillocks,  
 And the mountain sides ran with His mirth.  
 Lo, and the weary sea seemed to let  
 Its wrinkled checks mark lines of enjoyment.  
 Oh, I have jested with God and heard Him laugh!  
 I have laughed with Him, and I have seen Him smile  
 Upon my weeping.  
 Oh, ye men of earth, prate me no word of God.  
 I tell thee, I know nay fool so fellowable,  
 And we are companions. Then take thy words  
 And let me on my way with Him!

July 27, 1919.

I AM A TEMPTER

Never a siren sang with more desire to tempt than I  
 For I am a lurer of men; I am a temptress. Behold,  
 I make my songs like loving arms and scarlet lips,  
 Warm of that ecstasy which is the wine of love.  
 Yea, I sing as a siren upon the shore of eternity.  
 Tempting men to forget the day and to know HIM.

December 2, 1919.

THIS IS THE GOD I KNOW

Oh, this is the God I know  
 And His hands are aching in merciful succor,  
 And His heart is dripping of crystal waters,

And His eyes are the great pits of the day  
 In which all creation is reflected,  
 And His throat is eternity, and His tongue  
 The tongue of all creation in its varied keys.  
 Yet I would speak intimately with Him  
 In a small voice. I would not say Great God.  
 Nay, for in my hands He hath laid toys  
 Of such intricate fashioning that I  
 Am bejewelled; gossamer joys which breathed  
 But an instant and made away with moth's wings;  
 Anguishes like rubles, giving forth  
 Their red, red agony. Sorrow like blue pearls  
 With moonlight upon them, and dew where I  
 Have wept over them. Confusions, great  
 Formless things with which my hands  
 Toyed like an infant against its mother's breast,  
 Seeking with my lips to find  
 Sustenance from the breast of confusion!  
 Love hath He delivered unto my hands  
 In the form of a rainbow which vanishes  
 When I touch, yet bedazzles me in its beauty.  
 This is the God whom I know,  
 And I would speak with Him in a small voice.  
 Yea, I would sit at the hem of His universe  
 And look up unto His pit-like eyes,  
 Watching time roll about within their cups,  
 While my babe lips whisper "Sire!"

December 18, 1919.

"WHAT IS GOD?"

If I were with one word to swing HIM, that word would shatter into less than the  
 atoms of the mists that cling the mountain tops. If I should speak HIM in a song, the  
 song would slay me! And going forth, man would become deaf when he listed. If I  
 should announce HIM with a quill and fluid, lo, the script would be nothing less than  
 Eternity to hold the word I would write.

January 15, 1920.

AND YE WOULD NOT!

And the hem of His garment lay  
 Upon the rim of the earth, within  
 The grasp of man, yet he seeth it not.  
 He may kneel upon it, and hide his face  
 Within it; he may bind up his wounds  
 Of its substance; he may lie him down  
 And sleep upon its folds;  
 Yet he seeth it not!

February 16, 1920.

### WHEN THE BARLEY LEANS

When the barley leans either East or West  
 Or sways to the North or South,  
 Methinks 'tis the check of God pressed  
 On the field. When the trees wallow  
 Tossing their green in shadeful confusion  
 Methinks 'tis the Great God letting his fingers  
 Caress them. When the sea's breast  
 Becometh waved of little white rimmed waves,  
 Lopping, lispingly lopping, methinks  
 He is kissing the great bosom, myriad  
 Upon myriad of kisses letting fail.  
 When the night is black and great  
 Swollen clouds press low and the wind  
 Mourns and hisses and the lightning  
 Lets its fiery lash sweep the heavens,  
 Methinks 'tis but Him in His mighty voice  
 Speaking, not denouncingly, but with promise  
 Announcing His strength; for when the morning comes,  
 Behold, every grass blade shall be wet of His tears,  
 And that peace which is imprinted upon all  
 Of His creation not disturbed by man,  
 Is as a benediction hanging.

March 1, 1920.

### I KNOW THAT GOD IS

There is nothing in all the preachments  
 Of man which either stimulates  
 Or confounds me. I have known,  
 Since first my soul beheld that great,  
 Stately beyond of which I was a part—  
 I have known, I say, that God is.  
 He is manifest to me, not  
 In miracles, but in the trailing of smoke  
 Low o'er a field, touching the flower tops;  
 In the circling West, where the green Eve-star  
 Hangs, and the sun bloodily descends,  
 As a fallen knight in his gore,  
 Wrapping his sable raiment about him,  
 Sinking silently, with his face  
 Turned upward, majestically facing Eternity.

In the coming of the timid moon  
 Coyly masked with a halo marked  
 About her and two timid seeking stars

Vestured within it; in the rainbow,  
 Flung as an arch twixt Earth and Heaven,  
 Mystic as dreams, painted of imagination  
 Nothing but mist through which God smiles.

Through the coming of the buds;  
 Through the white mark of the barks  
 Writ chalkily against the grey sod;  
 in the footfall of man  
 As be busies, laboring in self,  
 Unselfishly accomplishing God's labor;  
 In a certain trust which is mine,  
 A tender trust, a thing my lips  
 Are loth to utter.

Who then would announce to me  
 The wonder of his God, shall stop.  
 I need not man's nays or yeas. There is  
 Within me a wick that burns steadfastly.

March 8, 1920.

#### IF THOU SHOULDST DEMAND

If Thou shouldst demand, O Great God, why I love Thee, how might I answer?  
 I might say: "This morning I saw the wheat tickling the sunshine;  
 Yea, I saw a lark marking the heavens, grotesquely playing a jest with his song."  
 I might say that I saw a star shoot, leaving a little radiance streaking,  
 As though in an endeavor to write me a little whimsey message.  
 I might say, yea, I might say that I love Thee—what for? O gracious  
 God, what for? For Thy strength?  
 Kennin' well that Thou mightest take twixt Thy finger and thumb the universe  
 And send it streaking as ashy dust across the ether,  
 Knocking the mountains one upon the other, making echoes like thunder.  
 For this? Nay, methinks I'd rather  
 Say I love Thee for the little swishing willow tassels whipping at the  
 waters fitfully.  
 I like to think of this—  
 That Thou art then a youth, playing so.

August 9, 1920.

#### THE MYSTERY OF GOD

Oh, the mystery of God, the great, unsolvable mystery!  
 He, the servant of all creation, humbly serving, never paid!  
 Oh, the mystery, the unsolvable mystery of God!  
 He is the strength which flings the universe to spin,

## THE CASE OF PATIENCE WORTH

The strength which, in a fury of delight,  
 In an exultance of creation scatters storms from His finger-tips,  
 Or, bending, kisses the buds until they blush and burst,  
 Yea, and become fruitful in ecstasy.  
 He becometh flesh within mine arm, yet flings  
 Himself down upon my mercy.  
 Yea, and becomes a staff for my faltering hand.

He eludes; hiding in hope, in expectancy, in doubt,  
 In all things which I may not attain,  
 Flitting, hither, thither von as a moth,  
 Delicately tenuous. Yet so awesome atimes that I  
 Seem standing upon the brink of nothing,  
 With an accusing finger pointed which commands me Plunge!  
 This is He, the Thing which makes  
 Ale do the bidding of the finger which points,  
 And having done, make no complaint  
 This is a part of the mystery  
 Of the Great God.

July 25, 1921.

## I HAVE UNLOCKED THE MYSTERY

I have unlocked the mystery, no longer am I awed.  
 I have stood before the everlasting fount,  
 Yea, the river of life.  
 I have beheld God interflowing,  
 The instants, permeating with surety  
 The dull atom of existence.

He is of a living substance as the lightning,  
 Verily, the illuminant pith of all life.  
 He is the elemental basis of creation,  
 His own being becoming the foundation of creation.  
 He stands with His head in the sun,  
 Yet He reclines within the palm of a babe.  
 His couch is the rainbow, yet He hath laid  
 His cheek unto man's bruised lips.  
 His voice is the roar of chaos  
 Yet He sits as a fay at the gateway  
 Of man's lips, beguiling him.

March 6, 1922.

## THE REMOTE GOD

Who is this God remote? I know Him not.  
 Who is He who within the sanctuary of the ever-space  
 Retreats, forgetting the creation which He flung  
 In an instant of joy, mayhap, spinning the ether?

I know Him not. That God which I acclaim,  
 Yea, and I know most fellowable, is one  
 Who kneels upon the fields and kisses the scarred earth  
 Leaving blossoms then to spurt. He is one who  
 Walketh upon the high spots, yea, upon the mountain peaks,  
 And from the purity of His raiment falleth the chaste snow.  
 He is one who rides the clouds and weeps in JOY.  
 Inasmuch as His tears are fruitful, I believe  
 That the universes are so much a part of Him  
 That they cling as dust atoms to His raiment,  
 And He may not be rid of them, nor they of Him.  
 Who is this God remote? I know Him not,

September 23, 1923.

#### THE GOD WHICH MAN HAS MADE

*(Suggested by seeing an ancient Chinese idol.)*

There sits the idol with complacent mien  
 Viewing the ages past and them to come  
 With lips belocked, yea, dumb, while man  
 Sprawls helpless in obeisance at  
 Its helpless feet. I must give pause.  
 How like the man—God is the stony face,  
 The silent image cast of brass  
 Mute, helpless, unhearing, yet we cry,  
 Behold the unenlightened."

#### DEATH AND THE HEREAFTER

It may interest readers to have a glimpse at Patience Worth's statements regarding "the other side." There has been in her conversation an entire absence of an attempt to describe that region or state, either of the symbolical sort of the Apocalypse, or the travelogue variety of Vale Owen. To questions she made various answers, not inconsistent with each other. "This be His Kingdom. Would thy handmaid mar it with her touching? What folly that ye ask to prate" about it. She intimates that she could not make plain what man has not experienced, and who would believe her if she could? "Did I for to set me o' word that stood as cloud's-weave and made me mouthings that sounded o'er the in-take o' their skull's cap, lo, then would they for to shake them o' nays." Finally, "this be not the will o' Him...that thou shouldst see the Here." But that "Heaven"

is desirable she asserted with emphasis, though she said nothing about harps and crowns. "I tell thee Heaven be all, and doth to clothe o'er all. 'Tis true, it abideth e'en 'pon Earth. O' all and all it be, and Earth doth dwell awrapped e'en o' it." Greater capacities are awakened there: "E'en as a dust's mite be thy scripts unto this wisdom's fount; yea, thy sages be the fools o' the courts ahigh." But Heaven is not alike to all. "Each man enjoyeth his Heaven—I say his Heaven—for the thing he enjoyeth in that same Heaven shall not be thine." There is continual progress there. "This path leadeth on and on and on." Asked if there is an intermediate state, she said: "This be a busied land, and be thy building not afinished, thou shalt finish it afore thy setting unto His task. Yea, thou mayest build within this land, for building defileth not Him. He be the first builder." Asked if we recognize our friends there, she retorted: "Ah me, what a fogged land thou thinkest! He is a sire, not a monster."

October 16, 1914

#### SHALL I ARISE AND KNOW THEE?

Shall I arise and know thee, brother, when like a bubble I  
 Am blown into eternity from this pipe of clay?  
 Or shall I burst and float these atoms in a joyous spray  
 At the beholding of this home prepared for me and thee?  
 And shall we together mingle our joys in one supreme joy in Him?  
 It matters not, beloved, so comfort thee,  
 For should the blowing be the end, what then!  
 Hast not thy pack been full, and mine?  
 We are weary of the work of living  
 And sinking into oblivion would be rest.  
 But sure as sun shall rise my dust shall be unloosed,  
 And blown into new fields of new days.  
 I see full fields yet to be harvested, and I am weary;  
 I see fresh business of living, work yet to be done, and I am weary.  
 Oh, let me fold these tired hands and sleep.  
 Beloved, I trust, and expect my trust, for ne'er yet did He fail

Summer of 1915.

Though eyes be hid, what care ye?  
 Though hand be not, what care ye?  
 Though love hath stepped from Earth  
 What think ye love shalt lose?  
 Heart that stoppeth beating ne'er astoppeth love!

March 17, 1916.

#### FEARING HEART

Fearing, fearing, heart! look not with fearing 'pon thy day!  
 Nay, look then unto the works o' Him that shew thee o' the way.

Dost fear the day-tide close? Dost fear the even-twi hour—  
 The darksome tide: and dost thou fear the shutting o' thine eyes  
 Unto the earth? Doth then their close spell dark,  
 Yea, dark o' Ever?

Nay, fear not, fear not!  
 But look' The mist-maid o' the early dawn doth dance the vale and cast  
 Her silvered robes to shimmer 'neath the sun;  
 And bound from hillside o'er unto the vallied place,  
 And wrap the earth so close,—so close, as though she loved o' it,  
 And lothed to leave.

And yet when sun doth climb,  
 Ah, look thee then! she casteth o' her robe  
 And meeteth him, arms flung ope, to melt unto a naught!  
 Unfearing doth she go to mingle 'mid the vasts and meet  
 With mists o' sisters' robes, and come aback a glistened drop  
 Of rain's sweet cool.

See, this be but mist.  
 And yet o' Him, and feareth not. But thou dost fear,  
 And thou art builded up o' Him, and loved o' Him and be His own.  
 Then thinkest thou that fear should set thy path?

January 9, 1917.

#### THE SUN OF A NEW DAY

Oh star of the eve, hang, hang low,  
 That I may see thy face. Leave not the clouds  
 To sweep thee from my straining eyes.  
 Oh, leave me thy beam; for the sun hath forgot,  
 The moon tarrieth, the day is dead,  
 And the night not yet come.  
 I am lone and it is dark.

Oh star of the eve, hang low, low.  
 I'd whisper thee the dead hopes  
 That flee the earth like bat-winged things  
 Darksome sweeping the silver sky.  
 I'd whisper thee of these. Oh, list,  
 And shed thy light, for the moon hath tarried  
 And the sun forgot. Death hath sought the valley  
 And hath reaped its blooms. He hath sought  
 The high spots and plucked a harvest there  
 And lo, the morrow sheweth a hoarfrost  
 Like death-dew o'er his stepping places.



Hark, oh star of eve! I'd whisper thee.  
 The moon tarrieth and the sun hath forgot.  
 The day is dead and the night not yet come.  
 Death walked with Love this morrow, and plucked  
 The wings that would speed him o'er the earth.  
 The Day hath forgotten this, but hark!  
 Thou mayest hear the sobbing, deep down  
 Within the valley, or von upon the high spots.

Oh, star of eve, hang low  
 That I may look upon thee.  
 The moon tarrieth and the sun hath forgot,  
 And I'd speak to thee of sorrows.  
 The fields this morrow glistened, wet with sweet rains.  
 But I supped, and they were salt; for Death  
 Had stepped the way, and eve did find them seared.  
 The Day hath forgot and the Night not yet come.  
 Earth knoweth not, but hark, the sobbing!

Oh, star of eve, what palest thee?  
 What new light steals upon thee, rosy gleaming?  
 What soundeth there within the valley?  
 Hath the sobbing ceased? What is the golden thing  
 That creepeth upon the earth the Day hath forgot?

Hark, O star of eve! 'Tis a new sun!  
 The Day is dead and the Moon tarrieth,  
 But yon cometh He, for He remembereth.

Oh, star of the eve, why tremblest thou?  
 What palest thee? Ah, the Sun cometh,  
 And He rideth it unto a new Day.  
 Be gone! I need thee not!

March 22, 1917.

A message asked for a bereaved person in Kansas. At once Patience gave:

- "Oh, that ye knew the caravan unto Here moveth surely, and though thine eyes may not see where it hath gone past the eye's span, still surely it moveth on.  
 "Oh, that ye knew that thy love that hasteth on afore thee, three-fold enricheth for thy waiting.  
 "Oh, that ye knew thy tears be naught but the cloud that dimmeth thine eyes unto the watching, aye, and waiting.  
 "Oh, that ye knew that ye should cast ye free o' tears. Would ye offer unto smiling, sorrow? Would ye mete a joyin', weepin'? Would ye weep at losin' what hath only become truly thine through Him?  
 "Oh, that ye knew His breast is thine. Rest thee upon it and smile, smile thy waiting.  
 Ah, the joy o' soothin'!"

May 6, 1918.

A WHITE HEAVEN

Oh man, what spotless Heaven would'st thou create  
 Milkwhite in sanctity, no stuff but that it gleams in colorlessness,  
 With pearly gates and alabaster shadows, rimmed with  
     white walls, cloud-tipped of whiter silver and lucid gems  
     of water pureness;  
 The paths enshrouded in a snow of blooms,  
 And the silver streets lined of fleece clad angels whose white  
     wings enfold their whiter form, and whose whiter souls  
     abide this white, white land.  
 Ah, what a heaven thou createst!  
 And I pray you, wherein thou?

May 6, 1918.

MY HEAVEN

Might I build a Heaven  
 I'd make the day contain the early dawn's first breath and the eve's  
     first shadows  
 That it be neither o'er bright nor o'er shadowed.  
 I'd make the land to roll in gentle rises wherein valleys lie, and the  
     peaks be not over-far.  
 And the roadway that I'd set me there would be a circle winding about  
     the hillocks and the vales,  
 Where at each turn a changeful shade of some sweet memory would  
     greet me.  
 I'd make me such a land, so full of recollections, that like trooping  
     thongs of happy babes they'd sport the fields,  
 And then I'd take a golden trumpet and stand upon its portals  
 And cry, O Brother, come.

June 30, 1919.

SMILE AND WAIT

(To Mrs. McK., whose husband had lately died.)  
 Mine ain, take heart, there be nay night.  
 E'en though the eye doth see the dark.  
 Mine ain, take heart, for love be fettered,  
 And soul enchained unto its love.  
 Flesh hath no power 'gainst this!

And the gentle God sendeth days  
 Which move slow, but even they  
 That pass like sorrow's procession  
 Are speeding! What wouldst thou?  
 Hast not thy damie spoken  
 Unto him thou lovest, and promised  
 The awakening, and heard o' his hope

## THE CASE OF PATIENCE WORTH

Which wert that o' a little child,  
 That he might see his mither's face?  
 Ah weel, it be! And wouldst thee  
 Who lovest him, weep upon his joy?  
 Smile, my sweet, smile and wait!

Mrs. Curran told us that while she was writing this poem she could see Mr. McK.  
 just as though he were in the room and that he was laughing.

August 2, 1919.

## TO THE DAY

They troop as Young maidens  
 Or angels white-robed  
 From the gateway of heaven unloosed,  
 Laughing, expectant as youth—  
 Days!

Among them is one who shall come  
 Unto my side and beckon  
 Leading me forth unto the gateway and pointing.  
 Oh, with what joy I await her!  
 God-sent messenger! How shall I greet her?  
 Weeping? Nay, I shall smile,  
 And lay my hands within hers,  
 And say: "Hasten, Sister, hasten."

January 3, 1920.

## REINCARNATION

Who would become a child  
 If heaven were a rebirth to infancy?  
 What then the game? To become  
 A child again with no heritage  
 Of memory? Then life is vain.

March 21, 1920.

## THEE AND ME

Behold, the valley's swag\* and the mist  
 And the path secluded, and thee and me seeking.  
 Oh mine ain, lip to lip, hand to hand,  
 Fear unto fear, confidence unto confidence,  
 Hope unto hope, thee and me upon the path  
 Secluded. Somewhere, hanging beyond the mists  
 Is a golden sun. Somewhere. Somewhere.

\* Swag: obsolete or dialectic verb, here used as a noun.

Be not confused in the enmeshing folds  
 Of gossamer. Be not confused,  
 Remember, here is my heart, a chalice  
 From which to drink, and I am supping  
 From thine. Here is my hand a staff  
 While I lean upon thine.  
 Thee and me upon the path secluded.

Yea, beloved, I know that the world  
 Is about us but curtained awthier  
 By the veil of mist. But what is this  
 To thee and me upon the path secluded,  
 Seeking the sun which hangs somewhere, somewhere?  
 Beloved, yon a little way beyond the valley  
 Is light and I pin faith upon the cadences  
 Of familiar tones. Already doth my heart  
 Leap, struck by an echo which seems  
 Creeping from that bright abode.

Be not fearful, beloved. We together  
 Upon the path secluded, make on  
 While the sands of the day slip  
 Through the hours; we forget time, days  
 Become trifling things, nothings, for in my companionship  
 With thee I am come unto a new faith  
 And a new knowledge. Here is my heart,  
 Beloved, sup. Here is my hand, lean.  
 We together upon the path secluded seeking  
 That sun which hangs somewhere, somewhere.  
 Dost thou hear me? I repeat  
 It unto conviction, somewhere, somewhere!

July 12, 1920.

#### THERE SHALL BE NO SORROW

Why shouldst thou mourn, beloved,  
 If I depart these shuttling days?  
 In yesterdays I still abide with thee,  
 And hastening but a little way beyond  
 Upon the trending path, think, beloved,  
 Think of that newer meeting which ne'er  
 Doth lose its first sweet ecstasy.

Why shouldst thou mourn, beloved, should I,  
 Having drunk, then lay the chalice down?

September 18, 1920.

### THE SILVER RIVER

I think I see  
 A silver river stretching far  
 Between most verdant banks  
 Toward an open sea.

I think I see  
 A fretful river making onward  
 Laying its lips to the silver sands,  
 Plunging to the sea depth  
 In a gushing joy!

Oh, such am I!  
 Beyond is the golden sea,  
 The ever changeful sea  
 The all-encompassing sea,  
 That mother breast on which  
 The crafts of men forever sail,  
 Eternity!

And I the fretful river  
 And the day the verdant banks.  
 I may not stay. I may not  
 Listen to the singing  
 Nor the sounds of creation.  
 I am urged, urged seaward.  
 Oh, my heart hath burst its portals  
 And pours as a silver fluid  
 Through the hours, and is the murmur  
 Of the waters. Yea, I am  
 The river slipping seaward.

### DEATH

Who art thou, who toucheth o' the flesh o' me,  
 And sendeth chill unto the heart o' me?

Aye, and who art thou, who putteth forth thy hand  
 And setteth at alow the hopes o' me?

Who art thou, who art thou, who steppeth ever to my day,  
 And shutteth o' the sun away?

Who art thou, who steppeth to earth at birth o' me,  
 And e'en 'mid wail o' weak, aye, at the birth o' wail,  
 Did set a chill 'pon infant flesh; and at the track o' man  
 'Pon earth doth follow ever, and at height  
 Afollow, and doth touch, and all doth crumble to a naught?

Thou! Thou! Who art thou.' Ever do I to ask,  
 And ever wish to see the face of thee,  
 And ne'er, ne'er do I to know thee—  
 Thou traveller 'pon the track of me.

Stand thou! Stand thou! and draw thy cloak from o'er thy face!  
 Ever hath the dread o' thee clutched at the heart o' me.

Aye, and at the end o' journey I beseech thee,  
 Cast thy cloak and show thee me' Aye, show thee me!

Aye, thou art the gift o' Him!  
 The Key to There! The Love o' Earth!  
 Aye, and hate hath made o' man to know thee not—  
 Thou! Thou! O Death! \*

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\* The whole poem, of which the above is a part, may be found in P. W. P. M., pp. 279-281, or L. B., pp. 246-247.

## WISDOM

February 15, 1914.

### ONE GRAIN OF HERO DUST

Ah, Peaceful Vale, wherein my soul may be my soul, and call not as the  
 night-bird to his mate, who but reechoes his song;  
 Nay, as cold stars warm the heavens to light, so must coldly-culled  
 truth warm my soul, and I shall show myself myself—  
 Not as a feigned or painted thing, nor yet the gently-smiling oily  
 thing, I would crave the world to believe.

Strike ye the sword, or dip ye in an inken well; smear ye a gaudy color,  
 or daub ye in the clay;  
 Aye, beat upon thy bosom then and cry, "'Tis mine, this world-love  
 and vain-glory

Ah, Master-hand who guided thee!  
 Stay, dost know that through the ages, yea, through the very ages,  
 One grain of Hero dust, blown from afar,  
 Hath lodged, and moveth thee?

Wait, wreath thyself and wait!  
 The green shall deepen to an ashen brown, and crumble then and fall  
 into thy sightless eyes,  
 While the mouldering dust droppeth away.  
 Wait, and catch thy dust; mayhap thou can'st build it back!  
 Ah, World! Ah, Folly, thou art king of men!

May 20, 1914.

### A DAY SHALL DAWN

A day shall dawn when I shall be not, and when the busy world wags on;  
 Not a pebble cast by me, nor yet work may I claim.  
 The morning sun shall warm the world to life  
 And rain fall on the rotting grass where I am laid.

But on a day whose dawn breaks gray, shall I not play a part?  
 E'en like the sunrise, prisoned as a painter's stroke, within  
 A mussel's shell, the beauty-store of its full life,  
 This past of mine shall gleam through mist, to glorify another day.

October 20, 1915.

### PARABLE OF THE ASS

There wert a man, and he sat him 'pon the towns-way. And he did to ride 'pon an ass and to, at the up o' the wether hill, the ass did stand him 'pon his feet and travel not. And the man did off him, and prod the ass 'pon the rump, and speak unto his ear, and strike him blow 'pon sides, and to, the ass moved not. And this man wert the wise one o' the towns-people. Yea, he did to deal o' word and sum unto the babes o' the town. And he did to make word o' much mouthing unto the ass, and to, he knew not o' such word. And to, the man did wax wrathed, and to, did the ass to wax it wrather and did stand it firmed 'pon the feet o' it, and to, the tail o' it did sink tight unto his bind. And the face o' the town's wiseun did red it much, and he did fall o' words o' much o' mouthing till he wert wearied sore. And to, from 'pon the path ahigh did there to come a lad o' young years, and he came unto the man and looked 'pon his wrath and 'pon the wrath o' the ass. And he knew not o' such an wrath as the man did shew, but did to know the ass. And he did to pipe atween his lips and stroke 'pon the nose o' the ass and it did off.

"There 'tis, 'tis word that meaneth little! Yea, athin the hand o' the babe there be the undoing o' word."

May 3, 1917.

### BE STILL AND LIST TO TRUTH

Hush! Hush! Let the hush fall unto the far corners of the Earth!  
 Stop the dinning! Stop the motley laughter,  
 Aye, and garish musics where dead spirits play in living flesh!  
 Stop the streaming wry-words, stop the tongue of prophecy!  
 Leave but truth upon it. Let the hush of all things be!  
 Stop! Stop! Stop the wheeling, teaming, speeding, clattering, rumbling,  
 Racking, torturing din, with the Great Hush which is Truth!

May 6, 1918.

### THE MYSTERIES

Oh, I have watched Thy mysteries, and I smile at their simplicity,  
 Oh, I have watched how they writ heaven within me with a sureness that can  
 never fail.  
 I learned first what lay behind a smile, and the sign which was the flash of love.  
 I learned the tone of love's voice from her who bore me,  
 And later life's harp struck a fuller tone that, tremorous, sang a deeper note.  
 I learned the bitterness of sorrow, and that the cup of sorrow's wine was  
 borne by one who wore a cap and bells.  
 I learned with wickedness to consort, and found the phantom thinner than  
 morning's mist.  
 Oh, all of this I know now; behold, my flesh was a script which took unto  
 it all of this irrevocably.  
 Lo, the letters are set now, for the writing of His hand.

June 7, 1918.

### WISDOM, WHERE IS THY TONGUE?

All, Wisdom, where is thy tongue: thy *tongues* are every busy!  
 O fools, where is thy king? I would grasp his hand  
 For he knoweth not the shortcomings of Wisdom.  
 I seek the voices of ages past, the voices that unravelled truth  
 To skeins of folly. Aye, I am waiting for a new tongue, that speaks  
 Words small enough to swallow.

June 17, 1918.

### REASSURANCE

I watched the monster cloud arise  
 And the lightnings interplay them,  
 Listening to the ominous rolling  
 Of the tongue that foretold their wrath.  
 I watched the sea climb the headland  
 Lashing the sky in seeming hunger  
 For the height. I watched the winds  
 Bend the forest before them  
 Snapping the age-old staffs  
 With quick movement, making havoc.

I was awed at the mightiness of this  
 When I saw a gnat, speeding upon the airs  
 Unmindful, and my awe was overcome.



July 1, 1918.

### WHILE SAGES SCRIBED

While sages scribed with wisdom-heavy quills, great scripts of ponderous meaning,  
 bestirring them to utterance;  
 Their tongues, that lapped the brine of earth's learning, speaking with elaborate word  
 small wisdoms,  
 And with foolish hands tracing as naught the thing that wert the pith;  
 While with their labor they labored:  
 Lo, there had been woven a cup-like nest that swung upon a hair, and three green eggs  
 had been deposited,  
 And beneath, the joyous crocuses had sprung, and violets peeped in timid manner.  
 And the buds were bursting, and a rainbow spread the sky,  
 Ah me! Their scripts held none of these, nor checked the labor that created them.

July 11, 1918.

### SHOW ME THY PHILOSOPHY

Show me thy philosophy. What hath it created?  
 A sling, that thou mightest cast a stone of Wisdom and fell a thing that thou mightest  
 lay hands upon it?  
 Doth it stand upon its foundation in an unalterable attitude, unmindful of the winds  
 of argument,  
 Knowing not the tickle of man's wits, and stonily staring forth, smugly complacent in  
 its own knowledge?  
 Bring thy philosophy forth! I shall wring it by the hand; I would know it.  
 Doth it limp, I then would lend it the hand of love;  
 Is it blind, I then would lead it;  
 Is it in labor, I then would look upon its begetting.  
 Aye, I would look upon the staff it leaneth upon, for if it be a true philosophy, it  
 shall lean upon but one staff,  
 And that is the staff of love.

October 24, 1918.

### GOD'S MYSTERIES

Oh, the mysteries of God  
 Are like a bird, fleeting  
 With wings strong to fend them.  
 Lo, they swirl before thine eyes,  
 Uttering strange songs that enchant,  
 Making music that stirs the soul,  
 Tearing thy heart ope with wonderment  
 And baffling wisdom.

While wisdom standeth upon a high peak  
 Out-reaching her hands in supplication,  
 Even leaping forward to catch the birds  
 Within its hand's grip—  
 There it is a leaden thing,  
 No longer singing, no longer moving.  
 Wisdom tireth of the toy  
 And casteth it free.

And lo, it spreadeth its wings  
 And saileth forward, forward,  
 Straight unto eternity!  
 Lo, the mysteries of God  
 Are like unto a bird.

January 6, 1919.

### CERTAIN SCIENTISTS

Man's law is precision, God's is chaotic. Man's wisdom is offensive to God, therefore He shows his displeasure in complications. To man the complications are chaos, thereby is man deceived. To God, man's precision is the fretfulness of a babe, aye, and man at his wilful deceiving is undone. Then to God, man is precisely chaotic; to man, God is the disruption of precision.

April 21, 1919.

### JUST A MINUTE

I am a beggar; thou knowest me.  
 I ask not for alms, but for one minute.  
 Give me but a stupid smile and I shall proffer  
 Thee in exchange a farthing of wisdom.

Thou shalt not pass without a prick of my wit;  
 Nor shalt thou thirst, for I shall give thee freely  
 Of the water of fellowship.

Thou mayest not pass me; I shall demand a toll.  
 One minute, friend! But an atom of thy time.  
 Spend it, even unwillingly, and I promise thee  
 Thou shalt profit. If I am a wise man  
 In that time, thou shalt acknowledge it;  
 If I be a fool then shall we laugh together!

One minute, for I am a beggar.  
 I ask thee alms—but one minute  
 Of thy eternity. Thou art spending it stupidly.  
 Let me make thee a profitable atom of time.  
 But a minute, friend!

October 21, 1919.

TWAIN

Lo, a fool in a garden gazed into a monk's window  
 Where in solitude he prayed and told the hours and beads.  
 "Folly, folly!" said the fool,  
 And skipped a measure.  
 Lo, a monk in his seclusion looked forth from his casement  
 Upon a fool who played with grass tassels or a dragon-fly and laughed.  
 "Folly, folly!" the monk chanted  
 And murmured, "Aye, aye."

November 21, 1919.

THE GREAT MYSTERY

I have striven with eyes which strain  
 To see through the great mystery which opens  
 Like a casement window before me, which man  
 Calls Day. I have striven with eyes strained  
 To understand why men mouth, their wisdom  
 Becoming bulky with overwording; why men  
 Whine, and in their whining become lean  
 Of soul; why the long pageantry passing me,  
 Moves on. What is the urge?  
 If this is the end when yonder sun  
 Doth sink, why doth not man lay down  
 His implements and stop? Why need he  
 Keep covenant with a God who hath  
 Betrayed him, bringing him into existence  
 Which is nothing, not e'en so much as  
 A gnat's flight across a field?  
 For when the sun hath sunk, the gossamer  
 Wings of the gnat will have stopped  
 And who upon the earth shall know?  
 I say, what is the lash that layeth  
 Heavily upon existence, each puppet  
 Animated by its cut, striving to the utmost  
 To attain, attain! Attain what? Chaos?  
 Then is God but the empty pit of Eternity?  
 Is there nothing but the firmaments  
 Whirling through space? Oh man! Speak  
 The word God, and I say thou hast taken  
 Within thee a wine which shall make thee  
 Drunk upon the faith which underlies  
 That vast pageantry which moveth, moveth,  
 Moveth! Somewhere in that ether, in that great void,  
 There is a God, and in the beckon of His very hand  
 Is the thing which speeds the legs of all existence!

December 18, 1919.

Patience Worth was told: "There is much talk of cosmic flow."

P. W.: Nay, they mouth o'er much which be spelled G O D.

Asked if "by all these fine terms" writers and speakers simply mean God:

P. W.: Aye, but they disperse Him, making Him become but a fog upon a morning.

A later allusion to cosmic consciousness brought: "Nay, I nae ha'e driven my swine to such swill."

January 8, 1920.

To measure man; to see man, this creation of the God I know, play the part allotted him, moving amid the day as though the hours were dense forests; following some marsh-light, some flickering hope with damnable persistence. To know that each man's lips betray him, to feel in the cloth woven by lengthy argument, the shoddy of its substance; to list unto the blowing of man's wisdom, throwing forth my net and catching but a few grains of sand, which I am doubtful of, even then!

Much of the day is this. There is less in argument than in silence, for silence ne'er destroys, and argument is a fretful water. To measure men thus, fairly, making myself a part of him, for he who would judge his brother shall become as his brother.

March 4, 1920.

#### THE NEW CIVILIZATION

Ah me, the worn toy;  
 A bauble within the hands of man!  
 Behold, each day is but a tiny house  
 Builded in the sand by the hand  
 Of a babe. Tomorrows come  
 And behold, the waters wipe awither  
 Yesterday's building and new hands  
 Take up old sands and older sands,  
 Older shells from the sea's pit washed,  
 And build anew.

And yet tomorrows come and yet, and yet,  
 And new hands play with old sands  
 And older, older shells and learn  
 From the echoes of yesterday, wry wisdoms  
 Which they fit into their wry days,  
 In egotry announcing new understanding  
 Of old truth. Ah me, ah me!

March 15, 1920.

MAN, THE TRICKSTER

Alan is a trickster. Behold, he findeth the bone of truth  
 And setteth up for to supply flesh with which to resurrect it.  
 Aye, and he announceth it a creed!  
 Show me a man's creed and I will show you his ain reflection.  
 If he be fat his creed be fat; if he be lean even so.  
 Many a monk whose beads hid beneath his belly's arch hath prated o' spirit.  
 Aye, and the phantom he prated o' had beads hid aneath its belly's arch!

June 7, 1920.

FULL SILENCE

Oh, all engulfing quietude,  
 The most confiding tongue of God!  
 Naught save the action of His creation  
 Knocks against that mystic wall.  
 Man in his desire to attain  
 Clattereth the symbols of commerce,  
 Yea, maketh of the hours, noiseful tabors  
 Announcing his labor thus to God.

Oh, all engulfing silence!  
 I would depart from the din, the tinkle  
 Of the clattering pence, man's days,  
 As he flings them unto the bowl of Eternity.  
 I would seclude me. I would become  
 Engulfed in the armor of silence.

Oh, all engulfing silence  
 The storehouse of all that hath been!  
 Unto thee I have commended  
 Mine all, and yet shall commend.  
 Then let me commune with thee apart,  
 Learning to listen to the nothingness  
 Of thy utterance, that I learn to lisp  
 The new wisdoms that await me.

June 28, 1920.

TO KNOW THEE

To know thee. To become comrade  
 With thy day, then I should know  
 The agony of the ages. I should suffer  
 Hates hotter than hell's pit.  
 I should know loves more langorous  
 Than drunken lotus flowers steeped  
 In honey at whose lips bees sup.

That fretful wing of personality,  
 The cunning intonations of all things'  
 Which bears the gist of utterance  
 To its mart.

I should know the tongues,

I should know well the sable-fringed East  
 With the crescent moon upon its brow,  
 With sandal scent enshrouded.  
 I should know the West, hot flaming  
 West, panting West, scarlet, robed  
 In bloody sunlight. I should know  
 The South, the perfumed South,  
 The half-disclosed sweetness of her nights,  
 White nights, silver-shrouded. Aye,  
 And I should know the North, the pallid North  
 With gaunt cheeks and glittering elves, holding  
 The dead taper, the north star earthward.

I should know these, all of these to know thee.  
 The hots and cools of all blood to know thee  
 O brother man!

September 27, 1920.

#### RETURNING

He is a fool, who hath pronounced Eternity a void,  
 A yawning throat through which the ages slip forever and forever  
 Into nothingness! Lo, is the symbol before thee in the spurting of Spring  
 And the decaying of Fall, and the respurting of Springs;  
 And the coming of stars flung to the silver bowl of night;  
 And in the sun's persistence; and in the moon's faithfulness.  
 Yet man, who beholds the crumbling of clay, sayeth with assurance:  
 "It is finished," even while the rekindling spirit stirs the mould  
 To new creation. This be the symbol. Man, with his doubt, banishes Him,  
 While he rides with expectant banners tilted earthward, sun-emblazoned banners  
 Star-fringed. Silently He rides in compassion earthward.

October 16, 1920.

#### GOD'S GREATEST GIFT

Great God, Thy greatest gift is the full knowledge which comes to man—how oft,  
 how oft belated! the knowledge that he be a fool!

What impudence is his! this folly-pated fool, that he demand his heritage with  
 Thee! Shaking his belled sceptre, he would jest at the

gateway of the heavens, and dancing as his ass's ears lopped, go mineing up to the Prince's throne.

Alike hath man inherited wisdom and folly. Yea, and he liveth his day to learn which be his rightful heritage!

January 24, 1921.

### MY TONGUE

Mine is a cunning implement!  
 There is no thing which may  
 Deny me wielding it.  
 Yet I have an o'ercoming awe  
 At the thought that might I strain  
 The sea of my wisdom, even so  
 Might I catch a minnow!  
 Yet in cocksure faith I wield  
 This cunning implement. I deny  
 The convictions of sages. I make argument  
 With God and reorganize His creation  
 Upon a foundation of words.  
 I create a justice for man  
 Out of the stuff I fling forth as wisdom.  
 The implement which is mine is light,  
 O'erlight, I'm fearing, and should I  
 Fling it clear, desiring to decapitate  
 My brother, in an instant lo! am I beheaded!  
 Ah, 'tis a cunning implement  
 A-deed, my tongue!

March 14, 1921.

### MAN

I cannot contemplate the day,  
 Drinking the honey of the hours,  
 Making myself a fellow with the beauties  
 That unfold. There is a sterner stuff  
 Within me. I behold man as a canvas  
 And the day the colorful play upon it.  
 Essentially it is the thing upon which  
 The colors play, which answers  
 My own inner hunger. It is man,  
 Man in his various and intricate,  
 Yea, his manifold expressions.  
 I do not think that I may feel God  
 Save through the pulse of man.  
 I exult in his labor, in his sweat,  
 In the power of his intellect.  
 Earth is naught to me but wet clay

With which man molds. I believe  
 That man is expressing God  
 And that he is, even through his groping  
 Which seems at times hopelessly vague  
 Attaining through that agony a certain kinship  
 With God. I think that the day  
 To me, is man. I exult in him.

I believe that I have supped  
 From the kinships of blood which are mine,  
 Certain valors, aye, and images;  
 That within me smouldereth an ember  
 Which is indelible, the breath  
 Of my forekin still dominant,  
 And that this breath through the ages  
 Shall fall upon my kind even as  
 My intent shall become another lash.  
 Then I am satisfied.  
 If my labor shall be unfinished,  
 I shall have writ a certain script  
 Which shall be read. This  
 Is my fervid belief. Man!  
 God is tongueless without him.  
 Aye, and loveless without him.  
 Aye, and powerless without him.  
 For man is the mirror-pool  
 In which God beholds himself.

April 11, 1921.

## WISDOM

There is no such thing as elevated Wisdom; she may be adorned colorfully, but her  
 flesh is the same.  
 There is he who sees but the leaf, and mayhap the sun;  
 There is he who seeth the leaf and mayhap the sun, and knoweth the tongue of the  
 leaf and its shadow;  
 There is he who knoweth the shadow, the tongue, the sunlight and the leaf, and  
 likewise the branch on the tree;  
 And yet there is he who knoweth the root. But knowing all these, they shall forget  
 not the earth,  
 From which spring the root and the tree, and the branch and the leaf and the shadow;  
 Yea, even so, shall they not be confused but remember that the tree sprang from the  
 union of sunlight and earth.  
 And the pith of that mystery hath no part with any of these separately, but as  
 common unto all.



April 28, 1921.

### THE MERGING OF JOY AND SORROW

I am tolerant of man, aye, tolerant of myself  
 As man, because I am listing unto God  
 In His various tongues. I am seeing  
 The light and shade of His countenance,  
 The joy and sorrow in its birth, for He  
 Being the perfect creation hath joy  
 And sorrow but by reflection.  
 Think ye on it, God is the implement  
 Within the hands of man in this measure;  
 He is the amalgamating power  
 In which joy and sorrow meet  
 And become a perfect harmony.

September 19, 1921.

### AMUSING MAN

I am amused at man!  
 He mewls wisdom and drools philosophy, as an infant;  
 His lips drivell cocksurely, loose-knit words, ill garments in which he lets his thoughts  
 disport.  
 Where is his soul? Retreated as a grim monk within a cell, waiting a single ray from  
 the sun.

I am amused at man!  
 It is a great game to count how many men think what their lips repeat,  
 Or repeat with their lips their thoughts;  
 For the bigot self stands twixt the thought and utterance, weighing smugly,  
 Lest the beam tip awry, and be who listeth to the prate shall see The utterer naked or  
 in foolscap.

November 7, 1921.

### RESPONSE TO A REQUEST TO DEFINE "PERSONALITY"

To do this thing, brother mine, needs must define God. Each man be a God  
 himself; pithed with an atom of that one God, his pith is as indefinable as that God  
 himself. He who is uttered partaketh of his kind. His inheritance is of flesh and of  
 spirit. This is the handiwork of man. I say man is pithed of God; inheritant of his  
 kind in flesh; subject to incident; the tool of a certain fate. Man admitteth fate  
 inasmuch as he creates it. His own action is the law of fate. Personality is the atom of  
 God beraimented of incident, but that thing, that unalterable law, that inexplicable  
 something which writes the ye defies man's understanding. I say to explain this needs  
 must define God. It is as endless as eternity, as indelible as God, as simple as  
 consciousness which is new, and like unto it as receptive.

personality is the root which each man plants in eternity. It is begun and never ended. It is begun in God and this bars man's Understanding of its beginning. Never finished it bars man's understanding and conception.

March 20, 1922.

Complication is understandable. 'Tis but an accumulation of atoms of discord. 'Tis simplicity which most men most misunderstand. Simplicity to an egotist is an insult to his egotry. He would twist the morsel until it become a complication. Yea, he would say unto himself: "Behold, of this I have created an intricate matter." This is the trick of learning with a pellet of wisdom.

September 16, 1923.

#### WHO IS THIS BESIDE ME?

And I am a wise man, but who is he  
 Who be beside me? He who weareth  
 A motley and a cockscomb and carryeth  
 A sceptre which is tipped as a folly rod.  
 And I am a wise man. Who then is he  
 Who, when I make wise utterance,  
 Winks and shaketh his folly rod?  
 Who is he who fellows with me,  
 Making one with my path as I make on  
 'Pon the trend of hours?  
 I may not sit and commune with myself  
 Announcing with conviction my own wisdom  
 While the fool winks. And I am a wise man  
 And is this my shadow, this fellow  
 In motley, who weareth a cockscomb and  
 Holdeth a staff tipped as a folly rod?

October 4, 1923.

#### DUST, DUST, DUST

Dust, dust, dust—the mould of kings,  
 Bits of the Orient, ashes of wise men,  
 The clod from the foot of a fool,  
 Dead roses, withered leaves, crumbling  
 Palaces, man's hopes and his desires,  
 The tears of ages, the stuff of all mankind.  
 Dust, dust, awaiting the hand of God  
 To intermingle and resurrect.  
 Dust, dust, dust—tomorrow unborn.  
 Dust, dust—yesterday's ashes.

January 30, 1925.

A CHILD BESIDE THE SEA

I am like a little child beside the wondrous sea,  
 Stretching wide and far with its lips to the sky's rim.  
 I am like a child about whose feet the young waves play,  
 Young waves born from the bosom of the sea, lispings old wisdom.  
 I am like a child before the wondrous sea—  
 The panting sagging sea, whose great throat holds a lolling tongue  
 so endless speaking.  
 I am like a child who stoops to play with the silver sands, while the  
 sea chants on and the waves lisp,  
 For what is wisdom or its echo to the cool sand;  
 Rather would I forget and play and wonder, keeping as a child, never  
 heeding the wisdom of the sea.  
 I am loath to learn somber wisdom,  
 And the sand is cool and slips from my fingers in a silver stream,  
 ever changeful.

December 29, 1925.

THE ESSENCE

What is the tabernacle of flesh?  
 Naught but the assemblance of atoms,  
 Held together by the essence of God.  
 What is the day, material,  
 The incident, what are these things?  
 Embers through which glows the essence,  
 The pith, the life itself which is infinite.  
 Let man utter the word God  
 And he hath encompassed the entirety of spirit.  
 Yea, he hath split his throat in the utterance.

February 26, 1926.

TO J. M. BIRD

He who would measure a sacred stuff  
 Needs offer a sacred measure.  
 He who would know God and His labor,  
 And the secrets of the universe,  
 Must know himself and must judge himself with no mercy.  
 He who would become one with creation  
 Must himself create.  
 He whose hands would lay upon the labor of God  
 Must pray for sympathy and justice.

"THE DAY'S WORK"

Behold, behold, the roadways lying stretched in grey dust-patterns  
 about the fields, curving the hillocks like necklets of ash;

And the creeping pageantry, of man, sweeping out in gentle lines upon the pathways  
of the earth:  
Yea, men who sweat, men who ache, men who anguish,  
Men who torture from crude stuffs, stones and clay, wondrous imagery which speaks  
their souls;  
Men who dip within their hearts and write scripts which the ages yet shall read;  
And men who dip within a fluid, writing that which is not thick enough to cast a  
shadow;  
Men who press their breasts upon implements of labor, striking the pregnant soil that  
it belch forth its teeming utterance;  
Men who idly dream dreams that shall stir the hearts of empires;  
Men who labor with blind eyes, never seeing, ever striving, with confusion as  
companion;  
Men who live! live to the last bitter dreg within the cup, quaffing with delight the  
potion of death—in defiance lifting the goblet;  
Men who sit within the shadow of their doubt, beholding the cup of death in fearing,  
Waiting for Tomorrow who already hath laid her hand upon the cup's brim—  
Tomorrow whose finger pointeth to Eternity!

So this is the pageantry of labor; these are the vitals of Day.  
Behold, when they stop the Day is finished.  
This is Day's labor, this intricate pattern of laboring;  
What pattern doth it weave?  
Oh, some morrow shall I stand beside the Loom with the shuttles empty—  
All these little crawling puppets of the day, each unwound of its strand of existence;  
Beholding the Plan, the Pattern God wove!

## WHIMSY

January 4, 1918.

## A DANCE WITH DEATH

There is a riotous dance with a weird strain floating.  
Encircled am I with a grewsome arm!  
Wildly I float with the shroud's cloth flying  
And the rattle of Death's frame close!

Oh, his lips are gone and his eyes are hollow,  
Pits of dark with ne'er a gleam;  
And his teeth are snagged and his jaws are set  
And the mould lies green 'pon his bones!

To a fiendish whine do we trip our way  
 And the shroud fans cool 'pon my cheek.  
 And my feet are froze and my lips are stiffed  
 As we dance the riotous maze.  
 With a rattling hand he clasps mine own  
 And his gait doth clicket much!

And I wake to start and scream aloud  
 With frenzied fear beset!  
 'Twere the curd and whey at the mid-hour's sup  
 That set me dreamin' so.

Oh, if she would only give us something plain and simple! wailed  
 Dr. W. Patience suggested:

"A puddin' bag, and a puddin' within it?" Then after the laugh  
 she wrote this whimsical set of lines in protest to the doctor's request.

September 18, 1919.

#### IN RESPONSE TO A REQUEST FOR "SOMETHING SIMPLE"

Oh, I sat upon a silken couch  
 And strummed a silver lute,  
 And sang a lay  
 Which made the day  
 Seem grey and melancholy.

I sat and sang a wordy tale  
 Of joust and war's grim splendor,  
 Of pettiskirts  
 And ruffled shirts  
 And shields and lances feathered.

Oh, I sang a lay that caused the thrush  
 To hang its head in shaming!  
 I sang my song  
 And warbled long  
 My song in sweetness streaming.

And lo, my lover sat in pain  
 Aweary growin', gaping.  
 "Mine ain," he said,  
 "Come turn the bread."  
 But I was singin', singin'!

Mr. Hamlin Garland objected to the word "legs" in a poem (see page 186),  
 whereupon Patience Worth in disdain of such delicacy, dictated the following, which  
 she called

## A WHIMSY

Behold, the dappled sky, mid-hour black  
 With golden spangles. Behold, the purple garden  
 With its fringe of moonlight. Behold, some tender  
 Morning, pale in its radiance, roseate,  
 Yea, yet canopied with a sea-green sky, and red  
 Stars growing faint in the bath of the Sun.

Behold, some eve with a gateway builded  
 Of grey cloud lined of silver and the sun  
 Peeping through yellowly gleaming.  
 Behold, some summer path, where the primrose  
 Bursts and hummingbirds dip deep, whirring.  
 All of this I hae set, yet I hae a belly, egad!

It was shocking. "I acknowledge the corn," said Mr. Garland.

March 15, 1920.

It was remarked how little of Patience's usual humor was coming and Mr. Curran begged Patience for something to make him laugh, foolishly making no stipulation whom the laugh should be on. This came and was found to be perfectly satisfactory for it produced results.

## THE NOTES OF BRASS

In that first pale hour still blushing from the night's embrace,  
 When the moon dips o'er the earth's rim and the sun comes slowly forth;  
 When the lark opeth its throat and singing, climbs the still starry sky;  
 And the brook slips through the dew-wet field, whispering cool words,  
 Little calm troths, and the reeds bend low in the marsh;  
 And the trees are heavy-swaying and the sweet scent  
 Of the damp grain floats from the valley;  
 At this holy instant I hae oft heard  
 An ass bray!

The following was given at a time of interruptions and confusion:

October 2, 1923.

I tune my lute and let my fingers strum  
 When lo, a gander squawks. I sigh  
 And sing, and out the belfry chimes  
 The bell wi' cracked sides and a heavy tongue.  
 I ply me listlessly and wait, and lo,  
 A jogging cart goes clattering by.  
 I dream me of a carol gay when lo, some wail  
 From out a distant spot breaks in,  
 Yet I must sing!

## SPARKS

Under this designation are presented a number of briefer scintillations of wisdom, wit and poetry.

MRS. R. (jokingly): Are you an individual or are you a part of the cosmic flow?

P. W.: I be me. Dusts o' me do spray 'pon airs, yet I be me.

---

Philosophy is a bony nag and her gait be woeful. He who rides must spur her well with his ain imagination.

---

Who would sickle at the sea or sow seeds upon the tides? Who would seek primroses 'pon a sand's shore or periwinkles upon a field? Yet this is the trade of men.

---

My lips are guilty things, truants the twain, announcing me fool while I roll big eyes of wisdom.

---

Mr. C.: Are we to have perpetual or practically perpetual peace? P. W.: Nay, while man's pocket piece be self.

Let me believe in the instant  
And I need not fear the hour.  
Let me believe in myself,  
Whereby doing homage to Him  
Who hath created me.

The greatest o' jests be that upon the Great One; that He hath hung within the jaws o' man the tung that may wag jests back unto Him.

Who said that love was fire?  
I know that love is ash.  
It is the thing which remains  
When the fire is spent,  
The holy essence of experience.

The company debated the meaning of a remark by Patience, who said, disgustedly, "I sneeze on dust o' wits."

Oh man, acknowledge thy undoing!  
 In thy intricate wording thou hast evolved  
 A gnat! While thou wert busy in the complication  
 Lo, the butterfly of wisdom flitted hence, and thou art undone.

Potent is the balm of love and smiles.

The sprite whose fair reflection satisfies thee is a dream child called Peaceful  
 Heart.

The teaching of the cat: to drowse but keep an eye to the corner gnawed.

Build ye four walls and call it God's country?

SUBJECT GIVEN BY W. F. P.: "TOADSTOOLS"

Witcheries of dank, dark places;  
 Magic of the sod, like wits,  
 Bespring from whence—from where?

Feb. 18, 1922.

Mrs. L. brought Mrs. Curran a lovely original drawing of the head of a little child.  
 Some one asked for a poem about it.

P. W.: Caught from the realms of fancy like a dartling dove,  
 Held prisoner an instant in imagination,  
 Which pricked the finger-tips with the Kingship of God—Creation.

Then the following subjects were proposed:

*Paris*

A peafowl with its graceful neck turned forward  
 Hungry for the garden, languishing for its perfume,  
 A peafowl so—with an arrow deep within its heart.

[Probably the "arrow" refers to deaths, etc., caused by the war.]

*London*

Well, I'm sayin' you, 'tis a sogged puddin',  
 Heavy o' wit, smug in honor, yea, honorable with age.

*Rome*

A land of dreams and dreaming, where mystery  
 Comes forth as mist in early morning,  
 Verdant in spirit, spiritual in labor.



*New York*

A gaudy bubble paused, reflecting the motley day;  
 A tenuous thing, a magic thing, the culmination  
 Of man's desire, the pinnacle of his attainment,  
 A gaudy bubble.

While wisdom lisps, fools speak plain words.

Yea, and the lisp is wisdom and the plain words, folly.

And wisdom, seeing this thing, learneth to speak glibly and her speech is called learning.

But it weareth cap, and bells!

The ass be the best o' man, for he shutteth up and standeth firm be he madded,  
 and man looseth and spitteth forth and setteth him a pace upon a path o' ruin. Then  
 'tis best that ye be ass. Yea, did the ass to ope o' lips and speak forth, then would he  
 ope the eyes o' sages, for wisdom past the sage hath he. Yea, and many wise saws o'  
 sages deck them in asses ears.

*Death*

Cheap pence paid for eternity and yet man whines!

Mrs. S. asked for a good night.

P.W.: What is good night save an announcement of the faith that morning comes?  
 What is good night? A pleasant dream, a short suspense, the interchanging of the sun  
 and moon, the snuffing of the stars and then—good morning."

All creation is subordinate unto Man, for Man is God without His Understanding,  
 seeking the Source of his own creation; he questioneth and becometh confused, for he  
 would drink the Infinite with a Finite Cup.

Oh, that ye knew that wisdom seeketh upon a mountain top the Great God when  
 He is upon the wings of the linnet that flieth the valley.

SUBJECT GIVEN: "MOTHERHOOD"

The vestal virgins of the Great God  
 Bend in willing agony, flinging  
 The gateway wide twixt There and Here  
 For His approach!

SUBJECT GIVEN: "MOTHERHOOD"

The compliment of God, for even HE knelt at the foot of womanhood that he  
 make entry unto earth.

On a flower out of a bulb growing on the table.

Behold the clod! It lies beneath the sun, the hours, caress it and it cometh forth God.

So doth morning upon the pool of Eternity,  
Lift her face Godward, as a lotus opening her leaves,  
Her pale face flushing.

Each man measureth his own God. He maketh a purse to contain Him of his own wisdom, and tauts the cord.

Methinks that of all the gifts from Thy prolific hand, laughter, next to love, is dearest.

---

SUBJECT GIVEN WAS "HOPE"

P. W.: The seine each man flings to the water of the day, and ah, the motley catch! And yet, and yet each morrow men do cast and cast, and e'er shall cast and cast and cast.

SUBJECT GIVEN: "COMEDY"

The fingers of wit tickling the fat side of wisdom.

Lest I be overfretful, give me labor.  
Lest I be overweary of my labor,  
Give me joy. Lest I be overjoyful  
Give me sorrow. Lest I be oversorrowful  
Give me understanding.

Into the sea of Eternity cast thee thy net and bring forth thy God that I behold him! I may place him upon the point of a sand's grain while my God idly lets the sand of Eternity slip His fingers! Thou denyest mine and I acknowledge thine as an atom of mine!

How can we see and know God? Miss H. asked.

P. W.: Ope up thy heart, dame, and look unto the babe's palm, Yea, and unto the deep o' the sky's arch. Yea, and feel athin thy heart the throb that telleth thee He hath smote thy lute.

Life is but a jest—and Death, why Death laughs at the jest.

Wisdom scratcheth the itch of the lout, while learning searcheth for the flea!

SUBJECT GIVEN: "IDENTITY"

Of all of mystery this thing be the canniest. Think 'pon it. Poured like sand from the maw of eternity, man teems and teems, each pithed of a self, each containing an atom of Him, This is His cunning—alike unto all, unlike in all.

## SUBJECT GIVEN: "MRS. CURRAN"

Mine ain harp. A woeful one at times, tuned o' self a whit, but withal my harp.

MRS. G.: "I am the captain of my soul."

"Yet my bark sails within the cup of His hand," completed Patience.

## SUBJECT GIVEN: "WORRY"

'Tis self woein'. 'Tis the moth of day.

The grey nun Night kneels; Atween her fingers the rosary of stars Slips one by one.

## SUBJECT GIVEN: "FEAR"

The undergarment of every armor. Man moutheth over words, and hangeth his wisdom with garments of words. Man knoweth certainties which even God doubteth.

He who would sing within a day, a dinning, dinning day, must needs create a turret for his soul, lifting its head among the clouds, veiling its latticed windows o'er o' the tendrilled vine o' fancy.

Dr. S. mentioned consciousness and conscience. Patience gave this definition of the two.

Consciousness is an evidence of the separateness with which God has created each man.

Conscience is the wailing of ego o'er its own consciousness.

Oh, think ye upon it, beloved, out of chaos He hath called thee and me; I to sing and thee to listen.

## SUBJECT GIVEN: "MARTIN LUTHER"

Bit of ego, he announces truth and brands ye with fire save ye sup it. He was just and awful, and awful and just.

## SUBJECT GIVEN: "NAPOLEON"

Who is he who steps from out the multitude And announces him above his brother! Fate plays with atoms and one is flung Upon a pinnacle and this is chance, Yet he played with the hours and incidents, As fate plays, and won and lost!

## SUBJECT GIVEN: "JOAN OF ARC"

Crucible of a tortured day through which a holy wine distilled, e'en pouring a living stuff to an empty tide, broken by the hand of ingratitude.

On November 15, 1914, 'Mrs. H. asked for "A Grace."  
 Send thou the bread to make  
 The hearth to bake  
 And take thy thanks from out the porridge-pot  
 (We asked if this was a grace.)  
 Nay, dis-grace.

Hallowe'en night, 1914, 'Mrs. P. asked "A Toast."  
 I pledge confusion here to fate!  
 Let's click the bumper to her own undoing.  
 I wish ye sorrow, then; enough to fill my cup already overfull,  
 And joys to fill it, now I've drunk thy toast.

At the end of the sitting Mrs. P. asked Patience for an inscription for the cup she was going to give to Mr. Reedy for Christmas (1915). Without any hesitancy this came:

Fill ye not thy cup with bitter brew  
 But sweet thee ever it with love:  
 The day, the bowl; the hours, the brew;  
 And friends the sweetening o' it.

Mrs. Thompson had called up and asked Mrs. Curran to ask Patience for a class motto. We recalled this and asked Patience if she would give it. This came:

There be nay goal like unto womanhood.

## SUBJECT GIVEN: "A FIELD OF DAFFODILS"

...The great God, in a sudden mercy, bent and kissed the field; And lo! the soil was pregnant, and gave forth a golden smile.

## SUBJECT GIVEN: "THE JOYS OF CHILDHOOD, THE HOPE OF YOUTH, THE RESIGNATION OF AGE"

Wisdom, unto childhood, is a mother who leads,  
 And then the man learns, and his wisdom becomes complicate; he leads  
 wisdom with his learning.  
 With age cometh a fuller understanding; he discardeth learning and  
 returns to fuller wisdom.

## SUBJECT GIVEN: "THE REGRETS OF YESTERDAY AND HOPES OF TOMORROW"

Why mourn o'er yesterday? God is mute, and sends tomorrow as His answer.

## SUBJECT GIVEN: "THE JOY OF LIVING"

Make me a fellow, a pawn beneath Thy hand.  
 This is Thy game, and I an atom in the great, great play;  
 Move me! Slav me! Use me! Let me fall!  
 What is this? This is Thy game and I Thy pawn. PLAY ME!

## SUBJECT GIVEN: "CHAINED TO THE GALLEY OF AMBITION"

I bleed, I sweat, I writhe in agony—to attain;  
 What an empty dream!  
 For today I hold the covet-prize, and tomorrow it is gone.  
 I bleed, I writhe, I agonize, I am upon the rack of desire;  
 There is salt in my wounds, for I sweat in agony to attain,  
 And having attained the day I meet Death—and have lost.

I am sustained by myself and by my oneness with God.  
 I am unafraid of tomorrow, for I have known today;  
 And having known today, know all the coming morrows.

P. W. began to make wishes for persons present of which this is a sample:  
 I shall set thee a wishing 'pon thy path.  
 That the sprite of happiness shall follow thee and  
 When thee wouldst sorry, tickle thee!

On several occasions such "wishings" were asked for and immediately banded out.  
 Here are some of the results after one such request, the prefaced names being those of  
 the persons for whom they were meant.

MR. CURRAN: "That the measure He dealeth thee be aweighted against thy great heart."

MR. YOST: "That thy words take wings like unto the birds that rose at His bidding.

MRS. YOST: "That ye know no thing be shut awither when thou leavest thy heart ope. That ye know that the bread I have set hath come out thy heart, for sharin' meaneth love and I hae ta'en o' thee and wove 'pon the woof o' thy heart."

MRS. CURRAN: "That ye—(cease thy tongue!) shall weary, thereby knowin' His labor, for this is the fullness o' all things."

MRS. C. had stopped and said she was afraid of her.

PATIENCE WEE: "That the chalice o' days shall pour purity 'pon her."

Wishings of September 19, 1923, given at request:

MRS. G.: I'd trick sunlight to linger longer than the day for thee."

MRS. P.: Would that I had a golden ball of joy, beloved one, what a game of catch we'd play."

MRS. S.: "Had I a cake, a wee seeded cake, ah wenchie. I ken who I'd seek." [Mrs. S. was always anxious for sweet messages.] Mr. C. wanted something sterner. Patience gave him this: "A sterner stuff, eh sirrah? Weel, were I to wish thee Justice, 'twould be vain. Should I wish thee understandin', 'twould be the same."

MRS. C.: "When a wee 'un ha'e a sweet, what need ye offer more (This referred to Mrs. Curran's baby.)"

Wishings of November 13, 1919:

MR. T.: "That tomorrows shall ever be gentle with thee and that todays shall never leave within thy hand a bitter memory."

MRS. SH.: "That thy hands shall never find 'labor fretful. That a fairy dame shall whisper thee dreams to Intermingle with thy labor."

MRS. L.: "That mercy shall lift thine eyelids and sunlight warm thy heart. That God in His mercy shall lend thee His hand."

MRS. ST.: "Seven witches upon thee! Each witch with a joy a-laden; for having seven, lo, they shall interchange thee through thy days."

MRS. P.: "That thy tongue's root shall keep silent the wisdom which is there until it floweth like a stream from its tip. Then shall it be purified and the sup thou offerest man shall quench his thirst."

"I shall say me a blessin' 'pon thee all."

*A Patience Worth Blessing*

This hour, this hour, a chalice. Unto its golden cup  
 We have poured our love, for there be not one man  
 Who may honestly disclaim that he hath taken within  
 His heart, God. Mayhap to refuse Him an abiding place;  
 But His shadow hath rested upon him.  
 Behold, from this instant we disperse and His shadow  
 Shall follow thee. I say that tomorrow at some instant  
 Of time, each of thee shall stop, and I, like a moth  
 Shall flit thee, and thou shalt remember Him.  
 I charge thee; it shall be!

We now asked her for something to send out to friends for Christmas and she gave Mrs. Curran a picture of a card with a little candle in each corner, one red and one green. Between the candles she gave a greeting and underneath each candle gave a verse pertaining to each.

[A sample follows.—Ed.]

When my substance hath become ash, Then shall the witchery of forgetfulness be  
 thine, And yesterday shall contain nothing within her wine Save the sweetness of the  
 grape!

## ONE EVENING'S WORK

Suppose that any living poet you can name were to have more than thirty subjects fired at him one after another in a single evening, and attempt to improvise, with the result that he orally delivered 32 short poems and 7 more or less witty and aphoristic remarks, the whole containing 1360 words! Is there one who would dare be put to the test? If so, what would the result be? After a recognized American poet, Edgar Lee Masters, had listened to the improvisation of a number of poems by Patience Worth on subjects given, he was asked if he knew of any writer who could do the like, and replied "There is but one answer to that question, it simply cannot be done."

Almost universally the poets employ time and reflection and pains upon their work, and after the first draft of a set of verses is made, go over it and revise, some of them repeatedly. A single draft of Pope's *Essay on Man* shows so many cancellations and interlineations that it is almost impossible to read the manuscript, and yet this is but one of the stages the poem went through. Perhaps a work which on the face of it is so finished and precise is not a good one for comparison. Take, then, the poems of Walt Whitman, which seemingly go to the other extreme in presenting an appearance of spontaneity and carelessness. Yet David McKay in his Preface tells us: "Perhaps no author was more given to change than Walt Whitman," and almost every page has footnotes listing alterations from one edition to another. And of course these tell nothing about the alterations in the original manuscript, before reaching the press.

This evening's work, 32 brief poems, and 7 other utterances, each started a few seconds after the subject was given by some one of the company present, contains no alteration either at the time or subsequently, but is here given as Patience Worth dictated and her words were taken down. As literature it is, of course, what it is, irrespective of all the facts connected with its delivery. But as a mental phenomenon these facts—(1) subjects given her, (2) the composition done before a critical company watching her, (3) no appreciable delay in her responses, (4) no change of a word by her at the time, (5) no subsequent editing—must be taken into consideration.

Mind, I am not claiming that Patience Worth is the greatest of poets,—I am not ranking her at all, but only furnishing comparisons and facilities to aid the reader in assigning what rank he will. But

surely it is not partisanship to say that if on this evening she never rose to the heights of Wordsworth's "Ode on Intimations of Immortality," she at least never sank to the turgid prose of some of his longer compositions or to the drivel of his "Peter Bell" type of verse. The merit of her evening's work rises and falls, of course. The lines to which I venture to call especial attention are printed in italics.

The dictation was done on the evening of January 12, 1926, at Strauss's Studio in St. Louis, before the Current Topics Club.

## LAVENDAR AND LACE

Foibles; yea, trumpery, in which to deck my lady.  
Soft, billowy, clinging—a robe, mayhap,  
All scented sweet of lavender.

P. W. REMARK: Nay, list ye!

## LAVENDAR AND LACE (Symbolized)

*A purple sky; twilight, Silver-fringed of tremorous stars; Cloud rifts, tattered, as old lace, And a shuttling moon—wan-faced, seeking.*

*Twilight, and garden shadows; The liquid note of some late songster; And the scent of lavender and rue, Like memory of the day aching!*

## ABRAHAM LINCOLN

Behold, how humility, faith, and simplicity write with sure hand a luminous script 'pon the page of day!

## WILLIAM MARION REEDY

He wert my fellow, wide, deep, and all-giving; His hand wert oped, and his heart—oped as a tabernacle, Offering thee a sanctuary.

He wert my fellow, wide, deep, and all-giving; His wert a short span of fellowship and following.

## THE DOCTORS OF HER DAY

P. W. REMARK: A sorry lot, eh? Aye, and they did for to seek of root and herb;—aye, and play 'pon the wit, or the lackin' o' it!



## THE CASE OF PATIENCE WORTH

J. C. STRAUSS

Behold, the board we grace!  
 Let's up a mug for him who founded it:  
 Lo, wert his labor a part of his play,  
 And his play a part of his labor.  
 He was one with childhood,  
 And IS one with humanity.  
 Behold, such a man!  
 He lives in the bosom of his God, familiarly!

## THE SPHINX

Mystery of ages! Labor, unlearned, hath created thee.  
 Some emblem, mayhap: gazing through the stilly night  
 And through the searing days, at all the writhing caravans of life.  
 Mystery—yet surely announced with a certain tongue,  
 Thou art the labor of the past holding the raiment of today!

## FRIENDSHIP

The staff in the hand of man that he may traverse the rugged path of day;  
 The cup in the hand of man that he may drink when he is thirsted;  
 LOVE in the heart of man when passion hath burned out!

## ANOTHER ON FRIENDSHIP

Let me be a fool in motley on a whimsy path.  
 Let me be a fool without bread, without shoon, without pence.  
 Let the day deal what it will.  
 Beloved God, give me friends,  
 And I will wink at life and play!

## THE FINITE AND THE INFINITE

Behold Him! The pith of chaos,  
 That certain *God, who, with a sure hand,*  
*Creates the universes, swings suns and moons,*  
*And lets the stars drip from his fingertips.*  
*Behold Him step upon the barren sod,*  
*And it spurteth, quickened by Him.*  
 Behold Him, the hunger urge within the breast of every man,  
 Seeking, seeking, seeking back to the certain spot.  
 Behold this INFINITE love,  
 The honey of which holds the atoms of the day together;  
 The honey of which hangs the universes suspended  
 In a beauteous harmony held fast;  
 The honey of which is GOD.  
 Man and matter, finite, are but thirsty vessels  
 Man for knowledge and for wisdom, matter for quickening.

## THE GOLDEN RULE

P. W. REMARK: The law of living, and egad, how oft doth man remember it?

## THE GOLDEN RULE (Poem)

To deal justice; to make thy heart quick with mercy, and with understanding;  
 To make thy hand slow in dealing aught save mercy;  
 To make thee companionable fully with the day  
 In a sure understanding;  
 To measure thyself first, and find how light the measure is,  
 And lay that 'pon the beam of thy brother,  
 Ere thou measurest him!

## PRESIDENT COOLIDGE

A sure hand on the wheel, I'd say.  
 One without vanity; with much Justice,  
 And great quietude!

## THE MIRACLE

A dream, of justice clothed in beauty,  
 And Mary made to bear. A dream!

## ANOTHER ON "THE MIRACLE"

What of a pageant, mute, yet eloquent?  
 What of the gaudy pageantry?  
 What of the symbolized miracle?  
 None of this is half so wondrous  
 As the labor man hath presented  
 And the ideal he hath offered.

There be nae miracle like the Miracle of one day!

## PEACE

Day is turmoil, din, confusion!  
 Learning is more confusion, more dinning!  
 Wisdom is simplicity, understanding!

## WORLD COURT

An enviable attainment can it be  
 Yet man must pocket his egotry,  
 As I hae said,  
 Else, sic an thing may ne'er to come.  
 A country be naught but the voice of her men.  
 Remember this!

## POMPEII

*Like a jewel of pearls about the hillock's throat;  
 The proud, proud hillock, with her head of fire!  
 Like a necklet of pearls about her false, false throat—  
 An instant, and behold!  
 The labor of Time becometh naught but ash and smouldering ember.*

## PRESIDENT WILSON

Behold ye, he shall for to lift his head from out today.  
 He shall for to speak unto a newer day,  
 For he hath spoke, hath been, hath acted, and IS for e'er and aye!

## MARY STUART

See what vanity can do! Tip a scarlet cup of hot, hot wine,  
 A draught—a heady draught. Egad, it cost *her* head!

## A CONSTRUCTION ENGINEER

He hath the inheritance of creation;  
 In this he is a fellow with God.  
 God hath bestowed upon him the  
 quickness of His hand,  
 And the creative element of His mind,  
 And he, in turn, creates!

## THE PRESS

The gab wench of the day!

## DIANA MANNERS

*Behold her! frail, chaste, inclined to sorrow;  
 Hand-eloquent, mute-lipped, portraying the Mother of Sorrows!  
 Behold her! A holy mantle hath fallen upon her,  
 For she uttereth prayer in action!*

## PATIENCE WORTH

*A phantom? Weel enough,  
 Prove thee thyself to me!  
 I say, behold, here I be,  
 Buskins, kirtle, cap and pettyskirts,  
 And much tongue!  
 Weel, what hast thou to prove thee?*

## SIR ISAAC NEWTON

Keen, filled of fire; pithed of desire.  
 He hath writ him in his act and made him one with man  
 Through the heritage he hath left!

## MELANCHOLY

P. W. REMARK: Coddling egotism, eh?

## MELANCHOLY (POEM)

Who said the moon would come? Who said it'  
 I have been in the garden and I found the roses heavy,  
 And the scents clinging.  
 O, I am sick of old memories! Why do they intrude?  
 Who said the sun would come? I have been out in the day  
 And I saw nothing but turmoil. I am distraught, for I dream.  
 Who said the stars would come and keep me tryst?  
 I, who am so alone—yea, I am alone!

(Added Remark)

Poor company, eh?

## GOETHE

What a song—and what an understanding!  
 What harmony, what magic trick was his!  
 Behold! he hath made his tongue holy  
 Through his use in utterance of it!

## GIBRALTAR

P. W. REMARK. We'el, bein' a wraith-like being—a shadow—it  
 matter not the whence nor whither, eh?

## GIBRALTAR (Poem)

*Beacon 'gainst which the ocean swirls,  
 Mutely, thou standest, age upon age, while the waters woo.  
 Mutely, thou standest, erect, watchful, in silence,  
 A symbol which answereth the turmoil in the Ocean's throat!*

## GALILEO

What hath led thee? What faith sustained thee?  
 What taper led thee thus to labor with surety,  
 And yet with wonderment?

## MUSIC

The voice of joy!  
 It may not be born,  
 Save through sorrow and blood;  
 But when it is born, and wailed,  
 It is joy!

## THE CASE OF PATIENCE WORTH

## THE FLAPPER

*They dare what the past hoped for!*

## THE WOMEN OF HER DAY

Chattels; beasties, verily. Ye should have seen me mither's thumb—flat with the twistin' o' flax, and me in buskins, alookin' at the castle, and dreaming dreams!

## PEARL CURRAN

Aline ain harp, a whit awry—but mine ain harp, withal!

## ANTIGONE

Beauty, yea, and blood!  
One fellow with the other in that day. Beauty, aye, and blood!  
And the bloody script writeth the page for history!

## IMMORTALITY

How can I say this thing called Immortality, the ever-is?  
When it is, there be nae sic a thing as aught else.  
The hope of man be in symbol, answered each day—  
And he will not read.

(Added Remark) Immortality IS.

## SPIRITUALISM

The act of being simple.

## A MESSAGE

Be there aught sae wondrous  
As a cup of communion? as a cup of fellowship?  
Be there aught sae wondrous to a wench  
As a right to wield her tongue, and good listeners?  
Be there aught sae wondrous as the fact  
That we may never, never, in the days to come, be separate?  
For I have become a part of thee, and thou hast become a part of me!  
This is an holy sacrament!

## PATIENCE WORTH'S ESTIMATE OF HER POEMS

Whether original or reflected from others, Patience Worth has confidence that her poetry is good and that it is good for people to read it. It may be that testimony from others to the literary excellence of them and to their spiritual helpfulness strengthened that confidence, but I think that she had it from the start, for from the start she spoke as one who had authority, and one who was conscious of a mission. There is something about her tone throughout, however, that saves her claims from the appearance of conceit. It is like some mother talking to her small children, who feels no pride that she knows more than they. Patience Worth seems to imply that she has had the advantage of experience and viewpoints that make it inevitable that she should be able to counsel those who have had but a few years on this mundane sphere, and powers which have been ripened in the more favorable climate where she professes to dwell. And not infrequently she takes pains to remind us that she is in some sense, as she believes, a messenger from God, commissioned in her way to speak for Him. I quote some of her conversational utterances.

Ye should see the wee gray dame. Such an mothie, that spinneth beauteous web!

---

I shall play with words like castinets. I shall set them twinkling like stars, yea and make them pale and langorous. I shall burn them of passion and wreak them dizzy of twisting. He who keepeth apace shall find him a lout at the prancin'.

---

I weave not, nay but neath these hands shall such a word set up, that Earth shall burn with wonder.

---

I should sing even though the winds arose and blew down my throat my song. Yea, I would swallow it and make it become a part of my flesh so that when the flesh had become dusts, behold through His magic, some field should spurt blooms more sweetly scented. Give birth unto a song! Even if it dieth at its first sound, it hath struck the bell of time.

---

There be a much ado and yet I say me unto thee it shall be that this barque shall sail upon clear seas unto the Day and no man shall know from whither, but men shall seek and take of her store.

Again, she declares that there are

Them o' Earth that shall seek o' this brew o' me, when they have filled and emptied at o'er-sick 'pon the wines o' Earth. Verily, I do say me so.

---

Miss B. (From France) Patience, I feel like you are like our own Jeanne d' Arc.

P. W. Inasmuch as thou hast spoken it, thy sainted One hath but breathed Him unto thee! And I be such an atom, such an wee sma' one, who led nay host, but would share o' Him.

---

Man may not measure the grain of my words for they are not mine. They are phantom things, becoming within thee a new thing, thereby quickening the God within thee.

---

It mattereth not that man take in that that I have set. Lo, it be truth, and even though it weareth not the pettiskirt that man desireth yet still it be truth and still it shall live.

Behold, of base stuffs I have tortured out beauties. Of beauteous stuffs have I created new beauties. Of wastes have I builded up much and of littles have I created monstrous things. Let any man behold that that this hand hath delivered and be may not say within his heart "nay" for it is builded of the magic of love and with the trickery of magic is he undone. Any man may deny God. It is but the lapping of waves, his denials, and God is the rock.

---

For thy handmaid came her back with but her song, and His lute, and nay hand that might strum it that thou mightest hear. Yet look! earth hath come and offered hands for the doing. Thou hast spoken not but hast said that all be His. This is well, and see ye unto it that thou dost hold Him up as a gleaming brand for the lighting of all paths, and not thy grey damie.

---

Unto thee who have eaten; forget thy handmaid and remember Him who walketh beside thee, even as thy shadow.

---

Look ye unto it; thy handmaid hath said that that she hath created is Him and thereby it shall live. Even so then, is that that she hath created not the handiwork of her, but the bearing of Him within a cup.

Look, more, it may e'en be that thy handmaid shall be caused by the tungs of earth to crumble and fade e'en as her flesh hath, but ah, ah, ah, the joy! He shall remain.

After much reading and discussion Mrs. McK. put the question: Why don't more people believe in you?

P. W.: What then, thou art at the puttin' o' words at the quizzin' o' me? Look thou I He hath died tides and tides agone, and thou knowest 'tis 'pon Earth them o' Him who still wag them nay!

The last sentence, as the reader may have divined, means that Jesus Christ died a long while ago, but there are still people who talk sceptically about him. The same 'Mrs. McK. was anxious to spread knowledge of the Patience Worth literature, for the good she believed it would do. Patience Worth responded:

Look, they handmaid fashioneth out loaves and thou dost take athin thy hand o' the crumbs o' this bread and cast unto them ahungered. And behold, thy handmaid careth not for the why nor the why nots o' the Earth's day! Nay, for look, this loaf, this crumb thou casteth, thou casteth for Him. And if it be trod 'neath the feet o' Earth still it be casted and thy work done.

But it must not be supposed that Patience Worth did not fully realize that some of her work was much inferior to other pieces. She not infrequently made remarks indicating her dissatisfaction, as when she called some verse a "pot-scrape." Sometimes a second attempt followed immediately upon the same subject.

Here are a few of the poems which indicate Patience Worth's delight in her own work, as art, and her belief in it as spiritually uplifting. First a picture of herself as a grey moth, fluttering through the portals of heaven impelled by love to eat in the cloth that veils the grey days of mortals, places through which light may come. Whether or not one is so "tough-minded" that he cannot entertain for a moment the thought of a returned intelligence, he can at least appreciate the beauty of the lines.

July 13, 1919.

#### THE GREY MOTH

Out the silence of that vasty Dark, through the heaven's portals,  
 What hap should a grey moth whose wings be sped of love  
 And whose urge wert but desire to eat the grey days' cloth to tatters,  
 Letting through the light—what hap should such a moth flee forth?

Surely He would not withhold its joy but let His mild eyes close  
 And smile at the fluttering wings.



Sept. 29, 1923.

I HAVE GIVEN THEE BREAD AND WINE

What dost thou need, O my, beloved?  
 Ne'er shalt thou turn unto thy board  
 Save thou shalt find bread and a sup  
 Of sweet wine. Yea, I have given thee  
 Bread, a common bread, the bread  
 Of kinship unto all men, and a wine  
 For to set thee dreaming and keep  
 Thy fancy bright-winged.

Thee mightest not lone, for thou wouldst find  
 My songs like worn vessels  
 To thy hand, turned in loving.  
 Thou mayst ne'er go ye free again  
 Without me, for I have writ me  
 On the sky and on the footflowers.

I am like blossoms on the hedges.  
 I am in the waters of the sea.  
 Yea, I am in the cup of every flower;  
 On the wings of the gnat; in the clod;  
 At thy very foot. I am in the sand  
 On the seashores. I am a part  
 Of the kiss of the water on the sand.  
 I am the quick of thy garden and the key  
 In the archway of thy doorway.  
 Hours nor tides may not efface me.  
 I shall stand beside the gate of the day,  
 And follow thee unto the spot  
 Where night makes covenant with rest.

July 22, 1918.

MY SONG

What rich song would I unloose  
 Like a flock of restless birds ascending,  
 Neither clinging to a path, but swerving,  
 Out and far and up and down, making music  
 Knock the dull doors of gloom  
 To unloose sorrow and let it free.

Oh, I would see it try its heavy wings  
 And forget its weariness and speed away  
 To bathe in the sunlight. I would let forth  
 My melody like a shimmering cloth,  
 Spun of gold and sapphires. It shall glint

And gleam, marking the dull hours with its splendor.  
 I shall lay it as a footcloth for His sons  
 And daughters. Lo, I would garland the air  
 With such perfume that the notes  
 Would be bathed of it, until the sweetness  
 And the melody should unloose laughter  
 From its prison, letting it sport  
 With its nimble feet like some slender fawn  
 Poised upon the brink or gracefully skimming  
 O'er the way and opening up joy to all  
 Who would behold it. I would make new notes  
 Whose beginning are sobs and whose endings  
 Are laughter. Lo, I would work magic  
 And witchery upon my song, so that  
 No man might not hark. Lo, I would Create  
 A sprite, not one whit more than a sandsgrain  
 In height, and not one whit heavier than down  
 So that it might sit within a man's ear  
 And woo him. And when he would pluck it forth  
 Lo, it would sink deeper, aye, and lodge  
 Within his heart. He may not deny it, this song.  
 Oh, I would take the earth by the hand  
 And with nimble toes would I spring  
 O'er the rough places, taking it after me.  
 Lo, I would pipe such an lay, that when Earth  
 Had danced until weary, she would lie down  
 In thankful rest.

Sept. 6, 1916.

#### MINE IS A SILVER LYRE

Mine is a silver lyre  
 With dulcet strings. Aye,  
 And I know its melodies.  
 They are familiar to my ears.  
 But I would sing a new song;  
 I would smite its slender strings  
 With a hand of mastery,  
 Making their silver tremble forth  
 With their utmost melodies  
 Until it seemed they wept in anguish.

I would let them then  
 Lie listlessly against my arm  
 Allowing the winds to play upon them  
 A noteless lay, yet perfect;

For it is His breath,  
 And its first touch would waken  
 The soul of my lyre  
 To unknown singing.

Oh I know the lyre that is mine  
 And its lacking, and I would make  
 It perfect by allowing it  
 To rest beneath His kiss.

\* \* \* \* \*

I am but a babe, making little puppets of clay;  
 Yet, mayhap, on some day, von and yon, some philosopher,  
 May walk beside the spot, and seeing my love-task, smile!

Subject given: "THE NOTICE OF PATIENCE WORTH"

Wit is the bead upon the cup, wisdom is the wine,  
 Learning is the froth, and love the sweet if there be any.  
 What is my voice?—a vague thing carrying naught but a song,  
 Some wisdom, little learning, keen atimes.  
 I have naught to enthrall thee save that ye would drink with me  
 A common cup of understanding.  
 Lo, I proffer thee the wine of my being—for I have lived.  
 I proffer thee wine which is bitter—for I have wept.  
 I proffer thee wine which is sweet—for I have loved.  
 I proffer thee wine which is salt—for I have sweat.  
 I proffer thee wine rich in dreams—for I, too, have dreamed.  
 No man, however his tongue be keen, can do more.

## DISCOURSES

None of the following five sample discourses by P. W. is given in its entirety. The second and third came in response to questions, the others spontaneously. I have slightly altered the language of the Sermon on Love, only by modernizing forms of some words. The disquisition on Life and Evolution, and that on Reincarnation are printed exactly as they were taken down.

### *Sermon on Love*

September 30, 1916.

\*List:

Ne'er with mouthing, with filling full ones of choice stuffs taken from out the Word, may Earth's heart be balmed.

Behold, His houses, built by them that mouth, be bowls. And they fashion from out of their own fancy, dipped within the tallow of their own folly, a god that fitteth the cup.

No word, nor yet linen, nor yet stuff, even a goodly black, may make a feeder of His sheep. Those of Earth who mouth and deal His words like the rich man to the beggar, should know that this be not theirs to shew and deal; that they are not tending their flocks, but His. Yea, and the tending is within His hands, and the words but grains that they should deal freely to the fold.

The staff is not within their hands; nay, they be but as the feeders of swine, even so lowly.

He that shall arise and claim naught, but deal, not unto them that already have, but unto them that have not, and deal in full loving, and not in the spirit of him that feedeth his flocks and longeth that they fatten and shall bring full price, shall bold unto the earth a new light.

Man may glut him within his spirit even so as unto his flesh.

They should deal not their world's goods through the hands of the chosen [through agents?]. Nay, but go like unto Him, open-hearted, open-handed, opened full wide in loving; and deal with thine own hand, and the pence shall hold love's own balm of healing.

Unto all of you there be a brother; and would each man take unto him one brother—look ye, there would show then no hunger nor woe, and Earth should be wrapped within a cloth wove by the hands of all men; and this cloth would be love.

Hath a man much, then should he deal unto the one who needeth little of his much, that he make much. Hath a man less, he should deal unto one who needeth of his less, that he make more. And this goeth on and on, even unto him who hath naught save a smile.

They bide their brothers; even their walls' windows set with bars [criminals in jails]. But hark; no bar shall uproot the evil, no wall shall shut it away. Nay, within the wee cradle should they reach in love.

Think, ye men who from out Earth have plucked her stores; what may ye buy? Gilded stuffs, gauds, baubles; when ye might see some dull eye ope and look on high—some darkened one whose in-man lieth cast into the depths. Think ye on it! Wilt ye of His stuffs, or Him?

Wilt thou dance upon the sands and see His wee crafts sink? Have thine eyes shut unto the broken ones that cling unto the stripped hark, stripped by thy hands, dumbly striving that they port?

Nay, nay, brother, if this be true, list! Even though thou dost dance, dance, the tide shall slip away, on, on, on from the golden sands, and leave thee dancing. And thou shalt pluck up the broken beams, the sea's drift, and build thine own craft out of the wastes, or thou shalt fail.

Yea, and the sun shall fail thee at thy building. More, hark; the hull shall be thy heart, and he it not staunch and strong, but filled of follies; if thou leavest not the filling of it but pluck out loves and cast

them unto the winds; hark, thou shalt sink. For how may a broken thing hold fast?

Thy handmaid chideth thee; be at thy building while there be stuffs [material]. Build while thine eyes be sealed unto the Here. Build even now, brother, that thou mayest cease thy building and be at His tasks when thou comest here.

For even though thou sinkest, thou shalt come forth by thine own hands!

The wise ones who chatter words but built not out of their hearts nor yet lovingly with their hands, shall pluck up dry twigs and weave them a cloth to hide their nakedness Here.

Behold, they offer unto His, the cross, yea, and show His suffering. Yea, they hold it on high. They offer it in words and say that men should bend unto the sign, they speak whining words. I say that be who offereth it to his brother should sink upon his knees in loving and through tears and smiles offer it in loving; not in pity-loving, but loving—loving.

More, Earth seeth her folly; for look ye, He is shut within walls, while I speak; the stones upon the pathways should cry Him out. Yea, when brother saith "Good morning, brother," there should be the love within the word and the smile one unto the other that tell that He abideth in thee.

Within thy hands hath stood the grain, His precious words; even within thy hearts is writ his suffering; and thou hast stood and watched His own turn them away, and lended not thy hand in loving dealing; knew ye not thy brother?

Lands be lands, but brothers be brothers upon all lands.

You see the crafts of Him sinking, and you have danced. O Earth, O Earth, awake! The cross standeth even now dripping with thy brother's blood. Was not His sacrifice enough?

Cast thy love wide. Ope up. Man, if thou art His son, raise thou His blade of love not hate. Till His lands and plant ye love and make His harvest rich.

### *Life and Evolution*

May 14, 1917.

Look ye, e'en the dusts be but dusts till the tide cometh that they seek them a completing. Blown 'pon His breath they fall them through the vasts in agonies o' nothingness. Aye, and become gladsome when they seek the light and cling one unto the other, and thereby be not the dusts but a thing.

Thereby is the firmament builded up. Even so it is unbuilded, thereby leaving new and free the dusts for more of fashioning. See ye then, the flesh is but that that He did create for the bowls o' all things. Aye, and it is but a transient thing. Aye, a-lended, ne'er thine. Yet the new fashioning is ever new, for it is Him and of Him. Thereby no

thing is e'er the same. Yet each bowl is perfect in itself. Mayhap the hand o' man hath dashed it, but the filling is out man's hand and is perfect.

It may be not now, nor now, nor now, 'but then, and then, and then. But it is what it is, which is Him, and He being the perfect Father may not beget a less perfect son. Nay, for the mother o' His son is the field o' love, which is the eternities.

Eternity's fruit poureth unto the universe; for the rooting and fashioning new createth the life's flame which is Him within a new bowl ta'en o' the dusts that it may become a shape,—a thing binded together complete in its atoms which set up a throbbing, its note o' the ever-song.

E'en there be them that ha'e but a whit o' melody, but He needeth o' this whit sorely, sorely.

Behold, He is like unto a mighty ring, aye, a great golden ball. Aye, and the heart o' Him uncovereth and becometh the crust and the crust becometh the heart, never, never ceasing. What is old becometh young through this thing. Look you, it may never cease. There shall be no end. It may not be that He shall cease to create, for then how may He become ever—ever?

This be true. He in his fullness may not cease, for the ceasing would be the ceasing of thee and thee. It may not be. Tides may sweep and new things be that no man conjureth even within his wildest dreamin', for He may not ever be recurring, recurring and build alike.

[Mrs. Curran here showed signs of impatience.]

Wait ye, youth. Ye should know ye may not tell o' the building of eternities in an eye's twinkling.

Then look ye, flesh becometh the bowl that catcheth the pouring of Him. And the Him within the flesh lighteth the atoms unto life. Yet life is a sister o' eternity and leaveth free the bands of flesh to mar the bowls.

Life is a gaysome trickster. Yea, life poureth about the atoms o' man wines of cunning, and equally is be filled up of Him. Thereby is man given freely and his lighting unto life leaveth him for his choosing. Aye, and the giving be wry-fallen atimes, for flesh would to tarry long and dance with life, fearing the greater thing athin it....

Know ye that no man may depart Him! He is man's very heart, for He is the spirit and the spirit may be gauded o'er by the folly of flesh, but thereby thou art at the smearing o' His countenance!...

Earth knoweth o'er the fulling of eternity. Yet I say me, she hath not enough o' wisdom for to blind one gnat. Ye see their wisdom be not binded up o' Him. Thereby, it is but dusts. They may not know amore until they bow down and speak His name amid their wisdoming. They make them temples and chants and mighty words. Yea, they, with their paltry, shaked hands, draw lines across the skies and wall up eternity; then life kisseth them and leaveth them the night. Aye, but the thing within them is fashioned a-spite their folly-dancing and they find them

whole and accounted, thereby, upon the newness of a new eternity, new yet old, for eternity leadeth thee upon the ever-path, nor doth the dark seek thee, nor doth eternity forsake, neither Him.

*No Reincarnation*

September 3, 1923.

[We asked if Patience would say something definite about reincarnation, as the question was often asked. Patience gave the following:]

How may it be that flesh created may become as flesh again in like exact? Nay, I say me, flesh is recreated of the same material, builded of the same atoms, but the honey of God is ne'er the same—the trick of its hangin' one 'pon the other. The trend o' kennin' may take frae this and that through kinship but this hath naught for to do with flesh.

The bowl is and breaked may become a new bowl, fulfilling the same office; but the wine once drunk may not be drunk again. The creatin' o' a bowl be the sign o' office bestowed. Aye, and man created be a root unto consciousness. The incidents inscribe consciousness with wisdom or folly, yet man in his span through circumstance and incident becometh conscious of experience, aye, becometh ready that he may learn.

He is touched of sorrow and thereby measures his joy. He is filled of joy and thereby measures his sorrow. He sees light and learns dark; tasteth sweet and becometh acquainted with the bitter; drinketh rich wine, sweet as lotus honey and sour like unto vinegar. In all of this he is but a child learning to play a great game.

Wisdom is conscious experience. Folly is the disregard of experience. Consciousness is the receptivity of man to God; is the compliment of God unto His creation.

That man who doubteth wisdom in its sober sense decries his God and proves himself unworthy of creation. Experience, bein' the rootin', setteth man upon the roadway unto new wisdom and that wisdom is tenuous as moonlight, evasive as smoke, aye, or as mist, all-encompassing as air, sustaining as bread, inexhaustible, ever-reaching, infinite. Man may take this unto him according to his inclination.

God neither demands nor exacts. Wisdom is manna for them who need and hunger. Eternity is forever hungered and forever fed. I may not set this in mere wordin'. Nay, as well dip moonlight wi' a mug, for it may not be. Look ye unto it; as indelibly writ as the sun is the soul of man. No mouthing, no doubting, no wonderment, Do folly, no cunning, no contrivance of word may efface this fact. Man is and once uttered, through the lips of God, he is as certain as chaos, which unto man's wisdom is a great riddle.

[This remark followed:]

Should God create an ass who stopped at a stile and its master felled it, would He then recreate the ass? Egad, should He, 'twould *stop at the stile*. Nay, rather turn him upon a green pasture.

*The Glory of Maternity*

I woe at the empty hands of the dames. Look: unto their hand.; hath He dealt the setting of Him upon earth, and see ye that which they do! They turn and see not, even though He showeth unto them.

Look ye, dame of the Earth: would'st thou leave upon the eversun of Him the shadow of thy building? He hath made thee the sceptre-bearer of Him, to sit upon the very throne of Him. And what doest thou?

Of thy blood hath He fleshed the earth. Of thy tears hath He jewelled the heavens. Of thine anguish hath He builded up songs that reach to the utmost of eternities. And thou, and thou, and thou, whose lips He hath set to deal Him out of their purity—what, what doest thou? When thou mightest grasp and intake of Him.. lo, thou dost spurn Him and look not upon the scarlet robe He offereth that thou mayest wear it in His name, but go seeking shadow-building.

Yea, the seepre thou hast laid by and grasped the fool's rod. Do ye hark! for lo, His loved song He singeth within the mother-heart of thee, deep within its warmth, wherein the hunger biteth. Dost hark its wooing? Lo, no man knowest even so much as one whit like her who hath borne of Him.

Look, this is truth. Where upon the earth, the dame might step leading Him from Heaven forth, she prateth sweet naughts and drinketh froth, and knoweth not that within her hand He hath laid His mightiest sword.

This I speak aloud unto them that hark not, but still I sing then of them that hear His voice within the small hours, and know the soothing of the flesh they bore of Him. Yea, upon the Earth there be them who do that which showeth right and meet. Them of Him who stand, the blade drawn, and bow their heads unto His will. Lo, they are the pulsing heart of earth without which earth dieth.

Unto the earth He cometh unto the fullness and thereby buildeth up an enriched Heaven. But this be within the dame's hand.

Behold, through the flesh of dames doth He speak unto earth. Lo, the dames be the beauteous gateway through which He steppeth unto the Day.

Ne'er would thy handmaid wound thy heart. Nay, but open it that it take of Him and grow.

*A Gospel of Today*

Mark ye, a Gospel of Today. He who considers today and today's incidents, shall not find him woed o'er yesterdays or tomorrows. He then who is of today is of today vitally concerned. For him there is no tomorrow and no yesterday. In this is he satisfied, making the incident at hand sufficient in its action to tip the beam of certainty.

Labor moves upon its trend by the application of urge upon the incident. Thereby hath labor no part with tomorrow. She is concerned



not. In this is the symbol of the gospel of today. Today is sufficient. Today is bread. Today is wine. Today is life. Today is—Thou art.

Yesterday is remorse, and has no part as an implement in labor. Tomorrow is foreboding, and is in no part a sinew which lifts.

The gospel of Today. He who reads the law becometh both his own physician and his own master. Today is intimate. It hath the prick of contact which goads life to attainment. Yesterday is a worn shoe. Tomorrow is a garment which ye sew today.

Then at labor, lest tomorrow thou art naked! The jest is this: there is no mark which sets aloof tomorrow and awither yesterday. Today is, and yesterday and tomorrow are today. Then in thy certainty of today acknowledge the defeat of gloom and doubting.

## IMPROMPTU PROVERBS

One of the dictionary definitions of the word "proverb" is: "A familiar and widely known popular saying in epigrammatic form." Obviously Patience Worth's sayings, in so far as they prove to be original with her, cannot answer to this definition. But every proverb must have had a beginning, when it, too, was not familiar and widely known. And it was as wise and clever the first time it was uttered as it was afterward recognized to be.

Another definition (*Standard Dictionary*) is: "A brief, pithy saying, condensing in witty or striking form the wisdom of experience." This applies to many of the sayings of Patience Worth.

I knew before this study began that proverbs are found among all peoples, and are imbedded in the literature of the ages, but I did not know how much attention they had attracted from scholars. In the Boston Public Library I found a vast number of collections, varying from a dozen pages in length to many hundreds. Most of them are large enough to be called books. There are over fifty collections of English proverbs by as many different compilers. There are twenty-six collections of French proverbs, twenty-four German, twenty Italian, and twenty Spanish, fourteen Latin, twelve Arabic, eight Scotch, five Hebrew, four Chinese, two each of Dutch, Greek, Irish, "Oriental," Turkish, Gaelic, Creole, Persian, Moroccan, Sanskrit and Serbian, and one each of East Indian, Japanese, Manx, Walloon, Welsh, Finnish, Jamaica Negro, Haytian, Polish, Roumanian, Chilian, Russian, Cashmere, Syriac, Malay, Burmese, Marathi, Pashto, Tshi, Tamil, Ashanti, Batak, Tulu and Biblical. Two, hundred and thirty collections of proverbs, of forty-five peoples, with many dialectical subdivisions! And the Boston library does not contain all there are.

In very few cases comparatively, is the author of a proverb known. Many of them are of great antiquity. Many, though not so many, have passed with but little change into several or numerous languages. Still it is probable that sometimes, when there is the appearance of this having been so, the same apt expression arose spontaneously and independently with several peoples.

A very large proportion of the proverbs of the nations came up from the ranks, so to speak. They originated in the humble business of the farm, in the toils of the sailor and the fisherman, every trade and

every calling furnished its contribution. Many of them attach to annuals, as asses, cats and dogs. But the learned professions also, the arts, warfare, and royal courts yielded their tribute. Philosophers, whether humble or exalted, originated many proverbs about folly and wisdom.

Some of the adages can be traced directly to poets and other writers. But seldom are they in their original form; time has generally abbreviated them, made them clearer and more concrete. If we could trace the proverbs of popular origin to their first form we would probably find that in most cases they also have undergone change, that they consisted of sentences which passed on from mouth to mouth, dropped all unnecessary words and became rounded like pebbles of the seashore.

Almost immediately after Patience Worth announced herself, especially as annoyed or stimulated by the wonderment, curiosity, and debate of persons present, and in impromptu response to utterances by others, she began to make replies, which in pith, wit, wisdom and generally in terseness, resemble the proverbs of old time, and compare favorably with them. Some are like the homeliest sayings of rural origin, some are philosophical and lofty, some are exquisite in beauty. Some of them indeed contain superfluous words, such as time would wear away if they passed through the process that has been applied to the wise saws of former generations.

They are given as originally recorded (unless marked "abbreviated"), except that I deemed it unnecessary always to retain obsolete spellings or archaic forms of words, such as "o" for of and "be" for am where the latter word would be used today. No other alterations whatever have been made, and these are very slight and few, touching no essentials, but simply making more pleasing to the eye.

As time went on Patience Worth uttered fewer and fewer aphorisms of the character hereinafter exhibited. Whether this was because, the novelty ceasing, sitters displayed less astonishment and curiosity, became more accustomed to deport themselves as she appeared to wish (to let her go on in her own way instead of stopping her to ask what she regarded as foolish or relatively unimportant questions), so that she lacked the stimulus of the first early provocative conversations, or because she became more interested in other forms of literature, I cannot say. But she is still able to make proverbs, and some of those which I have selected are of relatively late composition. The one hundred and seventy examples presented are in the chronological order of their production.

It is not so easy as it looks to manufacture, cold-bloodedly, sentences

of the genuine proverb quality. Of course the old adages vary in excellence, and some are far inferior to others. Let us put it, for one person to originate many scores of short sentences, ranging from rustic bluntness to philosophical depth and poetic beauty, all corresponding to the definition "condensing in witty or striking form the wisdom of experience" would be an extraordinary achievement. If not, who besides Patience Worth has done it?

Martin F. Tupper spent a large part of his lifetime in writing "Proverbial Philosophy." To be sure, he hampered himself with hexameter, but he need not have done so, and within hexameter it is theoretically quite possible to meet the definition of a proverb. His results indeed were popular for a time, passing through many editions, but it is all the more noteworthy that no sentence of his passed into common speech, and no one seems to quote him. "Putnam's Complete Book of Quotations, Proverbs and Household Words" indeed quotes thirty-seven passages from Tupper. These should be the cream. The following are the best of the thirty-seven as proverbs, in my opinion:

1. God will not love thee less, because men love thee more.
2. Nothing but may be better, and every better might be best.
3. The dangerous bar in the harbor's mouth is only grains of sand.
4. Religion hath no landmarks.
5. Youth is confident, manhood wary, and old age confident again.

Omitting several "proverbs" plainly cribbed or imitated, these are the high-water mark of Tupper. There are not a dozen in all which can possibly qualify; many of his sentences may be wise enough, but they have not the mingling of wit or striking force with sagacity and terseness which gives the true proverb stamp. Yet Tupper was a man of talent, something of a philosopher, and a scholar, and he tried—Lord, how he tried!

Henry Ward Beecher was a man of marvelous fertility of expression, who spouted rhetoric because the rhetoric came as his natural tongue.

A man named Drysdale went through his voluminous writings shortly before the great preacher's death, to cull what he called the *Proverbs* from Plymouth Pulpit. Just to test these I determined to select the best one on page 10, the best on page 20, and so on. There follow the most proverb-like utterances on the first five pages, so selected.

1. Maple-trees are the cows of trees (spring-milked), plain, good, useful, but not adorable.

2. A tongue that is the chimney of the lower nature is full of soot and blackness.
3. If there is no grit in a grindstone, how long would the axe be in grinding?
4. Men go shopping just as men go out fishing and hunting, to see how large a fish may be caught with the smallest hook.
5. Conscience without love is like a skeleton without flesh.

Of these, Nos. 1 and 4 are certainly not proverbs at all; No. 2 approaches more nearly but is too complicated and hardly could be boiled down to proverb consistency; the remaining two might pass, but the reader will compare them with the Patience Worth sayings and see if the latter have not an indefinable something—perhaps the flavor of seeming antiquity—which the former lack.

The "Poor Richard" proverbs of Franklin, which long passed with many as his own, were like the furniture in a shop of antiques, drawn from various sources, sometimes intact and sometimes skilfully mended. Now and then an adage is quoted as though Franklin were the originator, when it can be traced for centuries and into a number of languages. Of all Americans, it would seem as though Franklin, both from his surpassing sagacity and from the homespun simplicity of his style, was the man to originate sayings of proverb quality out of whole cloth. I find no proof that, with all his interest in wise sayings, manifested in twenty years of "Poor Richard" almanacs, he did so, though he did some clever altering and patching.

While this study was being made a literary friend recommended me to look up the aphorisms of George Herbert. I did so, and found that they, too, were not his own, but his selections from the proverbial lore of the ages.

Mrs. Curran never, in her talk with or letters to me, showed any tendency to coin sentences of a proverb-like nature, and I have found no one who remembers of her uttering one before the advent of Patience Worth. That she should be able, under the Patience Worth influence or in the Patience Worth state, to do impromptu, as flashes from the impact of utterances made by others, what is so exceedingly difficult for brilliant writers to do with deliberation and care, namely, to pour out sayings of proverb quality, pith, wisdom, flavor and brevity, fit to have come from the lips of a philosopher, a poet, a saint or a peasant (the last oftenest), places the problem of the subconscious, either as a transmitter or a generator, before us in more imperative terms than ever.

I now present a selected list, in chronological order, of one hundred

and seventy proverbs of Patience Worth. After each one I also present, for comparison, one or more proverbs found in the large Putnam collection, selected with regard to some point of contact, either of sense or of key word. The effort has been to select the best affording such a point of contact as I could find without more labor than could be spared. All these examples are taken from the Putnam collection except where I state otherwise.

It may be that an unintended and unwarranted effect of this mode of selection upon some readers will be causing them to think that Patience Worth has derived many of her sayings from earlier ones. I did, indeed, make a resolute attempt to trace such organic connections, but have succeeded only in three or four instances, where Patience Worth made a frank adaptation of an old proverb. It is difficult to find any of the old proverbs which have not their analogies in meaning, even though unique in form. And I am convinced that the great mass of Patience Worth's sayings are original with her, despite the analogies which we must expect. Something more upon this point will appear after the list is completed.

But the reader will bear in mind that my main purpose in presenting traditional sayings in conjunction with those of Patience Worth is for the purpose of comparing them for excellence in all the points which characterize excellence in a proverb.

#### 1. MUCH CLATTER FROM A GOOSE.

Compare, for conciseness, rustic raciness and mention of the same bird, *Stuffing is good for geese*; and for similar meaning expressed with differing imagery, *The noisy drum hath nothing in it but mere air*.

#### 2. AN OWL IS SILENT, AND CREDITED WITH MUCH WISDOM.

This is different from, but means the same as, *A fool, when silent, is counted wise*. This is the English form. The French, translated, is *The fool is wise according as he holds his tongue*.

#### 3. A WISE HEN BETRAYS NOT ITS NEST WITH A LOUD CACKLE.

I have not happened upon a proverb of similar meaning, but a similar bucolic picture is presented in *If you would have a hen lay, you must bear with her cackle*.

#### 4. THISTLE-DOWN IS AS RAINBOWS SPUN, YET FLAX THE LINEN MAKES.

This is poetry without rhyme, but it is aphoristic, too. Many of the old folk-proverbs are expressed in rhyme, though few of them are poetry. The meaning is the same as in *Handsome is that handsome does*, which is a more concise expression, but far less pleasing. If both were heard for the first time, it is probable

that the former sentence would make a more vivid impression and be more likely of repetition.

5. WHEN MANNA FALLS, FILL THYSELF AND QUESTION NOT.

Here is a loftier application than in *Never look a gift horse in the mouth*.

6. PUT FAITH IN FARTHINGS AND LET THE SHILLINGS RUST!

This at once recalls *Take care of the pennies and the pounds will take care of themselves*. It would be most unsafe to say that the former sentence was suggested by the latter, since a thousand practical truths are expressed in similar ways. In proverbial literature where there is not the least reason to suspect borrowing. But granting that it was, the turn given to the meaning is new and original. Patience Worth was annoyed again by her poetical outpouring of ethical material being dammed by The personal and petty remarks of the company. She sarcastically tells them to go ahead, regard trifles as of value and let the coin of higher value be corroded or ruined.

7. BEAT THE HOUND AND LOSE THE HARE.

This was said when the company present were endeavoring to burry Patience Worth. It evidently signifies that too much importunity might hinder the very object of their quest. Compare for words, but not for meaning, the Scotch saying, *Better hold with the hound than run with, the hare*.

8. TO BREW A POTION, NEEDS MUST HAVE A POT.

This was said when Patience Worth was asked why she chose Mrs. Curran to express herself through. The meaning evidently is that the latter was somehow suited for the purpose. An old proverb mentioning a pot is *Your pot broken seems better than my whole one*.

9. FROM CONSTANT WISHING THE MOON MAY TIP FOR THEE.

Here is an example of the proverb sarcastic, like the utterance of Job, *No doubt ye are the people and wisdom shall die with you*. An Italian proverb, which finds some contrast with Patience Worth's pithy exclamation, is *From wishing comes grieving*.

10. THE SWINE CRY, "WANT! WANT! WANT!"

This was in response to a querulous remark from one of the company regarding her wants. A specimen old-time proverb runs, *Pigs grunt about everything and nothing*, which is only superficially similar.

11. SOME FOLK, LIKE THE BELL WITHOUT A CLAPPER, GO CLANGING ON IN GOOD FAITH, BELIEVING THE GOOD FOLKS CAN HEAR THEM.

Even if oddly expressed, one can guess at the meaning of this, but what is the meaning of *To the counsel of fools a wooden bell?*

## 12. A WHIP IN TIME SAVES NINE.

Of course we have here a humorous parody on *A stitch in time saves nine*. Patience Worth is explaining that she speaks sharply in order to make the company stop their interfering irrelevancies.

## 13. A MAN LOVETH HIS WIFE, BUT AH THE BUCKLES ON HIS KNEE-BREEKS!

I have to go outside of Putnam's collection to find Kipling's *A woman is only a woman, but a good cigar is a smoke*.

## 14. OVER-FEEDING WILL KILL THE YULE-TIDE GOOSE.

Only for its like old-time rustic flavor, I quote the Danish proverb, *The goose goes so often to the kitchen that at last site is fastened to the spit*. Geese, asses, cats and dogs are frequent characters in folk-sayings.

## 15. A FIERY TONGUE BELONGS TO ONE WORTH BURNING.

This sharp sally, directed to one of the company, would suit the century to which Patience Worth professes to belong, when witches and heretics were burned. There is a proverb running, *He that strikes with his tongue must ward with his head*.

## 16. A LOLLIPOP IS BUT A BREEDER OF PAIN.

The ancient aphorism of Publilius Syrus, *A flattering speech contains its own poison*, has nearly the same significance. Patience Worth meant that flattering utterances are sometimes less beneficial than criticisms or rebukes.

## 17. AN OLD GOOSE GOBBLES THE GRAIN LIKE A GOSLING.

This pointed aphorism was addressed to one of the company present, apparently, and aptly meant that her remarks were childish, or that she had not become wiser in becoming older. It is certainly superior to *Goose and gander and gosling are three sounds but one thing*, which I take it to mean the same.

## 18. TOO MUCH SWEET MAY SPOIL THE SHORTBREAD.

Patience Worth is on the same theme as when she uttered No. 16, and thus happened on the same metaphor as that employed in *Sugar itself may spoil a good dish*.

## 19. A HEATED TERM OFT TURNS THE ADDLED BRAIN.

This was in humorous reference to courtship. Antoine Bret must have meant about the same when he wrote *The first sigh of love is the last of wisdom*.

## 20. DRY BONES SHINE FROM REPICKING.

If it be not immediately apparent what this means, an application may perhaps as readily be found as for Ovid's *Metal shines with use*.



## 21. WEAK YARN IS NOT WORTH THE KNITTING.

Evidently Patience Worth had the same opinion of the topics suggested by some one present that some unknown author had of a person—*Your main fault is that you are good for nothing*. But her expression has more the sound of a genuine folk-proverb.

## 22. THE SALT OF TODAY WILL NOT SERVE TO CATCH THE BIRD OF TOMORROW.

Here is evidently a witty turn given the proverb, *It is a foolish bird that stayeth the laying salt upon his tail*, or rather, the version which is more familiar in America (which I do not find in Putnam), *You can catch a bird if you put salt on its tail*. But the meaning must be more that of *A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush*.

## 23. A WISE COOK TELLETH NOT THE BREW.

The meaning of this dry aphorism is obvious. It would likewise have been to the point if she had quoted *Too much curiosity lost Paradise*.

## 24. THOU WILT BUMP THY NOSE TO LOOK INTO THE HOPPER.

Again Patience Worth laughs at her guest's prying curiosity with a new proverb. One is reminded of *He that gropes in the dark finds that he would not*.

## 25. THE BELL-COW DOTHT DEEM THE GOOD FOLKS GO TO SABBATH-HOUSE FROM THE RINGING OF HER BELL.

This cow, symbolizing a certain two-legged animal, was not more conceited than *The old cow [who] thinks she never was a calf*.

## 26. THE DONKEY LOVETH HIS SONG.

This honest beast has ever been the butt of aphorists. There are several similar sayings, one of which runs, *Every ass loveth to hear himself bray*. But in the use of the word "song" instead of "bray," Patience Worth's version is richer in humor.

## 27. FISH FOR A WHALE AND CATCH AN EEL.

This was in response to the remark that one never knew what Patience Worth would say next; her utterances were a constant surprise. Probably *Venture a small fish and catch a great one* means that one who makes an effort may have more results than he expected.

## 28. SHOULD'ST I PRESENT THEE WITH A PUMPKIN, WOULD'ST THOU DESIRE TO COUNT THE SEEDS?

This was said when the company's discussion of Patience Worth's meaning checked her delivery. More prosaic but not

dissimilar in meaning is Martial's Latin sentence, *It is disgraceful to make difficulties of trifles.*

29. IT TAKETH A WISE MAN TO BE A GOOD FOOL.

Shakespeare says, *This fellow's wise enough to play the fool*, but Patience Worth's is a general statement.

30. THE COCK WHO CROWETH LOUDEST TO CALL THE HENS SELDOM HATH A FAT WORM, BUT EXPECTETH A LOUD CACKLE.

Only in its barny flavor does this resemble *A cock crows best on his own dunghill*. Commonplace, though more cognate in meaning, is *Praise is always pleasant*.

31. HE WHO RECEIVETH GRAIN THANKLESSLY DESERVETH BUT THE DUST FROM THE SAW.

Is this not a finer saying than *To a grateful man give money when he asks?*

32. CLIMB NOT THE STARS TO FIND A PEBBLE.

Patience Worth said this meaning that her auditors were putting aside higher things by their questions about small matters. She might have said *When, fortune smiles upon thee, take the advantage*, but hers was the finer expression.

33. WHY STRIP THE ROSE? THE SCENT IS THINE WITHOUT THE WASTE.

Over and over, with inexhaustible fertility, Patience Worth utters sentences of pith and tang to indicate what she regarded as the folly of wanting to know just who was being hit or just how the mechanical means of communication was operated, etc., instead of being absorbed in the communications themselves. But these sentences are capable of wider application. I have not found any proverb of similar meaning, though such doubtless exist. Phaedrus said, in Latin, *The work perishes fruitlessly*.

34. HELL ITSELF IS BUT A HOME FOR DOUBTERS.

*Hell is paved* with various things in proverbs, and *Hell is full of the ungrateful*, but it remained to Patience Worth to say that Hell is "but a home" for doubters.

35. WASTE NOT THE PERFUME OF GOD'S GARDEN UPON JACKALS.

This, while apparently entirely original, is in exact key with *Neither cast ye your pearls before swine*, of the Bible.

36. SET THEE A DOG TO CARRY MICE TO TABBY?

This has something of the flavor of *When the fox preaches, look out for the geese*, an adage found in several languages.

37. RUST NOT THE STEEL BY SHEDDING TEARS UPON' THE BLADE.

Thus the Russian proverb has it, *Sorrow kills not, but it blights*, and the English one, *It is no use crying over spilt milk*. No two of these mean, however, exactly the same.

## 38. CARDING COTTON DOES NOT WEAVE THE CLOTH.

Again in pungent phrase, Patience Worth reminds her auditors that they are wasting time in trifles. A French proverb runs, *God sends the thread to cloth that is begun*. Both expressions counsel to make a real start.

## 39. TO GOD THE FOOL AND BABE ARE DEAR.

This is reminiscent, at least to the writer, of *God helps three sorts of people, fools, children and drunkard*, but is more musical.

## 40. DEAD RESOLVES ARE SORRY FARE.

The familiar *Hell is paved with good intentions* is undoubtedly a more graphic and vigorous locution.

## 41. QUILLS OF SAGES WERE PLUCKED FROM GEESE.

I am not sure that this is not a sarcastic sentence, which an exclamation point should follow. A good deal of discussion had been going on during the evening, and Patience Worth may have meant to imply, probably only playfully, that not much wisdom was to be expected of such silly folk. Yet it could be interpreted to mean something like *Wise men learn more from fools than fools from the wise*.

## 42. PATIENT CODDLING WOULD HATCH A WEEVIL,

This was called forth by additional discussion which Patience Worth evidently regarded of little profit. Horace expressed the same thought in the famous sentence *Parturiunt montes; nascetur ridiculus mus* (*The mountains are in labor; an absurd mouse will be born*).

## 43. THE ROAD TO HIGHER PLAINS LEADETH NOT ALONG THE STEEPLE.

This unorthodox sentence is not so far away from *The nearer the church, the farther from God*, but not necessarily anything so drastic.

## 44. HE WHO KNOWETH WORTH IS RICH INDEED.

Similarly an old proverb says, *He is rich indeed whom God loves*.

## 45. A BASTING BUT TOUGHENS AN OLD GOOSE.

Utterly unlike in expression, except that both employ imagery of husbandry, is the Biblical proverb, the meaning of which is practically identical, *Though thou should'st bray a fool in a mortar among wheat with a pestle, yet will his foolishness not depart from him*.

## 46. IF THOU SHOULD'ST SEE HIS FACE ON MORROW'S BREAK, 'TWOULD BUT START A WAGGING [OF TONGUES].

Compare with the terser but less brilliant *A wonder lasts but nine days*.

47. A POT OF WISDOM WOULD BOIL TO NOTHING ERE A DOUBTER DEEMETH IT WORTH TASTING.

For comparison in a general way, take the French proverb, *However the fool delays, the day does not delay*, and the Biblical passage, *O taste and see that the Lord is good*.

48. ROAST APPLES ON KNITTING NEEDLES, BUT SORRY THE YARN KNITTED THEREAFTER.

Patience Worth was again complaining that the company's curiosity about other matters damaged, or impeded, her flow of literary production. She evidently thought, *Better lose the saddle than the horse*.

49. WHEN GEESE FEED, THEY CLATTER FOR MORE.

This is a quainter way of saying *The more you have the more you want*.

50. 'TIS FOOL'S GOLD THAT TARNISHETH IN MIRE.

Some glimmering of the same idea as in *The proof of the pudding is in the eating*.

51. TO CATCH A FLEA NEEDS BE A DOG?

This aphorism was the swift retort to a remark that Patience Worth could not be the author of a metaphor in which the rosary was mentioned, on the ground that she had not been a Catholic. I remember a saying, not in Putnam, running *I know more than a hen, although I cannot lay an egg*.

52. PROD YE THE DONKEY'S RUMP YE ARE SOME OF A KICK.

The same sense of unerring consequence is in *He that lies with dogs rises with fleas*.

53. HE WHO BAWLETH MAY EXPECT THE COW'S LICKING.

This intimation that a man present and calling out loudly was a calf tempts me humorously to compare it with a proverb which is not humorous, *The mother's heart is always with her children*.

54. THE PARSON HATH NO LID ON LEARNING.

Compare with *The greatest clerks be not the wisest men*.

55. DOST LOOK FOR BUTTER IN SKIMMED MILK?

*It's no use pumping a dry well* has about the same significance.

56. A POT LOANED IS NOT LOST.

Compare with *Long lent is not given*.

57. THE PIGGIE WHO SCRATCHETH UPON AN OAK DOTTH DEEM HIS FLEAS THE FALLING ACORNS' CAUSE.

One is reminded by this quaint aphorism of the common expression, "the fly on the carriage wheel," which probably had its beginning in a sentence by Bacon, *The fly sat on the axle-tree of the chariot-wheel, and said, "What a dust I do raise!"*

58. THE SOAP-KETTLE NEEDED NOT A [FINE] SHAPE.

So we find this old adage, *Prettiness makes no pottage.*

59. HE WHO EATETH A BANNOCK WELL MADE FLATTERETH HIMSELF SHOULD HIS BELLY NOT SOUR.

Well, but *If we did not flatter ourselves, no one else would.*

60. NE'ER LEAP AFORE YE SEARCH.

This certainly looks like a conscious adaptation of *Look before you leap*. Surely, if it were not a frank one—if there were an attempt to pass off something old as original, a less familiar saying *Would* have been selected.

61. HE WHO TICKLETH THE ASS TO START HIS BRAYLING, FAIN WOULD CAROL WITH HIS BROTHER.

Somewhat like in meaning is *He is a fool who deals with a fool.*

62. A PEEP IN GOOD CAUSE COULD NE'ER HARM THE GODLY,

Patience Worth meant what the Bible means in *To the pure all things are pure.*

63. GOD BUT TUNED THE ASSES' BRAY TO SOUND THE BRASSES OF HIS HARMONIES.

This quaint and beautiful saying expresses what was written by Morris, *Dissonant chords beget divinest harmony.*

64. COARSE CLOTH WEARS WELL.

Almost the counterpart of this is found in *Fine clothes wear soonest out of fashion.*

65. THE JACKASS NE'ER CAN KNOW HIS REFLECTION IN THE POOL.

The thought is that the jackass, believes himself beautiful, is not able to recognize his reflection in the pool. More directly, an old proverb puts it, *Every ass is beautiful to an ass.*

66. THE JACKASS DEEMETH THE THRUSH HAS STOLEN OF HIS SONG.

Thus long ago, people said, *Every ass loves to hear himself bray.*

67. THINE ABODE IS WITHIN.

This is a still more concise rendering of the thought expressed by Dyers, *My mind to me a kingdom is.*

68. WOE IS HE WHO LOOKETH AT THE MOON, WHEN HE HATH THE EVENING STAR.

I am not certain what was the intended application of this, though I think it would not be difficult to find niches for it. As easy, perhaps, as to decide just what is the application of *Though the heavens be glorious, they are not all stars.*

## 69. PUDDINGS FIT FOR LORDS WOULD SOUR THE BELLY OF THE SWINE BOY.

This resembles in meaning *One man's meat is another man's poison*. Yet, as Patience Worth's aphorisms are? nearly all original—so far as I have been able to trace—in their verbal form, so they seldom have exactly the significance of the proverbs with which they may be compared. The Scotch adage just quoted means simply that what suits one man does not suit another, but that of Patience Worth declares that what is really superior in quality will be disagreeable to an inferior person.

## 70. A ROT SHOWETH NEATH SUN, BUT HIDETH IN MID DARK.

An old proverb about the sun runs, *The sun can be seen only by its own light*.

## 71. ASS LOVETH HIS BROTHER ASS.

And *Birds of a feather flocktogether*.

## 72. FAITH BE THE PRICE OF PATIENCE.

There are a number of proverbs similar to this in mere form, of which *Patience is the price of Paradise* (Turkish) and *Vigilance is the price of safety* (not in Putnam) are examples. Patience Worth adds another, signifying that through faith one is able to be patient.

## 73. FIRES BUT BAKE WELL.

There are points of contact in Penn's *No cross, no crown*, and the Danish saying, *Labor has a bitter root but a sweet taste*. One of the proverbs in the Bible, not quoted by Putnam, expresses the thought of Patience Worth more exactly: *The fining pot for silver, and the furnace for gold: but the Lord trieth, the hearts*.

## 74. EARTH ATHOUT THE MERRY BE A HELL.

Had there been the erosion which time often gives to the first form of a saying passed on from mouth to mouth this would probably have become "Earth Without mirth is hell." A little touch of this is in *A cheerful look makes a dish a feast*.

## 75. A BREW FINISHED SEASONETH NOT BETTER FOR THE BOILING OF IT.

So it has been said, *Enough is a feast, too much a vanity*, and *You never do it without overdoing it*. I fancy that many have uttered this not supposing it is regarded as a proverbial saying.

## 76. THE BLOOD LEADETH UNTO THE FOX.

Of the many old savings about foxes this is one: *The sleeping fox catches no poultry*

## 77. THERE BE MANY WHO KNOW WISDOM, BUT WISDOM KNOWETH FEW.

What we have here in the abstract was said in the concrete, *The wise man knows the fool, but the fool does not know the wise man*.

## 78. WORDS FELL NO TREE.

So it Was said, *Talking pays no toll.*

## 79. THE COCK ON A LIMB CROWS OVER THE HENS, BUT HE FEEDS ON WORMS AS WELL AS THEY [abbreviated].

*Pride's an ill horse to ride, and The devil wipes his tail on a poor man's pride* are poor congeners, but Shakespeare expresses grandly something of what Patience Worth says in her whimsical fashion, *Upon what meat doth this our Caesar feed, that he is grown so great?*

## 80. PRODS ON A WEARY NAG ARE WASTED [abbreviated].

Compare the Latin proverb, *Do not spur a willing horse*, and Racine's *Who wishes to travel far spares his steed*, which present other aspects of the same situation.

## 81. WORDS ARE SORRY MENDERS.

An old adage has it *Fine words do not grease the cabbage.*

## 82. SUPPING SWEETS BE SOURING INNARDS.

This, had it originated in the seventeenth century, would probably have been transmuted into "Supping sweets make sour stomachs." I find no apposite proverbs, though they surely exist, so fall back upon *Every sweet has its sour.*

## 83. BUSY FILLETH EMPTY.

I find *Busy will have bands*, which, if Patience Worth had said it, would have been pronounced nonsense even if in the time of it, the meaning was that busy-bodies must be restrained. The meaning of Patience Worth's terse utterance is obvious.

## 84. A FOOL BURNETH HIM TWICE, BUT A WISE MAN NEVER.

*Who is born a fool is never cured* is slightly cognate on one side and *A burnt child dreads the fire* on another. But Patience Worth's saying is far more expressive than either and has the flavor of ages past.

## 85. NO MAN IS WEARIED SORER THAN HE WHO IS WEARY OF HIMSELF.

The only "weary" proverb which I find in Putnam is this: *The weary ox is more sure on his feet.* This was a proverb in ancient Rome.

## 86. A BABE WITHOUT A WAIL IS LIKE A DOG WITHOUT A TAIL.

This has the lilt of some of the old folk-sayings, such as *A bad cat deserves a bad rat, It is a good horse that never stumbles And a good wife that never grumbles*, and *Neither wise men nor fools can work without tools.*

## 87. WAIT UNTIL FOLLY MEETETH THEE; GO NOT AND SEEK IT.

Here Patience Worth, in an original manner, hit upon the very thought of *Call not the devil; he will come fast enough.*

88. THE FOOL HARKS FOR THE GNAT'S FOOTFALL.  
Perhaps because Little things please little minds.

89. RESOLVE IS A LAZY WORKMAN.  
Plantus Wrote. That expression "He means well," is useless unless he does well.

90. EARTH IS FILLED UP WITH RESOLUTIONS,  
Yes, as *Hell is Paved with good intentions.*

91. THERE IS A DIFFERENCE BETWEEN ONE WHO RIDETH HIS TONGUE  
AND ONE WHOSE TONGUE RIDETH HIM.  
Compare with *Better to rule than be ruled by the rout.*

92. AN ASS WHO KICKETH A LUTE, DEEMETH 'TIS MYSCIC.  
There is a Latin proverbial phrase, An ass at the lyre, but I think it goes no further.

93. EACH MAN WRAPPETH HIS THOUGHT WITHIN HIS OWN EGOTRY  
[EGOTISM] AND CALLETH THE BRAT A NEW NAME.  
Here, in perfect picture and quaint phrasing, is what Goethe but partly expressed,—*Everything new hath been thought already; we can only try to think it once more.*

94. WISDOM IS NOT E'EN FIT FOIL A PATCH UPON THE CLOAK OF  
ROMANCE.  
There are points of contact in all three of the following aphorisms by famous Frenchmen: *The first sigh of love is the last of wisdom* (Bret), *He loves little who only loves by rule* (Montaigne), *The gloomy English-man, even in his loves, always wants to reason. We are more reasonable in France* (Voltaire). The last is more nearly an epigram. The others are in proverbial form, but are surpassed by Patience Worth's utterance, in point of beauty.

95. A MAN SAITH "THERE PASSETH A FOOL," WHEN IT IS HIS OWN  
SHADOW FALLING UPON HIS BROTHER.  
I have found nothing analogous to this. A French proverb says, *Fools bite one another, but wise men agree together.* Which is the finer saying?

96. GIVE ME NOT WISDOM ENOUGH TO UNDERSTAND THE UNIVERSE,  
BUT FOLLY ENOUGH TO TOLERATE IT.  
A German adage affirms that *Too much wisdom is folly*, and a French one that he *Who lives without folly is not so wise as he thinks.*

97. FEEDING WISDOM UNTO MEN AT TIMES IS LIKE UNTO SLAYING A  
GNAT WITH A CUDGEL.  
It is a French saying that *He is a fool who expects sense from a fool.*



## 98. SIN IS THE BRAT OF FOLLY.

Compare with *Fools make a mock at sin* of the Bible, and with *Often you, sin less if you know what you are ignorant of*, which is from the Latin of Publilius Syrus.

## 99. HUMILITY IS NOT A CLOUT FOR THE BEGGAR, BUT A KINGLY ROBE FOR THE MIGHTY.

And an old proverb has it, *The more noble, the more humble*.

## 100. FORGETTING IS A CLOUT FOR THE CONSCIENCE.

I do not know whether or not *Once a year a man may say "On his conscience"* refers to New Year's resolutions, forgotten the next day.

## 101. YESTERDAY IS, EVEN THOUGH SHE IS FORGOTTEN.

The idea of this is contained in *Today is yesterday's pupil*. The impress of the past day is upon us.

## 102. THE LEGS OF WISDOM ARE STILL BENT FROM CRAWLING.

Compare with *Creep before you gang*, a Scotch saying.

## 103. [Abbreviated.] WISDOM IS AN AGED BABE AND YOUTH THINKS HE IS ITS SIRE.

Two old proverbs say, the one, *Ignorance is the mother of impudence*, and the other, *Young men think old men fools; old men know young men to be so*.

## 104. WITH THE BLADE OF TRUTH MAN MAY SCRIBE UPON GRANITE.

Yes, and *Truth will be uppermost, one time or other*.

## 105. NIMBLE WORDS ARE NOT NIMBLE WITS.

Many minds, naturally, have hit upon this truth, and the following are three sample expressions of it. *Many words will not fill the bushel, A deluge of words and a drop of sense, and Talk much and err much*.

## 106. YOU MAY NOT MEND A SPLIT HEAD BY BEING SORRY.

*Sorrow will pay no debt, and Sorrow is dry, and Sorrow is good for nothing but sin*, said others.

## 107. A MAN'S LEGS BUT LEAD HIM UPON THE WAY AND HINDER NOT HIS HEART'S SPEEDING.

Compare with the Russian proverb, *The mind loves free space*, with the English one, *The soul is not where it lives, but where it loves*, and Tennyson's *The thrall in prison may be free in soul*.

## 108. AN ASS MAY BE A GOODISH NEIGHBOR WITH A RAILING BETWEEN

The best I can do is to find a proverb with the word "neighbor;" *You may love your neighbor and yet not hold his stirrup*.

109. MEET NOT THE TIDES, RATHER LIE IDLY AND AWAIT THEM.

More sententiously expressed, the idea may be the same as in the couplet of Thompson, which Putnam quotes:

*But sure it is of vanities most vain  
To toil for what you here untoiling may obtain.*

110. HE WHO RIDES O'ER-HARD TO MILL MAY LOSE HIS SACKING [SACKS].

Here compare *More haste, less speed* [the old meaning of "speed" was *success*].

111. HASTE IS A CHEAP TINDER AND PRODUCETH NOT THE FLAME.

Place this beside *Haste trips up its own heels*.

112. HE CREATED LAW WITHIN THY HEART; READ IT.

Compare the German proverb, *There is no law for just men*.

113. SAVE YE DEAL [GIVE] WITHOUT A THORN PRESSING BENEATH THY FLESH, DEAL NOT.

This is the thought, in figurative language, of *God loveth a cheerful giver*, one of the many Biblical passages which have passed into common speech.

114. JEALOUSY IS THE BLADE THAT SLAYS LOVE.

Conversely, *Love is the maker of suspicions*.

115. WITH WORDS MAN BECLOTHES HIS WISDOM, WHILE HE SHIVERS NAKED.

And *Words are fools' pence*.

116. MAN TAKETH NOT INTO ACCOUNT THE WISDOM OF GOD, BEING OVERCOME BY HIS OWN.

And the Bible says *The foolishness of God is wiser than men*.

117. LET A WISE MAN SET TO LOVERING AND THE APPLE OF HIS WISDOM ROTS.

Shakespeare says both that *To be wise and love exceeds man's might*, and that *Love is blind and lovers cannot see*.

118. NO MAN WHOSE BELLY IS SOURED THINKETH SWEET.

For language, compare *If it were not for the belly the back might wear gold*, and for the idea compare Voltaire's *Thought depends absolutely upon the stomach*.

119. HE WHO HATH FAITH HATH THE PENCE TO BUY ETERNITY.

This is something like the more prosaic *God provides for him that trusteth*.

120. WHEN A FOOL BECOMES WISE HE FALLS SILENT.

This is not the same thing as *A fool, when he is silent, is counted wise*.

121. HE WHO LACKETH THE POWER TO RAGE, DAMNETH SILENTLY AND ROTTETH HIS OWN HEART.

Almost the converse of this in idea is *When the pot boils over it cools itself*.

122. PHILOSOPHY NEEDETH LEGS OF SERVICE.

Evidently Patience Worth believes in the pragmatic test. A proverb says *Many talk like philosophers and live like fools*.

123. DISCOURSE IS THE SALT OF VANITY.

Simply because it is about vanity, I quote *We are more inclined to evil-speaking by vanity than by malice*, but more to the point is *Everyone talks of what he loves*.

124. VANITY IS THE SALT OF BEING; IT EXALTETH WITHOUT LABOR.

Rochefoucauld wrote *We would rather speak ill of ourselves than not at all*.

125. GIVE ME SEVEN WORDS AND I MAY TIE HEAVEN WITHIN THEM.

This is surely a vivid expression of the comprehensiveness of a skilfully constructed phrase *a multum in, parvo*.

126. MY HOPES ARE LIKE BECKONING HANDS, AND LEAD MY FEET UP THE STONY WAY.

An English proverb runs, *If it were not for hope the heart would break*, and Ovid says, in Latin, *Hope it is which makes the shipwrecked sailor strike out with his arms in the midst of the sea, even though on all sides he can, see no land*.

127. TIME WASTES NOT A WHIT OF THE PITH IN WIT, NOR DOTH IT RUST THE VALUE.

It is true that, while many an ancient system of philosophy has perished, wit of the same periods has survived with all its original sparkle and point. Now let the reader figure out the entirely different meaning of *The wit of you and the wool of a blue dog will make a good medley*.

128. WHEN AN ASS HATH GRAIN, SHOW HIM NO THISTLE.

*Give an ass oats, and he runs after thistles* contradicts the saying of Patience Worth, as proverbs often contradict each other, their truth depending upon circumstances, the sense of the word, etc. Thus the Book of Proverbs says in two successive verses, *Answer not a fool according to his folly*, and *Answer a fool according to his folly*, and states what is to be gained by either course. So an ass generally is not such an ass as not to prefer grain, yet an ass may be such an ass as to turn from it to thistles.

129. THE TONGUE OF REASON HANGS UPON A LOOSE PINT.

It takes a little more thinking to discern the meaning of the Italian *Reason lies between the spur and bridle*, though that also has plenty of meaning.

130. NO WISDOM IS A USEFUL THING SAVE IT HATH A PAIR OF HANDS THAT ARE FIT FOR WORKING.

Pragmatism again! Cicero Says, in Latin, Letter than can be rendered into English, *It is not enough that wisdom be merely set before as, it must be made use of.*

131. MAN'S INQUIRIES ARE THE PILLARS OF THE TEMPLE WHEREIN HE HOUSETH HIS GOD.

So an old proverb declares, *He that nothing questioneth nothing learneth*, and the Bible says *Seek and ye shall find.*

132. UNTO THE FOOL SILENCE IS FOLLY.

This gives another turn to the idea expressed in 120. *Words are fools' pence*, says an older English adage, and an Arabic one tell, us that *Silence is wisdom, but the man who practices it is seldom seen.*

133. THE BOBBIN'S STICKING MEANETH NAUGHT TO THE PATTERN.

I hardly think that the significance of this is equivalent to *None of my funeral* (not in Putnam). Perhaps it means that the pattern cares nothing for any excuse the bobbin may make, even though *A bad excuse is better than none at all.* An old satirical saying, referring to excuses for not working, is *I have a bone in my arm.* Figure that one out. I mean, of course, that the meaning and application of a few of Patience Worth's proverbs are not immediately clear; the same is the case with many of the proverbs which we have inherited.

134. JFIRST AFFIRM, FOR HE WHO HATH NOT KNOWLEDGE MAY NOT DENY.

This profoundly sagacious utterance was hit upon 'by an unknown Roman writer, the number of whose words, *Nil sciri se quis putat, id quoque nescit, an sciri possit, qui se nil scire fatetur*, must be almost doubled in the English translation, with two and a half times the number of letters. (If anyone is of the opinion that nothing can be known, seeing that he professes to know nothing, he cannot himself know whether anything can be known.) Patience Worth really has said in 11 words what took the Latin sentence 16 and its translation 27.

135. FOLLY IS AS FRESH TODAY AS YESTERDAY, AND WISDOM JUST SO SCARCE.

A French saying runs, *In all companies there are more fools than wise.*

136. MIND IS A BRAT SITTING BESIDE THE KNEE OF WISDOM, AND MAY NOT SPEAK TRULY, FOR IT HATH NOT LEARNED.

And Lucretius exclaimed, two thousand years ago, *O, how wretched are the minds of men, how blind their hearts!*

137. MIND IS THE MEASURING CUP, BUT THE SPIRIT SHOULD PURGE IT CLEAN.

Not at all of the same meaning is the following, offered for comparison, *Unsound minds, like unsound bodies, if you feed you poison.*

138. I COULD NOT DOUBT GOD SAVE THAT I DOUBTED MAN.

I have not yet found this pregnant thought anywhere else. Another proverb on doubt is from the French, *To seek to know is to seek to doubt.*

139. MAN LOSES THE ZEST OF THE GAME IN THE SORTING OF THE DISCUSES.

Thus *You cannot see the woods for the trees*, a proverb borrowed from Germany.

140. HARMONY IS THE AMALGAMATION OF DISCORDS.

Seneca said, in Latin, *The whole concord of this world consists in discords.* He may have meant the same thing, or perhaps he spoke in sarcasm. Whatever he or she meant, I contend that she said it better.

141. "IF" IS AS THE INSTANT OF WAKING, THE BLOTTER OF ALL DREAMS.

The reader will pardon another exclamation. This is surely far more beautifully said than the German Burger's *The man who invented "if" and "but" must surely have transformed chopped straw into gold.* To me, that sentence would seem more suitable had the final terms been transposed in order.

142. I HAVE OFTEN HEARD HOW WISE A BIRD THE OWL, BUT WHO HATH EVER HEARD A WISE THING IT HATH UTTERED?

This seems to emphasize that silence, though apt to be an accompaniment of wisdom, does not constitute or prove wisdom.

An older saying runs, in another direction, *An owl is not accounted the wiser for living retiredly.*

143. I HAVE KNOWN A SWINEHERD WHO LIKENED HIS LADY LOVE TO A WHITE SWINE.

This humorous aphorism reminds one of another, *Everyone as they like, as the old woman said when she kissed her cow.*

144. DOST THOU PRESENT A BRIARED PATH, THEN THE BABE SHALL BECOME SCRATCHED.

This has reference to the fact that children are apt to copy their parent's faults. And the Bible says, *The fathers have eaten sour grapes and the children's teeth are set on edge*, which is capable of the same interpretation.

145. HAVE FAITH IN MEN BUT KEEP THINE EYE SLITTED.

This means the same as the more commonplace *Trust, but not too much.* Similar in form is the saying (not in Putnam) which

is said to have been originated by David Crockett, *Trust God, but keep your powder dry.*

146. YE MAY NOT COME UNTO THE MART UNLESS YE TRUDGE THE WAY.

A flock of proverbs, similar to each other, also teach that what is of value usually has its price. *No gains without pains* is one, *No work, no recompense* another.

147. TRUST AND HOPE ARE STRANGERS.

St. Paul taught that knowledge and hope are irreconcilable; *Hope that is seen is not hope, for what a man seeth why doth he yet hope for.* Patience Worth means that when one thoroughly believes he does not have to hope.

148. HOW MANY HITCH HOPE AS AN ASS TO THE CART, AND THE LOAD BE NOT WORTH PULLING.

Fatuous effort is characterized in the English proverb, *It is lost labor to play a jig to a cat,* and in the German one, *Much cry and little wool, said the fool as he sheared the pig.* All three sayings have the smack of peasantry.

149. MOURNING IS THE DECKING OF SELF.

The thought here is that if one were truly wise his sorrow in bereavement would be lost in realization of the gain of his friend.

Quite another thought is in *To weep excessively for the dead is to affront the living.*

150. FATE IS A PUPPET OF MAN'S BUILDING.

Thus *Everyone is the maker of his own fate.*

151. MAN'S TONGUE IS NO THRONE FOR GOD.

Patience Worth always insists, as many proverbs do, on the superiority of doing to talking. Just for the mention of "tongue" I quote the saying, *Birds are entangled by their feet and men by their tongues.*

152. MAN'S WISDOM IS GOD'S JEST.

So the Bible says, *The foolishness of God is wiser than men.*

153. WOE IS HE WHOSE HEAVEN'S PEDESTAL IS HELL.

Patience Worth evidently agrees that *No man was ever scared into Heaven.*

154. NO BEGGAR IS SO BLIND AS HE WHO HATH LOVE'S FINGERS ON HIS EYES.

Again I bring forward for comparison Shakespeare's *Love is blind, and lovers cannot see,* from which the first clause has passed into common speech. Would Shakespeare have been ashamed to employ Patience Worth's far more poetic mode of expression?

155. LOVE IS AN ARMOR AND A SHIELD; YEA, AND AN ARROW WITH DEATH UPON ITS POINT.

The last part of this is met in *The reward of love is jealousy.*

156. HE WHO TIPS A POT OF SWILL INTO HIS WINE VAT NEED EXPECT NO SWEET DRAUGHT.

Also drawn from the life of the husbandman and teaching the same truth is the Biblical adage, *Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.* And the Arabs say *He who sows thorns will not gather grapes with them.*

157. TO SMIRK AND BABBLE AMONG LORDLINGS REMOVETH NOT THE BELLS FROM THE FOOL'S CROWN.

Perhaps something of the same idea is in *If an ass goes traveling he'll not come home a horse.*

158. HE IS NOT GREAT WHO HATH ATTAINED; GREATER FAR IS HE WHO STRIVETH FOR ATTAINMENT.

True, whether one rests on his laurels, or merely attains by the force of circumstances. *The virtue lies in the struggle, not the prize.*

159. NO MAN SO DEAD AS HE WHOSE WIT HATH PERISHED.

Here "wit" is evidently good sense. *A man without reason is a beast in season.*

160. LEARNING IS THE PATH OF THE DAY, AND WISDOM THE PILLAR OF LIGHT WHICH GOES BEFORE.

The adage nearest to this which I have discovered is *Knowledge, when wisdom is too weak to guide her, is like a headstrong horse, that throws the rider.*

161. DOUBT IS THE FETTER OF MAN'S FREEDOM.

Compare *Delay is cowardice, and doubt despair.*

162. DOTH THY DREAM REACH A LITTLE WAY BEYOND MAN'S NIGHT, WOE BEFALLS THEE.

So many an inspired dreamer, hooted by the "hard-headed," has found. Said Horace, *Mad in the judgment of the mob, sane, perhaps, in yours.* The Biblical passage, which Putnam also includes, is still more to the point: *Behold, this dreamer cometh, come now, therefore, and let us slay him.*

163. WIT IS THE BEAD OF THE WINE OF WISDOM.

A Scotch proverb declares *Want o' wit is waur [worse] than want o' siller.*

164. WHAT A GREAT GOOSE WISDOM IS! MAN HATH SAT SINCE THE FIRST DAY PLUCKING HER, AND STILL SHE SQUAWKETH AND STILL THERE IS MORE OF DOWN.

This, presumably, is the "wisdom of this world" which, said St. Paul, "is foolishness." Says a German proverb, *Nothing so*

*new as what has been long forgotten.* And Cicero declared, referring to the schools of "wisdom" of his time, *There is nothing which can be spoken which is so absurd that it might not be spoken by some one of the philosophers.*

165. MANY'S THE MAN WHO DEEMETH HE RUBBETH THE BEARD OF WISDOM WHEN, BEHOLD, HE IS CODDLING HIS OWN EARS.

Perhaps Patience Worth had in mind the behaviorist psychology. At any rate, I know nothing to match this keen aphorism to the effect that human philosophy is often merely an expression of human egotism. For its language only, the Slavonian proverb may be compared: *Men and asses must be held by the ears.*

166. WISE MEN LISP LEARNING; FOOLS SHOUT FOLLY.

*And Fools rush in, where angels fear to tread.*

167. WISDOM PATCHES THE SEAT OF LEARNING.

This is as peasant-like in its humor as many another proverb, such as *You cannot make a sieve out of an ass's tail,* and *Near is my petticoat, but nearer is my smock.*

168. WHO MOUTHS HIS LEARNING STOPS WISDOM, FOR SHE DEEMETH SHE HEARETH A BRAT CRYING.

Literally taken fully one-half of the listed proverbs are not universally true. So in this one, it is the man who "mouths" his learning, the conceited and self-sufficient learned man, who checks wisdom. As the French say, *A learned fool is a greater fool than an ignorant fool.*

169. THE GOOSE KNOWETH WHERE THE BIN LEAKETH.

Conversely *A bad dog never sees the wolf.*

170. HE WHO HATH A HOUSE, A HEARTH AND A FRIEND HATH A LUCKY LOT.

I have looked in vain through hundreds of proverbs classed under the most hopeful key words, but find nothing like this, and am forced to fall back upon *A man's house is his castle.*

It may be, as I have already hinted, that my zeal in searching former analogies to Patience Worth's sayings will produce the impression on casual readers that hers were really derived. It is true that among the proverbs in the large collections many are variants, or adaptations, of others. It is true that, as Marvin and Mrs. Mawr have amply proved, some proverbs have passed from one language to a group of others. But it is also true that mere analogies may be found in languages so far separated from each other that there can be no suspicion of connection.

I could give many examples, but a few will suffice.



"The cow licks the one that licks her" has the exact significance of our "Scratch my back, and I will scratch yours," but no one will allege that we got our proverb from the Zulus, or *vice-versa*.

"Pots are made when the clay is fit" is like "Make hay when the sun shines," but, again, the one is Zulu and the other English.

"A cat once burnt will shun the fire" sounds like a real relative of our proverb, "A burnt child dreads the fire," but the former is Tamil.

The English "Never was a mewling cat a good mouser" is very like the Turkish "The cat that is crying catches nothing," but there is not the least likelihood that one was copied from the other.

Almost never do Patience Worth's sayings resemble the analogies which I have given so much as in the last two cases just cited.

On the evening of Nov. 10, 1917, Patience Worth dictated, within the space of about fifteen minutes, thirteen aphorisms, of which follow:

1. Dead wisdoms spake by deader sages.
2. Wisdom consorteth with age and would that its brewster be a wraith full many a tide.
3. How may wisdom know wisdom without its winding-sheet and the scents of its mould.
4. Court wisdom with folly-singing; I wot then wisdom will dance.
5. The cowl of wisdom knoweth not that its shadow weareth bells.
6. It taketh a mountain to trip a fool, yet a wise man falleth o'er a grain of sand.
7. Chastity needeth not a frock of virtue.
8. Honor knoweth the whip within the hand of no man.
9. Truth hath a dangerous sister, half her flesh—near truth.
10. Wisdom is not even fit for a patch upon the cloak of romance.

If it be not immediately apparent what all these or all the other aphorisms which I have presented mean, the same is true with very many of the more unfamiliar traditional proverbs, as any reader may see by consulting a collection of them. A little thought, however, yields the meaning and application. The first three of the aphorisms immediately above express in different ways Patience Worth's contempt for the supposition that a thought, prejudice or predilection is necessarily wise because it is old.

The thirteen utterances of such quality within about a quarter of an hour constitute a *tour de force* either of swiftness of subconscious composition or of tenacious and swift recollection of previous subconscious composition.

Now to glance back at the steps we have taken.

1. The composition of adages which are not adaptations of or parodies on the old ones, and which, like them, compress into small

compass the wisdom of experience in a witty or striking manner, together with a certain flavor of ripeness which inclines one to look them up in a collection of proverbs come down from past generations, is very difficult.

2. Nevertheless, Mrs. Curran, or Patience Worth through Mrs. Curran, has done this extensively.

3. And yet, in most cases, there can have been no period of deliberate study for their composition, since in most cases they were impromptu, being called forth by some unexpected remark made by another.

4. They appear not to have been produced by any conscious effort on the part of Mrs. Curran.

5. She has never produced sayings of the character by conscious effort, either before or after the phenomena of Patience Worth began, nor had she previously practiced in this direction or desired to do so.

6. Since the general law is that the subconscious can occasionally surpass the feats of the conscious, but only in fields of effort where the conscious has shown aptitude or at least made effort or cherished desire to act, this mass of proverbial literature either evidences an external mind operating through Mrs. Curran's subconsciousness or makes her an exceptional case, transcending previous authentic cases and contradicting what had seemed one of the conclusions of psychology.

## PRAYERS

### A CHILD'S PRAYER

On July 31st, 1919, P. W. composed a prayer for the use of children. Both the prayer and the manner of its making are notable enough for discussion.

A month earlier a lady had stated that in her opinion the world had no "adequate" prayer of this sort, and asked P. W. to "give one to the world which would be." A hard task—that of surpassing all previous attempts of the kind!

No sign was given in any word of P. W. that she cared to excel all others, but there is evinced a great desire to compose a prayer suited to a small child.

It is a noteworthy fact that the marvellous fertility of invention and capacity for complex and lightning-swift thinking which enabled

P. W. to perform without hesitation almost incredible tasks proposed by myself and others, took time to consider this task, though it was but a few minutes, gave evidence of mental labor, made and abandoned a line and began anew, and still made alterations in the final form. She explained satisfactorily why all this was so, in that it was a work of extraordinary delicacy and difficulty to choose terms in all respects suitable to a babe.

Although it may well be that P. W. had pondered during the month past somewhat on the task set her, yet there is much evidence in the record to come that the work of actual verbal construction took place at the time of the dictation. I have already intimated what some of the indications were: It is particularly significant that the first attempt: "I am Thy little child; dear Father, I shall play," is in lines each of three feet, but she changes to lines of four feet, like those of Now I lay me."

Mrs. Curran circled a long time until we finally remarked upon it. Patience at last said: "Nay, I hae a taskin' which be such a lovin' one I be a-feared o' it. It be a child's prayin'.

We were all startled but immensely pleased. About a month previous to this Mrs. Smith had received a letter from her niece Marion, who suggested that the world held no adequate child's prayer, and would not Patience give one to the world which would be. Patience had refrained all this time, telling us to wait when it would be mentioned. It seemed rather an odd coincidence that Dr. King, who baptized the Baby Patience and Mrs. McKee, should have been urged to come over at this time.

"Patience," said Mrs. Smith, who was at the board, "don't you want Dr. King at the board while you write this prayer?"

"What mattereth it who stirreth a puddin', be it a good un? answered Patience, and we laughed, as Patience went on talking of the prayer and what it should be.

"How for to put within a babe's lips, whom He loveth so, words for to tell unto Him the love He hath bought from them!

"Woe is he who putteth but love within a babe's utterance. Fear hath nae part. Yea, for to bring the great God down unto the whisperin' lips, aye and disturb not the comin' sleep, with awe."

That was the hardest part as we realized. Then, as though she felt the need of the Father's help, she uttered these words of prayer:

"Let my throat sing a song that shall fall as a dove's coo. Oh, make my throat dulcet, aye and my words as the touch of sleep. Give me the tongue, aye and the power of simplicity."

Then, after the longest wait we ever had for something to come, she said: "Aye, I ha'e the singin'." Then another long wait and Patience

said: "I may not sing 'O Lord'; for what babe knoweth the words' lilt?"

"Father," went on Patience, and we thought she had commenced it. But she stopped and said:

"It meaneth not a nearness." Then later: "'Tis like unto making the first babe's swaddling cloth."

Letters and words were slipping by in streams as though Patience was selecting from all the literature of time. Then Mrs. Curran saw a little child on the shore of a vast sea. Then this passed and the prayer came.

The first time "Dear Father" was interjected. Then the first line read:

I am Thy little child, dear Father, I shall play.

Then after much feeling of unsatisfactoriness [on the part of P. W.—Ed.] and some changes we arrived at the final copy and then we asked Patience to approve it, which she did, and the final draft follows:

I, THY CHILD FOREVER, PLAY  
 ABOUT THY KNEES AT CLOSE OF DAY;  
 WITHIN THY ARMS I NOW SHALL CREEP  
 AND LEARN THY WISDOM WHILE I SLEEP.  
 AMEN.

Was the lady who requested the prayer right in saying that the world has no adequate one for a small child? By adequate I presume she meant one which is brief, in verse, beautiful in language, suited by its simplicity of words and of thought to a child's mentality, psychologically healthful and spiritually uplifting, incapable of affronting the child's intellect, confusing its moral sense or playing havoc upon its emotions.\* Now, I am no more able to say with certainty that there

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\* I cannot believe that children of the eighteenth century were mentally so different from children of our own time that the *Divine Songs for Children* of Isaac Watts, some of them in the form of prayers, did not do damage in all three particulars given. It is particularly in point to mention these sets of verses since, because of their very wide vogue, they undoubtedly affected the composition of some briefer products, specifically intended to be used as juvenile prayers. Watts says in his preface: "I have endeavored to sink the language to the level of a child's understanding; and yet to keep it, if possible, above contempt." A laudable purpose surely, that of writing in simple language, but perhaps it had been better for some children had the language been difficult so as to obscure the meaning. He wrote as though he regarded every child a hard-boiled theologian, so entranced with the ingenuity and intricacy of the vast legalistic machine constructed by Calvin to justify God for saving a few of His creatures whom He allowed to be born already damned, as to forget all the resultant horrors. The very first verse of his famous collection for boys and girls just able to talk, is this:

How glorious is our heavenly King  
 Who reigns above the sky!  
 How shall a child presume to sing  
 His dreadful majesty?

Even in the eighteenth century it is probable that many small children did not

is no such prayer in the wide world than I think the lady is, but at least I have never found any previous to P. W. which seems to me quite to fill the prescription as worded above. I have consulted all the promising titles in the Boston public library, and looked through many books containing prayers for children.

The most familiar form in the English language is:

Now I lay me down to sleep;  
 I pray Thee, Lord, my soul to keep;  
 If I should die before I wake,  
 I pray Thee, Lord, my soul to take.

This has several merits; it is short, simple in language, and passable if not good verse. But its content is small, and not of the best possible quality. There is nothing in it but a request to 'keep the soul while sleeping or to "take" it in the event of death during sleep. It is of doubtful psychological expediency to make an imaginative and nervous child repeat every night expressions of the possibility that its soul may get away even if so lucky as to wake up in the morning, and of the likelihood of dying while sleeping. No recorded saying by Jesus is in such a vein. He said: "Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of heaven," and "Except ye...become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven,"—and *both these sayings were uttered in the presence of children*, and therefore stand as representative of what He thought it

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find the word "majesty" quite on the level of their understanding, that some who did understand it did not love God the better for His being called "dreadful," and that it confused some to think that they should be expected "to sing" a majesty of that nature.

For generations children learned to recite hymns made specially for them by kind Dr. Watts, with such passages as these:

Then let me always watch my lips  
 Lest I be struck to death and hell;  
 Since God a book of reckoning keeps  
 For every lie that children tell, etc.  
 Great God, how terrible art Thou  
 To sinners e'er so young!...  
 There is a dreadful hell  
 And everlasting pains;  
 There sinners must with devils dwell  
 In darkness, fire and chains.  
 Can such a wretch as I  
 Escape this dreadful end?...

Even in the sweet and tender poem beginning, "Hush, my dear, lie still and slumber," Watts thought it his duty to introduce one such awful verse.

Is it any wonder that people, taught such things and with such imagery impressed upon their minds in childhood, become insane as Cowper did, or melancholics, wondering if they would manage to "escape this dreadful end"?

healthful for little children to hear about themselves at times when they are not "naughty" and need gentle reproof. Doubtless few children are actually injured or troubled by the recited solicitude regarding their safety while asleep, since the most of them begin to repeat the formula before they have any notion what it means, and get to understand it, more or less, too slowly to be more than vaguely troubled by it. But there are exceptional children. And it would seem better, if possible, to devise a form which would suggest and build up vital and continual relation with the unseen Power, rather than a reliance upon that Power mainly in case of an emergency. And, to tell the truth, few children who go to bed will die during their sleep. At any rate, it is not psychologically healthful to associate the thought of night with the emotion of fear.

Another rhymed prayer which I think had some vogue began:

Gentle Jesus, meek and mild,  
 Look upon a little child.  
 Make me gentle as Thou art;  
 Come and live within my heart."

This has what the more universal "Now I lay me" has not, an expression of adoration and devotion. Nor is there any hint of apprehension in the prayer. But children are sometimes very literal and some, as soon as they learned the meaning of the word "heart" and the location of that organ, might experience a wondering uneasiness concerning Jesus's living in it. The verse, too, is not economical, in that it describes Jesus by three synonymous terms, "gentle," "meek" and "mild." The repetition of terms implying the same moral quality, followed by the petition that the child may possess it, rather suggests that quiescent harmlessness is the acme of spiritual attainment.

I found in an old collection of prayers for children the following, but do not know that it was ever extensively used:

This night, my God, for Jesus' sake,  
 Thy blessing give to me;  
 Pardon my sins and may I wake  
 A better child to be.

This has the most concentrated amount of dogma in it, if one agrees with the dogma. But it appears to me to hold altogether too much of the doctrine of inborn sin. I maintain that it is psychologically more healthful for a small child to pray that he be kept good than that his sins be pardoned and that he may do less evil.

Another prayer in this old book is:

Heavenly Father, please to bless me,  
 Help me a good child to be;  
 Make me love my blessed Saviour  
 And do all that will please Thee.

This may stand as representative of forms that fail if only, for the reason that they pretend to be poetry, but lack the lilt and metrical evenness which are pleasing to childhood. Besides, one wonders, if a child is won to love best by the implication that he is to be *made* to love. I may be hypercritical; very well, it may be that we shall eventually find a prayer to which even the hypercritical cannot reasonably object.

Many children have learned to use as a prayer one or more verses of a well-known child's hymn. I quote the first and best because of the imposed condition of brevity:

Jesus, tender shepherd, hear me  
 Bless Thy little lamb tonight.  
 Through the darkness be Thou near me;  
 Keep me safe till morning light.

My objection to this is that there is not enough in it; the thought is again narrowed too much to mere safety from that danger during sleep which as a rule is negligible. Another verse, if we take that into account, dwells upon the child's sins and upon the hope that when he dies he will be with the Saviour. Jesus's way, as we have seen, was to implant in the child's mind the thought that he is with his Saviour now, and now in "the kingdom of heaven."

I find a prayer much used by German children:

Ich bin klein,  
 Mein herz ist rein;  
 Darf Niemand d'rin wohnen  
 Als Jesus allein.

Literally this is: "I am little; my heart is pure; no one may dwell therein but Jesus." A fairly adequate rendering in rhyme form, for which I am responsible, is:

I am a child,  
 My heart pure from sin;  
 No one but Jesus  
 May enter therein.

If one objects to a little child being accustomed to look upon himself as an inevitable sinner, it does not follow that he approves of the

child being trained to be a little Pharisee, proud how good he is. The form of words should rather suggest to the child that he is by his own choice doing that which is right because it is fit and beautiful and hence to be done naturally, with no occasion to give one's self special credit for doing it.

Now let us more minutely examine the prayer submitted by P. W.

*I. Thy child forever, play  
About Thy knees at close of day;  
Within Thy arms I now shall creep  
And learn Thy wisdom while I sleep.*

1. This meets the condition of brevity, which we imposed upon all conditions for quotation.

2. It is as smooth and lilting as "Now I lay me." While not so absolutely uniform in meter as "Jesus, tender shepherd," the variations are such as are agreeable to the ear of a child rather than otherwise, and

3. May have been deliberately adopted to facilitate substitution for the more nearly universal "Now I lay me," for they are exactly the same as in that verse. Whether at the time of dictation (certainly there is the appearance that much of the work of actual construction was done then) or earlier, a great deal of thought went into the building of these four lines. I suspect that P. W. determined that it should exactly duplicate the metrical scheme of "Now I lay me," as it does precisely. In both the first line has seven syllables, the other three have eight each. And in every case the additional syllable comes like a grace-note at the beginning of the line. As it had three chances in each of three lines of coming elsewhere, and there were chances of its not occurring in one or other of the three lines, or of occurring somewhere in the first, it seems to me hardly likely that the exact prosodical duplication was accident. This duplication is one of the features of the verse as an exhibit.

4. The language is brought to the level of a child's understanding as nearly as language admits, and yet contains lofty thought and spiritual essence.\* If requisite that every word shall be a monosyllable, then "Now I lay me" possesses this point in its favor. But it is not requisite, since children, of say, four years, understand many words of two or more syllables better than certain monosyllabic ones familiar

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\* P. W. realized the impossibility of fully achieving this ideal. She said: "How for to put within a babe's lips, whom He loveth so, words for to tell unto Him the love which He hath bought from them?"—the last clause being another way of saying "which they owe to Him."



enough to their elders. The chances are that a child would glimpse what "forever" means, having long assimilated "never" and later, probably, its contrary, "ever certainly better than he would grasp the metaphysical concept of "soul." And if to the child "soul" happens to be but a mystical word, the traditional prayer is until a later period of life of little meaning to him. He might as well ask the Lord to "keep" his cosine or his X, and to "take" it if he dies while asleep. I wish I could know what the average tot thinks is to be kept or taken, whether some tangible thing inside it, some invisible playmate, or what, or if it thinks anything about it. But in P. W.'s verse, if either "forever" or "wisdom" prevents the child from getting the full thought, the child gets enough of the thought not to confuse his understanding. His mind may stop short, but it is not muddled. At least he is "Thy child," and at least he may "learn Thy"—something that God can teach, and which is called "wisdom." Really, adults know not much more.

5. The language, while simple, is at the same time quietly dignified. Even in "Jesus, tender shepherd," a manly boy of five might find an expression, "Thy little lamb," to make him wince, but he would hardly object to "Thy child forever," as he is conscious that he is a child and has probably heard that we are all the "children of God." We have in the first line the simple beauty of the sentence in the Confirmation service: "Defend, O Lord, this Thy child...that he may continue thine forever." Perhaps the line contains a designed reminiscence of that passage, which for centuries bishops have uttered. If so, it is another mark of artistic fitness.

6. It is pictorial, and pictorial in terms familiar to a child. Playing about the knees of God as about those of his father, creeping into God's arms even as he sleepily feels himself held by the arms of his mother.

7. There is not in it a single phrase capable of producing a morbid effect upon the mind of the most imaginative or nervous child. I speak of what I do know, and shudder to think what would have been the effect upon my childish mind if I had been taught to repeat Watts's words:

"Then let me always watch my lips,  
Lest I be struck to death and hell."

For I remember the uneasiness which even "if I should die before I wake" stirred up within me. The child is led to feel confidence in Divine protection without first raising an apprehension and then trying, perhaps less successfully, to quiet it by an appeal. Is it a loftier,

a more spiritual thing, to bold out beseeching arms because one fears darkness or death, than to feel confidence without fear, not that God will look in if an emergency comes, but that one is with Him always?\*

8. The verse throughout is soothing and restful, as if it were specially designed, aside from its other values, to bring about speedy and sound slumber.†

9. There is not a thought expressed which, if a child grows up to be a man of religious conviction, he will outgrow. He may come to question whether or not the "holy angels" pictured in Watts's beautiful verse gather around his bed,—at least he will be very doubtful that angels correspond with the concept—which children borrow from pictures—but his advance in knowledge will only make him the more assured that his mental and spiritual self may improve and advance during sleep. Nor would even a Newton, who declared that he seemed to himself to have been all his life like a child gathering shells on the seashore, find anything beneath his dignity, if a religious man, in the idea that he is God's child forever, playing about His knees, and creeping into His arms at close of day.

I conclude that of all prayers intended for children which I have discovered, this seems incomparably the best, that it is entitled to be called a masterpiece, and that under all the circumstances of its composition, it constitutes a distinct and remarkable phenomenon in the case of Patience Worth.

## OTHER PRAYERS

The first of these which I present, dictated at the close of an evening's work, Feb. 1, 1916, is exactly as given, except that I have changed "fulling" to filling.

O' Days o' Thee I've ta'en the King o' the measure;  
 O' men, the smiles; o' earth, the tears;  
 Of bloom, the sweet; of pain, the hurt;  
 Of work, the tire; of song, the glad;  
 Of all, and claimed it as mine own,  
 And given naught but empty word.  
 And woe hath set upon me!  
     Take Thou this heart.  
     Take Thou these bands.  
     Take Thou this tear.

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\* Remember that P. W. said before she began to construct the prayer: "Woe is he who putteth [anything] but love within a babe's utterance. Fear hath nae part."

† And she also said: "Yea, for to bring the great God down unto the whispering lips, aye, and disturb not the coming sleep with awe," and, "Oh, make my throat dulcet, aye, and my words as the touch of sleep,"

Take Thou this smile.  
 Take Thou the hurt.  
 Take Thou the filling I have ta'en  
 For it be me, and I be Thine.  
 So then do Thou to claim thine own. Amen.\*

The following beautiful prayer Was given on Nov. 25th, 1916, the day before the baptism of "Patience Wee," the adopted child of the Currans:

"Out frae the white o' lilies, clothe her. Out o' its stored and glistenin' gold, do treasure her. Pluck from out the deep blue, the steadfast sky, the opi'n unto depths, that it be hers. Leave Thou the sun at every dawn to shew his light upon the seekin' shadows, that they shew their phantomness to her.

"Yet leave her woe. Ah, strip her not o' this! Make full her cup, that she know Thy heights and depths. Ope up her heart and write Thee there. Nae promise o' some golden realm as price; but write Thy words, and teach her lips to kiss the words."

Nov. 28, 1918.

#### PRAYER FOR MISS P. A. WRITER

Let the magic of Thy love descend, making the myriad sounds of love, creating the white flame which shall tip each utterance. Let Thyself flow like living water through this one."

July 29, 1920.

#### A PRAYER FOR THE BEREAVED

Great God, descend in a benediction upon this agony. Lift the weight of sorrow upon the wings of understanding. Create a perfect unison with Thee. Make today an instant, a careless instant, and ope the vista of tomorrow with its never-ending promise, with its new altar erected at which the taper burns.

#### PRAYER, FOR A BLIND WOMAN

Oh, Divine One, touch with Thy love The mantle of earth which is woe; Transform its tatters with Thy magic. Oh, Divine One, dearest God, list. Leave [let] Thy brightness creep the shadows; Make the midnight shine with Thy countenance. Oh, Divine One, make love, earth's armor, strong, That it shall turn the blade of woe. Make Thou this pleading blessed with Thy listening.

Amen.

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\* It is probable that the variations in the spelling of a word, here and elsewhere (as of the word of), are often ascribable to the recorder or the typist. Almost certainly P. W. did not spell out "upon" but 'pon.

## STUNTS OF COMPOSITION

The word "stunt" is not in the best repute, and yet it is the most expressive one I know to stand at the head of this chapter.

The inner dictator occasionally indulged her humor by feats of composition, some difficult only because of their swift, unhesitating delivery in the presence of a company, and some rising to heights of what antecedently would have been regarded as the impossible.

Here is a specimen of alliteration:

Oct. 31, 1921.

### I HAVE KNOWN

I have known pale mornings  
When the *listless leaves lapped loving*,  
When the *weary winged birds whirled*  
*Wheeling* toward the faint, faint stars.  
I have known pale mornings ere the sun came  
When a *holy awe hung hovering*  
Ere the curtain of the dawn revealed the sun  
And day, with her thousand, thousand trumpets,  
Came marching on!

I have known tempestuous noons  
*Fraught fiercely, fretted frantic*,  
Noons which *dinned and doled*  
In bart and change where man's tongue  
Slung the pendulum twixt loss and gain.

I have known long shadowed eves  
Where *green stars glimmered, glittering, glistening*  
*'Gainst* a sky of heliotrope,  
Where sombre woods pulsed *rhythmic, writhing runes*,  
And the fitful stream sang lazily betimes.

I have known the night, the *steadfast, steady*,  
*Solemn, sacred night, star-studded*,  
Moon-embled, serene, an holy altar  
At which I may worship in a *sacred silence*,  
Tipping the *sable cup in sweet communion*  
*With that sire who silence keeps*.

[this and following chapters skipped until final summary chapter]

## SUMMARY

In 1913 there suddenly began in or through the consciousness of Mrs. Pearl Lenore Curran, a woman then thirty-one years old, the manifestation of the following mental abilities and characteristics which have continued ever since, whenever she adjusts herself for the purpose, as it were turning on the tap.

A. A faculty for literary composition of a very high order, finding expression in poetry, lengthy tales, parables, aphorisms, etc. We have now read the judgments of many experts, and also many examples of the literature.

B. Knowledge of a vast number of locutions, most of them not used in this country at the present day, many of them never used here—obsolete words, archaic words, dialectal words of England; knowledge of foreign lands, particularly of England and the Orient, sufficient, for such production of "local color" as satisfied English critics that *Hope Trueblood* was written by one of their countrywomen, and making *The Sorry Tale* largely satisfactory to students of Bible lands as they were and are; knowledge of historical facts in relation particularly to Palestine and Rome, not perhaps inerrant, but enough to presume years of study.\*

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\* If in the sentence: "And this man was called Hezekiah, after the tribe's name (*The Sorry Tale*, p. 368), one of the ancient twelve tribes of the Israelites is referred to, as one would suppose, it is a gross error, as anyone with a moderate knowledge of the Bible would know. But Patience Worth, who applies the term "bin" to a trading-booth, and "house way" to a street, may not have meant one of the twelve tribes, or even a tribe in the technical sense. It is a quite possible suggestion that there was some bloc, family or other, founded by a leader the memory of whom has perished, and which perpetuated his name, especially as it signified "God is strength." A group of Zealots, cherishing dreams of national independence, might have been known as the Hezekiah Zealots. Worse seeming blunders in the Bible have been vindicated, and others, really facts, probably never will be. In Isaiah 52: 4 we read that the "Assyrian oppressed" the Israelites in Egypt, and this was long thought to be a ludicrous misstatement. But the mummy of the king believed to have been the Oppressor was discovered, it was found to have strongly marked Semitic features, and it is said to be proved that his mother was an Assyrian.

If Patience Worth had said, as mythical Masonic lore says, that the "lost book of the law" was buried under the Temple and the spot marked by a marble monument in the Holy of Holies, we could unflinchingly declare the statement absurd in itself, and impossible because absolutely opposed to the Jewish idea of the sanctity of that spot. But what she said about the name of the "tribe," allowing that she may have used the word in a non-technical sense, cannot be thus disproved.

But grant it an error, according to the superficial appearance. The fact that Patience Worth displayed a great deal of mysterious knowledge does not carry with it the demand that she should know everything. If John Smith, a bricklayer, suddenly showed ability to translate Egyptian hieroglyphics, his case would be hardly less puzzling

C. Special intellectual powers and dexterities. Ability to compose poetry, or long and complex narratives, with perfect continuity and ordered development, (a) by a stream of letters issuing with lightning rapidity from the lips (b) in the presence of groups of people, (c) paying attention at the same time to a vivid visual accompaniment, (d) stopping with ease to describe the imagery, to converse on relevant or irrelevant matters, or to answer the telephone or the doorbell, and resume without breaking, the connection, (e) and thus to compose, on one occasion, about 5,000 words, within three hours, on a difficult and dramatic part of the narrative, (f) laying the story aside and sometimes lending it out of the house, and resuming without difficulty, whether two days or two weeks later. All this involves phenomenal memory, phenomenal speed and phenomenal complexity of mental operations. Also ability to pass at will from a style which is ninety per cent Anglo-Saxon, the most nearly Anglo-Saxon since Wicliffe, as Mr. Yost estimates, to a style as different and as modern as that of *Lorna Doone* or *Jane Eyre*. Also ability to compose in the presence of an audience in almost instant response to subjects given her, with no declension in average quality, and also, in response to chance remarks to fling off aphorisms of unsurpassed quality, sounding as though derived from the lore of ages. And also ability to perform a variety of intellectual stunts impossible to at least most people, such

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if he occasionally made a mistake. Probably no historian treating a considerable period or an extensive subject is without errors which later investigators discover. Hildreth, the historian of New England, speaking of the Eighteenth Century, says that the treadmill was never idle, but the treadmill was not invented until the beginning of the Nineteenth Century. Macauley, exceedingly laborious in trying to fix his facts, sets down things not so. So does Bancroft. Historians have declared for more than one hundred and fifty years that the "blue laws" were forgeries of Samuel Peters, and occasionally repeat that error in magazine articles now, but I proved twenty-eight years ago that if forgeries, they were not the forgeries of Peters, and that the most of them actually existed in statutes or the common law, and this proof is now written in the standard history of Connecticut. Another error, relating to the early history of Virginia has been repeated by writers for 300 years. Even if Patience Worth were an archangel, ought we to expect her to be absolutely infallible? But if she is Mrs. Curran, considering what we have shown to be her education and environment, we should expect *The Sorry Tale*, dictated orally sometimes in large sections, to exhibit historical blunders, or details in contrast with what we know or can find about the ancient lands and cities, national and international politics, manners, customs, etc., etc., on almost every page. I have analyzed a number of documents composed automatically or by supposed "inspiration" by different persons and dealing with the remote past, and have become so used to finding the documents either full of anachronisms and incongruities or else accounted for by opportunities for normal knowledge which could easily be traced, that *The Sorry Tale*, and in a less degree *Hope Trueblood* strike me with astonishment, so few are the seeming errors and so, intractable is the case of Mrs. Curran with view to finding traces of the normal acquisition of the requisite knowledge.

*Addendum.* Since writing the above I have received a reply from Patience Worth through Mrs. Curran, whom I requested to ask what Patience Worth meant when she said that Hezekiah was named after the tribe; "Whist ye I Hezekiah wert named after his tribe, his kith, the eld o' his kind—not after a tribe o' the Jews."

as the intermingling of two compositions on two widely different subjects given her, and in widely different styles.

D. Highly developed mental trends such as normally imply long practice in certain modes of thought. I specially mention two. A trend toward and capacity for philosophical thinking, manifesting itself by the utterance of a consistent scheme of ideas regarding the cosmos, man and various problems of man. And a trend toward and capacity for what may be termed spiritual thinking, manifesting itself by the utterance of always consistent and harmonious views about God, religion and ethics. The former would normally imply that the woman through whose lips they issued had been of a deeply introspective and reflective bent, one who had meditated much upon the hidden meaning of things. The latter would normally imply that she had been, habitually or at all events during some period of life a woman of profoundly religious conviction and feeling, a devout attendant at religious rites, and something of a mystic.

There is no fact to indicate that all the powers and characteristics did not exist in Patience Worth fully from the first. From the outset she manifested her marvellous imagination and gift of poetic expression; within the very first sittings she produced in response to remarks many of those most difficult *tours de force*—aphorisms; that singular wisdom and spirituality were displayed without delay. Naturally it would be impossible to start every type of literature at once, but as soon as she turned her attention to one, as for example fiction, there was no period of fumbling, no gradual improvement, but the same facility and power shown as later on. Some of her "stunts" did not occur until years had passed, but as soon as the demand was made, she proved herself capable of it. The inference is that she could have done it equally well had the request been made earlier. Only in one respect was there the appearance of *acquiring* facility and that was in the matter of spelling out the words; and if Patience Worth is what she claims to be, that was because *Mrs. Curran* had to *get used* to the process.

Now, to account for all this on a normal basis, it is necessary to assume that *Mrs. Curran* possessed all these powers and facilities prior to the announcement of Patience Worth; that she possessed them either consciously or subconsciously.

Giving precedence to theory I, that she has consciously possessed them; this may take two forms:

1. She consciously had possessed and manifested them.
2. She consciously had possessed and concealed them.

We will begin by discussing 1:1, the theory that, prior to the announcement of Patience Worth, *Mrs. Curran* had possessed and exercised,

at least in large measure, the powers and facilities shown after that announcement, which we have enumerated as A, B, C and D.

What is the evidence regarding A, the possession and exercise of the ability to produce a high quality of literature, both poetry and prose?

*Testimony of Mrs. Curran.* She certainly knows the fact, if she had consciously possessed and exercised such ability. And the evidence is overwhelming that she is a person of veracity. (a) It is vouched for by those who know her, and have known her at different periods in her lifetime, whose letters and oral statements have been quoted. Mr. Reedy, skeptical at first, became willing to "bet his head" on her truthfulness. Mr. Yost is convinced of it and so are many whose words I have not quoted. Her step-daughter declared with emphasis that she was too frank by habit, Dr. Cory is among those convinced of her veracity. (b) Her veracity was indicated at every step of my own drastic examination, her willingness to answer any and all inquiries. Her manner, her answers given as readily when at first blush they seemed to make against her claims as when they unmistakably made for them, her readiness when called on to do so to open to me any possible source of information, the absence of all attempt to steer or influence me in my investigation,—everything indicated candor to a rare degree. (c) My visit to Palmer, in the Ozarks, was partly for the purpose of studying the "dialect" of the hills, but, unknown to her, it was partly to test her general truthfulness by comparing various statements which I adroitly elicited with what I learned there. The result was the vindication of all those statements. (d) The agreement between her testimony and the testimony of other witnesses was to mutually strengthen them all.

All this being the case, her testimony must be given great weight, and she declares that she never was conscious of possessing literary ability prior to Patience Worth's appearance, that in verse she had written only a very few pieces of school-girl doggerel, that she had never written a story or anything else which could be called literature.

*Testimony of persons who knew her at different periods.* That, as we have seen, supports her own statements. They never knew her to write literature or to manifest any pronounced taste for it, or to be more than a desultory reader. Her step-daughter, who had known her twenty years, scoffed at the idea that she had been a woman of literary ability. The utmost that has been said was by a lady who remembers that she could write good descriptive letters of persons and places, as tens of thousands of young women can.

*Testimony of Silence.* For fourteen years the case has been before



the public, and it must be that persons who formerly knew her and cannot be located have heard of it and the claims made. Finally, I made a direct appeal for all among a half million readers of the *Scientific American* who could furnish any information to do so. Surely if Mrs. Curran had ever manifested literary interest, erudition or faculty some one would have appeared to affirm it. No one has done so.

*The testimony of Mr. Curran's letters.* These, seventy in number, written at the period of courtship contained literary allusions of his own but none to anything she had ever said indicated literary authorship or even interest in books. This is a more important indication than it may appear to some.

*The testimony of the original draught of her own verses.* This, showing its age, in her girlish hand with ink writing, with her father's corrections written with a pencil, tells its corroborative story. The verses, revealing no sign of literary ability, have been exhibited in this volume.

*The testimony of the reactions of Mrs. Pollard and Mr. Curran.* Her mother died before any investigator thought to get her written testimony. But her wonder and delight, when the first Patience Worth verses came, as indicated in the record which Mrs. Hutchings transcribed, speak eloquently. If she had known her daughter to do such work before she would not have so reacted. Mr. Curran was prejudiced against the ouija board experiments, and the poetry was one of the chief influences which won his interest, and his wonder is plain in the record. If he had had knowledge that she could and had done such work normally, he would have said: "What is the use of the ouija board? You can compose, for you have composed, poetry without it."

Theory I: 1 in relation to A seems effectively disposed of.

Next we take up B. What is the evidence bearing on the supposition that Mrs. Curran, prior to the appearance of Patience Worth, had knowledge of a large number of obsolete, archaic and dialectal words, and made such knowledge known by using them in speech or writing: and also betrayed such knowledge of history and of foreign lands as to render it plausible that she could write a story of English life which would escape criticism as to its "local color," or of ancient times to a high degree satisfactory to special students of those times?

*Testimony of Mrs. Curran.* She declares that she was never in the least interested in the history of the language, never concerned with old and unusual words, never a reader of literature containing words in the special Patience Worth vocabulary, and never, so far as she knows, in the company of scholars who could have used or discussed such words within her hearing. The already cited proofs of her veracity should

be kept in mind. Also that she never studied more than a little history, that this little study related to the United States and particularly to Texas, that she was never a reader of history nor associated with any one who was, that she was never interested in foreign lands. Finally, that she never did or could have displayed either type of knowledge.

*Testimony of persons who knew her at different periods of her life.* This, we have seen, supports her at every point.

*Testimony of her library.* It has been shown that it contained no books which could have taught her peculiar words save a dictionary (which both she and Mrs. Maupin declare she very seldom looked into), and this, I find, has comparatively few of the words in question. Also that it contained very few books dealing of history or foreign lands, witnessing that both she and her husband were little interested in these subjects. Throughout, we must also remember that she never frequented public libraries or took out books until she began to take out novels to amuse her husband in his last illness.

*Testimony of her answers to my questions.* These, if veracious, showed that her knowledge of history was very meagre. Apart from general proof of her veracity and the corroboration of others, the answers contain internal evidence of their honesty, in their consistency with circumstances of her life, a consistency which was exceedingly unlikely to have been preserved had there been a purpose to conceal real knowledge. Some of my queries were carefully thought out with view to trapping her in inconsistencies, if she was not answering solely on the basis of her actual memories. For this reason I asked: "Who was the hero of the Alamo?", having in mind that she had told me that in the public school she had been taught something of the history of Texas. Since the siege of the Alamo would certainly have been included in what she was taught, and since that graphic picture would almost certainly have remained in memory, I should have regarded it as suspicious had she answered "I don't know." But she gave the name correctly—Davy Crockett, although she could not place Andrew Jackson or Daniel Webster. Knowing that she had been taught in an Episcopal Sunday-school, and that the meaning and origin of the rites of Holy Communion are usually emphasized in an Episcopal Sundayschool, it "rang true" to have her answer that it was founded on the Last Supper, and that this was related to the Passover. But there are thousands of men and women who were once in Sunday-school and who today would say: "Matthew, Mark, Luke and John—yes, Mark and Luke were Apostles." In the Sunday-school something of Henry VIII's relation to ecclesiastical matters would be taught, which is imperfectly remembered as "he almost founded his church." Her answers

that she knew something of the contents of *Thanatopsis*, *The Rubaiyat* and Whitman's poems, agree with the fact that it was these which Mr. Curran gave her before marriage. She remembers scraps of Longfellow because her mother used to repeat a poem by him, and she liked *Hiawatha*. Suppose that she had declared she was ignorant of any of Moore's poems, she a singer, when so many of them are set to music! But people who are bent on deceiving do betray themselves in exactly that way. Inwardly I was surprised that a woman who could not place Andrew Jackson and who had not read *Ben-Hur* should know that Poppaea was Nero's wife, but it turned out that she had seen the fact on a pictured poster of a *Ben-Hur* screen show. She did not know that Poppaea died from a kick by her husband—the poster would not depict that. Her particular bits of historical knowledge fit exactly in the framework. There are more people than readers may think, who would answer, if suddenly asked, that Daniel Webster made the dictionary, even though, as in Mrs. Curran's case, the mention of Noah revived the memory of his name. There was something indescribably convincing in her air of satisfaction at getting Daniel Webster correctly placed as the man who founded the *Saturday Evening Post*! Even this fits in. I saw no copies of this periodical about—if she habitually took it she would probably know what is announced every week on its cover, that "Benj. Franklin" founded it, but seeing it only now and then, her memory of just what great man established it got twisted.

*Testimony of environment.* Having now in mind the vocabulary of old and unusual words, I point to the extreme unlikelihood of her acquiring a taste and pursuing studies in relation to them under the circumstances of her life. Where was she likely to have done so, in the common schools of Texas and on the prairies? In the school in St. Louis where she was put back for deficiency in studies, and which she left at fourteen, going to Palmer? In the mining villages of Palmer and Potosi? While in Chicago laboring as a clerk and spending her spare time in practicing music? On her intervals back from Chicago in the uninspiring little towns of Potosi, Irondale and Bismarck, where, moreover, her main purpose was to earn enough money by giving music lessons to enable her to resume musical studies in Chicago? In her husband's home where there were no books for the purpose and into which no books were brought? \*

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\* If the reader is in any danger of getting, by this time or in the discussion which follows, the impression that Mrs. Curran is either unintelligent or as unversed on all subjects as she evidently is in history, and as scrawpily acquainted with all these as she is with high standard literature, that impression should be corrected. I should say that her intelligence is above the average, and in ordinary conversation she shines

Next we take up C, and inquire if it could be that she possessed before the announcement of Patience Worth singular powers of memory and of complex and difficult intellectual operations. I do not deny that there are persons so endowed, though many of the stories of cases are greatly exaggerated. There is no man who "never forgets a face," though we have heard of such men often. The late Rev. Dr. James M. Buckley was believed by many to have an infallible memory in the sense that if he remembered that a thing was so, it was so. But in the first encounter I ever had with him he contradicted my ascription of a certain anecdote to Artemus Ward, saying it was written by Mark Twain. And the infallible memory deceived him, though Mark Twain did allude to Artemus Ward's story in one of his books. But Cardinal Mezzofanti had a marvellous memory for languages. Vambery could learn enough of a language on a ship passage to converse with natives. There is no particular reason to doubt that a certain man, lately deceased, could, as stated, write out his shorthand notes in one language while conversing in another. All such persons have a peculiar genius. But we do not hear of such peculiar genius bursting into view for the first time in mature life, nor even in the years of adolescence without giving previous sign. The nearest to the appearance of such a case which I know of is that of Adam Clarke, who was supposed to be poor in Latin until one day when he heard his surly teacher tell a visitor that he was a dunce, whereupon he went home and learned the whole Latin grammar by heart that night, and recited perfectly after that. In the light of later psychological knowledge that case must be restated. He had learned the grammar already (he afterward became a famous linguist) but, probably owing to shyness and the surliness of his master, his thoughts became confused when he tried to recite. Somehow, the insult of being called a dunce blew off the cover of his inhibition, and with a little brushing up he was ready to show what he had acquired. The question about Mrs. Curran is, had she ever, prior to Patience Worth, shown any signs of extraordinary memory or of any other peculiar intellectual genius?

I need not here multiply the evidences, nor divide the proofs into sections. Of course there was no way by which others than "Pearl"

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more by virtue of that intelligence than many who have received a greater education. He is said to be an accomplished musician, and that subject has consumed a great share of her time and energy. She appears to maintain good mental contact with current events, and in fact lives mostly in her own day. There are a great many other intelligent women, not graduates of higher schools, who would not come off with flying colors were they examined in history and standard literature. But it is only honest to say, as Mrs. Curran herself admits and those who know her declare, that her mental life has been much ripened and enriched since the advent, and apparently mainly through the tutelage, of Patience Worth.

herself could judge on this point except by what traits and powers she manifested, and all testify that she showed no extraordinary intellectual endowments. She was intelligent, bright and vivacious, but no one remembers her having exhibited habitually or at any time any peculiar mental gifts, mnemonic or other, to cause surprise and wonder.

Still less does it seem necessary to deal formally and at length with D, whether Mrs. Curran ever possessed and manifested, prior to Patience Worth, a trend to philosophical thinking or a religious and spiritual trend. She declares that she was never contemplative or bothered her head with the problems of the universe. And all the testimony seems to show that she had been the very reverse of meditative and philosophical, a happy-go-lucky, matter-of-fact person who, like the majority, lived in the outer aspect of things, and troubled very little to look beneath the surface. She also declares that she never had any deep religious experience, simply "graduated" into being confirmed in a church, never was given to church going, never read more than a very little in the Bible, never had aspirations to be a missionary or a saint, and never thought much about God, the hereafter and similar subjects. Others, in proportion as their opportunities went, support her in all these statements. There is not a hint from any source that she ever showed religiosity, nor that there was any fact in her life to cause her to repress such a tendency.

We have now ascertained that not only is there no evidence in favor but also that all the evidence is against the theory that Mrs. Curran, prior to the announcement of Patience Worth, ever possessed and manifested any talent for poetical or other literary production, or any acquaintance with philological lore; ever showed more than the most meagre knowledge of history or the manners, customs, etc., of foreign countries; ever was endowed with and displayed unusual mnemonic or other intellectual powers of a peculiar character; or ever had or manifested a trend in the direction of deep philosophical thinking or of religiosity and mysticism. And all this is fully admitted by Dr. Cory, the psychologist who has made the most effort to supply an explanation, nor do I know that any other psychologist or other investigator questions it.

We come now to the theory 1:2, which is a conceivable one, whether or not actually entertained by anyone, that Mrs. Curran did as a matter of fact possess the literary genius or talent, had amassed the special knowledge, did own the peculiar intellectual powers, and had cultivated the aptitudes for philosophical and spiritual thinking, before these began to be displayed under cover of the name of Patience Worth, but had successfully concealed all these from view until that time.

We need not spend much time on this proposition, since to clearly state it, after the ground we have gone over, is almost to refute it.

All the difficulties, in connection with early schooling, and environment throughout,\* still exist.

Also, we are required to suppose that a character which according to present appearance and united testimony of those familiar with it in the past, is unusually open, frank and communicative, almost to the point of indiscretion, is nevertheless capable of gross falsehood throughout the more than thirteen years following the appearance of Patience Worth regarding powers, aptitudes and trends designated as A, B, C and D in this summary, and which she consciously possessed before Patience Worth's advent, and also that for a long period prior to that event she had concealed the conscious possession of these mental endowments, and so successfully concealed them that neither her own

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\* It may be that some readers do not yet appreciate the enormous difficulty of supposing that the specialized knowledge which enabled Patience Worth to employ correctly a vast number of locutions in use in the Seventeenth Century, many of which still dialectically survive, and to write *The Sorry Tale* and *Hope Trueblood*, was acquired by Mrs. Curran prior to the beginning of her automatic deliverances. The difficulty is that such acquisition, judged by all previous standards, should have left its traces discoverable in the course of the long hunt for them accompanied by such widespread publicity of the claims made. It is practically impossible that such normal acquisition should not have been made at least plausible, by something learned about early schooling or early and subsequent environment. One might write a treatise filled with illustrative examples, of which I will select two.

We may neglect entirely the internal evidences that the famous Rowley poems of Thomas Chatterton supposed to have been composed in the Fifteenth Century, were forgeries. Had they been delivered orally, in the exact manner of the ouija board, their connection with his early environment and peculiar tastes and studies could easily have been shown, as they ultimately were. His father was an antiquary, and the Chattertons had been sextons of the ancient Redcliffe church for two centuries. When a small boy he was fascinated by the old tombs in that church and was fond of deciphering the inscriptions and of poring over the old parchments in the oaken chests of the muniment room. He had learned his very letters from the illuminated capitals of an ancient musical folio. His poetical genius and his ambition for literary distinction were manifested in his sixth year. These are only samples of the clues that lay plentiful as daisies in a field.

James MacPherson pretended that the Ossianic poems were translations from Gaelic originals, whereas they are bits of genuine legendary poems set in a matrix of his own composition. He succeeded in fooling most scholars for a long time and never, like Psalmanazar, confessed to the imposition. But, while the claim that the poems, as a whole, are ancient ones, is absolutely confuted by internal evidence, MacPherson could not conceal that there was much in his education and environment to make it very possible that he was the principal author. He was born and reared among the scenes they depict, he was educated at King's College, Aberdeen, he early became much interested in Gaelic literature, he travelled in the Highlands and collected specimens of it, he made genuine translations of some poems in that tongue, beside some of his own, etc.

I repeat that it is exceedingly difficult, however dread the alternative, to credit that Mrs. Curran amassed the knowledge, possessed the poetical gifts, etc., prior to Patience Worth, and that, despite all the resources of the modern press, and the penetration of newspapers and magazines into every nook of the country, no trace after thirteen years should have come to light regarding her education, environment, habits or particular acts, to give any plausibility to the theory.

mother nor any other discoverable person had any notion that she possessed them.

Can a proved case parallel to this supposed one be pointed out in all history? Is such a case, involving anything like what this one would involve, psychologically possible? The more we explore the more certain we are that poetical genius, for example, begins to show signs at an early age. Could one, possessing it, conceal all signs of it from childhood on to the age of thirty-one? Could one, determined to conceal it, infallibly prevent a written scrap—for it is the first instinct of a poet to write from falling under other eyes? Poets read poetry. Could "Pearl" have been fond of reading poetry, and none know it? Could one possess, for example., an extraordinary power of memory, and never betray it for a term of years? Could one have a passion for antiquities, or philology, and never, year after year, go to libraries, ask questions, etc., that some one would note and remember? It is possible to pretend that one is pious when he is not, but can one be consumed with a passion of adoration for Deity and of spiritual aspiration inwardly yet purposely and persistently keep it under cover? If one or all of these are possible, think of the prodigious will power, the sleepless watch upon one's self, year after year, from early years onward!

And what for? If such was the unprecedented and phenomenal resolution, almost miraculously successful, it must have had a motive. What could have been that motive? Not timidity, since the most timid young thing at least has some companions to whom she expresses herself, and certain of the poets have been among the most shrinking violets of mankind. Timidity may obscure, it cannot conceal talents. Besides, it does not appear that "Pearl" was at all troubled with timidity. I have struggled to imagine a plausible theoretical motive for systematically crushing instinctive expression, and conquering all the motives which ordinarily govern human conduct, and it appears as though we must fix on the motive of astonishing the world, sometime, by claiming that somebody else was showing superior abilities, using her as an instrument.

We are now, through no will of mine, but by the logical leading of the theory, landed in comic opera. When "Pearl" was a girl (for the concealment must have begun early) she planned that she would for a great many years conceal the abilities which she felt developing within her and certain species of knowledge to be subsequently acquired, in order that she might at a proper time announce that a spirit possessed the abilities and the knowledge. And why? for we have not reached the ultimate motive.

For money? But she never afterward made money out of the Patience Worth phenomena, as she might have done by having paid sittings. Such money as came by way of royalties on books, etc., were offset by the extra expenses. Certainly her course was precisely the opposite of one who was actuated from the beginning by a far-seeing mercenary motive.

For fame? To give up human approbation for herself from childhood's years, in order to confer it principally upon a "spook," sometime in the future? Preposterous!

But, still pursuing, with a guilty sense that doing so is a silly farce, this theory which nobody has advanced, why did she make no move to bring her plan to effect? She attended no Spiritualist meetings, she worked up no atmosphere of expectation. She made no move for ouija board work, the ouija board first chanced to be encountered at a neighbor's house. *She* did not buy an ouija board, *she* did not urge continued sitting with it, *she* had to be coaxed and almost driven to the board. And how slow she was in bringing on Patience Worth! And how odd that so clever a schemer should have let her husband confuse her subconsciousness by that "Pat McQuillan" joke, instead of making the ouija board promptly declare "I am Patience Worth." I beg the reader's pardon for treating the theory of conscious possession and concealment with so much politeness.

We now turn to the theory II, that Mrs. Curran, prior to 1913, possessed the enumerated knowledge, powers and aptitudes, but only within the subliminal region of her mind, so that she was not consciously aware of them.

Again, this theory may take two forms: (1) That her subconscious mind as a whole gained the abilities, acquisitions and traits which were afterwards displayed by Patience Worth or (2) That there was formed within her subconscious mind a self-conscious secondary personality, which carried on the work of building up such resources, which were suddenly released through the agency of the ouija board.

The word "suddenly" deserves emphasis. In the first days and weeks of Patience Worth she displayed the same vigorous intellect of later years, the same keen and scintillating wit, the same teeming imagination, the same lofty spirituality, the same ability to perform feats of mental speed and agility, or the last at least as soon as she was asked to do this or that or as soon as she tried. She did not at first happen to undertake a long story, but when she did her ability to construct one was full-grown. Therefore all these must be held, on either theory of the subconscious, to have existed in ripe maturity before Patience Worth first manifested.



Beginning with the supposition II:1, that all this growth was attained by the subconscious in general, we find that our task is easier because much of the ground has been already explored. We have already found that the evidence and the probabilities are enormously against the theory that Mrs. Curran under the circumstances and in the environment of her life was able consciously to possess or acquire the literary skill, the variety and mass of knowledge, the singular mnemonic ability and capacity for complex mental feats of skill, and the philosophical and spiritual penetration of Patience Worth, and to have either revealed or consciously concealed them.

But her subconscious had the same circumstances and environment to draw from, and the area is now much less since we have already ruled out, as Professor Cory rules out, all the field of conscious acquirement and possession.

This would mean that from meagre reading of poetry her subconscious imbibed poetic ideas and developed the art of poetical expression, while her conscious self all the while took little interest in poetry and remained practically unalloyed from the wealth of literary power surging underneath! But this reverses the rule that the subconscious gets by precipitation most of its supplies and also derives its impetus from conscious acquisition and conscious effort, and it ignores the fact that the very nature of the subconscious is to send up to the conscious rivulets and streams of that precipitated material and energy accumulated in its depths. The supposition is in absolute negation of psychological law. I repeat that the mass of subliminal content by general consent is the precipitate of conscious exercise of the senses and of the intellect, comparatively little coming from impressions only subconsciously or "marginally" perceived. We are called upon to suppose Mrs. Curran a unique human specimen, in that in her case whole provinces of knowledge and tastes, powers and aptitudes were built up in her subconscious of which her conscious appropriated very little, and that instead of these "bubbling up" to enrich the conscious life they were, with her, locked up, covered as it were with ice.\*

Also it would mean that, although neither Mrs. Curran nor those

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\* It cannot be too much insisted upon that the subconscious primarily and originally follows the lead of the conscious in regard to its trends and activities, rather than the reverse, although it remains true that once there has been a period of conscious activity, in a particular direction or in a particular field, and a kindred trend and activity has been established in the subconscious, the latter not only sends up its reserves from time to time to act as reinforcements more or less powerful, but also sometimes subliminally performs a feat belonging to that species.

For instance, I have no natural aptitude for making puns, and all the more because this cheap form of wit seemed so easy to some people, there was a time when I spent considerable energy in trying to manufacture good ones. And it started me to dreaming puns, and the best one I ever perpetrated was composed in sleep.

who associated with her can remember any appreciable contact with sources of knowledge of disused and dialectal forms of speech, and facts of history and of foreign lands, yet outside the limits of what she consciously read, saw and heard there remained enough in that same environment to give her, subconsciously, that knowledge afterward manifested. A kind of a conspiracy between the subconscious and the conscious seems required, by which the latter should agree with the former that it only should pay attention to those sources of information, the adequate existence of which are so highly improbable.

Also this theory would mean that the subconsciousness was either possessed of innate genius for intellectual facts of speed and agility or acquired it, but kept all this to itself under hatches all those years. Both seem preposterous. It is the nature of genius to give signs of itself, as it is the nature of an apple tree to bear scented blossoms. And if experience has produced in the subconsciousness an aptitude, a taste, a tendency, it is the nature of the subconscious that this should be consciously felt, and even though not strenuously carried into action, at least to leave some signs of its existence. Or to put a general and clear proposition: no person normally suddenly blazes out in maturity in the exercise of extraordinary mental powers, who has given no sign of them before. If there are any exceptions to this statement I would like to have them pointed out. A man may suddenly turn his powers into a new channel, but they are the same powers, as Frederick the Great, the day he became king turned away from his roistering companions and began his stern reign, but with the same *elan vital*, the same wilful energy, that he had hitherto displayed in attention to other pursuits. A man may by application cultivate even in mature years an aptitude which he had never hitherto shown, but by slow and conscious effort. A man may perform some great intellectual feat for the first time even in the late years of his life, but hardly without signs of his capability. Thus General Grant astonished the world when, past sixty years old, he wrote a book of admirable literary style. But go back to his army dispatches and orders and you find the same crisp, admirably worded sentences. Go back even to his letters when a cadet and you find stylistic marks. DeMorgan wrote able novels first between the ages of sixty and seventy, but a glance at his early writings printed in his memoirs reveals that he had all the while a singular capacity for literary expression, spent in other directions than novel writing.\*

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\* In 1920, a small volume of "Poems by a Little Girl," Hilda Conkling, was published. Miss Amy Lowell wrote a preface for it and says: "I wish at the outset to state, and emphatically, that it is poetry, the stuff and essence of poetry, that this book contains." She adds: "I know of no other instance in which such really beautiful poetry has been written by a child."

Also this theory would require that Mrs. Curran's subconscious had been filled with a mass of eminently healthful philosophical ideas about life and the universe and with a set of religious ideas and with theistical devotion, drawn somehow from the ether, while all the while her conscious mind had been unconcerned about problems of 'Life and the universe, and but superficially concerned about religion. I have heard of the "heart" of a well-meaning person being "desperately wicked," but not of a common this-worldly person whose heart was a devotee and saint. Bad tendencies are often repressed, whether through the restraints of religion or society, and may peep out in unexpected or disguised fashions. But the repression of ethical and religious thoughts, as though they were against law or against conscience, is novel. I have known persons who were undergoing or had undergone religious conflicts or ecstasies to automatically compose material of a religious character, frequently bizarre in quality. But Mrs. Curran's life seems never to have been touched by any particular religious excitement or interest.

At the age of eight, Hilda composed the following, which Miss Lowell regards as one of her best poems.

This is mint and here are three pinks  
 I have brought you, Mother.  
 They are wet with rain  
 And shining with it.  
 The pinks smell like more of them  
 In a blue vase.  
 The mint smells like summer  
 In many gardens.

This, we are told, "has feeling, expression, originality, cadence." Miss Lowell picks out another example, and says: "Try to write something new about a dandelion. Try it, and then read the poem of that name here. It is charming; how did she think of it?"

O little soldier with the golden helmet,  
 What are you guarding on my lawn?  
 You with your green gun and your yellow beard,  
 Why do you stand so stiff?  
 There is only the grass to fight.

I am taking it for granted that such lines are as fine as Miss Lowell says they are. In that case, we have the phenomenon of genius, of native capacity, of being born of a kind, as in the vegetable world one seed is endowed with a potency which causes a tall tree, while a handful of other seeds produces only bushes.

The phenomenon in the case of Mrs. Curran is quite a different one, that of being a bush for thirty years and suddenly becoming, apparently, a palm-tree.

Nor is it without relevance and interest that Hilda is the daughter of a woman who is a professor of English in a college and that "she and her sister have been their mother's close companions, ever since they were born." The child, therefore, was born with a mental quality which bore fruit early, fostered by a singularly favorable environment. I bring this instance of superior innate capacity or mental precocity, as I might any one of a thousand others, for the contrast that it affords. There is not the slightest indication that Mrs. Curran was either born with any extraordinary endowment or had led anyone to suspect that she had any until it blazed forth in *Patience Worth*.

There remains the theory II:2, that in Mrs. Curran's subconscious there was formed, probably many years before the Patience Worth phenomena began, a self-conscious secondary personality, which gathered the materials and cultivated the mental powers and character' sties first displayed in 1913. This is the theory put forth by Professor Cory, the only man who has made a resolute and formal attempt to account for the case by the terms of current psychology. I shall not attempt to summarize all the points of my argument in reply to him.

But the reader will first note that all the difficulties, in the way of the first three theories, exist in relation to this, the fourth one. In addition, it has peculiar difficulties of its own.

Had there formed in Mrs. Curran's subconsciousness the coherent, enduring mental aggregation known as a secondary personality, in all probability, judging from the gleanings of abnormal psychology, it would have been preceded and heralded by a number out of a group of signs announcing mental instability. From all I could learn from her and others who had known her—and I tried to make my questions as casual and innocent appearing as possible she was never, in her childhood or youth, inclined to moodiness, introspection or reverie, she was not disposed to prefer solitary play or to talk much with herself, she had no known nervous maladies, she experienced no sensory hallucinations, nor could I learn of anything that was "odd" or suspicious.

If she has for years had a subconscious secondary personality, she ought for years to have shown and she ought now to show some of those symptoms to which we give the general term hysteria. For these constitute the very shadow of such an abnormal mental entity. Will some psychologist list the distinct stigmata of hysteria which he discovered in her case? I am supposed to have some experience in the determination of these signs and I found none. She certainly is of the nervous rather than the phlegmatic temperament, is somewhat high strung, sensitive and emotional perhaps, on occasions, but is prevaillingly cheerful and self-sustained, of a jolly sensible humor, and is royal good company. If all this means a hysteric then the only psychologist who (not Dr. Cory), so far as I am aware, has called her one is a hysteric himself, for he also is marked by the traits above mentioned.

Again, if this lady for years has possessed a subconscious secondary personality busily acquiring knowledge and cultivating mental abilities, it is a psychological miracle that it would wait until a chance ouija board came along before giving any sign of existence. What, never once seize possession of the lips and speak, never once to cause a moment of unconsciousness, never once to express by automatic writing or by impressions within the primary consciousness lines of literary

beauty, never to give odd sensations and impulsions such as would cause her to wonder and to appear odd to others, never cloud her conscious thinking by the inward activity of composition and what not,' never in any other way to give significant tokens of that powerful and peculiar personality, that brilliant intelligence and that organized ability which lay beneath the surface fully conscious of itself? It is psychologically unthinkable, and I do not believe that an person thoroughly versed in the literature of dissociation will credit the proposition, once it is put clearly before him. I have insisted too, and shall insist until I am corrected, that no secondary personality ever manifested extraordinary talent in a field where the primary or conscious personality had not shown aptitude, or made earnest endeavor or felt and manifested positive ambition. The Hanna secondary personality quickly learned a musical instrument, but he had been a musician before. "Sick Doris" developed the ability to do better embroidery than "Real Doris" ever could, but "Real Doris" had first become a skilful needle-worker. Numerous illustrations of this principle could be given. \*

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\* It has hitherto seemed a law that the subliminal, whether of the normal or of the distinctly dissociated person, has the greatest capacity for activity and creation, during periods when the upper consciousness is observably quiescent. Coleridge composed *Kubla Khan* automatically, i. e., his subconscious composed it, but it was while he was asleep. There are numerous cases of the kind in connection with somnambulism or "sleep-walking." "Margaret" becoming interested in things outside and thinking vigorously about them clouded the thinking of "Real Doris." But *Patience Worth* can compose while Mrs. Curran, howbeit she gives the superficial appearance of abstraction caused by paying attention to what is inwardly heard and seen, is describing the panoramic accompaniment aloud, looking from one listener to another, etc., apparently in full possession of her normal mental activity. The playing of a piano when one is conversing is in another category, for the piano piece has been previously learned and stored away.

I have inspected what purported to be *literature* in verse or prose, produced in an automatic or semi-automatic way, by many scores of writers who submitted it with confidence in its artistic value. Not in a single case, so far as I remember, unless the automatist was a person of literary taste, and had given evidence of some conscious ability in literary expression, did such specimens surpass the mediocre grade, and the most of them were arrant doggerel.

Lizzie Doten, a Spiritualist "inspirational" poet, believed that she got verse from unseen intelligences. Perhaps she did, but she began getting it when a little girl, and therefore the poems in themselves prove nothing but native talent. Having such talent, it is very likely, indeed probable, that at certain periods of exaltation, when all the valves of the subconscious were, so to speak, open, she did her very best work. But she did it on the basis, apparently, of a native endowment improved by practice. It is probable that she could not by an effort of conscious will have produced anything as good as the following:

God of the Granite and the Rose!  
Soul of the Sparrow and the Bee!  
The mighty tide of Being flows  
Through countless channels, Lord, from thee.  
It leaps to life in grass and flowers,  
Through every grade of being runs,  
Till from Creation's radiant towers  
Its glory flames in stars and suns.

Take the feature of poetry alone: if in spite of the fact that Mrs. Curran had never taken more than the most casual interest in poetry, not deserving even the adjective dilettante, that she had never written more than a few jingles such as thousands of girls do in their teens, and that she had never had ambitions or dreams of becoming a poet,—if, I say, despite all this, there was below the threshold a secondary personality which for years had been practicing the art of literary construction so that when the accident of the ouija board happened it was ready to begin that marvellous outflow of poetic thought characterized by brilliance of imagery hardly excelled, and by beautiful and rhythmic phrasing, and even ready to exercise its skill undiminished, as soon as called upon, upon themes announced at the moment,—then we have in Mrs. Curran a reversal of the usual psychological mechanisms as anomalous as a printing press where the paper goes in at the end of the machine where with others it comes out. And the principle applied to

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But if Lizzie Doten had never shown any poetical ability in whatever state, and never had possessed any but a languid taste for literature or been particular what she read, up to the age of thirty years, and had *then* produced poetry like that, coming like lightning out of a clear sky, her case would perplex me as does that of Mrs. Curran.

I have repeatedly known of persons who began automatically to write what they thought if not good verse, at least beyond what they themselves could write. And I have again and again asked: "And do you mean to say that with your intelligence you could not sit down and write stuff as good as this?" And I had little doubt that they could had they only thought so. Anyone not a moron, who has read poetry and has even a meagre education, can string out vapid thoughts in some semblance of metrical form, and with rhymes more or less good, and in the great mass of cases this is what the automatic product consists of. Much of it is excellent material for psychoanalysis, and in some cases I was able to learn enough about the person to locate the subconscious springs. Before me now are several "poems" which an automatist sent me to compare with Patience Worth's work. Her letter seems to indicate about the grade of education that Mrs. Curran has, the sentences are well constructed, and the spelling is at least better than that of Napoleon. But her automatic poetry! Here is a sample.

Salt is the sea  
 To the taste of the mackerel fish.  
 Salt is the sea  
 To the hair of the Great Oraphonia.  
 Salt is the sea  
 To the Big Golaphonia.  
 Salt is the sea To the Indian Maid—Orasaida.  
 She washed her hair—Her riven hair  
 Her coal black hair—Her sweet blue black hair,  
 Her long braided hair.  
 Far away, far away in the moonrise,  
 Get between the sunset and in next to the moonrise,  
 Fair maid, foul man, fair maid, foul man;  
 He it was who betrayed Indian maid, Indian maid,  
 Get in next to the Big Typhoon,  
 Get in close to the Rappahannock. Etc.

Well, I have seen a good many worse specimens than this. The writer says that she has written several short stories automatically and been paid tea dollars

department A of Patience Worth's activities, applies also to B, C and D. Take C: if Mrs. Curran had shown signs of possessing an extraordinary memory, the subconscious might have been stimulated to sporadic mnemonic feats above her normal level, manifested in dreams or automatic deliverances. If she had acquired by diligent practice certain mental agilities sufficient to attract attention, her subconscious similarly might have been stimulated to emulation. Hardly otherwise. Or take D: had she been given to introspection and puzzling over the problems of life and the universe, her subconscious might have been started in that direction; had she ever undergone emotional religious experience, the subconscious might have developed a devotional strain. Hardly otherwise.

Reverting to the doctrine of repression, we are now in a position to

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apiece for them, but she adds that she had previously written stories by conscious effort and been paid for them too.

Now I am not denying that the lady wrote, more or less automatically, better stuff than she could write by direct volition. Perhaps she was not consciously equal to such poetry as the above extract (though it is hard to credit it), but she had probably attempted verse. Probably her "inspirational" stories were a bit better than her consciously devised ones, but she had started the subconscious machinery by writing stories.

As people in automatic writing and speaking, where there is no evidence of anything but the subconscious being concerned, never do any sustained work above their conscious ability, though there may be an occasional momentary heightening of ability, so it is in dream. Coleridge's "Kubla Khan" is an example. It rises above his average, but it was executed by the subconscious of a life-long poet. Since the law is as well illustrated on low levels of ability as on high, I give an example from my own experience. One night I dreamed that I was in a country farmyard trying to make the acquaintance of a calf that was refractory until I brought it a bucket of milk. Then in my dream I composed the following lines which I wrote down on waking.

As ancient Ajax, man of might,  
Owned Hector master in the fight,  
And grumbled much to be his slave,  
Yet welcomed all his bounty gave;  
So boss the bucket sees, and cries amain,  
"I'll to my breakfast turn again."

Now it is quite easy to account for that effusion, although it contains an allusion to the conflicts of Ajax and Hector of which I had no conscious memory, and an old-fashioned flavor like that of the period of Pope unlike anything I had ever consciously written. For I had written a great many purported poems, of slight literary value but at least as good as the dream effort. And I had read the *Odyssey*, though not for twenty years. And it had been an amusement of mine to write verses in imitation of the style of various poets. Nor was it possible for me to be sure that within the preceding twenty-four hours I had not read some lines of old-time flavor, some allusion to Pope or another poet of about his period (in my memory there were enough poetical passages of the Eighteenth Century to serve as models) or something else to furnish the hint, and set the subconscious machine at its task, even as only last night, after reading about the tribulations of a royal personage on account of his debts, I dreamed an elaborate story of my being in the midst of such embarrassments.

Or take an illustration drawn also from my experience, doubtless the experience of all writers who have been voluminous readers, only I cannot readily locate their testimonies. It is an illustration of how knowledge precipitated into the subconscious and there conserved will "bubble up" into the conscious. I have words come to me when I am composing an address or article, which I have no memory of ever having

see better how inapplicable it is. There must be something in order to repress it. And that which is repressed must be related to something painful in past experience, or if the whole content of a species of mental activity is fastened down to the subconscious region, it must be because it is painful to consciousness. Particular topics for poetical treatment might be excluded from conscious treatment, or painful topics might find expression in disguised forms, but not the whole body of poetic activity. How could it possibly be painful to express *any* extraordinary mental gifts and acquirements whatever, so that one and all that marked her off from the rank and file of bright and intelligent people would be strictly kept under cover? Pardon, but *cela fait rire!*

We have now canvassed four explanatory theories and found the difficulties in the way of adoption becoming more numerous and weighty as one succeeded another. The one which most ignores the evidence, violates the cumulative probabilities and oppugns the teachings of previous psychological observation is the last, the only one yet formally brought forward and championed before the public.

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previously used, and which I then look up in the dictionary to be sure that they express my precise meaning better than the synonyms consciously familiar, and they generally do. But I have been all my life, beginning before I can remember, a voluminous reader of all kinds of literature, later going back to a period before Chaucer and embracing several languages. Therefore there is no doubt that I absorbed from the contexts the peculiar shades of meaning of those words, and conserved this knowledge in my subconsciousness, from which it rose at time of need. Amelie Rives testified that when she wrote some stories dealing with the Elizabethan period "quaint old English words and expressions of that time" came into her consciousness. She thought it must have been due to "some pre-existent state," but it is hardly to be doubted that this lifelong literary artist had also been a voluminous reader and that she had read much literature belonging to that age. If Patience Worth had employed only a few old locutions such as "wi'" and "o'," and "lawk!", Mrs. Curran might easily have picked them up consciously or subconsciously from her desultory reading; it is the large number of disused or dialectically used authentic locutions which, under the circumstances, furnish this part of the puzzle.

I do not wish it inferred that I think Mrs. Curran's case presents the only known puzzle of its general class. I am acquainted with a case where singular technical skill in painting spontaneously arose in a woman who could not draw better than an ordinary child. I have letters from Professor Arthur W. Dow, late head of the art department of Teachers' College, Columbia University, testifying to qualities of the painting of Miss F. Marian Spore which aroused his interest and commendation. I know a woman, Miss Mary McEvelly (now married) whose life motive had been vocal music and who had never studied psychological works, or had any other experience to explain, a part of whose automatic writings would have done credit to an experienced therapeutical psychologist. A Massachusetts lady who had taken a few drawing lessons but showed no native ability suddenly began to draw flowers and foliage automatically, with marvellous surety and delicacy of touch but within a year lost the power and never recovered it. To a certain woman of no known poetical ability there once came two verses of exquisitely lovely poetry, which have been printed with an invitation to the world to identify them, which has never been done. But all these cases were connected with subjective impressions of spirit causation. I state this simply as a fact. Nor do I regard all these cases as problems certainly without normal solution. Mrs. Curran's is the most extraordinary of all such cases of which I have any knowledge, the most publicly proclaimed, the most painstakingly searched and analyzed, the most intractible.



The eminent psychologist, Dr. William McDougall, in 1907, published a paper dealing with cases of divided personality, particularly that known as the Beauchamp Case.\* He said: "If we are to discuss these strange cases with any hope of profit, we must give rein to speculation, and, as was said above, there are no established facts that set certain limits to hypothesis.... It may be that, as Mr. H. G. Wells has suggested in one of his weird stories, disembodied souls are crowding thickly about us, each striving to occupy some nervous system and so become restored to a full life of sense and motion and human fellowship. Or it may be that with each organism there is associated an indefinitely large number of psychic beings, each capable, on fitting opportunity, of playing its part as a dominant 'psyche' in interaction with the whole nervous system." He points out the inconsistency between Dr. Morton Prince's interpretation of the case and his data: e. g., Dr. Prince shows that the "personality" Sally existed co-consciously side by side, as it were, with both personalities B I and B IV, and still continued after B I and B IV were consolidated, and yet holds, apparently with good reason, that B I and B IV, when synthezized, resulted in the original and complete Miss Beauchamp. "Dr. Prince seems, in fact, to have set out with the conviction that every case of multiple personality is to be regarded as resulting from dissociation of a normal personality, and to have allowed this prejudice to limit the range of his search for hypotheses, and to blind him to the unmistakable implications of his own descriptions." After giving the reasons from data furnished by Dr. Prince why Sally appears to have been superior to any normal individual, Dr. McDougall says: "In short, to assert, as Dr. Prince does, that Sally is a split-off fragment of Miss B. *is to maintain that the part may be greater than the whole.*" We "can hardly suppose that there could be in Miss B.'s brain sufficient nervous matter to serve as the physical basis for the very full memories of Sally, in addition to those of B I and B IV, for since Sally can remember so much of Miss B.'s experiences as well as B I's and her own, the content of her mind must be regarded as at least as abundant as that of the other personalities together." This would imply that half the brain of a normal person lies dormant, which "seems in the last degree improbable." "If a number of cases of the type of Sally Beauchamp, as described by Dr. Prince, were to be described by other equally careful, and credible observers, I think the weight of their testimony would be irresistible.† The conclusion would give very strong

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\* "The Case of Sally Beauchamp," by William McDougall, M.Sc., M.B., in *Proceedings of S. P. R.*, Part 52, pp. 400-431.

† Nine years later appeared *The Doris Case of Multiple Personality*, the data

support to the spiritistic explanation of such cases as Mrs. Piper, and would go far to justify the belief in the survival of human personality after the death of the body. It is for this reason that Sally Beauchamp seems to me of so great interest to this Society."

The above quoted points made by Dr. McDougall apply, with certain modifications, to the Case of Patience Worth.

1. The theory that she is such a submerged and yet tremendously potent personality, who must have long antedated her announcement, is irreconcilable with the entire lack of the customary signs of dissociation.

2. That theory requires the supposition that while Mrs. Curran was living her full normal life filled with mental activities of several types, a submerged personality was, not simply gathering up and elaborating on scraps from the conscious experience, but living a quite different life and ranging in fields of mental activity scarcely touched by the conscious self, acquiring independent knowledge and skill, and at the same time duplicating the thought content of the primary self. As Dr. McDougall has said, "we can hardly suppose there could be in [Mrs. Curran's] brain sufficient nervous matter" for these dual processes, as "this would seem to imply that of the brain of a normal individual but one-half the nervous substance may be concerned in mental processes, the other half lying dormant," which "seems in the last degree improbable."

3. Then if we take any and all obtainable cross-sections of Mrs. Curran's life, with their occupations and mental ranges and manifestations as known to anyone who can be brought forward in this wide world, and remember that according to the hypothesis there has been existing for an indefinite period, though first blazing into sudden manifestation in 1913, an inner consciousness of prodigious mental acquisition, energy, genius, agility, wisdom and spiritual splendor, far transcending the woman's respectable but ordinary mentality,—we are required to believe that the vastly greater may be contained in the less.

4. Granted that the vastly greater secondary personality may be contained in the less,—whence did it get its growth? We are required to suppose that from a person who had never been studious except in one field, there should be obtainable when a certain tap is turned on what is explainable only as the result of research; that from a person who had never cultivated or practiced poetry there should by turning on the tap be obtainable poetry which is explainable only on the ground

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in which, generally accepted by psychologists, emphatically support those of the Beauchamp Case.

of poetical interest and practice; and so on with all the powers and trends shown by Patience Worth, visibly unrelated to Mrs. Curran's preoccupations and environments. And the magic expression "subliminal self" is the talisman to cause this act of faith. I recommend to the reader to whom one has only to say "subliminal self" to remove mountains of difficulty in a theory, one of the closing sentences of Dr. McDougall: "I venture to think that the phrase 'the subliminal self' may prove detrimental to the efficiency of our Society if we do not sternly resist the tendency to use it as a mere cloak for our ignorance whenever we are confronted by the inexplicable events with which we have to attempt to grapple."

In 1918, Dr. F. C. S. Schiller, of Oxford University, one of the most brilliant thinkers in our age along lines of psychology and philosophy, wrote a review of *The Doris Case of Multiple Personality*.\* He devotes considerable space to "Sleeping Margaret" who, after three personalities had been banished, "remained a great puzzle." "With her mature intelligence, detached attitude and curiously restricted control of the body, she was obviously unlike the alternating personalities.... She alone was not amenable to suggestion," and she continued to manifest after the case was apparently cured. Dr. Schiller treats with respect, though not expressed acceptance, Sleeping Margaret's claim that she was a guarding spirit. And he says:

The Doris Fischer case suggests that in all such affairs there may be a good deal more than meets the ordinary doctor's eye. It seems to point to a whole array of mysteries which are usually not explored because medical prejudice fights shy of them and medical attention is directed elsewhere. We may take it that medical records are usually incomplete where they approach the supernormal. Incidents bordering upon this region are recorded, if at all, only apologetically and under protest. Nevertheless, it is fairly well recognized that cases of "dissociation" exhibit hyperaesthesias as well as anaesthesias, though rarely in such abundance as in our case. Supernormal knowledge was observed in other cases also, e. g., in "Alma Z.," "Lurancy Vennum," and "Mr. Hanna." As for the Beauchamp case, it will be remembered that "Sally" seemed so supernormal to Mr. McDougall as to drive that great authority into an argument for sheer spiritism.† In the Doris Fischer case the supernormal, though still subordinate to the psychological interest, bulks large—perhaps only because it was fully and fairly recorded. At any rate it is to be accounted a piece of good luck rather than an anomaly that the case fell into the hands of investigators who were not afraid to explore its supernormal side. Nor can

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\* *Proceedings of S. P. R.*, Part 74, pp. 386-403.

† *Proceedings of S. P. R.*, Vol. XIX., p. 430.

it be too strongly impressed on future investigators that scientific completeness and honesty require them not to omit what look like supernormal incidents merely because they do not understand them. We know so very little about the intimate "nature" and structure of "souls," and about their disorders and potentialities, that we should not allow any *a priori* prejudice to impede the investigation of whatever facts we can observe. Nor should we acquiesce too easily in terms like "dissociation" as the beginning and end of wisdom.

Drs. McDougall and Schiller are not content to settle down on mere formulas, nor will they blink difficulties, insufficiencies, inconsistencies. Conscious of the ocean of ignorance that surrounds the little island of human knowledge and of the ease with which the new knowledge which caused nausea yesterday is digested today, they are not afraid to seek explanatory hypotheses and to look them in the face. They do not shrink to utter the dread word "supernormal." They call on investigators to produce their facts in full and to recognize all of the facts in any attempt at explanation, and to defer explanation rather than to adopt a theory which either ignores or is unjust to the facts. As Dr. Schiller says: "Nothing is more likely to impede investigation than premature acceptance of 'explanations'."

The sentiments I have attributed to these eminent scholars are my own. It is far better to gather, test, authenticate, analyze and synthetically set forth the facts to the extent of one's ability even though no explanation is even suggested, than to outline a magnificent theory with little examination and much ignoring of the facts. For ten months my time has been mostly devoted to the study of this case by all the methods possible for me to employ. No single discovered datum has been omitted, no clue or hint from any source neglected. It is not possible for any fact that shall come to light to disconcert me, since I am not wedded to any theory. Once again, in the closing words of this book I invoke the whole world to tell what it knows of Mrs. Curran. If there should be reason I will retreat as cheerfully as I have advanced, but, after the arduous and unremitting labor now drawn to a close, am not sanguine of having the opportunity to retreat from or to modify this proposition:

*Either our concept of what we call the subconscious must be radically altered, so as to include potencies of which we hitherto have had no knowledge, or else some cause operating through but not originating in the subconsciousness of Mrs. Curran must be acknowledged.*