

By green a-sigh in broken pride
For leafy way, for forest ride
That loitered, ere the old world died,
Soft-footed, shy, and fancy-free,
Coy lists for woodland amourie;
By green whose swelling bosom fed
Ten little villages with bread;
By green of richest mantling, flecked
With russet kine and flocks who recked
Nought but the distant meads that becked
To fatter fare from day to day;
By green a-gilt for honeyed hay.

And here and there in pattern bold
The great highways, now grey and cold,
Sprang up or couched, as, fold on fold,
All the champaign before me rolled.
The great highways with trumpet names
That held in fee of riband-hold
Cities whose storied deeds are flames
To fire a world grown old.
The white high-road on market-day,
Ere dropt the sun his level ray,
When the world was all a-sing
And the sturdy metalling
Set each sober hoof a-ring;
And the sentry poplars dressed
Their shadows swart towards the West,
But shook them in the morning breeze
To tell they only jested, lest
The children in their high-day best
Should doubt the friendly trees.
The white high-road from day to day
That bound each little village gay
To neighbour village, rosy red
In warm-tiled cote and wide-flung stead
Whose timbers took the season's tone,
Whose years had washed the mother-stone