

## MORITURI SALUTAMUS.

WRITTEN BY H. W. LONGFELLOW FOR THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE CLASS OF 1825, BOWDOIN COLLEGE.

[Although this fine poem has been published in Harper's Magazine and copied in several dailies, we insert it in the columns of the CANADIAN ILLUSTRATED NEWS that it may be read leisurely, relished and preserved.—ED. NEWS.]

## MORITURI SALUTAMUS.

Tempora labuntur, taciturne senescimus annis,  
Et fugiunt freno non remorante dies.  
OVID, *Fastorum* Lib vi.

"O Caesar, we who are about to die  
Salute you!" was the gladiator's cry  
In the arena, standing face to face  
With death and with the Roman populace.

O ye familiar scenes—ye groves of pine,  
That once were mine and are no longer mine—  
Thou river, widening through the meadows green  
To the vast sea, so near and yet unseen—

Ye halls, in whose seclusion and repose  
Phantoms of fame, like exhalations, rose  
And vanished—we who are about to die  
Salute you; earth and air and sea and sky,  
And the Imperial Sun that scatters down  
His sovereign splendors upon grove and town.

Ye do not answer us! ye do not hear!  
We are forgotten; and in your austere  
And calm indifference ye little care  
Whether we come or go, or whence or where.  
What passing generations fill these halls,  
What passing voices echo from these walls,  
Ye heed not; we are only as the blast,  
A moment heard, and then forever past.

No so the teachers who in earlier days  
Led our bewildered feet through learning's maze;  
They answer us—alas! what have I said?  
What greetings come there from the voiceless dead?  
What salutation, welcome, or reply?  
What pressure from the hands that lifeless lie?  
They are no longer here; they all are gone  
Into the land of shadows—all save one.  
Honor and reverence, and the good repute  
That follows faithful service as its fruit,  
Be unto him, whom living we salute.

The great Italian poet, when he made  
His dreadful journey to the realms of shade,  
Met there the old instructor of his youth,  
And cried, in tones of pity and of ruth:  
"O, never from the memory of my heart  
Your dear, paternal image shall depart,  
Who while on earth, ere yet by death surprised,  
Taught me how mortals are immortalized;  
How grateful am I for that patient care  
All my life long my language shall declare."

To-day we make the poet's words our own,  
And utter them in plaintive undertone;  
Nor to the living only be they said,  
But to the other living called the dead,  
Whose dear, paternal images appear  
Not wrapped in gloom, but robed in sunshine here;  
Whose simple lives, complete and without flaw,  
Whose part and parcel of great Nature's law;

Who said not to their Lord, as if afraid,  
"Here is thy talent in a napkin laid,"  
But labored in their sphere, as those who live  
In the delight that work alone can give.  
Peace be to them; eternal peace and rest,  
And the fulfillment of the great behest;  
"Ye have been faithful over a few things,  
Over ten cities shall ye reign as kings."

And ye who fill the places we once filled,  
And follow in the furrows that we tilled,  
Young men, whose generous hearts are beating high,  
We who are old, and are about to die,  
Salute you; hail you; take your hands in ours,  
And crown you with our welcome as with flowers!

How beautiful is youth! how bright it gleams  
With its illusions, aspirations, dreams!  
Book of Beginnings, story without End,  
Each maid a heroine, and each man a friend!  
Aladdin's Lamp, and Fortunatus' Purse,  
That holds the treasures of the universe!  
All possibilities are in its hands,  
No danger daunts it, and no foe withstands;  
In its sublime audacity of faith,  
"Be thou removed!" it is the mountain saith,  
And with ambitious feet, secure and proud,  
Ascends the ladder leaning on the cloud!

As ancient Priam at the Scæan gate  
Sat on the walls of Troy in regal state  
With the old men, too old and weak to fight,  
Chirping like grasshoppers in their delight,  
To see the embattled hosts, with spear and shield,  
Of Trojans and Achæans in the field;  
So from the snowy summits of our years  
We see you in the plain, as each appears.  
And question of you; asking, "Who is he  
That towers above the others? Which may be  
Atrides, Menelaus, Odysseus,  
Ajax the great, or bold Idomeneus?"

Let him not boast who puts his armor on,  
But he who puts it off, the battle done,  
Study yourselves; and most of all note well  
Wherein kind Nature means you to excel.  
Not every blossom ripens into fruit;  
Minerva, the inventress of the flute,  
Plunged it aside, when she her face surveyed  
Distorted in a fountain as she played;  
The unlucky Marsyas found it, and his fate  
Was one to make the bravest hesitate.

Write on your doors the saying wise and old,  
"Be bold! be bold! and everywhere be bold;  
But not too bold!" Yet better the excess  
Than the defect; better the more than less;  
Better like Hector in the field to die,  
Than like a perfumed Paris turn and fly.

And now, my classmates: ye remaining few  
That number not the half of those we knew:  
Ye against whose familiar names not yet  
The fatal asterisk of death is set,  
Ye I salute! The horologe of Time  
Strikes the half-century with solemn chime,  
And summons us together once again,  
The joy of meeting not unmixed with pain.

Where are the others? Voices from the deep,  
Caverns of darkness answer me, "They sleep!"  
I name no names; instinctively I feel  
Each at some well-remembered grave will kneel,  
And from the inscription wipe the weeds and moss.  
For every heart best knoweth its own loss.

I see the scattered gravestones gleaming white  
Through the pale dusk of the impending night!  
O'er all alike the impartial sunset throws  
Its golden lilies mingled with the rose;  
We give to all a tender thought and pass  
Out of the graveyards with their tangled grass,  
Unto these scenes frequented by our feet  
When we were young, and life was fresh and sweet.

What shall I say to you? What can I say  
Better than silence is? When I survey  
This throng of faces turned to meet my own,  
Friendly and fair, and yet to me unknown,  
Transformed the very landscape seems, to be;  
It is the same, yet not the same to me.  
So many memories crowd upon my brain,  
I fain would steal away, with noiseless tread,  
As from a house where some one lieth dead.

I cannot go; I pause; I hesitate;  
My feet reluctant linger at the gate;  
As one who struggles in a troubled dream  
To speak and cannot, to myself I seem.

Vanish the dream! Vanish the idle fears!  
Vanish the rolling mists of fifty years!  
Whatever time or space may intervene  
I will not be a stranger in this scene.  
Here every doubt, all indecision ends;  
Hail, my companions, comrades, classmates, friends!

Ah me! the fifty years since last we met  
Seem to me fifty folios bound and set.  
By Time the great transcriber, on his shelves,  
Wherein are written the histories of ourselves,  
What tragedies, what comedies, are there;  
What joy and grief, what rapture and despair!  
What chronicles of triumph and defeat,  
Of struggle, and temptation, and retreat!  
What records of regrets, and doubts, and fears!  
What pages blotted, blistered by our tears!  
What lovely landscapes on the margin shine,  
And holy images of love and trust,  
Undimmed by age, unsoiled by damp or dust!  
Whose hand shall dare to open and explore  
These volumes, closed and clasped for ever more?  
Not mine. With reverential feet I pass;  
I hear a voice that cries, "Alas! Alas!  
Whatever hath been written shall remain.  
Nor be erased nor written o'er again;  
The unwritten only still belongs to thee.  
Take heed and ponder well what that shall be."

As children frightened by a thunder cloud  
Are reassured if some one reads aloud  
A tale of wonder, with enchantment fraught,  
Or wild adventure, that diverts their thought,  
Let me endeavor with a tale to chase  
The gathering shadows of the time and place,  
And banish what we all too deeply feel  
Wholly to say, or wholly to conceal.

In mediæval Rome, I know not where,  
There stood an image with its arm in air,  
And on its lifted finger, shining clear,  
A golden ring with the device, "Strike here!"  
Greatly the people wondered, though none guessed  
The meaning that these words but half expressed,  
Until a learned clerk, who at noonday,  
With downcast eyes, was passing on his way,  
Paused, and observed the spot, and marked it well,  
Whereon the shadow of the finger fell;  
And, coming back at midnight, delved and found  
A secret stairway leading under ground.  
Down this he passed and into a spacious hall,  
Lit by a flaming jewel on the wall;  
And opposite a brazen statue stood  
With bow and shaft in threatening attitude.  
Upon its forehead like a coronet,  
Were these mysterious words of menace set—  
"That which I am, I am; my fatal aim  
None can escape, not even von luminous flame!"  
Midway the hall was a fair table placed,  
With cloth of gold, and golden cups enchased  
With rubies, and the plates and knives were gold,  
And gold the bread and viands manifold.  
Around it, silent, motionless and sad,  
Were seated gallant knights in armor clad,  
And ladies beautiful with plume and zone,  
But they were stone, their hearts within were stone.  
And the vast hall was filled in every part  
With silent crowds, stony in face and heart.

Long at the scene bewildered and amazed,  
The trembling clerk in speechless wonder gazed;  
Then from the table, by his greed made bold,  
He seized a goblet and a knife of gold,  
And sudden from their seats the guests upsprang,  
The vaulted ceiling with loud clamors rang,  
The archer sped his arrow, at their call,  
Shattering the lambent jewel on the wall,  
And all was dark around and overhead;  
Stark on the floor the luckless clerk lay dead.

The writer of this legend then records  
Its ghostly application in these words:—  
The image is the Adversary old,  
Whose beckoning finger points to realms of gold;  
Our lusts and passions are the downward stair  
That leads the soul from a diviner air;  
The archer, Death; the flaming jewel, Life;  
Terrestrial goods, the goblet and the knife;  
The knights and ladies, all whose flesh and bone  
By avarice have been hardened into stone.  
The clerk, the scholar whom the love of pelf  
Tempts from his books and from his nobler self.

The scholar and the world! The endless strife,  
The discord in the harmonies of life!  
The love of learning, the sequestered nooks,  
And all the sweet serenity of books;  
The market-place, the eager love of gain,  
Whose aim is vanity and whose end is pain!

But why, you ask me, should this tale be told  
To men grown old or who are growing old?  
It is too late! Ah, nothing is too late  
Till the tired heart shall cease to palpitate.  
Cato learned Greek at eighty; Sophocles  
Wrote his grand *Edipus*, and Simonides  
Bore off the prize of verse from his compeers,  
When each had numbered more than fourscore years;  
And Theophrastus, at fourscore and ten,  
Had begun his *Characters of Men*,  
Chaucer, at Woodstock with the nightingales,  
At sixty wrote the *Canterbury Tales*;  
Goethe, at Weimar, toiling to the last,  
Completed *Faust* when eighty years were past.  
These are indeed exceptions; but they show  
How far the gulf-stream of our youth may flow  
Into the arctic regions of our lives,  
Where little else than life itself survives.

As the barometer foretells the storm  
While still the skies are clear, the weather warm,  
So something in us, as old age draws near,  
Betrays the pressure of the atmosphere.  
The nimble mercury, ere we are aware,  
Descends the elastic ladder of the air;  
The tell-tale blood in artery and vein  
Sinks from its higher levels in the brain;  
Whatever poet, orator, or sage  
May say of it, old age is still old age.  
It is the waning, not the crescent moon,  
The dusk of evening, not the blaze of noon;  
It is not strength, but weakness; not desire,  
But its surcease; not the fierce heat of fire,  
The burning and consuming element,  
But that of ashes and of embers spent,  
In which some living sparks we still discern,  
Enough to warm, but not enough to burn.

What then? Shall we sit idly down and say  
The night hath come; it is no longer day!  
The night hath not yet come; we are not quite  
Cut off from labor by the failing light;

Something remains for us to do or dare;  
Even the oldest tree some fruit may bear;  
Not *Edipus Coloneus*, or Greek *Ode*,  
Or tales of pilgrims that one morning rode  
Out the gateway of the Tabard Inn,  
But other some thing, would we but begin;  
For age is opportunity no less  
Than youth itself, though in another dress,  
And as the evening twilight fades away  
The sky is filled with stars, invisible by day.

## THE FATAL LETTER.

It was only a girlish freak. She had a mind  
To try his heart. If she could make the noble  
Percy jealous, surely that were to put his love  
unto the quickest test.

How should she know that the time was ill  
chosen? They had not told her the foe was  
almost at the gate. Time out of mind, she had  
heard of the enemy who would one day come and  
challenge them to the combat. But use is second  
nature. She had grown up among alarms of war  
and record of knightly deeds.

No, thou shalt not see it, cousin Percy. I  
tell thee the letter is for me alone to read, and  
thou mayst not see how or why it's writ.

There was Yes and No in her eye. No means  
Yes as often as it means No in woman's mouth  
and eyes. But Lord Percy was a man of earnest  
mind and impulse. He had no practice in read-  
ing hearts like Lady Katharine's. He weighed  
her words, and not her looks; he had no skill  
of badinage; his soul was truth itself; but he  
should not thus have played the part of lover  
with Katharine. To-day, moreover, he was less  
than ever in mood for jests and frivolous words.  
He longed for the maiden's love, for gentle  
speech and sympathetic looks. She gave him  
glances arch and coy, and jests, and Yea and  
Nay; and these jarred upon Lord Percy's serious  
knowledge of the times. But my Lady Katharine  
seemed not made for sober joys and deep  
heart-plighted troth. Her young life had taken  
the gayest colour of the time, leaving the sombre  
tints to sadder natures. As yet she had lived in  
the sun, and knew nothing of the sad delights  
of the shadow.

If thou art jealous of this poor letter because  
thou mayst not see it, then, Lord Percy, get  
thee gone. I am used to be trusted, and I take  
it ill of thee to do me wrong with thy jealous  
fears.

He had come to say farewell; he had come to  
kneel at her feet, to take her hand, to ask her  
when they should be wed; to tell her that,  
when she saw him go forth to meet the foe, she  
might know he would be safe to conquer, because  
he wore her likeness in his heart, and her glove  
in his plumed casque. He came to look into her  
eyes, and say tender things and sad. He came  
to sue for the solace of her outspoken love, to  
bask in the true woman's smile, to be assured  
that he had some one to fight for, to die for,  
if need be, and to carry with him to the field her  
sweet looks, the memory of her last dear words.

But how should she have known all this?  
Why are not men always frank and true of  
speech? Why do they not open their hearts  
freely, and take the risk of results? Because  
they are vain and proud, foolishly susceptible to  
ridicule, and lack the courage to meet disappoint-  
ment.

Had Lord Percy told her all, Katharine, start-  
led into naturalness at his earnest words, had  
laid her hand in his, and trusted him with all his  
true heart's secret.

She chose to make a mystery of that foolish  
letter, albeit 'twas but a fond epistle from her  
brother; but, in those long past days of English  
history, to receive a letter was a great event.

Moreover, Lord Percy remembered a strange  
knight riding out across the drawbridge three  
months before, and kissing his hand in the  
moonlight to the window of Lady Katharine's  
chamber. But what of that, my Lord? True  
love should hold the mistress of its heart above  
suspicion. It was only now, in presence of that  
averted letter, that Lord Percy thought of the  
strange guest of half an hour, who came to deli-  
ver despatches to the garrison.

"Then 'tis like you love another," he said with  
rueful voice—"that strange knight, perchance,  
and 'tis he hath sent my Lady that favoured  
letter."

'Tis like, if thou shalt think so—like enough,  
my Lord, the maiden answered, nothing loth to  
fan the flame. "I say not so; but thou art  
brave and wise, and knowest many things."

"You answer tauntingly, methinks, when I do  
but speak from the love I bear thee, sweet Kate,"  
he said.

"I am no longer sweet Kate to thee, Percy, if  
thou doubtst me, and can even remember that  
strange knight, whom I never saw, against me."

She looked up with an acted indifference  
which Lord Percy could not discern, he was so  
intent upon her words and his own desires.

"Nay, show me that letter, then, my cousin,  
and let me know my fate at once. I pine and  
chafe against these bars of doubt, and I have  
much that I would say to thee."

"I tell thee, Percy, thou mayst not see the let-  
ter; and if thou wilt make bars to chafe against,  
thou art thine own prisoner."

"Kate, you trifle with me—you have a se-  
cret."

"I have, my Lord; and wouldst thou knew it,  
then wouldst thou be sorry for thy cruel words."

She was getting angry with herself and him, and  
longed to see him at her feet, that she might  
show him her brother's letter, and all be well  
again. But Lord Percy had never loved before,  
and knew not, nor guessed the maiden's arts and  
wiles.

"I would die rather than say cruel words to  
thee, Kate; but I would not have tortured thee  
as thou hast tortured me for all the treasures of  
Egypt and Peru. Thou art fickle and untrue,  
and would take back the promises which I once  
read in thine eyes and in thy choice of compa-  
nionship."

"Fickle, my Lord!—untrue! Are these the  
words thou dost select to pelt thy love withal?  
Nay, then, the Lady Katharine has well escaped  
such mating as thou wouldst offer her. Fare-  
well, cousin Percy; and when next thou comest  
to woo, bring softer words and discerning eyes,  
and better knowledge of a maiden's heart than  
thou hast discovered here to-day."

He went his way, the proud Lord Percy, and  
the tender words remained unsaid. When he  
was gone my Lady sighed and wept, and tore up  
her brother's letter into fragments, and scattered  
them in the air from her window. She watched  
them floating on the wind like summer butter-  
flies.

On the morrow the foe, whose tardy opera-  
tions had made his presence in the land almost  
disregarded, showed his angry front, and sum-  
moned the royal garrison to battle. There was  
clash of drums and trumpets, and neighing of  
restless steeds. The sun shone out on glittering  
swords, and silken banners, and men in flashing  
steel.

Lord Percy sallied forth with his mail-clad  
warriors. He had not sought the Lady Katharine  
again. The bustle of sudden preparation  
had held him prisoner to details of arrangement.  
She had sent once to bid him remember his cousin  
in this hour of danger, to wish him godspeed;  
but for Lord Percy the bout of love was over.  
He had put on the soldier now, and laid aside  
the silken hose and rosetted shoon. His voice  
rang out the well-known commands—his gallant  
knights responded with the Percy battle-cry—  
his plume waved foremost in the van. Thinking  
of this on yesternight, he would fain have car-  
ried some simple talisman against the foe's  
spear, some guerdon of his love, a ribbon, a glove,  
to wear in his helmet's plume—some token of  
his heart's desire. But now he sallied forth with  
only the Percy colours, the Percy arms, unsol-  
tened by woman's gentle gift at parting.

When his men came home victorious, with  
spoils of battle and prisoners of note, they brought  
their leader on a warlike bier, and laid him down  
where his cousin and all the castle's inmates, men  
and women, might see how death had quenched  
the light of his noble face.

And then my Lady Katharine learnt the bitter  
lesson of her life. Her heart stood still, until  
they feared she were dead also; but she awakened  
to her grief all pale and sad, and then they  
guessed her secret, and tended her night and day.

Lord Percy's mother came likewise, and, touch-  
ed by the maiden's grief, she took her for a  
daughter, to fill the vacant place in her widowed  
heart.

Lady Katharine lived a pious, gentle life, that  
might, under another fortune, have been a life  
of love and house-hold pride—a life of woman's  
happiness, with children to console and bless.  
But fate had willed it otherwise, and she bowed  
her head as one who merited all the sorrow that  
had fallen upon her young and blighted years.

So oftentimes it happens, in course of love and  
friendship, the hasty word, the cruel thought,  
only shadowed forth in jest, come back to blister  
the fairest lips and break the truest heart.

JOSEPH HATTON.

## HISTORY OF THE WEEK.

Lambert Bros. & Scott, London coal merchants, have  
suspended for £1,000,000.

The Canada Copyright Bill has passed its second  
reading in the English House of Commons.

General Dorregaray has retreated into Catalonia,  
pursued by the Alfonsist General Martinez Camps.

Colonel Gildersleeve has accepted the offer for the  
American team to shoot for a cup offered by British ride-  
men.

The French Assembly yesterday passed a vote of con-  
fidence in the Government by a majority of 483 to 3, the  
Left not voting.

It is said that General Badeau, at present U. S. Con-  
sul-General at London, will be appointed to the post of  
Minister to Brussels, now vacant.

A treaty relative to the suppression of the slave trade  
on the coast of Africa was completed with the Sultan of  
Zanzibar during his recent visit to England.

Professor Fawcett brought up a motion in the House  
of Commons against the grant for the Prince of Wales' visit  
to India, which motion was opposed by Disraeli  
and Gladstone, and rejected.

The rumor of a proposed intervention in Spanish Col-  
onial affairs by England, Germany and the United  
States is contradicted.

The enquiry into the loss of the steamship *Vicksburg*  
has been completed, and it is understood that the Com-  
missioners' report will fully exonerate Captain Bennett  
from all blame in the matter.

The French Assembly has finally passed the Public  
Powers Bill by a vote of 530 to 30; and has adopted a  
resolution for discussion of the Budget and adjournment  
thereafter till November 30th.

The Carlists are bombarding Puyceira.  
Lady Franklin died in London on Saturday night.  
The Cuban insurgents have captured two more forts  
and their garrisons.

The whale that the s. s. *Scythia* struck has been  
brought into Queenstown, and measures 54 feet in  
length.

M. Michel Chevalier, the great political economist,  
has been presented with a gold medal by the Marquis  
of Hartington.

Mr. Rigby, of the Irish team, tied Fulton, of the  
Americans, for the St. Leger Stakes on Saturday. Ties  
to be shot off to-morrow.

Jessie Pomeroy, the boy murderer, has made a state-  
ment, in which he retracts the former statements where-  
in he confessed his guilt.

A British schooner was chased into the harbor of  
Hayti by a Spanish man-of-war, where, on examina-  
tion, it was found that she was carrying a contraband  
cargo.