

Great is Liberty ! great is Equality ! I am their follower ;
Helmsmen of nations, choose your craft ! where you sail, I sail,¹
I weather it out with you, or sink with you.²

Great is Youth—equally great is Old Age—great are the Day
and Night ;

Great is Wealth—great is Poverty—great is Expression—great
is Silence.

Youth, large, lusty, loving—Youth, full of grace, force, fascina-
tion !

Do you know that Old Age may come after you, with equal grace,
force, fascination ? 10

Day, full-blown and splendid—Day of the immense sun, action,
ambition, laughter,

The Night follows close, with millions of suns, and sleep, and
restoring darkness.

Wealth, with the flush hand, fine clothes, hospitality ;

But then the Soul's wealth, which is candor, knowledge, pride,
enfolding love ;

(Who goes for men and women showing Poverty richer than
wealth ?)

Expression of speech ! in what is written or said, forget not that
Silence is also expressive,

That anguish as hot as the hottest, and contempt as cold as the
coldest, may be without words.³

¹ 1855 '56 '60 after line 5 read :

“ Yours is the muscle of life or death—yours is the perfect science—in you I
have absolute faith.

Great is To-day, and beautiful,

It is good to live in this age—there never was any better.

Great are the plunges, throes, triumphs, downfalls of Democracy,

Great the reformers, with their lapses and screams,

Great the daring and venture of sailors, on new explorations.

Great are Yourself and Myself,

We are just as good and bad as the oldest and youngest or any,

What the best and worst did, we could do,

What they felt, do not we feel it in ourselves ? ⁷

What they wished, do we not wish the same ? ⁸

² Line 6 added in 1867.

³ 1855 '56 '60. After line 17 read “ That the true adoration is likewise
without words and without kneeling.

Great is the greatest Nation—the nation of clusters of equal nations.”