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The Gaspereaux.

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Sweet mountain stream whose amber tide,
With noisy haste, or softest glide,
Like childhood's bright inconstancy,
Pursues its journey to the sea,
And winds in many a graceful sweep
Where blossomed wild-flowers silent weep.
Upon thy marge the fragrant dews
That evening's humid steps diffuse—
At intervals scarce seen amid
The herbage of the valley hid;
Whose wild luxuriance reveals
The fertile wave its growth conceals;
In soft and mazy dance to stray,
I've watched thy gentle winding way,
As leaping o'er its rocky bed,
Thy shallow current downward sped;
Or deeply, smoothly slid away
Without a ripple or a spray.
And I have dreamed, tho' scarce to song,
As yet thine humble name belong,
That not the travelled Summer glade,
E'er slept within so sweet a vale
As that upon whose bosom bright
Thy current shapes its line of light;
When, issuing from the dark ravine,
Thy forest-shadowed wave is seen
To check its tide, that many a mile
Had fretted in the dark defile,
When flowing o'er their subject flood
Thy mural precipices stood.

My thoughts, tho' seldom now I may
Beside thy murmuring waters stray,
Oft turn, by fond remembrance led,
Where those gray rocks obscurely shed
Their image on thy foaming wave,
Whose eddying course was wont to lave
Their shelvy base, where, in and out,
The salmon and the speckled trout
Gliding, were frequent captives made
By patient angler in the shade;
While sweetly on the branch above
The wild-bird tuned his note of love;
Or mingled with thy murmurs still,
Its monotonous the distant mill;
And sloping skyward from thy shore,
Those hills a fadeless mantle wore,
Of fragrant spruce and hemlock green,
Where the sun's latest rays were seen,
And in the glade with Spring's first glow
The Mayflower bloomed amid the snow.

As pencilled by the sunbeam true,
All thy loved haunts now rise to view;
And there is mingled with the thought
Of thee, by faithful Memory brought,
A feeling near allied to pain,
That I perhaps may ne'er again
Beside thy silver margin roam
With dreams of hope and childhood's home.
Daughter of lakes! long years have past,
Since my fond look was on thee cast;—
By many a stream my path has led,
Where legends of the brave and dead,
With Nature's fair or wild display
Have mingled in the poet's lay,
Yet fairer rose than each fair scene
To view thy vales of living green.

I've seen the dancing foam-wreath fleck
The darkly rolling Kennebec;
And swiftly on his shining track
Flow down the busy Merrimac,
Seen leaping from his piny hills,
Augmented by a thousand rills;
Where art, wealth, taste, their graces blend,
The fair Connecticut descend.
His cultured vales, with fertile wave,
I've seen the gentle Mchawk lave;
Imperial Hudson glide in shade
'Neath his eternal palisade;
And villa'd banks, and cities fair
Glassed in majestic Delaware;
Her midnight lamp have seen—the moon,
O'er hidden Schuylkill hang in June;
And the fierce day-star faintly gleam
On Wissahickon's shaded stream;
Beheld in transport from the steep,
Through his wild gorge Potomac leap;
And gathered the flinty arrow-head
By the wild Lehigh's rocky bed.
I've watched the Spring his pride renew,
On Susquehanna's hills of blue,
And Autumn's lovely tints grow pale,
In Juniata's winding vale;
Startled the fawn on hills that fling
Shadows on blood-stained Wyoming,
And lingering o'er the classic vale,
Have matched the sadly tragic tale
And sorrow of sweet Gertrude's line
With those of thine Evangeline.
Whence Alleghany's limpid flow,
Joins the Monongahela slow,
Commingling from their rocky plain;
Through all his fair and wide domain,
Still verging towards the western day,
Ohio holds his placid way,
With Commerce throned on either hand,