

Anne Gilchrist

We are indebted to Thomas B. Harned for the letters of Anne Gilchrist to Walt Whitman.

They are the greatest letters ever written by any woman, and constitute the finest tribute yet paid to the work of Whitman.

To her the reading of his poems was truly a new birth of the soul. It is a rare tribute to the discernment of Rossetti, that he placed the whole of Whitman's poems in the hands of one who has proved his greatest interpreter.

Carlyle has said, "There is no grand poem in the world, but is at bottom, a biography—the life of a man."

Walt Whitman's poems are not the biography of a man, but they are his real presence.

That Anne Gilchrist fell in love with Walt Whitman is what we would expect her to do; how could it be otherwise?

Whitman lovers are being developed in every country and clime the wide world over, and many Anne Gilchrists will feel the thrills she felt, in equal and lesser intensity, according to their development. Even an Emerson stumbled and fell and lacked courage and would have taken from "Leaves of Grass," the bravest, cleanest, holiest and subtly meaningful lines, lines which interpreted by the sacredness of mother love and lover's love, could not be omitted.

What a wonderfully fitting epitaph is the following, from the poet she loved:—

Going Somewhere

My science-friend, my noblest woman-friend (now buried in an English grave—and this a memory-leaf for her dear sake).
Ended our talk—(The sum concluding all we know of old or modern learning, intuitions deep),
Of all Geologies, Histories, of all Astronomy, of Evolution, Metaphysics all,
Is, that we all are onward, onward, speeding slowly, surely, bettering,
Life, life an endless march, and endless army (no halt, but it is duly over),
The world, the race, the soul—in space and time, the Universes,
All bound as is befitting each—all surely going somewhere."

Walt Whitman

By John Haynes Holmes

Church of the Messiah, New York City.

The noblest and most characteristic poetry which ever came from the pen of Walt Whitman was written under the inspiration of, and in tribute to, Abraham Lincoln. It is no accident, to my mind, that these two men are thus associated, for Whitman holds the same place in the literary history of America that Lincoln holds in its political and social history. Each, to use Lowell's