

# THE PLEASANT HOURS

A PAPER FOR OUR YOUNG FOLK

ENLARGED SERIES.—VOL. II.

TORONTO, MAY 27, 1882.

No. 10.

HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW. \*

BY ANNA M. TOMKINS.

"Would I had  
Lilies of all kinds, the flower-de-luce be-  
ing one,  
To strew him o'er and o'er?"—*Winter's  
Tale.*

And must we say a sad good-night  
To him, our life-long, dear delight?  
And now, with darkness and the dead,  
Associate that beloved head,  
And feel no more, with joy, that he  
Breathes the same atmosphere as we?  
Will nevermore a springing flower,  
Or chiming bell, or sunset hour,  
Or lofty deed, or vanquished wrong  
Provoke from him a noble song?—  
Not often from our earthly shore,  
So fair a spirit passes o'er

To join the circle of the great  
Celestials: We, outside the gate,  
Feel, with a deepening sense of loss,  
That life is poorer than it was;  
Bereft of him whose carol dear  
Rang rapture on our childhood's ear,  
Whose silver note distinct, sustained,  
For fifty years its charm maintained,  
And deeper and diviner grew  
As nearer to the night he drew.  
Poet of light and sweetness, he,  
Those silver locks so fair to see  
Bound with the Laurel's glistening leaf,  
Betoken, neither age nor grief.

He was no Michael, sword in hand,  
Who comes the Dragon to destroy,  
But Gabriel mild with lily wand,  
Announcing tidings of great joy.  
Yet not the less, he had his part  
In all that wrings and rends the heart;  
But swift from the abyss of pain  
He soared to life and light again,  
And showed, though hours of grief in-  
trude,

That joy is the soul's natural mood,  
And peace, and boundless confidence  
In that great Good beyond the sense.  
He found in every common sight  
Secrets of beauty and delight,  
And left, as precious legacies,  
Some lovely thought with each of these.  
And now the common flag-flower blue  
A lily is; a rare one too,  
And boasts a nobler pedigree  
Than royal Bourbon fleur-de-lis  
Henceforth for us the wayside trees,  
Will murmur *Benedictus*.

And bow and sign the holy cross;  
Whenever the winds their branches toss,  
Henceforth our rude Atlantic coast  
Will harbor many a lovely ghost,  
And phantom fair, his magic song,  
Has bodied forth, our shores along,  
The midnight's starry pulses beat  
Symphonious to his music sweet;  
Redolent, Orion, all the throng  
Point the high moral of his song;  
Those pealing Voices of the Night  
That echo from an endless height  
Not earthy fibr of earth was he,  
His Genius was ethereal, free;  
And deep relations and benign

He ever held with things divine.  
He with a Raphael's pure, light touch  
Drew angels that are truly such,  
And hints of Paradise that seem  
To wear the colors of a dream.  
There was no schism in his soul,  
'Twas pure and catholic and whole.]

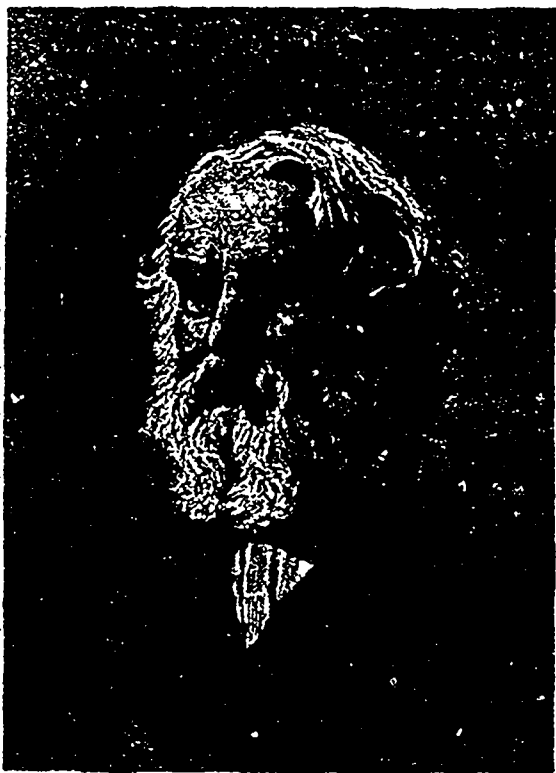
The incense clouds, the lifted Host,  
The mighty hovering Dove almost;  
The chants, the pealing bells and all  
The old and splendid ritual.  
And then with equal grace he drew  
The meeting house with high-backed pew,  
The village choir, the rustic throng,

More wealthy in the beautiful;  
For that is indestructible,  
And all men see and feel its worth.  
How deep the charm, how heavenly sweet,  
When passion and high honour meet,  
And love, so stronger far than death,  
Draws among men its angel breath;  
Pure as the water-lily's cup  
From ooze and slime that floateth up!  
Such Elsie and Evangeline,  
Handmaids for Shakespeare's Imogen,  
As high in love and constancy,  
And almost as renowned as she.

It may not be the loftiest art,  
And yet it is a noble part,  
To touch the universal heart,  
And speak to peasants and to kings  
The word that joy and healing brings,  
And win a love and fame that reach  
As far as doth our English speech.  
Thus he, whose praises we rehearse  
In numbers all unworthy him;  
Nor can we think that years will dim  
The halo that surrounds his verse,  
Because it has the enduring grace  
And magic charm of loveliness,  
And nobly utters truths sublime,  
"Not for an age, but for all time."

Poet of sweetness and of light!  
We will not say a sad wood-night,  
Nor leave thee where thy body lies,  
'Mid Auburn's funeral sanctities.  
Surely the world unseen must be  
Far ampler than the one we see,  
And lovelier; and it holds for thee  
Store of congenial company.  
And thou, who still wast happy here,  
Uplifting high thy hymns of cheer  
'Mid sorrow's storms and age's frost,  
Hast not thy joyous ardor lost.  
Thou swan-like Poet! silver bright  
Be those long rivers of delight  
That bear thee to the mystic sea  
Of all-enfolding Deity.  
We may not guess how deep thy joy,  
What lofty themes thy thoughts employ,  
What converse high 'tis thine to hold  
With sovereign bards and heroes old;  
With what a rapture near to pain,  
Thy spirit clasps its own again;  
How passing fair thy being's rose  
In yon Elysian climate blows;  
How rich and wide an empire  
Thy faithful service wins for thee;  
But we believe thy soul has found,  
The peace without a name or bound,  
And rests, and evermore shall rest,  
In that bright country, wholly blest!

STANSTEAD, P. Q.



HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW. \*

*In the elder days of Art,  
Dwelt & wrought with greater care  
Each minute and unseen part:  
So the gods see everywhere:  
Let us do our work as well,  
Both the unseen and the seen,  
Make the house, where lives many dwell,  
Beautiful, entire, and clean.*  
Henry W. Longfellow

All creeds, all races, every age  
His muse had for her heritage.  
With master hand he made us see  
The great cathedral's majesty,  
Its pillared aisles and arches high  
All dim and rich with imagery;  
Angels and saints in dazzling maze  
Amid the illumined windows' blaze,

The sermon good, and dull, and long;  
The open window, and the stray  
Light breeze, sweet scented with the hay,  
Fluttering the hymn book's leaves, that  
Lies open on the window sill.  
Oh! great is he who makes the earth

An interesting anecdote is told of  
Mr. Longfellow and Paul Fleming, the  
hero of his "Hyperion." It is said  
that, being once asked whether the  
character of the young man was drawn  
from life, he paused for a little time  
before replying, and then said, hesitat-  
ingly, "He was—what I thought I  
might have been—but I never"—and  
shaded his face with his hand and did  
not conclude his sentence.

\* We have pleasure in presenting this beautiful  
miniature by a Canadian lady. Those familiar with  
Longfellow's poems will see how happily she refers to  
him.—Ed.

\* We are indebted to the courtesy of J. W. Gage, Esq., for the use of this fac-simile of Longfellow's  
autograph which the poet, a short time before his death, sent for use in Gage's new series of school  
readers.