

But that same day 'twas from them stole.
A child outside wedlock is born—
Alone the mother bears the scorn.

Observing this, my child must then
Much marvel at the ways of men,
And from his pages, leaf by leaf,
He will labor to expose the thief;
Poor innocent will strive to show
To men what they already know,
And what they choose to tolerate—
Abuse of power by the great,
The slaughtered right, the nourished wrong,
The tortured weak, the pampered strong—
Poor foolish child, to worry so
About the world and all its woe;
Lay down your pen, I charge you, boy,
It is a silly useless toy;
That's pen's too blunt, that ink too thin
To heal a world so steeped in sin.

And is the effort worth the time
One spends in protest and in rhyme?
As gaily pass the careless crowd
Some are heard to laugh aloud
As those who hate to hear the truth—
And all ignore the wailing youth.
For of his lineage 'tis said
His father was a horrid Red;
My literary race is run—
I swear I'll breed no other son.
Dance on, old mad and dizzy earth,