

Flood of Years," and "Among the Trees," are very fine, and were all written after he had reached the age of eighty. His last poem of any length, an "Ode to Washington," is one of the finest things in our language. Subjoined are a few stanzas:

Pale is the February sky,  
And brief the mid-day's sunny hours;  
The wind-swept forest seems to sigh  
For the sweet time of leaves and flowers.

Lo, where, beneath an icy shield,  
Calmly the mighty Hudson flows;  
By snow-clad fell and frozen field,  
Broadening the lordly river goes.

The wildest storm that sweeps through space,  
And rends the oak with sudden force,  
Can raise no ripple on his face  
Or slacken his majestic course.

As an editor Bryant has shown a sceptical age the possibility of a man *successfully* turning his back upon all that is base and degrading in party politics. Had he desired he could have obtained from either of the great American parties nominations for positions in the government of the country, but he preferred to remain unfettered by party obligations, and thus retain the liberty to support the right and oppose the wrong, no matter from what quarter they came. Even if those that follow his example be few, he has at least demonstrated the possibility and dignity of independence.

As a poet Bryant has not as yet received his meed of praise. What great poet was ever appreciated in his lifetime? But the day will come when he will take

his place as the first distinctively American poet of this century. Other poets have been affected by American feelings and ideas, but Bryant is great as a cause and not as an effect. Longfellow, Poe, Holmes, Whittier, Emerson, and Lowell are rungs in a ladder of which the highest is as yet Bryant. When the broad valley of the Mississippi and the Pacific slopes teem with an English-speaking race, then will be seen how broad was his theme, how ennobling his thought. If *American* means anything it means broad, liberal, unfettered, and cosmopolitan. Such was Bryant and such are his writings. He was not a poet of a district or a class. Broader than New England feelings, unlike his fellow poets, he disdains to mingle with his songs of nature and of freedom anything in praise of "culture" or of caste. He sang, too, for all mankind. More than any other American poet he has dealt with the mysteries of life—the noblest and fittest theme for poetic work—and that he has treated these in such a way as to comfort and encourage many doubt-laden hearts is his best tribute of praise. The very fact that "Thanatopsis," "Inscription to the Entrance to a Wood," "The Planting of an Apple Tree," "To a Waterfall," "The Land of Dreams," "The Waning Moon," and "The Rivulet," have each been by some considered his greatest poem, proves only how varied and how well-sustained his efforts were, and indicates to some extent how many were the chords of the human heart that vibrated to the music of his words.

