

says good-bye to the class of '99.  
May we come through the exams.  
like Dewey's men at Manila. Let  
there be not even the smell of fire  
upon our clothes. Then will come  
the great Afterward. Whither are  
we tending? Let it be where glory  
awaits us.

### Observation :—A Soliloquy.

How slow the minutes drag around to-day,  
As on my wooden chair inflexible  
With tired eye and buzzing ear I sit  
Amid a crowd of noisy kids. Methinks  
Old Daddy Time is snoring by the way,  
With broken hour-glass and with scythe  
unsharped.  
And in an empty void of timeless sleep  
An atom helpless. I am mooning here.

The teacher talks, and eke the scholars all  
Converse in tones subdued among  
themselves.

Like to the rustling of a chestnut-tree,  
Whose falling fruit the rattle of the slate  
Doth vocalize. How truly was it said  
That life is but a vapor—would that now  
These benches and this blackboard would  
vamoose

To other spheres of greater usefulness  
Than to my gasping corpse they e'er can  
have.

And can it be that once the mighty brain  
That works and seethes within this skull  
of mine

In mystic process psychological,  
Was trained in such a place as this?  
Gadzooks,  
What lofty works our public schools  
produce!

Full truly should I reverence after all  
The embryonic learning that pervades  
The atmospheric content of this room.  
Hallo! There goes the bell—recess at last.

(After recess: moral song by pupils)

"And if I have a piece of cake  
And with the others play,  
I will not keep it all myself  
But give a part away."

Again the chair—and harder than before.  
With lusty lungs refreshed the children  
now

Spell o'er a list of words. Ahai! the crash  
Of letters shouted hardily, the crash  
Doth beat into my skull, the roll and crash  
Of breakers shattering on a stony beach,  
O'erwhelming me, a mute Demosthenes.

It ceases: but within the vaulty caverns  
Of my auricular anatomy,

A murmur, like the sea-shell's ghostly  
voice,  
Whispers and dies away.

Dictation now.

My jaded ear receiveth gladsomely  
The teacher's even accents. I am here  
To observe, to criticize, to catch the grains  
Of education falling from the board  
Where mighty Paedagogia slingeth grub.  
Hither, my note-book! Let me place in  
thee

Some record of these precious hours. Of  
course

The chair is rigid and the hour is long,  
Of course my limbs are cramped with  
many cramps,—

*Sed patendum est.*—The sun is shining  
Full pleasantly outside the window there:  
I would 'twere summer.

Summer! I am sitting  
Upon the gunwale of a skiff that sails  
Mid windy waters, heeling bravely over,  
And dancing swift along the white-capped  
hills

That lie between her and the distant isle.  
The sun of afternoon shines free, the splash  
Of parted waves sounds merrily 'neath  
the keel,

And ever blows the wind a muffled song.  
Full soon I'll lie upon the breeze-swept  
grass

Beneath a friendly tree, my haven won,  
And breathing deep and gazing at the sky  
Chew meditative straws. Blow, North-  
West wind!

Beat stormily against the stout old sail  
That's fought with me through many a  
wild adventure,  
That's been my comrade many a dreary  
day.

Roll the waves higher, higher still.—

"Clean Slates!"

*Ting Ling!* What here again? The  
blackboard looms

Before my blinking eyes, and on my knee  
My note-book lies untouched. A sigh as  
deep

As Adam's at the clash of Eden's gates,  
And once again I turn to books, to methods,  
To finding new positions on my chair.  
And ever smuglier smiles the smooth-faced  
clock.

And ever slower crawl its sleepy hands—  
The longer hand a meditative tortoise,  
The shorter hand a dead one. I am here  
To observe, to criticize; and I shall do it.

With resolution stern my mind I bend  
To education's wholesome tasks, and see  
The wondrous patience and the foresight  
long

Of those whose silent, unrewarded toil  
Has given our children freedom. So I lose  
Remembrance of slow-moving Time, and  
come