

BALLAD TO THE BROTHERHOOD

DESPITE the rush of commerce and distractions linked to life,
Forgetting one brief moment all the noise and ceaseless strife:
Reflection's voice reminds me that with ebbing tide of time,
Floats away a merry epoch—hear ye not the watch bells chime?
Dear friends and faithful colleagues on this strand and o'er the sea,
I recall your proffered kindness and your courtesy to me.

Memory serves to paint a picture shewing changes in the past:
'Tis well the Reaper's scythe is stayed until the die is cast.
Though our day is dark and troubled by the ruthless hand of Might,
All trust the scourge will vanish like the mystic flight of night.
Let encouragement and counsel nourish hope and banish fear,
May the bonds of friendship strengthen and expand from year to year.

We've had, methinks, more happy times than sorrows in our lives,
To you, Messieurs a bumper—to your sweethearts, daughters, wives;
Here is hoping that prosperity and robust health be yours,
For you a peaceful future is the wish my heart conjures:
And when that silent Skipper with his phantom craft steals 'round,
May he steer us safely over to the Happy Hunting Ground.