

Happy those golden days, those times,
A glimpse, as from some poet's page
Or painter's canvas, fills my mind :
I see the rough posts, tendril-twined,
The rough roofs over-laid with bark
Beneath some forest-shadow dark.

I see the youths, the maidens gay
Clad only with a dress of leaves
All goods were common ; travellers fared
Unarmed and careless ; no man dared,
Or wished to injure or defraud.
Lone virgins roamed the country broad.

Contrast this with the modern world ;
How greed and evil creep apace !
The weak are robbed, the lawless seek
To ruin ; where are found the meek ?
The traveller wanders on his way
Watchful of harm by night and day.

I see some lonely forest-sward,
Bathed with the shades of sombrous trees.
The children of this solitude
By low-roofed habitations rude
Or in the open glades at ease
Stand grouped in attitudes of peace.

Happy those golden days now gone ;
That child-like innocence is fled.
O, Sancho Panza, we must weep—
Your eye-lids heavy are with sleep—
Must weep that those days ne'er return,
Howe'er our longing hearts may burn.

It seems as if some wizard's wand
Had driven away those scenes of bliss—
Had left behind but mire and clay.
We find naught like it here to-day
Around this savoury pot, these skins
We weep. Day ceases. Night begins.