

(ORIGINAL.)

## THE CITY ELMS.

Old trees, I love your shade,  
Though not on banks with wild flowers all bedight,  
Falls through your trembling boughs the chequered  
light,

As in some forest glade,  
Where roves the murmuring bee.

Yet, ye to me do bring  
Thoughts of the breezy hill, the free green wood,  
The gushing stream that over fragments rude,  
Its silvery foam doth fling,  
In wild fantastic play.

There's music in the sound,  
Oh, verdant elms ! of your green whispering leaves  
Music my spirit loves, and yet it grieves,  
That ye should here be found,  
Soil'd with the city's dust.

Here, amid pent-up streets,  
Where never the glad tones of nature's voice,  
Steal in to soothe the harsh discordant noise,  
The wearied ear that greets,  
With ceaseless jar and din.

Ye should spring graceful forth,  
Fair sister elms, from the green flow'ry sward,  
And 'neath the sweet shade of your branches broad,  
True hearts should plight their troth,  
In love's low whispered tones.

But here, rude hands have marred,  
Your stately forms, and uncouth objects piled  
Around your trunks, where should have gaily smiled,  
Banks with the primrose starred,  
Or bright anemone.

And few who pass ye by,  
Your beauty note, or lift their upward gaze,  
To bless your drooping boughs, that dim the blaze,  
Of the hot noon-tide sky,  
With their cool leafy screen.

They are intent on gain,  
Vexed with earth's cares, and scarce a thought have  
they,  
On God or his fair works to cast away,—  
For such, old trees, in vain,  
Ye stand in beauty here.

Yet, yet to me, ye are,  
A joy and a delight for ever new,  
Lovely to sense and thought, is your soft hue,  
Or e'en your branches bare,  
When winter rules the year.

At the still midnight hour,  
I love to hear, as on my couch I lay,  
The low, soft breeze among your boughs at play,  
Or the sweet summer shower,  
Make music with your leaves.

Oft rise I then, to gaze  
On your dark forms, lone watchers of the night ;  
While o'er ye hangs the moon, her crescent bright,  
Lighting with silver rays,  
Each small and trembling spray.

Of God ye seem to speak,  
But with a voice, which at this silent hour,  
Whispers in gentlest tones, yet with a power,  
That bids my spirit seek,  
Communion with the skies.

Ye summon too the dead,  
With a strange spell—bright forms long passed from  
earth—  
But at your bidding they again have birth,  
And come with solemn tread,  
Back to their ancient homes.

Ah,\* who shall dare to say,  
They are not round us ever—by our side,  
Watching our steps—loved ones, who were our pride  
With whom the summer day,  
Passed like a fleeting thought.

Old trees, and this still hour,  
Ye wake sweet fancies in my dreaming breast,  
Yet while the jarring world lies at its rest,  
I yield me to the power  
Of night and solitude.

The morn will banish peace,  
For with it comes the sound of rolling wheel,  
The hurrying step ; and I shall gladly steal,  
E'en from your sight, fair trees,  
Till gentle eve returns.

Oh, happy they, who dwell  
Mid nature's charms, conning her varied page,  
From joyous childhood, till maturest age !  
Green elms, it had been well,  
Were this your lot and mine.

E. L. C.

Montreal, August 12, 1841.

\* Millions of spiritual beings walk the earth  
Both when we wake and when we sleep.

*Milton.*

It is possible, that the distance of heaven lies  
wholly in the veil of flesh, which we now want  
power to penetrate. A new sense, a new eye, might  
show the spiritual world compassing us on every  
side.

*Channing.*