

THE LAST LEAF<sup>1</sup>

I SAW him once before,  
As he passed by the door,  
And again  
The pavement stones resound,  
As he totters o'er the ground  
With his cane.

They say that in his prime,  
Ere the pruning-knife of Time  
Cut him down,  
Not a better man was found  
By the Crier on his round  
Through the town.

But now he walks the streets,  
And he looks at all he meets  
Sad and wan,  
And he shakes his feeble head,  
That it seems as if he said,  
"They are gone."

The mossy marbles rest  
On the lips that he has presst  
In their bloom,  
And the names he loved to hear  
Have been carved for many a year  
On the tomb.

My grandmamma has said—  
Poor old lady, she is dead  
Long ago—

<sup>1</sup> **The Last Leaf**—This poem was suggested to the author "by the sight of a figure well known to Bostonians in 1831 and 1832, that of Major Thomas Melville, 'the last of the cocked hats' as he was sometimes called." Strangely enough, Holmes himself lived to be "the last leaf upon the tree."