

VI.

after this that I made my first attempt at verse, which pleased me so well that I continued to practice the art, but none of my efforts ever tasted ink.

When yet a child in life's elysian spring,
And fancy first assay'd her timid wing,
With but my mother dearer to my heart,
I nursed a nestling of poetic art ;
But hardship never yet in song express'd
Expell'd the cherish'd fondling from my breast.

During a number of years succeeding I composed only at distant intervals. At the age of twenty-four I received my share of the family estate, amounting to nearly one thousand dollars; and now came the time to determine on my occupation of life. My education consisted in reading and writing imperfectly ; and if I could have been content with that for life, I could have been rich and respected ; but I am neither. I supposed myself a "well-to-do" farmer, happy in compound ignorance, neither knowing nor caring for anything but what pertained to my mode of making money, and soon concluded that it was "something better not to be."