

THE LUMBERMAN.

BY JOHN GREENLEAF WHITTIER.

Wildly round our woodland quarters,
 Sad-voiced Autumn grieves ;
 Thickly down these swelling waters
 Float his fallen leaves.
 Through the tall and naked timber,
 Column-like and old,
 Gleam the sunsets of November,
 From their skies of gold.

When with sounds of smothered thunder,
 On some night of rain,
 Lake and river break asunder
 Winter's weakened chain,
 Down the wild March flood shall bear them
 To the sawmill's wheel,
 Or where Steam, the slave, shall tear them
 With his teeth of steel.

Be it starlight, be it moonlight,
 In these vales below,
 When the earliest beams of sunlight
 Streak the mountain's snow,
 Crisps the hoar-frost, keen and early,
 To our hurrying feet,
 And the forest echoes clearly
 All our blows repeat.

Where are mossy carpets better
 Than the Persian weaves,
 And than Eastern perfumes sweeter
 Seem the fading leaves ;
 And a music wild and solemn,
 From the pine-tree's height,
 Rolls its vast and sea-like volume
 On the wind of night ;

Make we here our camp of winter ;
 And, through sleet and snow,
 Pitchy knot and beechen splinter
 On our hearth shall glow.
 Here, with mirth to lighten duty,
 We shall lack alone
 Woman's smile and girlhood's beauty
 Childhood's lisping tone.

But their hearth is brighter burning
 For our toil to-day ;
 And the welcome of returning
 Shall our loss repay,
 When, like seamen from the waters,
 From the woods we come,
 Greeting sisters, wives, and daughters
 Angels of our home.

Not for us the measured ringing
 From the village spire,
 Not for us the Sabbath singing
 Of the sweet-voiced choir ;
 Ours the old, majestic temple,
 Where God's brightness shines
 Down the dome so grand and anple,
 Propped by lofty pines !

Through each branch-enwoven skylight,
 Speaks He in the breeze,
 As of old beneath the twilight
 Of lost Eden's trees !
 Strike, then, comrades !—Trade is waiting
 On our rugged toil ;
 Far ships waiting for the freighting
 Of our woodland spoil !

Ships, whose traffic links these highlands,
 Bleak and cold, of ours,
 With the citron-planted islands
 Of a clime of flowers ;
 To our frosts the tribute bringing
 Of eternal heats ;
 In our lap of winter flinging
 Tropic fruits and sweets.

Cheerly, on the axe of labour,
 Let the sunbeams dance,
 Better than the flash of sabre
 Or the gleam of lance !
 Strike !—With every blow is given
 Freer sun and sky,
 And the long-hid earth to heaven
 Looks, with wondering eye !

Loud behind us grow the murmurs
 Of the age to come ;
 Clang of smiths, and tread of farmers,
 Bearing harvest home !
 Here her virgin lap with treasures
 Shall the green earth fill ;
 Waving wheat and golden maize-ears
 Crown each beechen hill.

In our North-land, wild and woody,
 Let us still have part ;
 Rugged nurse and mother sturdy,
 Hold us to thy heart !
 Freedom, hand in hand with labour,
 Walketh strong and brave ;
 On the forehead of his neighbour
 No man writeth Slave !

