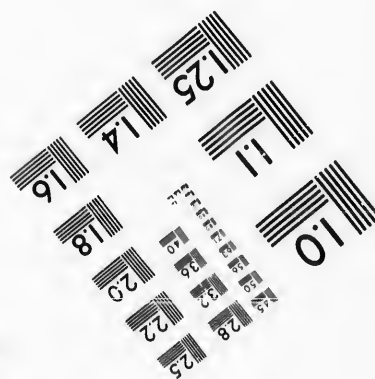
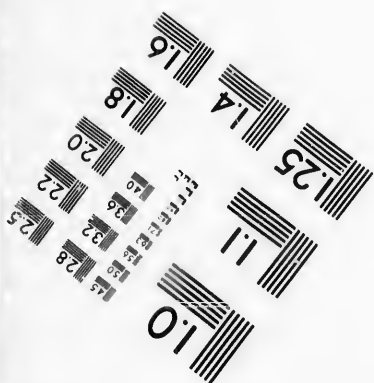
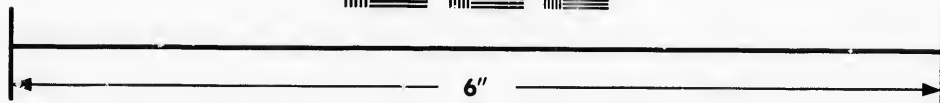
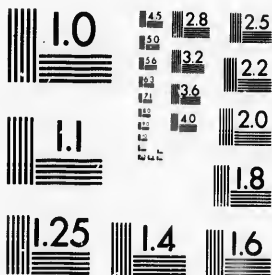


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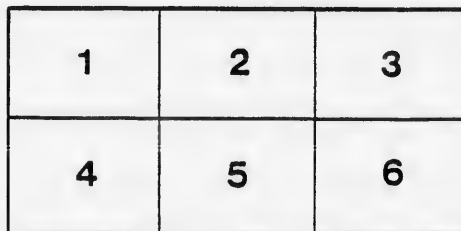
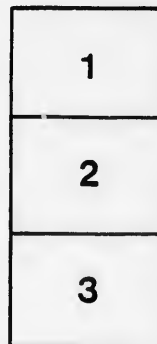
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1629 Buswell.

SUMMER EVENING  
CONTEMPLATIONS.

~~~~~  
BY THE REV. ADAM HOOD BURWELL.  
~~~~~

Montreal :  
PRINTED BY LOVELL AND GIBSON, ST. NICHOLAS STREET.  
1849.



## SUMMER EVENING CONTEMPLATIONS.

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### I.

THE sun descending, rolls his flaming orb,  
Beyond the bounds of Huron's ample wave,  
That glitters in his parting beams. He goes  
To shed his light on western isles remote—  
His daily light upon the Isles that spot  
The outspread bosom of that mighty deep,  
The vast Pacific, in itself a world.  
We see it reaching forth from pole to pole  
With giant arms; eternal frost abides  
On either hand; the burning line between.  
Its sunny isles receive their daily meed,  
Of light and b'essing from the solar beams,  
While Ocean pours his own profusion round.

### II.

But onward rolls the sun. His lingering rays  
Brighten the evening clouds, whose ridges, rolled  
In rising volumes, fill the glowing east  
With floating hills of fire, that seem to rest  
Upon some neighbouring land. But deeper sinks  
The sun behind the spheric earth, when, lo!  
The western sky and zenith all are spread  
With broken clouds, whose scattered fragments blush  
The red of heaven, skirted with other dyes  
Of ever varying shade. Th' empyrean vault,  
Behind the scene, presents its dark back-ground;  
The intermediate tints, bright or obscure,  
Blending soft, into each other run,  
And change, and sink, and vanish out of sight.



Or longitudinal, in wavy stripes  
 That mimic ocean's face, the canopy  
 Of clouds from north to south, and give  
 Alternate crimson facings on a ground  
 Of purple slate. But soon the vision fades,  
 And leaves the splendid scene a dusky veil,  
 That only hides the coming stars, until  
 The breath of Heaven dissolves it into air.

## III.

Of have I watched these visionary things  
 The close of day presents—the various shades  
 (Inimitable tints) surrounding Heaven  
 Presents to the beholder; marked their change,  
 And gazed—but not with philosophic eye;  
 And mused—but not with philosophic mind;  
 And thought—but only as the untaught think;  
 For science ne'er unlocked her stores, nor poured  
 Her treasures forth to me. But why repine?  
 Or why the seeming pleasures grudge, which might  
 Have been (but have not) had fair fortune smiled,  
 And science oped her treasures? Why despond,  
 As for an irremediable loss?  
 It need not be! Short though the present life,  
 Poor and contracted in its largest bound,  
 And mean and meagre its attainments all,  
 And these the seeming favours of a few,  
 It is not so; and I will not repine  
 That life is short, and meagre is the stream  
 Inflowing, the ambitious heart to fill,  
 And set capacities that but enlarge  
 By drinking e'en this stream. Eternity  
 Stretches beyond the little bound of time,—  
 Eternity, that never knows an end!  
 And time is but the introduction brief  
 To this Eternity. The child of Time  
 Is the beginning of the future man,  
 And his acquirements but the preface are,—  
 The introduction to an endless theme.  
 Eternity shall take this future man,  
 This child of Time,—and carry forward what  
 Is now but just begun in him, and train  
 Him for itself. No more an heir of death,  
 Clogged with the countless 'cumbrances of Time,—  
 But freed from these, him shall Eternity  
 Receive, and fashion to his new estate,

And build him up in everlasting life  
 With every needful increment, and fill,  
 With healthful pabulum, capacities,  
 That, growing, shall enlarge as they are fed,  
 And feeding, shall grow up as trees of God;  
 To fulness in their measure grow, and be  
 Forever beautiful in leaves and fruit,  
 And in their fruitfulness and beauty good.  
 The Man himself shall be a spreading tree,  
 And every faculty a fruitful bough,  
 Largely outbranching from the parent stem,  
 As branches grace the vine: and Man shall fill  
 The destiny pronounced at his creation,  
 And fill it to the glory of his God.

## IV.

Bright sets the sun. Thus when the good man quits  
 This world of travail, life's poor journey o'er,  
 His sun descends serene. The sting of death  
 Is plucked for those who die the good man's death;  
 And they can part with friends as those who part  
 In sure and certain hope to meet again,  
 And meet in life. Life is not life unless  
 'Tis passed forever o'er the bound of death.  
 'Tis resurrection-power that gives this life,  
 And then confirms it. Up through death this power  
 Ascended, conquering Satan, death and hell;  
 Conquering for man. The dying Christian knows  
 That death is but a transient sleep, the while  
 His weary members rest, and rest in hope.  
 The glorious morn of immortality  
 Is near: and He, the Sun of Righteousness,  
 "The Resurrection and the Life," shall call  
 The dead, and they shall answer with their presence  
 Where, in the light, the living meet their Head.  
 And then they come with Him in open sight,  
 To take dominion o'er that world which erst  
 Cast out their names as evil from its presence.  
 And what is their revenge? 'Tis that of God.  
 Who sends them forth the angels of His peace,  
 To rule the world in righteousness forever.

## V.

Now lingers twilight on the verge of Heaven,  
 Vested in sober grey. The feathered tribes  
 Have sung their latest song, and hid themselves

In their night coverts deep. The peeping stars  
 Shine out and gem the azure firmament  
 With lamps minute, profusely scattered round  
 The ambient Heavens, each with its ruddy flame,  
 Its tiny twinkling light. Clear is the sky,  
 Nor cloud, nor vapour, rests upon its face,  
 To intercept the ray that passes down,  
 Unhindered, through the deep blue crystal vault—  
 The seeming vault of space o'erarching all :  
 Emblem of heavenly-mindedness, where naught  
 Of error lingers to withstand the truth,  
 Where naught of passion unsubdued remains  
 Antagonistic to the light divine,  
 Descending from the Source profound of light,  
 For the instruction of the sons of Truth.  
 O! for that light, which shines to lighten all,  
 To rise, increasing to the perfect day,  
 The day of glory, when the Sun Himself  
 Of Righteousness, with healing on His wings,  
 Comes forth to scatter all the gloom of night,  
 And drive the prowling beasts to seek their dens;  
 And there abide, troublers of earth no more!  
 O! for that light to lighten every man!  
 O! for that truth upon the inward parts  
 To write its living law, and fill the world  
 With righteousness, and happiness, and peace.

## VI.

But evening sighs its latest breeze, and wafts  
 On silenced wing, the roaring or the surge—  
 That, restless, beats on Erie's rugged rocks,  
 Roused by the gale of noon; or tumbles rough  
 Round the projecting point where Huron's shores,  
 Winding away, stretch with indentures deep,  
 And long protrusions, far into the land;  
 Or where Ontario spreads his blue expanse,  
 Begirt with rugged stones, or forests dark  
 That overhang the flood. The listening ear  
 Pays willing homage to the soothing sound  
 That breaks at intervals the solemn pause  
 Of sober evening; first abrupt, then low,  
 Retreating, dying, till succeeding waves  
 Waken afresh the melancholy dirge,  
 Half slumbering on the bosom of the night.  
 And the hoarse bull-frog, from his stagnant pool,  
 Chimes to its murmur, solemn, deep, and grave.

And with his note acnte the whip-poor-will  
 Begins his night-song 'neath the spreading bush  
 And rouses echo from the neighbouring wood  
 To whistle back his music, sharp and shrill,  
 That ceases not till morn. The fire-fly starts  
 Out from the sedgy covert where he lay  
 Scure and hidden while the glowing sun  
 His bright effulgence poured upon the earth,  
 And flies abroad, and lights his tiny lamp,  
 Ambitious to be seen. Along the stream  
 Smoothly meandering 'twixt its banks, he shows  
 His little ray; or where the marshy soil,  
 Luxuriant shoots its reedy burthen up.

## VII.

Brilliant with clustering stars deep night comes on,  
 And calm and placid all; and undisturbed,  
 I fain would wend my solitary way  
 Beside the river's brink, or by the shore  
 O'erlooking far the broad expanse of some  
 Of our huge inland seas. The surface smooth  
 And mirror-faced, reflects the epyrean vault,  
 And seems a heaven beneath, the counterpart  
 Of that above, with all its starry hosts:  
 For now the waters are at rest and peace.  
 Perhaps Niagara in the distance breaks,  
 With voice suppressed, the deep repose of night—  
 Voices of thunder rolling far away,  
 Subdued and sad, in long continuous peal,  
 Unbroken as the stream that rushes down  
 The rocky steep. That everlasting voice!  
 That noise of many waters' ceaseless roar,  
 That broke forth with Creation! still pours forth  
 Its thunder in its undiminished strength!  
 And still the mighty river rushes down  
 The rocky steep, and boils, and foams, and lifts  
 Aloft its cloudy banner to the sky.  
 What is the symbol that huge banner bears?  
 It is the Bow of Promise and of Peace,  
 In light proceeding from the Source of light,  
 And backward from the cloudy pillar thrown,  
 To say that God His covenant remembers,  
 His covenant with man and with the earth.

## VIII.

I love to listen to the dashing oar  
 That breaks the glassy bosom of the wave,  
 Undimpled by a zephyr, while the barge  
 Is passing by with music, half obscured  
 Behind the whitish mist that hovers low  
 Upon the placid surface of the stream.  
 Harmonic numbers swell the trembling air,  
 That wafts the breathing melody of flute  
 And dulcet voice—rich, soft, deep, full, and sweet.  
 The balanced oar keeps time, and marks the bars  
 With downward stroke vibrating, and the blade  
 Dips true. Now brisk the bolder numbers rise ;  
 Now sink in cadence sweet ; pathetic now ;  
 And now they die away in murmuring strains,  
 Mellowed by distance, till the attentive ear  
 Listens in vain. 'Tis audible no more  
 To me ; but musing let me sit awhile,  
 And in imagination hear, and back  
 Recall the fleeting pleasure for a space,  
 And feast in silence on the dulcet strains.  
 The voice of music spoke : that voice returns,  
 Borne on imagination's mystic wing,  
 And echoes through the chambers of the soul,  
 Which feasts, and rests and rises satisfied.  
 For music for a feast was given to man ;—  
 For sober feasting, not for riot given ;  
 But first and chiefest for the praise of God,  
 That man might worship Him in highest feast,  
 And drink refreshment from the living font,  
 And drink and live, and live and drink forever.

## IX.

And now along the regions of the south,  
 Where the horizon meets the bending sky,  
 The distant thunder-clouds, in ridgy folds,  
 Hang on the burthened air with profile dark,  
 Uneven as the hills whose rocky sides,  
 Cliff above cliff, in rugged grandeur rise,  
 And to the skies heave their enormous heads.  
 There play the lightnings, and the liquid fire,  
 Flash after flash, enkindles all the south  
 With sudden bursts of light, and all the clouds  
 Alternate seem a mountain wrapt in flame,

Or dark and blank. But now the rising moon,  
 In light subdued, lifts up her waning orb,  
 Mounting her nightly ear to ride aloft,  
 The radiant queen of heaven, and measure half  
 Th' ethereal circle ere her silver wheels,  
 Descending low, dip in the western main.

## x.

Twilight is fully gone : all Nature rests,  
 Enjoying sweet repose, the special boon  
 Indulge Heaven bestows on all its works.  
 Sleep sooths the animated part,  
 Exhausted strength recruiting ; while soft dew  
 Refresh the vegetable tribes that drink  
 The evening vapours, settled and condensed  
 in shining drops, upon their thirsty leaves.

## xi.

The world's at rest. But let my wakeful eyes  
 Close not for slumber : let me stay abroad  
 For contemplation, while with wing outspread,  
 Imagination soars among the spheres.  
 And I would linger out the midnight hour  
 Beneath that wondrous canopy of stars,  
 And visit them in thought, remote or near,  
 That mock the ken of astronomer eyes,  
 Or roll in orbs familiar to the reach  
 Of optic science. Their unvarying rounds  
 Fair science measures, and their ample orbs  
 True to the eye of Heaven, incessant wheel  
 In silent grandeur through the mighty void,  
 Whose boundary is not. Guided by the hand  
 Of Him that made them, on their journey round,  
 Bending their course precise. The central sun  
 Holds all within his grasp, or planet, bright  
 In borrowed splendour, sweeping on its way ;  
 Or misty comet, whose elliptic arch  
 Far stretches into space. Harmonious, these  
 Obey the will of Heaven : yet still ascend,  
 As if to mingle in the stellar groups  
 That outward lie ; and there the glorious sun,  
 Diminished, sinks into a twinkling star,  
 And twinkling stars continue twinkling stars,

Mere telescopic dust, and still refuse  
 To show e'en the minutest magnitude!  
 But why such thoughts? It is that we may think  
 Of Him who made and gave to each his place,  
 Yet condescends to number all our hairs,  
 And suffers naught to perish through neglect:—  
 To think of Him "whose presence fills all space:"  
 Who for His pleasure made whatever is;  
 Who lighted up the sun, and hung the moon,  
 Balanced the earth, and named and set the stars,  
 To serve for signs, and seasons, days, and years.  
 The rainbow is a sign; the clouds are signs;  
 The thunder has a voice that man should know;  
 The rapid lightning he should understand:  
 The rain, the dew, the grass, the trees, the beasts,  
 The birds, the fishes, all should teach him truth.  
 Gold, silver, precious stones, the earth itself,  
 With all its furniture of mountains, hills,  
 Valleys, and streams, deserts, and fruitful plains;  
 The northern cold; the moulding of the snow;  
 The generation of the hail and storms;  
 The changing winds, the restless roaring sea,  
 That casts up mire and dirt;—these man should read,  
 And "look through nature—*up to Nature's God!*"  
 Not so!—He hath ordained another way.  
 The mystic ladder Isaac's son beheld  
 Of intercourse between the seen and unseen,  
 Prefigured naught of Nature. God in manhood.  
 Th' Eternal Word made flesh! He is the Way  
 Up to the God of all. He lifts men up,  
 And seats them with Himself, and gives them power  
 Downward to look through all the works of God,  
 And read them in His light. For man was made  
 To have dominion over all creation:  
 So Adam names to all the creatures gave,  
 Because he saw them in the light of God,  
 From whom to them he went. God left him not  
 To grope his way; and win, by long induction,  
 The precious knowledge that we have a God,  
 But shewed himself at once. Lifted is man  
 Within the sphere of Godhead by the Son;  
 Nor looks, nor passes upward, but as He  
 Reveals the Father by Himself, and leads  
 Heavenward the honored child of dust. The King  
 For wisdom far renowned, by light divine  
 Of beasts and fishes spake, of shrubs and trees,  
 And birds of every wing; and God to him,

That mystery divine inbedded deep  
 Close hidden in each one, revealed; and One  
 Greater than Solomon shall open all.  
 And where then shall we find the Christian Muse?  
 No pagan phantom 'tis, nor made of man,  
 No creature, but the living One who spake  
 By holy men of old in all the Psalms,  
 The Law, the Prophets,—in all Holy Scripture.

## XII.

I love the lonely hour of night, but not  
 For darkness' sake, nor for its works; nor yet  
 Without the precious light of day to tell  
 Of persons, things and places. Light was made  
 Before them all. Nor would I love the night  
 When storms and blackness rule. Night, with its stars,  
 O'er-canopied, is not the darkness dread  
 Which wise and foolish fear alike. 'Twas night  
 When eastern sages came to Bethlehem.  
 Safe guided by the star, and found the Babe,  
 Born in a stable, and their honours paid,  
 Their adoration, and their offerings gave  
 As to a King divine. 'Twas in the night,  
 As shepherds watched their flocks, the Angel came.  
 From Heaven descending, glory shining round,  
 And told them of the wonder God had wrought.  
 And then the hosts of Heaven appeared, and sung  
 That wondrous song, confirming all His words:—  
 "Glory to God on High; and on the earth,  
 Peace and good will to men." That wondrous song  
 Well might the angels sing! well might the Heavens  
 Break forth in anthems of sublimest strains!  
 But ah! the world heard not that song! The world  
 Profound in darkness slumbered. All its ear  
 That open was that time, for other things  
 Was vigilant. The murderous jealousy  
 Of hell was wakeful in Judea's court;  
 And Herod sought to know the place where He  
 Was born, with the intent the Child to kill,  
 Not worship. And by night the angel came,  
 And warned the sleeping Joseph, who, by night,  
 Arose and fled. Chiefly by night the Lord  
 Of life prevailed to foil man's foe. By night  
 The garden witnessed that deep agony  
 Which forced the bloody sweat to flow! All night  
 The lifeless body of the Crucified,



Hopeful in death, reposed. And 'twas yet night,  
 When, with a mighty earthquake, Gabriel came,  
 In terror clad, and rolled the stone away  
 Of entrance to the dead. And then He rose  
 Whom Death could not detain; and, rising, He  
 Became the Resurrection and the Life,  
 Destroying death, and him that had its power.  
 Such are the uses God hath had for night;  
 And so He hath outdone the Prince of Darkness.

## XIII.

And it is good to meditate  
 These mighty themes when night o'erhangs the earth,  
 All nature shrouding in her sable pall.  
 The night hath had its time; Egypt hath ruled,  
 And with its darkness covered all the earth.  
 The Prince of Darkness his dominion hath  
 Long exercised in cruelty and craft,  
 And boisterous ruffian force. But now the end  
 Comes swiftly on; and, as the Angel came,  
 A son of strength in glory clad, to ope  
 The sepulchre, and strike the keepers dumb,  
 When they the glory saw, the earthquake heard;  
 So He shall come to raise the sleeping dead  
 From out their graves, and by his presence fill  
 The hearts of men with fear. And He shall shake  
 All nations and all things as then He shook  
 Earth by His power. And He shall sit the Judge.  
 Judgment and justice shall before him go,  
 And from His face all darkness flee away.

*with the words of*

Sir,

I have the honour to request, in pursuance of 49 Vic.,  
Chap. 5, Sec. 1, that a draft may be prepared and sent to this  
Department, of a Commission under the Great Seal in favour  
of .....  
.....  
as .....  
with the rank of .....

