

WHITMAN: RADICAL OR CONSERVATIVE?

By GEORGE J. SMITH

I hear it was charg'd against me that I sought to destroy
institutions,
But really I am neither for nor against institutions,
(What indeed have I in common with them? or what with
the destruction of them?)*

I suppose that lovers of Walt Whitman, or those who speak frankly in admiration of him, often hear intimations that the poet was not "respectable," that he was an apologist or friend of wickedness, that he was an enemy of ideas and systems dear to the hearts of most men, that he was, in short, a dangerous and reprehensible man, best left alone. It is true that of late years few express these sentiments with such positiveness as Whitman's detractors indulged in, some years ago. But the sentiments nevertheless survive, even if only as half-formulated notions or prejudices. Their expression may frequently amount (as Hamlet puts it) only to

Arms encumbered thus, or this head-shake,
Or the pronouncing of some doubtful phrase,
As, well, well, we know—,

or other "such ambiguous giving out." Yet nothing is more persistent than prejudice or vague detraction.

Needless to say to any who know Whitman even tolerably well, that the slurs I have referred to are based either upon narrowness of ideas, or upon ignorance of what he has really thought and said. An examination, therefore, of such of Whitman's utterances as might reveal his attitude toward

* *Leaves of Grass*, edition 1897, p. 107.

the usual criterions of conservatism and of revolutionism might seem to be of use only to those who lack enlightenment regarding the purport of *Leaves of Grass*. But on the other hand those who love and reverence Whitman always must find his words electric, and contact with his thought if for the thousandth time must yet be for them a renewed delight and inspiration. It is possible also that a collation of certain of the poet's utterances may, when made from a particular standpoint or with a special purpose, put his thoughts in a new light or invest them with new significance even for those readers who know the message well.

I presume that the measure of a writer's iconoclasm may be inferred from his ideas and consequent attitudes respecting the nature of men, and then respecting their social relations and activities. In Whitman, however, as indeed he himself has told us in the lines quoted at the beginning of this paper, we need not expect to find either an advocate or an enemy of definite institutions, such as property or marriage or a particular scheme of government or a machinery for regulating wealth and poverty. For criticism of such matters we go not to the poet but to the propagandist. For my present purpose I think we should be satisfied to take Whitman's own word for it, that he was at least not an opponent of institutions. He does not discuss them at all. Yet there are certain broad underlying principles or ideas which properly belong to the poet's realm, and which indeed the true poet must hold with firm grasp. Furthermore, I think, if we know a man's views concerning these fundamentals, we can infer with tolerable clearness what his attitude must have been toward a given application of them in an act or an institution. I purpose therefore to inquire what Walt Whitman has to say of (1) Equality; (2) Freedom and Law; and (3) Revolution, for I think an examination of any man's notions about these ideas or principles, which underlie our social existence, ought to show whether or not he is, as regards society, a radical and an iconoclast.

Then I wish to conclude with a similar inquiry into his thought of man in himself and in his private relations; and for this purpose I shall consider his words respecting (4) Virtue and Vice; and (5) Religion.

I. Whitman's doctrine respecting equality seems at first sight difficult and contradictory. He speaks of all men as his equals. He makes no exceptions. On the very page* on which we read his noble and inexpressibly touching lines to his "dear brother" that was crucified—where, coupling himself and others with Jesus, he says:

That we all labor together transmitting the same charge and
succession,
We few equals indifferent of lands, indifferent of times, . . .
Till we saturate time and eras, that the men and women of
races, ages to come, may prove brethren and lovers as
we are—

we confront the following words:

You felons on trial in courts,
You convicts in prison-cells, you sentenc'd assassins chain'd
and handcuff'd with iron,
Who am I too that I am not on trial or in prison?
Me ruthless and devilish as any, that my wrists are not
chain'd with iron, or my ankles with iron?

What a tremendous, astounding contrast! The self-abasement as deep as the self-exaltation is lofty—both measureless. A divinity within, that cannot deny its rank, and yet a humanity, too, that will not deny its brother-souls, a love as all-embracing as the heavens. "Not till the sun excludes you do I exclude you," he cries to a wretched outcast: †

Not till the waters refuse to glisten for you and the leaves
to rustle for you, do my words refuse to glisten and
rustle for you.

But let us consider more closely. Can it be possible that Whitman believed all men equal in ability and in virtue? Assuredly not. He speaks of "the degraded and undevel-

*p. 298. †p. 299 (To a Common Prostitute).

opt,"* of the weak and shallow.† "To a certain civilian"‡ he says:

What to such as you anyhow such a poet as I? therefore
 leave my works,
 And go lull yourself with what you can understand, and
 with piano-tunes,
 For I lull nobody, and you will never understand me.

Or again:§ "A great city is that which has the greatest men and women." Or once more, To a Pupil,|| he says:

Is reform needed? is it through you?
 The greater the reform needed, the greater the Personality
 you need to accomplish it.

It is useless further to multiply instances of his speaking of the personal inequalities among men. But how, then, it must be asked, how, for instance, after speaking (in lines truly titanic) of the "lamentable" faces of various types of degraded persons °—

This face is a dog's snout sniffing for garbage,
 Snakes nest in that mouth, I hear the sibilant threat;

of this as the face of

Some abject louse asking leave to be, cringing for it,
 Some milk-nos'd maggot blessing what lets it wrig to its
 hole—

how can he yet cry,

Features of my equals would you trick me with your creas'd
 and cadaverous march?

Well, you cannot trick me.

No; but why? Because the equality Whitman speaks of is not the levelling of all men to a common measure; it is equality in the sight of the eternal, the equality of brothers, equality of potential being, in the dignity of manhood and all that in Whitman's faith manhood sooner or later implied.

* Prose Works, p. 336. † Leaves of Grass, p. 69 (Song of Myself).
 ‡ p. 252. § p. 152 (Song of the Broad-Axe). || p. 302. ° p. 353 (Faces).

The idea of unending development is, in his thought, an essential portion of the conception of equality. In this lies the explanation of the apparent contradiction. He declares:*

By God! I will accept nothing which all cannot have their counterpart of on the same terms.

This is a principle of equality, to be sure, but does not imply an actual present equality, rather the opposite; and as it implies for others a future receiving, it distinctly announces that there are "terms" on which such growth can be had. The future tense is more definite in his great saying:†

I swear the earth shall surely be complete to him or her who shall be complete,
The earth remains jagged and broken only to him or her who remains jagged and broken.

So I think that in the following sentence, ‡ if we emphasize the words "chances" and "rights" as meaning opportunities for growth in fulness and greatness of life, we may apprehend still more clearly the poet's idea of equality as not actual but potential, meaning, as nearly as a phrase can word it, the measureless power in any manhood to develop itself "on the old terms:."

Of Equality—as if it harm'd me, giving others the same chances and rights as myself—as if it were not indispensable to my own rights that others possess the same.

With this understanding, and with Whitman's unquestioning allowance of unending time for the achievement, equality at some future status becomes, to the thought, actual. Whitman, no more than other sane persons, believed that in present fact one man is as good as another or as great in powers as another. But man's wondrous and divine quality of development is his especial possession. How well Browning puts it: §

* p. 48 (Song of Myself). † p. 179 (A Song of the Rolling Earth).
‡ p. 218 (Thought.). § Death in the Desert.

Progress is man's distinctive mark alone,
 Not God's, and not the beasts': *God* is, *they* are,
Man partly is, and wholly hopes to be.

In the possession of such a power as this of development, all men become potentially equal; and if we can accept Whitman's or Browning's absolute faith in the future, we can say with Whitman, in the calmness of conviction:*

I saw the face of the most smear'd and slobbering idiot they
 had at the asylum,
 And I knew for my consolation what they knew not,
 I knew of the agents that emptied and broke my brother,
 The same wait to clear the rubbish from the fallen tenement,
 And I shall look again in a score or two of ages,
 And I shall meet the real landlord perfect and unharm'd,
 every inch as good as myself.

Whitman, then, even though he is the poet of democracy, is no blatant leveller. He measures men by their amount of manhood, and though he finds each one divine in his potency and destiny, he sees with absolute clearness how unlike, how unequal, they are as yet. He believes in the equality of hope, but not in the bald monotony of men which means for the communist promiscuity and indistinction. Whitman could have been no poet without a fine sense of selection and discrimination. The poet must see life as it is, as well as life as it ought to be and shall be, and the two he must not confuse.

2. Let us turn to consider more briefly Whitman's notions of freedom and law. He does not shirk the correspondence of the two; he does not fall into the error of thinking law the enemy of freedom. When in his enthusiasm for great and self-sufficing personalities he makes one of the tests of his "great city," † that there "the men and women think lightly of the laws," or when he says, "Let others promulge the laws, I will make no account of the laws," ‡

* *Leaves of Grass*, p. 354 (Faces). † p. 152 (Song of the Broad-Axe).
 ‡ p. 189 (Myself and Mine).

we may be assured that he only asserts what we all believe, that there is a standard within us which is above human enactments and which sets aside the authority of senates and legislatures, a standard which to know and follow makes laws impertinences. I say we may be assured that Whitman but means to declare the insufficiency of actual statute law, and the sufficiency of great and noble manhood; for he does not fail to recognize even in human law something of the splendor that haloes it in old Hooker's golden words:

Of Law there can be no less acknowledged, than that her seat is the bosom of God, her voice the harmony of the world.

In these words the poet vindicates the necessity of rule:

Land in the realms of God to be a realm unto thyself,
Under the rule of God to be a rule unto thyself.*

In his prose † Whitman speaks very definitively concerning his idea of freedom; and though he is probably to be understood here as referring only to natural or universal law, yet the passage is of importance as showing his general attitude toward the notions of freedom and law:

It is not only entirely true that most people misunderstand Freedom, but I sometimes think I have not yet met one person who rightly understands it. The whole Universe is absolute Law. Freedom only opens entire activity and license *under the law*. . . . Strange as it may seem, we only attain to freedom by a knowledge of, and implicit obedience to, Law. Great—unspeakably great—is the Will! the free Soul of man! At its greatest, understanding and obeying the laws, it can then, and then only, maintain true liberty. For there is to the highest, that law as absolute as any—more absolute than any—the Law of Liberty. The shallow, as intimated, consider liberty a release from all law, from every constraint. The wise see in it, on the contrary, the potent Law of Laws, namely the fusion and combination of the conscious will, or partial individual law, with those universal, eternal, unconscious ones, which run through all Time, pervade history, prove immortality, give moral pur-

* p. 350 (Thou Mother, etc.) † p. 336.

pose to the entire objective world, and the last dignity to human life.

Even in his inspired dreams of the future of democracy Whitman never fails to link law with freedom. For instance, in *Years of the Modern*, he writes: *

I see Freedom, completely arm'd and victorious and very
haughty, with Law on one side and Peace on the other.

Or again, in *Thou Mother with thy Equal Brood*: †

Lo, where arise three peerless stars,
To be thy natal stars my country, Ensemble, Evolution,
Freedom,
Set in the sky of Law.

Or, once more, in the *Song of the Exposition*, in these words he declares unequivocally that in our national statehood, our one-in-many government, is found an indispensable condition of our future happiness and progress: ‡

All thine, O sacred Union!
While we rehearse our measureless wealth, it is for thee,
dear Mother.
We own it all and several today indissoluble in thee;
Our freedom all in thee! our very lives in thee!

Observe he says, "our freedom" all in the national life, all under the conditions implied by the state. Not that Whitman would approve, any more than the rest of us approve, of evil and unjust laws; not but that he might regard the need of human legality as but a temporary phase of evolution; but that he recognizes at any rate the present necessity and indispensability of the *institution* of law and government, of the nation, just as fully as he recognizes the need of great and superb citizenship as the foundation of the nation's greatness.

3. Such being Whitman's views as to liberty, that it is ever under the law, we may yet at first be surprised, on coming to consider his attitude toward our third subject, revolution,

* p. 370. † p. 350. ‡ pp. 164-165.

into believing that his detractors have some ground to stand on. For does he not say in his lines *To a Foil'd Revolutionary* * that his songs are not songs of loyalty alone,

But songs of insurrection also,
For I am the sworn poet of every dauntless rebel the world
over,
And he going with me leaves peace and routine behind him,
And stakes his life to be lost at any moment?

I find this perfectly consistent with Whitman's universal love and sympathy; and, moreover, if we are none of us so blind as to imagine for a moment that the world is in no need of improvement, so none of us can, with intelligence, refuse our welcome to all agitation, discussion, aspiration and effort that has in view the dawning of a better day. No man worthy the name of man can be willing that the world should stand still, that its present injustices should never know correction and its sufferings never alleviation. Who would be heard to damn all efforts toward the reign of love and peace? who, knowing what he did, would number himself with the cloddish, the unadvancing, and would add to the mass of ignorance and selfishness that blocks the laboring wheels of progress?

No great-souled man could, even to a mistaken martyr in the cause of human advancement, refuse his sympathy. It is, to my thinking, the life-element in Whitman or any other man that he believe amelioration possible, that he be not of opinion that all should remain as it is. If to share in these opinions makes a man a revolutionary, he will find himself in the best of company.

But did Whitman hold that progress should come through sudden and violent breaking with the past—was he really a revolutionary in the usual sense of the word? He was so far upon being, that I think no poet can be named who voices more fully and convincingly than Whitman the doc-

* p. 287.

trine of our complete dependence upon the past—the doctrine of growth, of evolution as opposed to revolution. We are, in Whitman's view, the children of the past and the parents of the future. All is caused. Effort to better life is welcome, nay, is necessary. But the betterment will come as natural growth, not otherwise. When conditions are ripe, the due results will follow, and not before.

We do not blame thee, elder World, nor really separate ourselves from thee,
(Would the son separate himself from the father?)*

With antecedents,
With my fathers and mothers and the accumulations of past
ages,
With all which, had it not been, I would not now be here,
as I am.†

The Past—the dark unfathom'd retrospect!
The teeming gulf—the sleepers and the shadows!
The past—the infinite greatness of the past!
For what is the present after all but a growth out of the past?
(As a projectile form'd, impell'd, passing a certain line, still
keeps on,
So the present, utterly form'd, impell'd by the past.)‡

Or again:

Nations ten thousand years before these States, and many
times ten thousand years before these States,
Garner'd clusters of ages that men and women like us grew
up and travel'd their course and pass'd on, . . .
What histories, rulers, heroes, perhaps transcending all
others,
What laws, customs, wealth, arts, traditions, . . .
Who were witty and wise, who beautiful and poetic, who
brutish and undevelop'd,
Not a mark, not a record remains—and yet all remains.§

Is it not clear that Whitman believed in causation, and that nations develop and change as plants grow, namely, be-

* p. 160 (Song of the Exposition). † p. 191 (With Antecedents).
‡ p. 315 (Passage to India). § p. 288 (Unnamed Lands).

cause the conditions make necessary just such changes as occur, no greater and no less? All is order, all is as the causes have made it. In his own words:*

The universe is duly in order, every thing in its place.
What has arrived is in its place and what waits shall be in its place.

Assuredly the calm of these words, this breadth of view, could not come from a dangerous revolutionary. Yet do not misunderstand his words, "everything is in its place," as meaning what Pope meant in saying "whatever is, is right." Whitman means that every thing, every person, is exactly as it or he must be, because of all that has preceded; not that every thing is satisfactory and ideal, and every man a model. Were things as we are told in Genesis they were, "all very good," then growth and progress would be unnecessary, and undesirable. But on the contrary, to Whitman, as we read in one of the noblest of his poems, the Song of the Open Road, progress is the all in all, the justification of life. Rising to a magnificent climax, he bids us

To know the universe itself as a road, as many roads, as roads for traveling souls.
All parts away for the progress of souls, . . . along the grand roads of the universe.†

And finally let us ask, what means does Whitman have in mind for furthering this grand "procession of souls"—does he advocate violence and overthrow? He believes man's progress can be helped along, but how? These are his words:

And you America,
Cast you the real reckoning for your present?
The lights and shadows of your future, good or evil?
To girlhood, boyhood look, the teacher and the school.‡

Whitman's reckless and revolutionary principle is, Education, there is the key to progress!

* p. 331 (The Sleepers). † p. 127. ‡ p. 308 (An Old Man's Thought of School).

4. As I pass to my fourth point, Whitman's attitude toward virtue and toward vice, it seems to me now, after all that has been shown of the poet's moral and intellectual character, almost ridiculous to inquire whether such a man would either shallowly or wickedly ignore the eternal difference between good and bad, sneer at the one or palliate the other. But small space is needed to demonstrate, in this case as in the preceding cases, Whitman's inspiring saneness and lofty spirituality.

First, as to the importance of moral soundness in the nation, he declares that America must attain to "moral wealth and civilization, (until which her proudest material civilization must remain in vain.)" * And his hoped-for "great city" must be one

Where thrift is in its place, and prudence is in its place,
Where equanimity is illustrated in affairs,
Where speculations on the soul are encourag'd,
Where the city of the cleanliness of the sexes stands,
There the great city stands. †

But it is on the virtue of the individual that Whitman lays the stress. Almost terrible are his statements of the law of consequences.

The law of the past cannot be eluded,
The law of the present and future cannot be eluded,
The law of promotion and transformation cannot be eluded,
The law of heroes and good-doers cannot be eluded,
The law of drunkards, informers, mean persons, not one
iota thereof can be eluded. ‡

Each man to himself and each woman to herself, is the word
of the past and present, and the true word of immor-
tality ;

No one can acquire for another—not one,
Not one can grow for another—not one. . . .
The murder is to the murderer, and comes back most to him,
The theft is to the thief, and comes back most to him,

* p. 350 (Thou Mother with thy Equal Brood). † pp. 152-153 (Song of the Broad-Axe). ‡ p. 336 (To Think of Time).

The love is to the lover, and comes back most to him,
The gift is to the giver, and comes back most to him.*

Or again, in the Song of Prudence :

All that a person does, says, thinks, is of consequence. . . .
Charity and personal force are the only investments worth
any thing.

No specification is necessary, all that a male or female does,
that is vigorous, benevolent, clean, is so much profit to
him or her,

In the unshakable order of the universe and through the
whole scope of it forever.†

Then, in *The Sleepers* : ‡

What has arriv'd is in its place, and what waits shall be in
its place,

The twisted skull waits, the watery or rotten blood waits,
The child of the glutton or venerealee waits long, and the
child of the drunkard waits long, and the drunkard
himself waits long.

What could be expected from such a man as the writer of
these words, but that in his view,

What behaved well in the past or behaves well today is not
such a wonder,

The wonder is always and always how there can be a mean
man or an infidel.§

And finally, as for moral aspiration, I would ask what
poet has voiced a nobler ideal?

Who has gone farthest? for I would go farther,
And who has been just? for I would be the most just per-
son of the earth, . . .

And who has been bold and true? for I would be the bold-
est and truest being of the universe,

And who benevolent? for I would show more benevolence
than all the rest,

And who thinks the amplest thoughts? for I would sur-
round those thoughts.||

* pp. 178-179 (*A Song of the Rolling Earth*). † p. 290. ‡ p. 331. § p.
47 (*Song of Myself*). || p. 363 (*Excelsior*).

Can such desires come from any but a great heart? To Walt Whitman the right spirit in men was the solution of all. Not the performance of duties, but the acting out of the dictates of the ennobled spirit, made the man he admired.

I give nothing as duties,
What others give as duties I give as living impulses,
(Shall I give the heart's action as a duty?)*

I think we may from these utterances conclude without doubt that Whitman did not in the least degree palliate the seriousness of wrong-doing. But it is none the less true that his voice to the wrong doer was not a voice of condemnation and merciless judgment. No poet has broader sympathy, more inclusive love. This beautiful trait I have already illustrated.† His thought about evil was the same as Jesus expresses in his saying, "Woe unto the world because of offences! for it must needs be that offences come; but woe to that man by whom the offence cometh!"‡ What then is left for us but to look upon those who err, not with blame, but with yearning and pity? Certainly this is Whitman's attitude. He knows that all which exists by cause. He, too, says to the evil-doer, "Neither do I condemn thee."§

5. The last point I designed to consider was Whitman's word respecting religion. Here I cannot hope to satisfy all, perhaps not many. Creeds to bind faith in intellectual strait-jackets were not for him, sects and denominations could not hold him. If religion be a matter of intellectual acceptance of traditional dogmas or doctrines about God or Jesus or the nature of man, Whitman, who thought at first hand, was not religious. But if religion be an emotional attitude toward world and man and God, if religion consist in an adoring reverence and wonder and praise for the All-Father and his works, and an eager aspiration toward the highest ideal of life, then his religiousness it is that pervades

* p. 190 (*Myself and Mine*). † See p. 23. ‡ S. Matthew, XVIII, 7.
§ S. John, VIII, 4.

his whole being, and leads him to utterances hardly to be paralleled for loftiness of rapture. To him the universe is filled with supernal glory and wondrousness. He cries :

Why, who makes much of a miracle?

As to me I know of nothing else but miracles, . . .

Whether I stand under trees in the woods, . . .

Or look at strangers opposite me in the car, . . .

Or watch honey-bees busy around the hive of a summer forenoon,

Or animals feeding in the fields,

Or birds, or the wonderfulness of insects in the air,

Or the wonderfulness of the sundown, or of stars shining so quiet and bright,

Or the exquisite delicate thin curve of the new moon in spring;

These with the rest, one and all, are to me miracles. . . .

To me every hour of the light and dark is a miracle, . . .

Every cubic inch of space is a miracle,

Every square yard of the surface of the earth is spread with the same,

Every foot of the interior swarms with the same.*

Or, from his rapt and splendid Song at Sunset: †

You earth and life till the last ray gleams I sing.

Open mouth of my soul uttering gladness,

Eyes of my soul seeing perfection,

Natural life of me faithfully praising things. . . .

O, amazement of things—even the least particle! . . .

O setting sun! though the time has come,

I still warble under you, if none else does, unmitigated adoration.

And does he connect this unspeakable display of glory and wonder with any higher principle of unity and inspiring purport? His own words answer :

Ah more than any priest O soul we too believe in God,

But with the mystery of God we dare not dally. ‡

And in another place he writes: §

* p. 301 (Miracles). † pp. 374-376. ‡ p. 321 (Passage to India).

§ p. 76 (Song of Myself).

And I say to mankind, Be not curious about God,
 For I who am curious about each am not curious about God,
 (No array of terms can say how much I am at peace about
 God and about death.)

I hear and behold God in every object, yet understand God
 not in the least. . . .

Why should I wish to see God better than this day?
 I see something of God each hour of the twenty-four, and
 each moment then,
 In the faces of men and women I see God, and in my own
 face in the glass,
 I find letters from God dropt in the street, and every one is
 sign'd by God's name,
 And I leave them where they are, for I know that where-
 soe'er I go,
 Others will punctually come for ever and ever.

To Whitman every object was Emmanuel, God with us.
 His indeed is the religion "in the daily walk," the religion
 that sanctifies and transfigures life in its every hour. Could
 a man feel as Whitman felt about the world and his brother
 men and God without being expanded by an aspiration too
 great for words to tell? Looking forth upon life he sees

Love like the light silently wrapping all,
 Nature's amelioration blessing all,
 The blossoms, fruits of ages, orchards divine and certain,
 Forms, objects, growths, humanities, to spiritual images
 ripening.

Give me O God to sing that thought,
 Give me, give him or her I love this quenchless faith,
 In Thy ensemble, whatever else withheld withhold not from
 us,

Belief in plan of Thee enclosed in Time and Space,
 Health, peace, salvation universal.*

Then as to his own life, for what will such a faith make
 him strive as toward his God? Hear his own words: †

Lover divine and perfect Comrade,
 Waiting content, invisible yet, but certain,
 Be thou my God.

* p. 182 (Song of the Universal). † p. 213 (Gods).

Thou, thou, the Ideal Man,
Fair, able, beautiful, content, and loving,
Complete in body and dilate in spirit,
Be thou my God.

Aught, aught of mightiest, best I see, conceive, or know, . . .
All great ideas, the races' aspirations,
All heroisms, deeds of rapt enthusiasts,
Be ye my Gods.

Walt Whitman was a lofty and beautiful soul, filled with love, pitying others' shortcomings, recognizing his own, but keeping in view no ideal short of perfection. From this all the rest follows. Vice he cannot, will not, condone; but offenders he will not and cannot condemn. In a universe of unchangeable law what is done is done and cannot be undone, be it however lamentable; yet he knows that all is moving onward, that there is a progress "toward the best—toward something great." * And in this power of growth toward an ideal all men partake, and so become in his eyes all alike beautiful and divine.

So we may say, in answer to the question of this paper, that Whitman is neither a conservative nor a radical, or perhaps better, that he is both. He believes in progress, and his words are living forces to urge men onward toward the best, but he keeps firm hold on the past, recognizes its parenthood, and would build upon what it has bequeathed. Never does he slacken his grasp of the great truths that underlie the life of man among men and under God. He is therefore to my apprehension one of the greatest of teachers, uplifters, spiritual aiders of men;

And while he rests, his songs, in troops,
Walk up and down our earthly slopes,
Companioned by diviner Hopes. †

* p. 127 (Song of the Open Road). † Elizabeth Barrett Browning: A Vision of Poets.