

The Down-hill of Life.

In the down-hill of life when I find I'm declining,
May my fate no less fortunate be,
Than a snug elbow-chair can afford for reclining,
And a cot that overlooks the wide sea:
With an ambling pad poney, to pace over the lawn
While I carol away idle sorrow;
And as blithe as the lark that each day hails the dawn,
Look forward with hope for to-morrow.

With a porch at my door, both for shelter and shade too,
As the sunshine or rain may prevail;
With a small spot of ground, for the use of the spade too,
And a barn for the use of the flail;
With a cow for my dairy, a dog for my game,
And a purse when a friend wants to borrow,—
I envy no Nabob his riches or fame,
On what honours may wait him to-morrow.

From the bleak northern blast, may my cot be completely
Secured by a neighbouring hill;
And at night may repose steal upon me more sweetly
By the side of a murmuring rill:
And while peace and plenty I find at my board,
With a heart free from sickness and sorrow,
I'll share with my friends what to-day may afford,
And let them spread the table to-morrow.

And when I at last must throw off this frail covering
I've worn for threescore years and ten,
On the brink of the grave I'll not seek to keep hovering
Nor my thread wish to spin over again:
But my face in the glass I'll serenely survey,
And with smiles count each wrinkle and furrow;
As this old worn out stuff, which is thread-bare to-day
May become everlasting to-morrow.

The Oak of our Fathers.

The oak of our fathers to freedom was dear,
Its leaves were his crown and its wood was his spear,
And its head tower'd high and its branches spread round,
For its roots were struck deep and its heart it was sound;
The bees o'er its honey-dew'd foliage play'd,
And the beasts of the forest fed under its shade;
Alas! for the oak of our fathers, that stood,
In its beauty the glory and pride of the wood.

Around its bark crept the ivy and clung to its trunk,
It struck in its mouth and its juices it drunk;
Its branches grew sickly, depriv'd of their food
Its towering head droop'd, by its poison subdued;
No longer the bees o'er its honey dew's play'd,
Nor the beasts of the forest fed under its shade;
Alas! for the oak of our fathers, that stood,
In its beauty the glory and pride of the wood.

The oak has receiv'd its incurable wound,
Guile has loosen'd the roots tho' the heart may be sound.
What the travelers at distance green flourishing see,
Are the leaves of the ivy that ruin'd the tree;
Disfigur'd the trunk in its ruin is seen,
A monument now what its what its beauty has been;
Alas! for the oak of our fathers, that stood,
In its beauty the glory and pride of the wood.