

To Washington Irving Esq.
Dear Sir

I do not know how often you may be
annoyed with anonymous communications and perhaps there may
be no reason why this should not be included in the same
category. — And that even the wish of a heart untaught to veil
these feelings which perchance it ought should be looked upon as
born from fear of giving offence by utterance to the source which
prompted them. — It is not in my nature to be injurious to
benefit conferred, and out of the abundance of the heart the mouth
speaketh and certainly I hold it no light privilege to have an oppor-
tunity for that expression. I would not here use the language of commendation
a *debatum*, which would be irksome to me & could not be other than
repulsive to you. The esteem and admiration of your countrymen &
wherever your works are known (and when are they not) is now too
deeply fixed to be shaken, & certainly beyond my power either to
augment or diminish. It is delightful to contemplate such
a reputation unallied by those jealous & thickening which unfortunately
— by so often degrading the name of literature — it is only to rejoice in
a fame in which there never may a cloud hang to dim its brightness.
— Could that such instances were less rare, how many a human
life more the picture, and where genius may be compared to a lamp
on the gate only of a palace. It may serve to cast a gleam of light on them
without, while she in habitants sit in darkness. — Without asking an
apology for saying thus much which I feel I can scarcely have a
right to claim, I will at once briefly state the object of the
present writing. I commenced a poem, if it can be so called, chiefly

for the purpose of introducing selections from some favorite authors
of mine in which perhaps "My little book might abundant sail
Glorious the triumph and partake the gale." The idea of publication
if ever seriously entertained I have abandoned, in which probably
neither the public nor myself will be the losers. — When
anything was Halleck, Bryant, Whittier, Willis, Burck, & some British
poets in illustration of certain subjects. I have therefore taken
the liberty of appending that portion which bore the sanction of the subject
either in style or matter & may at least express with unfeigned
sincerity, the esteem and regard of your obliged
(Fellow Citizen,

New York Nov. 26, 1852, —

By Hudson's wave there is a woody dell
On them doth Gunning worth & Henson dwell,
Cold is that heart that looks on these
Nor owns thy spirit's mastery. —
A drowsy dreaming land of yore,
When no rude steamer dash'd the shore,
No flying car with thundering sound
E'er broke the silence — deep, profound, —
Yet goblins grim were rampant there,
And pumpkins flying through the air,
When oft we heard a cry, the story
The clattering fleet of Grass Ram & Piney,
And headless, shipman's wild career,
That fill'd poor Salem with ghastly fear,
That oft he fled in dire alarms
Forsaken Katrina's charms, —
The legend still shall live in story,
And tell its glory in their glory,
But slumber'll ne'er again prevail
Amid the glory of "Sleepy Vale,"
A voice has gone from hill to shore
That "Sunnyside shall sleep no more" —
And voyagers will mark the shrine
And lingering gaze upon that spot
When halls more lofty far than these
Are pass'd unheeded or forgot, —
And pilgrims shall unceasing throng,
Still on the spell that floats the air

And feel what thou hast said or sung
To man the very turret there, —

But thou art yet among us, and we rejoice
We still may hear thy lov'd & well known voice,
Whether in quiet humour, or pathetic strain,
All else but the joy, Oh never known to pain,
No chord discordant ever is touch'd by thee,
But ever blest a soul subduing melody,
And though thy fame has o'er the wide world flown
In joy, 'tis pride to call thee still our own,
Not ours alone but thy classic page
Shall claim the homage of a future age. —
Thy gratitude that prompts these feeble lays,
I'm well I know thou needest not my praise, —
I have approach'd with diffidence and fear
And humbly tho' the tribute, 'tis sincere. —

And when the fiat of Almighty Love
Shall call thee to this glorious field above,
(And long and late that time may be,)
To ask the diamond lent to thee,
That precious gift from beauteous heaven,
As pure as when to thee was given —
The Lord of Hosts, in that day when
He shall his jewels gather then — Oh then —
Mayst thou still a brighter gem
Adorn thy Saviour's diadem, —

Anonymous letter
Nov 20th 1852