

Outlook

Corrected

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L. H. Bailey

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"In Adam's fall

We sinnèd all"

They told me when my years were young;

And deep with pain my heart was stung

That we were banished all to woe,

Nor understood why we should thus be
disciplined

Because some other one had grossly sinned

Six thousand years ago.

No power have we

Ourselves to free

From out this thrall,

Miserable sinners all;

For all the race is downward doomed

From high estate,

Mankind is lost, its hopes consumed

By guilt innate,

And at the last

Our convict souls on hell are cast.

If we attain to paradise
Some other one must make amends
And must avert these awful ends
By mortal sacrifice.



Years have come and gone since then
And I have wandered far from homes of men
In deep strong woods and fragrant fields
Where every rising morning yields
A world uncursed and new.
The meadows green, the heavens blue,
The noonday heat, the morning dew,
The winds that roam the great groves
through,
The beast and fin and feathered crew,—
They bear no mark of fateful trend
To perdition or doom-end—
All lead me out to fearless view
A deepening hold on life construe
For what they teach I hold is true.

They teach that all the world is good
Alike for man and brute and wood

All set in one vast fellowhood,
Nor innate guilt appears;
That all the tribes are onward bound
Ascended each from lower round
Prophetic of uprising forms
That shall accord to higher norms,
And in them all no wreck inheres;
Some better man than yet may come
Old earth is still not dead or dumb,—
The kinds and races are outpast
And every one unto itself is better than
the last:

So,
I trust my lot
As my ways are trod,
And I blaspheme not
The perfecting works of God;
And I build my holy fires
Where every living thing aspires.



And I am I;
Dominion unto me is given
As the fertile years go by
To win my way to heaven.

Myself I must redeem—
All nature helps me on
And all good saints of here and yon—
My soul must be supreme.
Within myself my kingdom lies
Nor any fatal faiths shall blind my eyes
When my soul would take its wings and
rise,
For all nature disregards our small philosophies
And confounds them with her everlasting
silences.

The creatures live their parts complete,
To them there is no blank defeat
Or canker set against the heart:
So shall I take my eager part
In the great program
And let there be no weak repine
And no self-annulment mine
Where I am,—
But may there be some good conquest
That I shall win with trust and zest
Where all things are divine.

Nor are we blind
Hope lies not behind
Ever new is the language nature speaks—
We live not with the Greeks;
The earth and sky stretch on and on
With web of law and mystery
Yet bear some healing benison
To consecrate my sins to me—
We find a goodly harmony
When nature holds the mastery.



I break not with the past.
I stead myself in all the things of yore
In all mankind's long climb and all the
sacred lore,
And then I outward look to what lies on
before.
From first unto the last
Some mighty essence runs,
It moveth in the worlds and riseth in the
suns:
Its scheme I would forecast,

prescience

For some far time will science open wide
the vista vast
And let us see the chart whereon our ways
are cast.—

When I consider the heavens, the
stars, and the moon
My spirit out-wings its small forenoon
With pride of master and man
To partake in the plan.



We helpless gaze unto the stars;
But some great day we shall in signal be
with Mars
And in a twinkling shall sense a wider
brotherhood
Than any man hath ever understood,—
A kinship that encompasseth the universe
Wherein will all our feeble cults disperse
And all the worlds our neighbors be
In one vast fraternity.
New visions will outlift the race
As we identify ourselves in space
And achieve the meaning of the whole

In some new splendor of the soul;
Old formulas will readjust,
And calmer still will be our trust
When our shrinking fears shall cease
And we discover our release
From all vagary and caprice;
And everywhere shall God appear
In our serene abiding here.

And closer then on earth the ties
When free of doubt and all disguise
Their common end men recognize
And in one wholesome effort rise.



'Tis not for time alone I seek
'Tis not for hope or joy I speak,
I fly beyond all things we know
To understand why all is so—
I must be free:
Why should I fear to look when I have
eyes to see?
Then casting all reserve aside
To know things as they are,
The order in the world's my guide

Its process is my star:
The planets and the systems ply—
If they are safe, then so am I.
I fear no ill where I shall range
Nor lose my bearings when my forms of
 hope shall change.
There may be worlds about us that we
 cannot apprehend
Existencies that all our hopes and days
 transcend:
These may take us hence
Into some super-sense
And this may be our great sequence.
So,
I hail the brother soul
Who rides with me this whirling world
Through the waiting spaces hurled;
So I let the cycles roll
While this tiny sand-grain sphere
Lives its little shining year.

Spins

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And so will my days possess
No aching void of loneliness
Because my world has larger grown,
But fuller be as they unfold
With the gladness lived of old
And with the ranges then unknown.
Quietly the rain-drops fall
And tirelessly the white winds call;
So,
I live and love as seasons fly
And then, O Teacher, here am I.
I stand within the cosmic sea
And dreadless wait my destiny—
I stand with bird and beast and tree
And all the things unbond and free,
For they and I and all together
Pass on in space and time and weather.