
This is a reproduction of a library book that was digitized by Google as part of an ongoing effort to preserve the information in books and make it universally accessible.

Google™ books

<https://books.google.com>



560

LONGFELLOW'S

EVANGELINE

L

76

THE EMERALD SERIES

65
KONINKLIJKE BIBLIOTHEEK

**UIT DE BIBLIOTHEEK
VAN WIJLEN DEN HEER**

E. A. KEUCHENIUS

'S-GRAVENHAGE

1935

7112 - '35

KONINKLIJKE BIBLIOTHEEK



0623 2927

Digitized by Google

560 676



EVANGELINE.

A TALE OF ACADIA.

EVANGELINE:

A TALE OF ACADIA.

BY

HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW.

ILLUSTRATED

By SIR JOHN GILBERT, R.A.

LONDON:
GEORGE ROUTLEDGE AND SONS,
THE BROADWAY, LUDGATE.

1878.

PREFATORY NOTE.

THE story of "EVANGELINE" is founded on a painful occurrence which took place in the early period of British colonization in the Northern part of America.

In the year 1713, Acadia, or as it is now named, Nova Scotia, was ceded to Great Britain by the French. The wishes of the inhabitants seem to have been little consulted in the change, and they with great difficulty were induced to take the oaths of allegiance to the British government. Some time after this, war having again broken out between the French and British in Canada, the Acadians were accused of having assisted the French, from whom they were descended and connected by many ties of friendship, with provisions and ammunition at the siege of Beau Séjour. Whether the accusation was founded on fact or not, has not been satisfactorily ascertained; the result however, was most disastrous to the primitive, simple-minded Acadians. The British government ordered them to be removed from their homes and dispersed throughout the other colonies, at a distance from their much-loved land. This resolution was not communicated to the inhabitants till measures had been matured to carry it into immediate effect; when the Governor of the colony, having issued a summons calling the whole people to a meeting, informed them that their lands, tenements, and cattle of all kinds were forfeited to the British crown, that he had orders to remove them in vessels to distant colonies, and they must remain in custody till their embarkation.

The poem is descriptive of the fate of some of the persons involved in these calamitous proceedings.





EVANGELINE.

A TALE OF ACADIA.

THIS is the forest primeval. The murmuring
pines and the hemlocks,
Bearded with moss, and in garments green, in-
distinct in the twilight,
Stand like Druids of eld, with voices sad and
prophetic,
Stand like harpers hoar, with beards that rest on
their bosoms.
Loud from its rocky caverns, the deep-voiced
neighboring ocean
Speaks, and in accents disconsolate answers the
wail of the forest.

This is the forest primeval ; but where are the
hearts that beneath it
Leaped like the roe, when he hears in the woodland
the voice of the huntsman?
Where is the thatch-roofed village, the home of
Acadian farmers,—
Men whose lives glided on like rivers that water
the woodlands,
Darkened by shadows of earth, but reflecting an
image of heaven ?

Waste are those pleasant farms, and the farmers
forever departed !
Scattered like dust and leaves, when the mighty
blasts of October
Seize them, and whirl them aloft, and sprinkle them
far o'er the ocean.
Nought but tradition remains of the beautiful
village of Grand-Pré.

Ye who believe in affection that hopes, and en-
dures, and is patient,
Ye who believe in the beauty and strength of
woman's devotion,
List to the mournful tradition still sung by the
pines of the forest ;
List to a Tale of Love in Acadie, home of the
happy.





PART THE FIRST.

I.

IN the Acadian land, on the shores of the Basin
of Minas,
Distant, secluded, still, the little village of Grand-
Pré
Lay in the fruitful valley. Vast meadows stretched
to the eastward,
Giving the village its name, and pasture to flocks
without number.
Dikes, that the hands of the farmers had raised
with labor incessant,
Shut out the turbulent tides ; but at stated seasons
the flood-gates
Opened, and welcomed the sea to wander at will
o'er the meadows.
West and south there were fields of flax, and
orchards and cornfields
Spreading afar and unfenced o'er the plain, and
away to the northward
Blomidon rose, and the forests old, and aloft on the
mountains
Sea-fogs pitched their tents, and mists from the
mighty Atlantic
Looked on the happy valley, but ne'er from their
station descended.

There, in the midst of its farms, reposed the
Acadian village.
Strongly built were the houses, with frames of oak
and of chestnut,
Such as the peasants of Normandy built in the
reign of the Henries.
Thatched were the roofs, with dormer-windows ;
and gables projecting
Over the basement below protected and shaded the
doorway.
There in the tranquil evenings of summer, when
brightly the sunset
Lighted the village street, and gilded the vanes on
the chimneys,
Matrons and maidens sat in snow-white caps and
in kirtles
Scarlet and blue and green, with distaffs spinning
the golden
Flax for the gossiping looms, whose noisy shuttles
within doors
Mingled their sound with the whir of the wheels and
the songs of the maidens.
Solemnly down the street came the parish priest,
and the children
Paused in their play to kiss the hand he extended
to bless them.
Reverend walked he among them : and up rose
matrons and maidens,
Hailing his slow approach with words of affec-
tionate welcome.
Then came the laborers home from the field, and
serenely the sun sank
Down to his rest, and twilight prevailed. Anon from
the belfry

Softly the Angelus sounded, and over the roofs of
the village
Columns of pale blue smoke, like clouds of incense
ascending,
Rose from a hundred hearths, the homes of peace
and contentment.
Thus dwelt together in love these simple Acadian
farmers,—
Dwelt in the love of God and of man. Alike were
they free from
Fear, that reigns with the tyrant, and envy, the
voice of republics.
Neither locks had they to their doors, nor bars to
their windows ;
But their dwellings were open as day and the hearts
of the owners ;
There the richest was poor, and the poorest lived
in abundance.

Somewhat apart from the village, and nearer the
Basin of Minas,
Benedict Bellefontaine, the wealthiest farmer of
Grand-Pré,
Dwelt on his goodly acres ; and with him, directing
his household,
Gentle Evangeline lived, his child, and the pride of
the village.
Stalwart and stately in form was the man of seventy
winters ;
Hearty and hale was he, an oak that is covered
with snow-flakes ;
White as the snow were his locks, and his cheeks
as brown as the oak-leaves.

Fair was she to behold, that maiden of seventeen
summers.
Black were her eyes as the berry that grows on the
thorn by the way-side,
Black, yet how softly they gleamed beneath the
brown shade of her tresses !
Sweet was her breath as the breath of kine that feed
in the meadows.
When in the harvest heat she bore to the reapers
at noontime
Flagons of home-brewed ale, ah ! fair in sooth
was the maiden.
Fairer was she when, on Sunday morn, while the
bell from its turret
Sprinkled with holy sounds the air, as the priest
with his hyssop
Sprinkles the congregation, and scatters blessings
upon them,
Down the long street she passed, with her chaplet
of beads and her missal,
Wearing her Norman cap, and her kirtle of blue,
and the earrings,
Brought in the olden time from France, and since,
as an heirloom,
Handed down from mother to child, through long
generations.
But a celestial brightness — a more ethereal
beauty—
Shone on her face and encircled her form, when,
after confession,
Homeward serenely she walked with God's bene-
diction upon her.
When she had passed, it seemed like the ceasing of
exquisite music.

Firmly builded with rafters of oak, the house of the
farmer
Stood on the side of a hill commanding the sea ;
and a shady
Sycamore grew by the door, with a woodbine
wreathing around it.
Rudely carved was the porch, with seats beneath ;
and a footpath
Led through an orchard wide, and disappeared in
the meadow.
Under the sycamore-tree were hives overhung by a
penthouse,
Such as a traveller sees in regions remote by the
road-side,
Built o'er a box for the poor, or the blessed image
of Mary.
Farther down, on the slope of the hill, was the well
with its moss-grown
Bucket, fastened with iron, and near it a trough for
the horses.
Shielding the house from storms, on the north, were
the barn and the farm-yard.
There stood the broad-wheeled wains, and the
antique ploughs and the harrows ;
There were the folds for the sheep ; and there, in
his feathered seraglio,
Strutted the lordly turkey, and crowed the cock
with the self-same
Voice that in ages of old had startled the penitent
Peter.
Bursting with hay were the barns, themselves a
village. In each one
Far o'er the gable projected a roof of thatch ; and
a staircase

Under the sheltering eaves led up to the odorous
corn-loft.
There too the dove-cot stood, with its meek and
innocent inmates
Murmuring ever of love ; while above in the variant
breezes
Numberless noisy weathercocks rattled and sang of
mutation.

Thus, at peace with God and the world, the
farmer of Grand-Pré
Lived on his sunny farm, and Evangeline governed
his household.
Many a youth, as he knelt in church and opened
his missal,
Fixed his eyes upon her, as the saint of his deepest
devotion ;
Happy was he who might touch her hand or the
hem of her garment ;
Many a suitor came to her door, by the darkness
befriended,
And as he knocked, and waited to hear the sound
of her footsteps,
Knew not which beat the louder, his heart or the
knocker of iron ;
Or at the joyous feast of the Patron Saint of the
village,
Bolder grew, and pressed her hand in the dance as
he whispered
Hurried words of love, that seemed a part of the
music.
But, among all who came, young Gabriel only was
welcome ;

Gabriel Lajeunesse, the son of Basil the blacksmith,
Who was a mighty man in the village, and honored
of all men ;
For since the birth of time, throughout all ages and
nations,
Has the craft of the smith been held in repute by
the people.
Basil was Benedict's friend. Their children from
earliest childhood
Grew up together as brother and sister ; and Father
Felician,
Priest and pedagogue both in the village, had taught
them their letters
Out of the self-same book, with the hymns of the
church and the plain-song.
But when the hymn was sung, and the daily lesson
completed,
Swiftly they hurried away to the forge of Basil the
blacksmith.
There at the door they stood, with wondering eyes
to behold him
Take in his leathern lap the hoof of the horse as a
plaything,
Nailing the shoe in its place ; while near him the
tire of a cart-wheel
Lay like a fiery snake, coiled round in a circle of
cinders.
Oft on autumnal eves, when without in the gather-
ing darkness
Bursting with light seemed the smithy, through
every cranny and crevice,
Warm by the forge within they watched the labor-
ing bellows,

And as its panting ceased, and the sparks expired
 in the ashes,
Merrily laughed, and said they were nuns going
 into the chapel.
Oft on sledges in winter, as swift as the swoop of
 the eagle,
Down the hill-side bounding, they glided away o'er
 the meadow.
Oft in the barns they climbed to the populous nests
 on the rafters,
Seeking with eager eyes that wondrous stone, which
 the swallow
Brings from the shore of the sea to restore the
 sight of its fledglings ;
Lucky was he who found that stone in the nest of
 the swallow !
Thus passed a few swift years, and they no longer
 were children.
He was a valiant youth, and his face, like the face
 of the morning,
Gladdened the earth with its light, and ripened
 thought into action.
She was a woman now, with the heart and hopes of
 a woman.
"Sunshine of Saint Eulalie" was she called ; for
 that was the sunshine
Which, as the farmers believed, would load their
 orchards with apples ;
She, too, would bring to her husband's house
 delight and abundance,
Filling it full of love and the ruddy faces of children.

II.

NOW had the season returned, when the nights grow
colder and longer,
And the retreating sun the sign of the Scorpion
enters.
Birds of passage sailed through the leaden air, from
the ice-bound,
Desolate northern bays to the shores of tropical
islands.
Harvests were gathered in; and wild with the winds
of September
Wrestled the trees of the forest, as Jacob of old
with the angel.
All the signs foretold a winter long and inclement.
Bees, with prophetic instinct of want, had hoarded
their honey
Till the hives overflowed; and the Indian hunters
asserted
Cold would the winter be, for thick was the fur of
the foxes.
Such was the advent of autumn. Then followed
that beautiful season
Called by the pious Acadian peasants the summer
of All-Saints!
Filled was the air with a dreamy and magical light;
and the landscape
Lay as if new created in all the freshness of child-
hood.
Peace seemed to reign upon earth, and the restless
heart of the ocean
Was for a moment consoled. All sounds were in
harmony blended.

Voices of children at play, the crowing of cocks
in the farm-yards,
Whir of wings in the drowsy air, and the cooing of
pigeons,
All were subdued and low as the murmurs of love,
and the great sun
Looked with the eye of love through the golden
vapors around him ;
While arrayed in its robes of russet and scarlet and
yellow,
Bright with the sheen of the dew, each glittering
tree of the forest
Flashed like the plane-tree the Persian adorned
with mantles and jewels.

Now recommenced the reign of rest and affection
and stillness.
Day with its burden and heat had departed, and
twilight descending
Brought back the evening star to the sky, and the
herds to the homestead.
Pawing the ground they came, and resting their
necks on each other,
And with their nostrils distended inhaling the fresh-
ness of evening.
Foremost, bearing the bell, Evangeline's beautiful
heifer,
Proud of her snow-white hide, and the ribbon that
waved from her collar,
Quietly paced and slow, as if conscious of human
affection.
Then came the shepherd back with his bleating
flocks from the sea-side

Where was their favorite pasture. Behind them
followed the watch-dog,
Patient, full of importance, and grand in the pride
of his instinct,
Walking from side to side with a lordly air, and
superbly
Waving his bushy tail, and urging forward the
stragglers ;
Regent of flocks was he when the shepherd slept ;
their protector,
When from the forest at night, through the starry
silence, the wolves howled.
Late, with the rising moon, returned the wains from
the marshes,
Laden with briny hay, that filled the air with its
odor,
Cheerily neighed the steeds, with dew on their
manes and their fetlocks.
While aloft on their shoulders the wooden and
ponderous saddles,
Painted with brilliant dyes, and adorned with
tassels of crimson,
Nodded in bright array, like hollyhocks heavy with
blossoms.
Patiently stood the cows meanwhile, and yielded
their udders
Unto the milkmaid's hand ; whilst loud, and in
regular cadence,
Into the sounding pails the foaming streamlets
descended.
Lowing of cattle and peals of laughter were heard
in the farm-yard,
Echoed back by the barns. Anon they sank into
stillness ;

Heavily closed, with a jarring sound, the valves of
the barn-doors,
Rattled the wooden bars, and all for a season was
silent.

In-doors, warm by the wide-mouthed fire-place,
idly the farmer
Sat in his elbow-chair, and watched how the flames
and the smoke-wreaths
Struggled together like foes in a burning city.
Behind him,
Nodding and mocking along the wall, with gestures
fantastic,
Darted his own huge shadow, and vanished away
into darkness.
Faces, clumsily carved in oak, on the back of his
arm-chair
Laughed in the flickering light, and the pewter
plates on the dresser
Caught and reflected the flame, as shields of armies
the sunshine.
Fragments of song the old man sang, and carols
of Christmas,
Such as at home, in the olden time, his fathers
before him
Sang in their Norman orchards and bright Bur-
gundian vineyards.
Close at her father's side was the gentle Evangeline
seated,
Spinning flax for the loom, that stood in the corner
behind her.
Silent a while were its treadles, at rest was its dili-
gent shuttle,

While the monotonous drone of the wheel, like the
drone of a bagpipe,
Followed the old man's song, and united the frag-
ments together.
As in a church, when the chant of the choir at
intervals ceases,
Footfalls are heard in the aisles, or words of the
priest at the altar,
So, in each pause of the song, with measured
motion the clock clicked.

Thus as they sat, there were footsteps heard,
and, suddenly lifted,
Sounded the wooden latch, and the door swung
back on its hinges.
Benedict knew by the hob-nailed shoes it was Basil
the blacksmith,
And by her beating heart Evangeline knew who
was with him.
"Welcome!" the farmer exclaimed, as their foot-
steps paused on the threshold,
"Welcome, Basil, my friend! Come, take thy
place on the settle
Close by the chimney-side, which is always empty
without thee ;
Take from the shelf overhead thy pipe and the box
of tobacco ;
Never so much thyself art thou as when through
the curling
Smoke of the pipe or the forge thy friendly and
jovial face gleams
Round and red as the harvest moon through the
mist of the marshes."

Then, with a smile of content, thus answered Basil
the blacksmith,
Taking with easy air the accustomed seat by the
fire-side :—
“ Benedict Bellefontaine, thou hast ever thy jest
and thy ballad !
Ever in cheerfulest mood art thou, when others
are filled with
Gloomy forebodings of ill, and see only ruin before
them.
Happy art thou, as if every day thou hadst picked
up a horseshoe.”
Pausing a moment to take the pipe Evangeline
brought him,
And with a coal from the embers had lighted, he
slowly continued :—
“ Four days now are passed since the English
ships at their anchors
Ride in the Gaspereau’s mouth, with their cannon
pointed against us.
What their design may be is unknown ; but all are
commanded
On the morrow to meet in the church, where his
Majesty’s mandate
Will be proclaimed as law in the land. Alas ! in
the meantime
Many surmises of evil alarm the hearts of the
people.”
Then made answer the farmer :—“ Perhaps some
friendlier purpose
Brings these ships to our shores. Perhaps the
harvest in England
By the untimely rains or untimelier heat have been
blighted,

And from our bursting barns they would feed their
cattle and children."

"Not so thinketh the folk in the village," said,
warmly, the blacksmith,
Shaking his head, as in doubt; then, heaving a
sigh, he continued:—

"Louisburg is not forgotten, nor Beau Séjour, nor
Port Royal.

Many already have fled to the forest, and lurk on
its outskirts,

Waiting with anxious hearts the dubious fate of
to-morrow.

Arms have been taken from us, and warlike wea-
pons of all kinds;

Nothing is left but the blacksmith's sledge and the
scythe of the mower."

Then with a pleasant smile made answer the jovial
farmer:—

"Safer are we unarmed, in the midst of our flocks
and our cornfields,

Safer within these peaceful dykes, besieged by the
ocean,

Than were our fathers in forts, besieged by the
enemy's cannon.

Fear no evil, my friend, and to-night may no
shadow of sorrow

Fall on this house and hearth; for this is the night
of the contract.

Built are the house and the barn. The merry lads
of the village

Strongly have built them and well; and, breaking
the glebe round about them,

Filled the barn with hay, and the house with food
for a twelvemonth.

René Leblanc will be here anon, with his papers
and inkhorn.

Shall we not then be glad, and rejoice in the joy
of our children?"



As apart by the window she stood, with her hand
in her lover's,

Blushing Evangeline heard the words that her
father had spoken,
And as they died on his lips the worthy notary
entered.

III.

BENT like a laboring oar, that toils in the surf of
the ocean,
Bent but not broken, by age was the form of the
notary public ;
Shocks of yellow hairs, like the silken floss of the
maize, hung
Over his shoulders ; his forehead was high ; and
glasses with horn bows
Sat astride on his nose, with a look of wisdom su-
pernal.
Father of twenty children was he, and more than a
hundred
Children's children rode on his knee, and heard his
great watch tick.
Four long years in the times of the war had he
languished a captive,
Suffering much in an old French fort as the friend
of the English.
Now, though warier grown, without all guile or
suspicion,
Ripe in wisdom was he, but patient, and simple,
and childlike.
He was beloved by all, and most of all by the
children ;
For he told them tales of the Loup-garou in the
forest,

And of the goblin that came in the night to water
the horses,
And of the white Létiche, the ghost of a child who
unchristened
Died, and was doomed to haunt unseen the
chambers of children ;
And how on Christmas eve the oxen talked in the
stable,
And how the fever was cured by a spider shut up
in a nutshell,
And of the marvellous powers of four-leaved clover
and horseshoes,
With whatsoever else was writ in the lore of the
village.
Then up rose from his seat by the fireside Basil the
blacksmith,
Knocked from his pipe the ashes, and slowly
extending his right hand,
“ Father Leblanc,” he exclaimed, “ thou hast heard
the talk in the village,
And, perchance, canst tell us some news of these
ships and their errand.”
Then with modest demeanor made answer the
notary public,—
“ Gossip enough have I heard, in sooth, yet am
never the wiser ;
And what their errand may be I know not better
than others.
Yet am I not of those who imagine some evil in-
tention
Brings them here, for we are at peace ; and why
then molest us ?”
“ God’s name !” shouted the hasty and somewhat
irascible blacksmith ;

“Must we in all things look for the how, and the why, and the wherefore
Daily injustice is done, and might is the right of the strongest?”

But, without heeding his warmth, continued the notary public,—

“Man is unjust, but God is just; and finally justice Triumphs; and well I remember a story, that often consoled me,

When as a captive I lay in the old French fort at Port Royal.”

This was the old man’s favorite tale, and he loved to repeat it

When his neighbors complained that any injustice was done them.

“Once in an ancient city, whose name I no longer remember,

Raised aloft on a column, a brazen statue of Justice Stood in the public square, upholding the scales in its left hand,

And in its right a sword, as an emblem that justice presided

Over the laws of the land, and the hearts and homes of the people.

Even the birds had built their nests in the scales of the balance,

Having no fear of the sword that flashed in the sunshine above them.

But in the course of time the laws of the land were corrupted;

Might took the place of right, and the weak were oppressed, and the mighty

Ruled with an iron rod. Then it chanced in a nobleman’s palace

That a necklace of pearls was lost, and ere long a
suspicion
Fell on an orphan girl who lived as maid in the
household.
She, after form of trial condemned to die on the
scaffold,
Patiently met her doom at the foot of the statue of
Justice.
As to her Father in heaven her innocent spirit
ascended,
Lo ! o'er the city a tempest arose ; and the bolts of
the thunder
Smote the statue of bronze, and hurled in wrath
from its left hand
Down on the pavement below the clattering scales
of the balance,
And in the hollow thereof was found the nest of a
magpie,
Into whose clay-built walls the necklace of pearls
was inwoven.”
Silenced, but not convinced, when the story was
ended, the blacksmith
Stood like a man who fain would speak, but findeth
no language ;
All his thoughts were congealed into lines on his
face, as the vapors
Freeze in fantastic shapes on the window-panes in
the winter.

Then Evangeline lighted the brazen lamp on the
table,
Filled, till it overflowed, the pewter tankard with
home-brewed

Nut-brown ale, that was famed for its strength in
the village of Grand-Pré ;
While from his pocket the notary drew his papers
and inkhorn,
Wrote with a steady hand the date and the age of
the parties,
Naming the dower of the bride in flocks of sheep
and in cattle.
Orderly all things proceeded, and duly and well
were completed,
And the great seal of the law was set like a sun on
the margin.
Then from his leathern pouch the farmer threw on
the table
Three times the old man's fee in solid pieces of
silver ;
And the notary rising, and blessing the bride and
the bridegroom,
Lifted aloft the tankard of ale and drank to their
welfare.
Wiping the foam from his lip, he solemnly bowed
and departed,
While in silence the others sat and mused by the
fireside,
Till Evangeline brought the draught-board out of
its corner.
Soon was the game begun. In friendly contention
the old men
Laughed at each lucky hit, or unsuccessful
manœuvre,
Laughed when a man was crowned, or a breach
was made in the king-row.
Meanwhile apart, in the twilight gloom of a
window's embrasure,

Sat the lovers, and whispered together, beholding
the moon rise
Over the pallid sea and the silvery mist of the
meadows.
Silently one by one, in the infinite meadows of
heaven,
Blossomed the lovely stars, the forget-me-nots of
the angels.

Thus passed the evening away. Anon the bell
from the belfry
Rang out the hour of nine, the village curfew, and
straightway
Rose the guests and departed ; and silence reigned
in the household.
Many a farewell word and sweet good-night on the
door-step
Lingered long in Evangeline's heart, and filled it
with gladness.
Carefully then were covered the embers that
glowed on the hearth-stone,
And on the oaken stairs resounded the tread of the
farmer.
Soon with a soundless step the foot of Evangeline
followed.
Up the staircase moved a luminous space in the
darkness,
Lighted less by the lamp than the shining face of
the maiden.
Silent she passed through the hall, and entered the
door of her chamber.
Simple that chamber was, with its curtains of
white, and its clothes-press

Ample and high, on whose spacious shelves were
carefully folded
Linen and woollen stuffs, by the hand of Evan-
geline woven.
This was the precious dower she would bring to
her husband in marriage,
Better than flocks and herds, being proofs of her
skill as a housewife.
Soon she extinguished her lamp, for the mellow
and radiant moonlight
Streamed through the windows, and lighted the
room, till the heart of the maiden
Swelled and obeyed its power, like the tremulous
tides of the ocean.
Ah ! she was fair, exceeding fair to behold, as she
stood with
Naked snow-white feet on the gleaming floor of her
chamber !
Little she dreamed that below, among the trees of
the orchard,
Waited her lover and watched for the gleam of her
lamp and her shadow.
Yet were her thoughts of him, and at times a
feeling of sadness
Passed o'er her soul, as the sailing shade of clouds
in the moonlight
Flitted across the floor and darkened the room for
a moment.
And as she gazed from the window she saw
serenely the moon pass
Forth from the folds of a cloud, and one star follow
her footsteps,
As out of Abraham's tent young Ishmael wandered
with Hagar !

IV.

PLEASANTLY rose next morn the sun on the village
of Grand-Pré.
Pleasantly gleamed in the soft, sweet air the Basin
of Minas,
Where the ships, with their wavering shadows,
were riding at anchor.
Life had long been astir in the village, and
clamorous labor
Knocked with its hundred hands at the golden
gates of the morning.
Now from the country around, from the farms and
the neighbouring hamlets,
Came in their holiday dresses the blithe Acadian
peasants.
Many a glad good-morrow and jocund laugh from
the young folk
Made the bright air brighter, as up from the
numerous meadows,
Where no path could be seen but the track of
wheels in the greensward,
Group after group appeared, and joined, or passed
on the highway.
Long ere noon, in the village all sounds of labor
were silenced.
Thronged were the streets with people ; and noisy
groups at the house-doors
Sat in the cheerful sun, and rejoiced and gossiped
together.
Every house was an inn, where all were welcomed
and feasted ;
For with this simple people, who lived like brothers
together,

All things were held in common, and what one had
was another's.
Yet under Benedict's roof hospitality seemed more
abundant :
For Evangeline stood among the guests of her
father ;
Bright was her face with smiles, and words of
welcome and gladness
Fell from her beautiful lips, and blessed the cup as
she gave it.

Under the open sky, in the odorous air of the
orchard,
Bending with golden fruit, was spread the feast of
betrothal.
There in the shade of the porch were the priest and
the notary seated ;
There good Benedict sat, and sturdy Basil the
blacksmith.
Not far withdrawn from these, by the cider-press
and the beehives,
Michael the fiddler was placed, with the gayest of
hearts and of waistcoats.
Shadow and light from the leaves alternately
played on his snow-white
Hair, as it waved in the wind ; and the jolly face of
the fiddler
Glowed like a living coal when the ashes are blown
from the embers.
Gaily the old man sang to the vibrant sound of his
fiddle,
Tous les Bourgeois de Chartres, and *Le Carillon de
Dunkerque*,

And anon with his wooden shoes beat time to the music.
Merrily, merrily whirled the wheels of the dizzying dances
Under the orchard-trees and down the path to the meadows ;



Old folk and young together, and children mingled among them.
Fairest of all the maids was Evangeline, Benedict's daughter !

Noblest of all the youths was Gabriel, son of the
blacksmith !

So passed the morning away. And lo ! with a
summons sonorous,
Sounded the bell from its tower, and over the
meadows a drum beat.
Thronged ere long was the church with men.
Without, in the churchyard,
Waited the women. They stood by the graves, and
hung on the head-stones
Garlands of autumn leaves and evergreens fresh
from the forest.
Then came the guard from the ships, and marching
proudly among them
Entered the sacred portal. With loud and dis-
sonant clangor
Echoed the sound of their brazen drums from
ceiling and casement,—
Echoed a moment only, and slowly the ponderous
portal
Closed, and in silence the crowd awaited the will of
the soldiers.
Then uprose their commander, and spake from the
steps of the altar,
Holding aloft in his hands, with its seals, the royal
commission.
“You are convened this day,” he said, by his
Majesty’s orders.
Clement and kind has he been ; but how you have
answered his kindness,
Let your own hearts reply ! To my natural make
and my temper

Painful the task is I do which to you I know must
 be grievous.
Yet must I bow and obey, and deliver the will of
 our monarch ;
Namely, that all your lands, and dwellings, and
 cattle of all kinds,
Forfeited be to the crown ; and that you yourselves
 from this province
Be transported to other lands. God grant you may
 dwell there
Ever as faithful subjects, a happy and peaceable
 people !
Prisoners now I declare you ; for such is his
 Majesty's pleasure !”
As, when the air is serene in the sultry solstice of
 summer,
Suddenly gathers a storm, and the deadly sling of
 the hailstones
Beats down the farmer's corn in the field and
 shatters his windows,
Hiding the sun, and strewing the ground with
 thatch from the house-roofs,
Bellowing fly the herds, and seek to break their
 enclosures ;
So on the hearts of the people descended the words
 of the speaker.
Silent a moment they stood in speechless wonder,
 and then rose
Louder and ever louder a wail of sorrow and
 anger,
And, by one impulse moved, they madly rushed to
 the doorway.
Vain was the hope of escape ; and cries and fierce
 imprecations

Rang through the house of prayer ; and high o'er
the heads of the others
Rose, with his arms uplifted, the figure of Basil the
blacksmith,
As, on a stormy sea, a spar is tossed by the billows.
Flushed was his face and distorted with passion ;
and wildly he shouted,—
“ Down with the tyrants of England ! we never
have sworn them allegiance !
Death to these foreign soldiers, who seize on our
homes and our harvests ! ”
More he fain would have said, but the merciless
hand of a soldier
Smote him upon the mouth, and dragged him down
to the pavement.

In the midst of the strife and tumult of angry
contention,
Lo ! the door of the chancel opened, and Father
Felician
Entered, with serious mien, and ascended the
steps of the altar.
Raising his reverend hand, with a gesture he awed
into silence
All that clamorous throng ; and thus he spake to
his people.
Deep were his tones and solemn ; in accents
measured and mournful
Spake he, as, after the tocsin's alarum, distinctly
the clock strikes.
“ What is this that ye do, my children ? what
madness has seized you ?
Forty years of my life have I labored among you,
and taught you,

Not in word alone, but in deed, to love one another !
Is this the fruit of my toils, of my vigils and
prayers and privations ?
Have you so soon forgotten all lessons of love and
forgiveness ?
This is the house of the Prince of Peace, and
would you profane it
Thus with violent deeds and hearts overflowing
with hatred ?
Lo ! where the crucified Christ from His cross is
gazing upon you !
See ! in those sorrowful eyes what meekness and
holy compassion !
Hark ! how those lips still repeat the prayer, ' O
Father, forgive them !'
Let us repeat that prayer in the hour when the
wicked assail us,
Let us repeat it now, and say, ' O Father, forgive
them !' "

Few were his words of rebuke, but deep in the
hearts of his people
Sank they, and sobs of contrition succeeded that
passionate outbreak ;
And they repeated his prayer, and said, " O Father,
forgive them ! "

Then came the evening service. The tapers
gleamed from the altar.
Fervent and deep was the voice of the priest, and
the people responded,
Not with their lips alone, but their hearts ; and the
Ave Maria
Sang they, and fell on their knees, and their souls,
with devotion translated,

Rose on the ardor of prayer, like Elijah ascending
to heaven.

Meanwhile had spread in the village the tidings
of ill, and on all sides
Wandered, wailing, from house to house the women
and children.
Long at her father's door *Evangeline* stood, with
her right hand
Shielding her eyes from the level rays of the sun,
that, descending,
Lighted the village street with mysterious splendor,
and roofed each
Peasant's cottage with golden thatch, and em-
blazoned its windows.
Long within had been spread the snow-white cloth
on the table ;
There stood the wheaten loaf, and the honey
fragrant with wild flowers !
There stood the tankard of ale, and the cheese
fresh brought from the dairy ;
And at the head of the board the great arm-chair
of the farmer.
Thus did *Evangeline* wait at her father's door, as
the sunset
Threw the long shadows of trees o'er the broad
ambrosial meadows.
Ah ! on her spirit within a deeper shadow had fallen,
And from the fields of her soul a fragrance celestial
ascended,—
Charity, meekness, love, and hope, and forgiveness,
and patience !
Then, all forgetful of self, she wandered into the
village,

Cheering with looks and words the disconsolate
 hearts of the women,
As o'er the darkening fields with lingering steps
 they departed,
Urged by their household cares, and the weary feet
 of their children.
Down sank the great red sun, and in golden,
 glimmering vapors
Veiled the light of his face, like the Prophet
 descending from Sinai.
Sweetly over the village the bell of the Angelus
 sounded.

 Meanwhile, amid the gloom, by the church
 Evangeline lingered.
All was silent within ; and in vain at the door and
 the windows
Stood she, and listened and looked, until, overcome
 by emotion,
“Gabriel !” cried she aloud with tremulous voice ;
 but no answer
Came from the graves of the dead ; nor the
 gloomier grave of the living.
Slowly at length she returned to the tenantless
 house of her father.
Smouldered the fire on the hearth, on the board
 stood the supper untasted,
Empty and drear was each room, and haunted
 with phantoms of terror.
Sadly echoed her step on the stair and the floor of
 her chamber.
In the dead of the night she heard the whispering
 rain fall

Loud on the withered leaves of the sycamore-tree
by the window.
Keenly the lightning flashed ; and the voice of the
echoing thunder
Told her that God was in heaven, and governed
the world He created !
Then she remembered the tale she had heard of
the justice of heaven ;
Soothed was her troubled soul, and she peacefully
slumbered till morning.

V.

FOUR times the sun had risen and set ; and now on
the fifth day
Cheerily called the cock to the sleeping maids of
the farm-house.
Soon o'er the yellow fields, in silent and mournful
procession,
Came from the neighbouring hamlets and farms the
Acadian women,
Driving in ponderous wains their household goods
to the sea-shore,
Pausing and looking back to gaze once more on
their dwellings
Ere they were shut from sight by the winding road
and the woodland.
Close at their sides their children ran, and urged on
their oxen,
While in their little hands they clasped some frag-
ments of playthings.

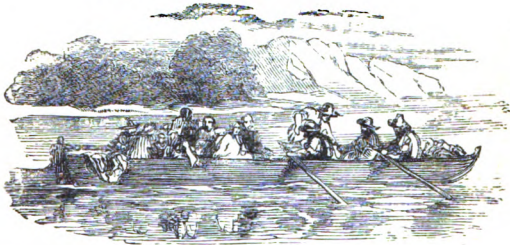
Thus to the Gaspereau's mouth they hurried ;
and there on the sea-beach

Piled in confusion lay the household goods of the
peasants.
All day long between the shore and the ships did
the boats ply ;
All day long the wains came laboring down from
the village.
Late in the afternoon, when the sun was near to
his setting,
Echoing far o'er the fields came the roll of drums
from the churchyard.
Thither the women and children thronged. On a
sudden the church-doors
Opened, and forth came the guard, and marching
in gloomy procession
Followed the long imprisoned, but patient, Acadian
farmers.
Even as pilgrims, who journey afar from their
homes and their country,
Sing as they go, and in singing forget they are
weary and way-worn,
So with songs on their lips the Acadian peasants
descended
Down from the church to the shore, amid their
wives and their daughters.
Foremost the young men came ; and, raising to-
gether their voices,
Sang they with tremulous lips a chant of the
Catholic Missions :—
“ Sacred heart of the Saviour ! O inexhaustible
fountain !
Fill our hearts this day with strength and submis-
sion and patience ! ”
Then the old men, as they marched, and the women
that stood by the way-side,

Joined in the sacred psalm, and the birds in the
sunshine above them
Mingled their notes therewith, like voices of spirits
departed.

Half-way down to the shore Evangeline waited
in silence,
Not overcome with grief, but strong in the hour of
affliction,—
Calmly and sadly waited, until the procession
approached her.
And she beheld the face of Gabriel pale with emotion.
Tears then filled her eyes, and, eagerly running to
meet him,
Clasped she his hands, and laid her head on his
shoulder, and whispered,—
“ Gabriel ! be of good cheer ! for if we love one
another,
Nothing, in truth, can harm us, whatever mis-
chances may happen ! ”
Smiling she spake these words ; then suddenly
paused, for her father
Saw she slowly advancing. Alas ! how changed
was his aspect !
Gone was the glow from his cheek, and the fire
from his eye, and his footstep
Heavier seemed with the weight of the weary heart
in his bosom.
But with a smile and a sigh, she clasped his neck
and embraced him,
Speaking words of endearment where words of
comfort availed not.
Thus to the Gaspereau’s mouth moved on that
mournful procession.

There disorder prevailed, and the tumult and stir
of embarking.
Busily plied the freighted boats; and in the
confusion
Wives were torn from their husbands, and mothers,
too late, saw their children
Left on the land, extending their arms, with wildest
entreaties.
So unto separate ships were Basil and Gabriel carried,
While in despair on the shore Evangeline stood
with her father.



Half the task was not done, when the sun went
down, and the twilight
Deepened and darkened around; and in haste the
refluent ocean
Fled away from the shore, and left the line of the
sand-beach
Covered with waifs of the tide, with kelp and the
slippery sea-weed.
Farther back in the midst of the household goods
and the wagons,
Like to a gipsy camp, or a leaguer after a battle,

All escape cut off by the sea, and the sentinels near
them,
Lay encamped for the night the houseless Acadian
farmers.
Back to its nethermost caves retreated the bellow-
ing ocean,
Dragging adown the beach the rattling pebbles,
and leaving
Inland and far up the shore the stranded boats of
the sailors.
Then, as the night descended, the herds returned
from their pastures ;
Sweet was the moist still air with the odor of milk
from their udders ;
Lowing they waited, and long, at the well-known
bars of the farm-yard,—
Waited and looked in vain for the voice and the
hand of the milkmaid.
Silence reigned in the streets ; from the church no
Angelus sounded,
Rose no smoke from the roofs, and gleamed no
lights from the windows.

But on the shore meanwhile the evening fires had
been kindled,
Built of the drift-wood thrown on the sands from
wrecks in the tempest.
Round them shapes of gloom and sorrowful faces
were gathered,
Voices of women were heard, and of men, and the
crying of children.
Onward from fire to fire, as from hearth to hearth
in his parish,

Wandered the faithful priest, consoling and blessing
and cheering,
Like unto shipwrecked Paul on Melita's desolate
sea-shore.

Thus he approached the place where Evangeline
sat with her father,
And in the flickering light beheld the face of the
old man,

Haggard and hollow and wan, and without either
thought or emotion,
E'en as the face of a clock from which the hands
have been taken.

Vainly Evangeline strove with words and caresses
to cheer him,
Vainly offered him food ; yet he moved not, he
looked not, he spake not.



But, with a vacant stare, ever gazed at the flickering
fire-light.
“*Benedicite!*” murmured the priest, in tones of
compassion.

More he fain would have said, but his heart was
full, and his accents
Faltered and paused on his lips, as the feet of a
child on the threshold,
Hushed by the scene he beholds, and the awful
presence of sorrow.
Silently, therefore, he laid his hand on the head of
the maiden,
Raising his eyes, full of tears, to the silent stars
that above them
Moved on their way, unperturbed by the wrongs
and sorrows of mortals.
Then sat he down at her side, and they wept to-
gether in silence.

Suddenly rose from the south a light, as in autumn
the blood-red
Moon climbs the crystal walls of heaven, and o'er
the horizon
Titan-like stretches its hundred hands upon moun-
tain and meadow,
Seizing the rocks and the rivers, and piling huge
shadows together.
Broader and ever broader it gleamed on the roofs
of the village,
Gleamed on the sky and the sea, and the ships
that lay in the roadstead.
Columns of shining smoke uprose, and flashes of
flame were
Thrust through their folds and withdrawn, like the
quivering hands of a martyr.
Then as the winds seized the gleeds and the burn-
ing thatch, and, uplifting,

Whirled them aloft through the air, at once from a
hundred house-tops
Started the sheeted smoke with flashes of flame
intermingled.

These things beheld in dismay the crowd on the
shore and on shipboard.
Speechless at first they stood, then cried aloud in
their anguish,
“We shall behold no more our homes in the village
of Grand-Pré !”
Loud on a sudden the cocks began to crow in the
farm-yards,
Thinking the day had dawned ; and anon the low-
ing of cattle
Came on the evening breeze, by the barking of dogs
interrupted.
Then rose a sound of dread, such as startles the
sleeping encampments
Far in the western prairies or forests that skirt the
Nebraska,
When the wild horses affrighted sweep by with the
speed of the whirlwind,
Or the loud bellowing herds of buffaloes rush to the
river.
Such was the sound that arose on the night, as the
herds and the horses
Broke through their folds and fences, and madly
rushed o’er the meadows.

Overwhelmed with the sight, yet speechless, the
priest and the maiden
Gazed on the scene of terror that reddened and
widened before them ;

And as they turned at length to speak to their silent
companion,
Lo ! from his seat he had fallen, and stretched
abroad on the sea-shore
Motionless lay his form, from which the soul had
departed.
Slowly the priest uplifted the lifeless head, and the
maiden
Knelt at her father's side, and wailed aloud in
her terror.
Then in a swoon she sank, and lay with her head
on his bosom.
Through the long night she lay in deep, oblivious
slumber ;
And when she woke from the trance, she beheld a
multitude near her.
Faces of friends she beheld, that were mournfully
gazing upon her,
Pallid, with tearful eyes, and looks of saddest com-
passion.
Still the blaze of the burning village illumined the
landscape,
Reddened the sky overhead, and gleamed on the
faces around her,
And like the day of doom it seemed to her waver-
ing senses.
Then a familiar voice she heard, as it said to the
people,—
“ Let us bury him here by the sea. When a happier
season
Brings us again to our homes from the unknown
land of our exile,
Then shall his sacred dust be piously laid in the
churchyard.”

Such were the words of the priest. And there in
haste by the sea-side,
Having the glare of the burning village for funeral
torches,
But without bell or book, they buried the farmer of
Grand-Pré.
And as the voice of the priest repeated the service
of sorrow,
Lo ! with a mournful sound, like the voice of a vast
congregation,
Solemnly answered the sea, and mingled its roar
with the dirges.
'Twas the returning tide, that afar from the waste
of the ocean,
With the first dawn of the day, came heaving and
hurrying landward.
Then recommenced once more the stir and noise
of embarking ;
And with the ebb of that tide the ships sailed out
of the harbor,
Leaving behind them the dead on the shore, and
the village in ruins.





PART THE SECOND.

I.

MANY a weary year had passed since the
burning of Grand-Pré,
When on the falling tide the freighted vessels de-
parted,
Bearing a nation, with all its household gods, into
exile,
Exile without an end, and without an example in
story.
Far asunder, on separate coasts, the Acadians
landed ;
Scattered were they, like flakes of snow, when the
wind from the north-east
Strikes aslant through the fogs that darken the
Banks of Newfoundland.
Friendless, homeless, hopeless, they wandered from
city to city,
From the cold lakes of the North to sultry Southern
savannas,—
From the bleak shores of the sea to the lands where
the Father of Waters
Seizes the hills in his hands, and drags them down
to the ocean,
Deep in their sands to bury the scattered bones of
the mammoth.
Friends they sought and homes ; and many, de-
spairing, heart-broken,

Asked of the earth but a grave, and no longer a
friend nor a fireside.
Written their history stands on tablets of stone in
the churchyards.
Long among them was seen a maiden who waited
and wandered,
Lowly and meek in spirit, and patiently suffering
all things.
Fair was she and young ; but, alas ! before her
extended,
Dreary and vast and silent, the desert of life, with
its pathway
Marked by the graves of those who had sorrowed
and suffered before her,
Passions long extinguished, and hopes long dead
and abandoned,
As the emigrant's way o'er the Western desert is
marked by
Camp-fires long consumed, and bones that bleach
in the sunshine.
Something there was in her life incomplete, im-
perfect, unfinished ;
As if a morning of June, with all its music and
sunshine,
Suddenly paused in the sky, and, fading, slowly
descended
Into the East again, from whence it late had
arisen.
Sometimes she lingered in towns, till, urged by the
fever within her,
Urged by a restless longing, the hunger and thirst
of the spirit,
She would commence again her endless search and
endeavour ;

Sometimes in church-yards strayed, and gazed on
 the crosses and tombstones,
 Sat by some nameless grave, and thought that
 perhaps in its bosom

He was already at rest ; and she longed to slumber
 beside him.

Sometimes a rumor, a hearsay, an inarticulate
 whisper,

Came with its airy hand to point and beckon her
 forward.

Sometimes she spake with those who had seen her
 beloved and known him,

But it was long ago, in some far-off place or for-
 gotten.

“ Gabriel Lajeunesse ! ” said others ; “ O, yes ! we
 have seen him.

He was with Basil the blacksmith, and both have
 gone to the prairies ;

Coueurs-des-Bois are they, and famous hunters
 and trappers.”

“ Gabriel Lajeunesse ! ” said others ; “ O, yes ! we
 have seen him.

He is a *Voyageur* in the lowlands of Louis-
 iana.”

Then would they say,—“ Dear child ! why dream
 and wait for him longer ?

Are there not other youths as fair as Gabriel ?
 others

Who have hearts as tender and true, and spirits as
 loyal ?

Here is Baptiste Leblanc, the notary’s son, who has
 loved thee

Many a tedious year ; come, give him thy hand and
 be happy !

Thou art too fair to be left to braid St. Catherine's tresses."

Then would Evangeline answer, serenely but sadly,
"I cannot !

Whither my heart has gone, there follows my hand,
and not elsewhere.

For when the heart goes before, like a lamp, and
illuminates the pathway,

Many things are made clear that else lie hidden in
darkness."

And thereupon the priest, her friend and father-
confessor,

Said, with a smile, "O daughter ! thy God thus
speaketh within thee !

Talk not of wasted affection, affection never was
wasted ;

If it enrich not the heart of another, its waters,
returning

Back to their spring, like the rain, shall fill them
full of refreshment ;

That which the fountain sends forth returns again
to the fountain.

Patience ; accomplish thy labor ; accomplish thy
work of affection !

Sorrow and silence are strong, and patient en-
durance is godlike,

Therefore accomplish thy labor of love, till the
heart is made godlike

Purified, strengthened, perfected, and rendered
more worthy of heaven !"

Cheered by the good man's words, Evangeline
labored and waited.

Still in her heart she heard the funeral dirge of the
ocean,

But with its sound there was mingled a voice that
whispered, "Despair not!"
Thus did that poor soul wander in want and cheer-
less discomfort,
Bleeding, barefooted, over the shards and thorns of
existence.
Let me essay, O Muse! to follow the wanderer's
footsteps;—
Not through each devious path, each changeful
year of existence;
But as a traveller follows a streamlet's course
through the valley:
Far from its margin at times, and seeing the gleam
of its water
Here and there, in some open space, and at inter-
vals only;
Then drawing nearer its banks, through sylvan
glooms that conceal it,
Though he behold it not, he can hear its continuous
murmur;
Happy, at length, if he find the spot where it reaches
an outlet.

II.

IT was the month of May. Far down the Beautiful
River,
Past the Ohio shore and past the mouth of the
Wabash,
Into the golden stream of the broad and swift
Mississippi,
Floated a cumbrous boat, that was rowed by
Acadian boatmen.

It was a band of exiles : a raft, as it were, from the
shipwrecked
Nation, scattered along the coast, now floating
together,
Bound by the bonds of a common belief, and a
common misfortune ;
Men and women and children, who, guided by
hope or by hearsay,
Sought for their kith and their kin among the few-
acred farmers
On the Acadian coast, and the prairies of fair
Opelousas.
With them Evangeline went, and her guide, the
Father Felician.
Onward o'er sunken sands, through a wilderness
sombre with forests,
Day after day they glided adown the turbulent
river ;
Night after night, by their blazing fires, encamped
on its borders.
Now through rushing chutes, among green islands,
where plumelike
Cotton-trees nodded their shadowy crests, they
swept with the current,
Then emerged into broad lagoons, where silvery
sand-bars
Lay in the stream, and along the wimpling waves
of their margin,
Shining with snow-white plumes, large flocks of
pelicans waded.
Level the landscape grew, and along the shores of
the river,
Shaded by china-trees, in the midst of luxuriant
gardens,

Stood the houses of planters, with negro-cabins and
dove-cots.

They were approaching the region where reigns
perpetual summer,

Where through the Golden Coast, and groves of
orange and citron,

Sweeps with majestic curve the river away to the
eastward.

They, too, swerved from their course ; and, entering
the Bayou of Plaquemine,

Soon were lost in a maze of sluggish and devious
waters,

Which, like a network of steel, extended in every
direction.

Over their heads the towering and tenebrous boughs
of the cypress

Met in a dusky arch, and trailing mosses in mid-
air

Waved like banners that hang on the walls of
ancient cathedrals.

Deathlike the silence seemed, and unbroken, save
by the herons

Home to their roosts in the cedar-trees returning at
sunset,

Or by the owl, as he greeted the moon with de-
moniac laughter.

Lovely the moonlight was at it glanced and gleamed
on the water,

Gleamed on the columns of cypress and cedar
sustaining the arches,

Down through whose broken vaults it fell as through
chinks in a ruin.

Dreamlike, and indistinct, and strange were all
things around them ;

And o'er their spirits there came a feeling of wonder
and sadness,—
Strange forebodings of ill, unseen and that cannot
be compassed.
As, at the tramp of a horse's hoof on the turf of the
prairies,
Far in advance are closed the leaves of the shrinking
mimosa,
So, at the hoof-beats of fate, with sad forebodings
of evil,
Shrinks and closes the heart, ere the stroke of doom
has attained it.
But Evangeline's heart was sustained by a vision,
that faintly
Floated before her eyes, and beckoned her on
through the moonlight.
It was the thought of her brain that assumed the
shape of a phantom.
Through the shadowy aisles had Gabriel wandered
before her,
And every stroke of the oar now brought him nearer
and nearer.

Then in his place, at the prow of the boat, rose
one of the oarsmen,
And, as a signal sound, if others like them per-
adventure
Sailed on those gloomy and midnight streams, blew
a blast on his bugle.
Wild through the dark colonnades and corridors
leafy the blast rang,
Breaking the seal of silence, and giving tongues to
the forest.

Soundless above them the banners of moss just
stirred to the music.
Multitudinous echoes awoke and died in the
distance,
Over the watery floor, and beneath the reverberant
branches ;
But not a voice replied ; no answer came from the
darkness ;
And when the echoes had ceased, like a sense of
pain was the silence.
Then *Evangeline* slept ; but the boatmen rowed
through the midnight,
Silent at times, then singing familiar Canadian
boat-songs,
Such as they sang of old on their own Acadian
rivers.
And through the night were heard the mysterious
sounds of the desert,
Far off, indistinct, as of wave or wind in the forest,
Mixed with the whoop of the crane and the roar of
the grim alligator.

Thus ere another noon they emerged from those
shades ; and before them
Lay, in the golden sun, the lakes of the Atchafalaya.
Water-lilies in myriads rocked on the slight un-
dulations
Made by the passing oars, and, resplendent in
beauty, the lotus
Lifted her golden crown above the heads of the
boatmen.
Faint was the air with the odorous breath of
magnolia blossoms,

And with the heat of noon ; and numberless sylvan
islands,
Fragrant and thickly embowered with blossoming
hedges of roses,
Near to whose shores they glided along, invited
to slumber.
Soon by the fairest of these their weary oars were
suspended.
Under the boughs of Wachita willows, that grew
by the margin,
Safely their boat was moored ; and scattered about
on the greensward,
Tired with their midnight toil, the weary travellers
slumbered.
Over them vast and high extended the cope of a
cedar.
Swinging from its great arms, the trumpet-flower
and the grape-vine
Hung their ladder of ropes aloft like the ladder of
Jacob,
On whose pendulous stairs the angels ascending,
descending,
Were the swift humming-birds, that flitted from
blossom to blossom.
Such was the vision Evangeline saw as she slum-
bered beneath it.
Filled was her heart with love, and the dawn of an
opening heaven
Lighted her soul in sleep with the glory of regions
celestial.

Nearer and ever nearer, among the numberless
islands,

Darted a light, swift boat, that sped away o'er the
water,
Urged on its course by the sinewy arms of hunters
and trappers.
Northward its prow was turned, to the land of the
bison and beaver.
At the helm sat a youth, with countenance thoughtful
and careworn.
Dark and neglected locks overshadowed his brow,
and a sadness
Somewhat beyond his years on his face was legibly
written.
Gabriel was it, who, weary with waiting, unhappy
and restless,
Sought in the Western wilds oblivion of self and of
sorrow.
Swiftly they glided along, close under the lee of the
island,
But by the opposite bank, and behind a screen of
palmettos,
So that they saw not the boat, where it lay con-
cealed in the willows,
And undisturbed by the dash of their oars, and
unseen, were the sleepers ;
Angel of God was there none to awaken the
slumbering maiden.
Swiftly they glided away, like the shade of a cloud
on the prairie.
After the sound of their oars on the tholes had died
in the distance,
As from a magic trance the sleepers awoke, and
the maiden
Said with a sigh to the friendly priest,—“ O Father
Felician !

Something says in my heart that near me Gabriel
wanders.

Is it a foolish dream, an idle and vague superstition?

Or has an angel passed, and revealed the truth to
my spirit?"

Then, with a blush, she added,—“Alas for my
credulous fancy!

Unto ears like thine such words as these have no
meaning.”

But made answer the reverend man, and he smiled
as he answered,—

“Daughter, thy words are not idle; nor are they to
me without meaning.

Feeling is deep and still; and the word that floats
on the surface

Is as the tossing buoy, that betrays where the
anchor is hidden.

Therefore trust to thy heart, and to what the world
calls illusions.

Gabriel truly is near thee; for not far away to the
southward,

On the banks of the Têche, are the towns of St.
Maur and St. Martin.

There the long-wandering bride shall be given
again to her bridegroom,

There the long-absent pastor regain his flock and
his sheepfold.

Beautiful is the land, with its prairies and forests of
fruit-trees;

Under the feet a garden of flowers, and the bluest
of heavens

Bending above, and resting its dome on the walls
of the forest

They who dwell there have named it the Eden of Louisiana."

And with these words of cheer they arose and continued their journey.
Softly the evening came. The sun from the western horizon
Like a magician extended his golden wand o'er the landscape ;
Twinkling vapors arose ; and sky and water and forest
Seemed all on fire at the touch, and melted and mingled together.
Hanging between two skies, a cloud with edges of silver,
Floated the boat, with its dripping oars, on the motionless water.
Filled was Evangeline's heart with inexpressible sweetness.
Touched by the magic spell, the sacred fountains of feeling
Glowed with the light of love, as the skies and waters around her.
Then from a neighbouring thicket the mocking-bird, wildest of singers,
Swinging aloft on a willow spray that hung o'er the water,
Shook from his little throat such floods of delirious music,
That the whole air and the woods and the waves seemed silent to listen.
Plaintive at first were the tones and sad ; then soaring to madness

Seemed they to follow or guide the revel of frenzied
Bacchantes.
Single notes were then heard, in sorrowful, low
lamentation ;
Till, having gathered them all, he flung them
abroad in derision,
As when, after a storm, a gust of wind through the
tree-tops
Shakes down the rattling rain in a crystal shower
on the branches.
With such a prelude as this, and hearts that
throbbed with emotion,
Slowly they entered the Têche, where it flows
through the green Opelousas,
And through the amber air, above the crest of the
woodland,
Saw the column of smoke that arose from a neigh-
bouring dwelling ;—
Sounds of a horn they heard, and the distant
lowing of cattle.

III.

NEAR to the bank of the river, shadowed by oaks,
from whose branches
Garlands of Spanish moss and of mystic mistletoe
flaunted,
Such as the Druids cut down with golden hatchets
at Yule-tide,
Stood, secluded and still, the house of the herds-
man. A garden
Girded it round about with a belt of luxuriant
blossoms,

Filling the air with fragrance. The house itself
was of timbers
Hewn from the cypress-tree, and carefully fitted
together.
Large and low was the roof; and on slender
columns supported,
Rose-wreathed, vine-encircled, a broad and spacious
veranda,
Haunt of the humming-bird and the bee, extended
around it.
At each end of the house, amid the flowers of the
garden,
Stationed the dove-cots were, as love's perpetual
symbol,
Scenes of endless wooing, and endless contentions
of rivals.
Silence reigned o'er the place. The line of shadow
and sunshine
Ran near the tops of the trees; but the house
itself was in shadow,
And from its chimney-top, ascending and slowly
expanding
Into the evening air, a thin blue column of smoke
rose.
In the rear of the house, from the garden gate, ran
a pathway
Through the great groves of oak to the skirts of
the limitless prairie,
Into whose sea of flowers the sun was slowly
descending.
Full in his track of light, like ships with shadowy
canvas
Hanging loose from their spars in a motionless
calm in the tropics,

Stood a cluster of trees, with tangled cordage of
grape-vines.

Just where the woodlands met the flowery surf of
the prairie,
Mounted upon his horse, with Spanish saddle and
stirrups,
Sat a herdsman, arrayed in gaiters and doublet of
deerskin.
Broad and brown was the face that from under the
Spanish sombrero
Gazed on the peaceful scene, with the lordly look
of its master.
Round about him were numberless herds of kine,
that were grazing
Quietly in the meadows, and breathing the vapory
freshness
That uprose from the river, and spread itself over
the landscape.
Slowly lifting the horn that hung at his side, and
expanding
Fully his broad, deep chest, he blew a blast, that
resounded
Wildly and sweet and far, through the still damp
air of the evening.
Suddenly out of the grass the long white horns of
the cattle
Rose like flakes of foam on the adverse currents of
ocean.
Silent a moment they gazed, then bellowing rushed
o'er the prairie,
And the whole mass became a cloud, a shade in the
distance.

Then, as the herdsman turned to the house, through
the gate of the garden
Saw he the forms of the priest and the maiden
advancing to meet him.



Suddenly down from his horse he sprang in amazement, and forward
Rushed with extended arms and exclamations of wonder ;
When they beheld his face, they recognised Basil
the blacksmith.

Hearty his welcome was, as he led his guests to the
garden.
There in an arbor of roses with endless question
and answer
Gave they vent to their hearts, and renewed their
friendly embraces,
Laughing and weeping by turns, or sitting silent
and thoughtful.
Thoughtful, for Gabriel came not ; and now dark
doubts and misgivings
Stole o'er the maiden's heart ; and Basil, somewhat
embarrassed,
Broke the silence and said,—“ If you came by the
great Atchafalaya,
How have you nowhere encountered my Gabriel's
boat on the bayous ? ”
Over Evangeline's face at the words of Basil a
shade passed.
Tears came into her eyes, and she said, with a
tremulous accent,—
“ Gone ? is Gabriel gone ? ” and, concealing her
face on his shoulder,
All her o'erburdened heart gave way, and she wept
and lamented.
Then the good Basil said,—and his voice grew
blithe as he said it,—
“ Be of good cheer, my child ; it is only to-day he
departed.
Foolish boy ! he has left me alone with my herds
and my horses.
Moody and restless grown, and tried and troubled,
his spirit
Could no longer endure the calm of this quiet
existence.

Thinking ever of thee, uncertain and sorrowful
ever,
Ever silent, or speaking only of thee and his
troubles,
He at length had become so tedious to men and to
maidens,
Tedious even to me, that at length I bethought me,
and sent him
Unto the town of Adayes to trade for mules with
the Spaniards.
Thence he will follow the Indian trails to the Ozark
Mountains,
Hunting for furs in the forests, on rivers trapping
the beaver.
Therefore be of good cheer ; we will follow the
fugitive lover ;
He is not far on his way, and the Fates and the
streams are against him.
Up and away to-morrow, and through the red dew
of the morning
We will follow him fast, and bring him back to his
prison."

Then glad voices were heard, and up from the
banks of the river,
Borne aloft on his comrades' arms, came Michael
the fiddler.
Long under Basil's roof had he lived like a god on
Olympus,
Having no other care than dispensing music to
mortals.
Far renowned was he for his silver locks and his
fiddle.

“Long live Michael,” they cried, “our brave
Acadian minstrel !”

As they bore him aloft in triumphal procession ;
and straightway

Father Felician advanced with Evangeline, greeting
the old man

Kindly and oft, and recalling the past, while Basil,
enraptured,

Hailed with hilarious joy his old companions and
gossips,

Laughing loud and long, and embracing mothers
and daughters.

Much they marvelled to see the wealth of the ci-
devant blacksmith,

All his domains and his herds, and his patriarchal
demeanour ;

Much they marvelled to hear his tales of the soil
and the climate,

And of the prairies, whose numberless herds were
his who would take them ;

Each one thought in his heart, that he, too, would
go and do likewise.

Thus they ascended the steps, and, crossing the
airy veranda,

Entered the hall of the house, where already the
supper of Basil

Waited his late return ; and they rested and feasted
together.

Over the joyous feast the sudden darkness
descended.

All was silent without, and, illuming the landscape
with silver,

Fair rose the dewy moon and the myriad stars ;
but within doors,
Brighter than these, shone the faces of friends in
the glimmering lamplight.
Then from his station aloft, at the head of the
table, the herdsman
Poured forth his heart and his wine together in
endless profusion.
Lighting his pipe, that was filled with sweet
Natchitoches tobacco,
Thus he spake to his guests, who listened, and
smiled as they listened :—
“ Welcome once more, my friends, who so long
have been friendless and homeless,
Welcome once more to a home, that is better per-
chance than the old one !
Here no hungry winter congeals our blood like the
rivers ;
Here no stony ground provokes the wrath of the
farmer ;
Smoothly the ploughshare runs through the soil as
a keel through the water.
All the year round the orange-groves are in blossom ;
and grass grows
More in a single night than a whole Canadian
summer.
Here, too, numberless herds run wild and un-
claimed in the prairies ;
Here, too, lands may be had for the asking, and
forests of timber
With a few blows of the axe are hewn and framed
into houses.
After your houses are built, and your fields are
yellow with harvests,

No King George of England shall drive you away
from your homesteads,
Burning your dwellings and barns, and stealing
your farms and your cattle."

Speaking these words, he blew a wrathful cloud
from his nostrils,

And his huge brawny hand came thundering down
on the table,

So that the guests all started ; and Father Felician,
astounded,

Suddenly paused, with a pinch of snuff half-way to
his nostrils.

But the brave Basil resumed, and his words were
milder and gayer :

"Only beware of the fever, my friends, beware of
the fever !

For it is not like that of our cold Acadian
climate,

Cured by wearing a spider hung round one's neck
in a nutshell !"

Then there were voices heard at the door, and foot-
steps approaching

Sounded upon the stairs and the floor of the breezy
veranda.

It was the neighbouring Creoles and small Acadian
planters,

Who had been summoned all to the house of Basil
the herdsman.

Merry the meeting was of ancient comrades and
neighbours :

Friend clasped friend in his arms ; and they who
before were as strangers,

Meeting in exile, became straightway as friends to
each other,

Drawn by the gentle bond of a common country
together.
But in the neighbouring hall a strain of music,
proceeding
From the accordant strings of Michael's melodious
fiddle,
Broke up all further speech. Away, like children
delighted,
All things forgotten beside, they gave themselves to
the maddening
Whirl of the dizzy dance, as it swept and swayed to
the music,
Dreamlike, with beaming eyes and the rush of
fluttering garments.

Meanwhile, apart, at the head of the hall, the
priest and the herdsman
Sat, conversing together of past and present and
future ;
While Evangeline stood like one entranced, for
within her
Olden memories rose, and loud in the midst of the
music
Heard she the sound of the sea, and an irrepressible
sadness
Came o'er her heart, and unseen she stole forth
into the garden.
Beautiful was the night. Behind the black wall of
the forest,
Tipping its summit with silver, arose the moon. On
the river
Fell here and there through the branches a tremu-
lous gleam of the moonlight,

Like the sweet thoughts of love on a darkened and
devious spirit.
Nearer and round about her, the manifold flowers
of the garden
Poured out their souls in odours, that were their
prayers and confessions
Unto the night, as it went its way like a silent
Carthusian.
Fuller of fragrance than they, and as heavy with
shadows and night-dews,
Hung the heart of the maiden. The calm and
the magical moonlight
Seemed to inundate her soul with indefinable
longings,
As, through the garden gate, beneath the brown
shade of the oak-trees,
Passed she along the path to the edge of the
measureless prairie.
Silent it lay, with a silvery haze upon it, and fire-
flies
Gleaming and floating away in mingled and infinite
numbers.
Over her head the stars, the thoughts of God in the
heavens,
Shone on the eyes of man, who had ceased to
marvel and worship
Save when a blazing comet was seen on the walls of
that temple,
As if a hand had appeared and written upon them
"Upharsin."
And the soul of the maiden, between the stars and
the fire-flies,
Wandered alone, and she cried,—“ O Gabriel ! O
my beloved !

Art thou so near unto me, and yet I cannot behold
thee?

Art thou so near unto me, and yet thy voice does
not reach me?

Ah ! how often thy feet have trod this path to the
prairie !

Ah ! how often thine eyes have looked on the wood-
lands around me !

Ah ! how often beneath this oak, returning from
labour,

Thou hast lain down to rest, and to dream of me
in thy slumbers.

When shall these eyes behold, these arms be folded
about thee?"

Loud and sudden and near the note of a whip-
poorwill sounded

Like a flute in the woods ; and anon, through the
neighboring thickets,

Farther and farther away it floated and dropped
into silence.

"Patience!" whispered the oaks from oracular
caverns of darkness ;

And, from the moonlit meadow, a sigh responded,
"To-morrow !"

Bright rose the sun next day ; and all the flowers
of the garden

Bathed his shining feet with their tears, and
anointed his tresses

With the delicious balm that they bore in their
vases of crystal.

"Farewell !" said the priest, as he stood at the
shadowy threshold ;

D

“ See that you bring us the Prodigal Son from his
fasting and famine,
And, too, the Foolish Virgin, who slept when the
bridegroom was coming.”

“ Farewell !” answered the maiden, and, smiling,
with Basil descended
Down to the river’s brink, where the boatmen
already were waiting.

Thus beginning their journey with morning, and
sunshine, and gladness,

Swiftly they followed the flight of him who was
speeding before them,

Blown by the blast of fate like a dead leaf over the
desert.

Not that day, nor the next, nor yet the day that
succeeded,

Found they trace of his course, in lake or forest or
river,

Nor, after many days, had they found him ; but
vague and uncertain

Rumors alone were their guides through a wild
and desolate country ;

Till, at the little inn of the Spanish town of
Adayes,

Weary and worn, they alighted, and learned from
the garrulous landlord,

That on the day before, with horses and guides
and companions,

Gabriel left the village, and took the road of the
prairies.

IV.

FAR in the West there lies a desert land, where the
mountains
Lift, through perpetual snows, their lofty and
luminous summits.
Down from their jagged, deep ravines, where the
gorge, like a gateway,
Opens a passage rude to the wheels of the emigrant's
wagon,
Westward the Oregon flows and the Walleway and
the Owyhee.
Eastward, with devious course, among the Wind-
river Mountains,
Through the Sweet-water Valley precipitate leaps
the Nebraska ;
And to the south, from Fontaine-qui-bout and the
Spanish sierras,
Fretted with sands and rocks, and swept by the
wind of the desert,
Numberless torrents, with ceaseless sound, descend
to the ocean,
Like the great chords of a harp, in loud and solemn
vibrations.
Spreading between these streams are the wondrous,
beautiful prairies,
Billowy bays of grass ever rolling in shadow and
sunshine,
Bright with luxuriant clusters of roses and purple
amorphas.
Over them wander the buffalo herds, and the elk
and the roebuck ;

Over them wander the wolves, and herds of riderless
horses ;
Fires that blast and blight, and winds that are
weary with travel ;
Over them wander the scattered tribes of Ishmael's
children,
Staining the desert with blood ; and above their
terrible war-trails
Circles and sails aloft, on pinions majestic, the
vulture,
Like the implacable soul of a chieftain slaughtered
in battle,
By invisible stairs ascending and scaling the
heavens.
Here and there rise smokes from the camps of
these savage marauders ;
Here and there rise groves from the margins of
swift-running rivers ;
And the grim, taciturn bear, the anchorite monk of
the desert,
Climbs down their dark ravines to dig for roots by
the brook-side,
And over all is the sky, the clear and crystalline
heaven,
Like the protecting hand of God inverted above
them.

Into this wonderful land, at the base of the Ozark
Mountains,
Gabriel far had entered, with hunters and trappers
behind him.
Day after day, with their Indian guides, the maiden
and Basil

Followed his flying steps, and thought each day to
o'ertake him.
Sometimes they saw, or thought they saw, the
smoke of his camp-fire
Rise in the morning air from the distant plain ; but
at nightfall,
When they had reached the place, they found only
embers and ashes.
And, though their hearts were sad at times, and
their bodies were weary,
Hope still guided them on, as the magic Fata
Morgana
Showed them her lakes of light, that retreated and
vanished before them.

Once, as they sat by their evening fire, there
silently entered
Into the little camp an Indian woman, whose
features
Wore deep traces of sorrow, and patience as great
as her sorrow.
She was a Shawnee woman returning home to her
people
From the far-off hunting-grounds of the cruel
Camanches,
Where her Canadian husband, a Coureur-des-Bois,
had been murdered.
Touched were their hearts at her story, and warm-
est and friendliest welcome
Gave they, with words of cheer, and she sat and
feasted among them
On the buffalo-meat and the venison cooked on
the embers.

But when their meal was done, and Basil and all
his companions,
Worn with the long day's march and the chase of
the deer and the bison,
Stretched themselves on the ground, and slept where
the quivering fire-light
Flashed on their swarthy cheeks, and their forms
wrapped up in their blankets,



Then at the door of Evangeline's tent she sat and
repeated
Slowly, with soft, low voice, and the charm of her
Indian accent,
All the tale of her love, with its pleasures, and
pains, and reverses.
Much Evangeline wept at the tale, and to know
that another
Hapless heart like her own had loved and had been
diappointed.
Moved to the depths of her soul by pity and woman's
compassion,
Yet in her sorrow pleased that one who had suffered
was near her,

She in turn related her love and all its disasters.
Mute with wonder the Shawnee sat, and when she had ended
Still was mute ; but at length, as if a mysterious horror
Passed through her brain, she spake, and repeated
the tale of the Mowis ;
Mowis, the bridegroom of snow, who won and wedded a maiden,
But, when the morning came, arose and passed from the wigwam,
Fading and melting away and dissolving into the sunshine,
Till she beheld him no more, though she followed far into the forest.
Then, in those sweet, low tones, that seemed like a weird incantation,
Told she the tale of the fair Lilinau, who was wooed by a phantom,
That, through the pines o'er her father's lodge, in the hush of the twilight,
Breathed like the evening wind, and whispered love to the maiden,
Till she followed his green and waving plume through the forest,
And never more returned, nor was seen again by her people.
Silent with wonder and strange surprise, Evangeline listened
To the soft flow of her magical words, till the region around her
Seemed like enchanted ground, and her swarthy guest the enchantress.

Slowly over the tops of the Ozark Mountains the
moon rose,
Lighting the little tent, and with a mysterious
splendour
Touching the sombre leaves, and embracing and
filling the woodland.
With a delicious sound the brook rushed by, and
the branches
Swayed and sighed overhead in scarcely audible
whispers.
Filled with the thoughts of love was Evangeline's
heart, but a secret,
Subtile sense crept in of pain and indefinite terror,
As the cold, poisonous snake creeps into the nest
of the swallow.
It was no earthly fear. A breath from the region
of spirits
Seemed to float in the air of night; and she felt
for a moment
That, like the Indian maid, she too was pursuing a
phantom.
And with this thought she slept, and the fear and
the phantom had vanished.

Early upon the morrow the march was resumed ;
and the Shawnee
Said, as they journeyed along,—“On the western
slope of these mountains
Dwells in his little village the Black Robe chief of
the Mission.
Much he teaches the people, and tells them of
Mary and Jesus ;
Loud laugh their hearts with joy, and weep with
pain, as they hear him.”

Then, with a sudden and secret emotion, Evangeline answered,—

“ Let us go to the Mission, for there good tidings await us ! ”

Thither they turned their steeds ; and behind a spur of the mountains,

Just as the sun went down, they heard a murmur of voices,

And in a meadow green and broad, by the bank of a river,

Saw the tents of the Christians, the tents of the Jesuit Mission.

Under a towering oak, that stood in the midst of the village,

Knelt the Black Robe chief with his children. A crucifix fastened

High on the trunk of the tree, and overshadowed by grape-vines,

Looked with its agonized face on the multitude kneeling beneath it.

This was their rural chapel. Aloft, through the intricate arches

Of its aërial roof, arose the chant of their vespers,

Mingling its notes with the soft susurrus and sighs of the branches.

Silent, with heads uncovered, the travellers, nearer approaching,

Knelt on the swarded floor, and joined in the evening devotions.

But when the service was done, and the benediction had fallen

Forth from the hands of the priest, like seed from the hands of the sower,

Slowly the reverend man advanced to the strangers
and bade them

Welcome ; and when they replied, he smiled with
benignant expression,

Hearing the homelike sounds of his mother-tongue
in the forest,

And with words of kindness conducted them into
his wigwam.

There upon mats and skins they reposed, and on
cakes of the maize-ear

Feasted, and slaked their thirst from the water-
gourd of the teacher.

Soon was their story told ; and the priest with
solemnity answered :—

“ Not six suns have risen and set since Gabriel,
seated

On this mat by my side, where now the maiden re-
poses,

Told me this same sad tale ; then arose and con-
tinued his journey ! ”

Soft was the voice of the priest, and he spake with
an accent of kindness ;

But on Evangeline’s heart fell his words as in
winter the snow-flakes

Fall into some lone nest from which the birds had
departed.

“ Far to the north he has gone,” continued the
priest, “ but in autumn,

When the chase is done, will return again to the
Mission.”

Then Evangeline said, and her voice was meek and
submissive,—

“ Let me remain with thee, for my soul is sad and
afflicted.”

So seemed it wise and well unto all ; and betimes on
the morrow,
Mounting his Mexican steed, with his Indian guides
and companion,
Homeward Basil returned, and Evangeline stayed
at the Mission.

Slowly, slowly, slowly the days succeeded each
other,—
Days and weeks and months ; and the fields of
maize that were springing
Green from the ground when a stranger she came,
now waving above her,
Lifted their slender shafts, with leaves interlacing
and forming
Cloisters for mendicant crows and granaries pil-
laged by squirrels.
Then in the golden weather the maize was husked,
and the maidens
Blushed at each blood-red ear, for that betokened
a lover,
But at the crooked laughed, and called it a thief in
the corn-field.
Even the blood-red ear to Evangeline brought not
her lover.
“Patience,” the priest would say ; “have faith and
thy prayer will be answered !
Look at this delicate plant that lifts its head from
the meadow,
See how its leaves all point to the north, as true as
the magnet :
It is the compass-flower, that the finger of God has
suspended

Here on its fragile stalk, to direct the traveller's
 journey
 Over the sea-like, pathless, limitless waste of the
 desert.
 Such in the soul of man is faith. The blossoms
 of passion,
 Gay and luxuriant flowers, are brighter and fuller
 of fragrance,
 But they beguile us and lead us astray, and their
 odour is deadly.
 Only this humble plant can guide us here, and
 hereafter
 Crown us with asphodel flowers, that are wet with
 the dews of nepenthe."

So came the autumn, and passed, and the winter,
 —yet Gabriel came not ;
 Blossomed the opening spring, and the notes of
 the robin and blue-bird
 Sounded sweet upon wold and in wood,—yet Gabriel
 came not.
 But on the breath of the summer winds a rumour
 was wafted
 Sweeter than song of bird, or hue or odour of
 blossom.
 Far to the north and east, it said, in the Michigan
 forests,
 Gabriel had his lodge by the banks of the Saginaw
 river.
 And, with returning guides, that sought the lakes
 of St. Lawrence,
 Saying a sad farewell, Evangeline went from the
 Mission.

When over weary ways, by long and perilous
marches,
She had attained at length the depths of the Michi-
gan forests,
Found she the hunter's lodge deserted and fallen to
ruin !

Thus did the long sad years glide on, and in
seasons and places
Divers and distant far was seen the wandering
maiden ;—
Now in the tents of grace of the meek Moravian
Missions,
Now in the noisy camps and the battle-fields of the
army,
Now in secluded hamlets, in towns and populous
cities.
Like a phantom she came, and passed away un-
remembered.
Fair was she and young, when in hope began the
long journey ;
Faded was she and old, when in disappointment it
ended.
Each succeeding year stole something away from
her beauty,
Leaving behind it, broader and deeper, the gloom
and the shadow.
Then there appeared and spread faint streaks of
grey o'er her forehead,
Dawn of another life, that broke o'er her earthly
horizon,
As in the eastern sky the first faint streaks of the
morning

V.

IN that delightful land which is washed by the
Delaware's waters,
Guarding in sylvan shades the name of Penn the
apostle,
Stands on the banks of its beautiful stream the city
he founded.
There all the air is balm, and the peach is the em-
blem of beauty,
And the streets still reëcho the names of the trees
of the forest,
As if they fain would appease the Dryads whose
haunts they molested.
There from the troubled sea had Evangeline landed,
an exile,
Finding among the children of Penn a home and a
country.
There old René Leblanc had died ; and when he
departed,
Saw at his side only one of all his hundred de-
scendants.
Something at least there was in the friendly streets
of the city,
Something that spake to her heart, and made her
no longer a stranger ;
And her ear was pleased with the Thee and Thou
of the Quakers,
For it recalled the past, the old Acadian
country,
Where all men were equal, and all were brothers
and sisters.

So, when the fruitless search, the disappointed
endeavor,
Ended, to recommence no more upon earth,
uncomplaining,
Thither, as leaves to the light, were turned her
thoughts and her footsteps,
As from a mountain's top the rainy mists of the
morning
Roll away, and afar we behold the landscape below
us,
Sun-illumined, with shining rivers and cities and
hamlets,
So fell the mists from her mind, and she saw the
world far below her,
Dark no longer, but all illumined with love; and
the pathway
Which she had climbed so far, lying smooth and
fair in the distance.
Gabriel was not forgotten. Within her heart was
his image,
Clothed in the beauty of love and youth, as last
she beheld him,
Only more beautiful made by his deathlike silence
and absence.
Into her thoughts of him time entered not, for it
was not.
Over him years had no power; he was not changed,
but transfigured;
He had become to her heart as one who is dead,
and not absent;
Patience and abnegation of self, and devotion to
others,
This was the lesson a life of trial and sorrow had
taught her.

So was her love diffused, but, like to some odorous
spices,
Suffered no waste nor loss, though filling the air
with aroma.
Other hope had she none, nor wish in life, but to
follow
Meekly, with reverent steps, the sacred feet of her
Saviour.
Thus many years she lived as a Sister of Mercy ;
frequenting
Lonely and wretched roofs in the crowded lanes of
the city,
Where distress and want concealed themselves from
the sunlight,
Where disease and sorrow in garrets languished
neglected.
Night after night, when the world was asleep, as
the watchman repeated
Loud, through the gusty streets, that all was well in
the city,
High at some lonely window he saw the light of
her taper.
Day after day, in the grey of the dawn, as slow
through the suburbs
Plodded the German farmer, with flowers and fruits
for the market,
Met he that meek, pale face, returning home from
its watchings.

Then it came to pass that a pestilence fell on the
city,
Presaged by wondrous signs, and mostly by flocks
of wild pigeons,

Darkening the sun in their flight, with nought in
their craws but an acorn.
And, as the tides of the sea arise in the month of
September,
Flooding some silver stream, till it spreads to a
lake in the meadow,
So death flooded life, and, o'erflowing its natural
margin,
Spread to a brackish lake, the silver stream of
existence.
Wealth had no power to bribe, nor beauty to charm
the oppressor :
But all perished alike beneath the scourge of his
anger ;—
Only, alas ! the poor, who had neither friends nor
attendants,
Crept away to die in the almshouse, home of the
homeless.
Then in the suburbs it stood, in the midst of
meadows and woodlands ;—
Now the city surrounds it ; but still, with its gate-
way and wicket,
Meek, in the midst of splendor, its humble walls
seem to echo
Softly the words of the Lord :—“ The poor ye
always have with you.”
Thither, by night and by day, came the Sister of
Mercy. The dying
Looked up into her face, and thought, indeed, to
behold there
Gleams of celestial light encircle her forehead with
splendor,
Such as the artist paints o'er the brows of saints
and apostles,

Or such as hangs by night o'er a city seen at a
distance.
Unto their eyes it seemed the lamps of the city
celestial
Into whose shining gates ere long their spirits
would enter.

Thus, on a Sabbath morn, through the streets,
deserted and silent,
Wending her quiet way, she entered the door of the
almshouse.
Sweet on the summer air was the odor of flowers
in the garden :
And she paused on her way to gather the fairest
among them,
That the dying once more might rejoice in their
fragrance and beauty.
Then, as she mounted the stairs to the corridors,
cooled by the east wind,
Distant and soft on her ear fell the chimes from the
belfry of Christ Church,
While, intermingled with these, across the meadows
were wafted
Sounds of psalms, that were sung by the Swedes in
their church at Wicaco.
Soft as descending wings fell the calm of the hour
on her spirit ;
Something within her said,—“ At length thy trials
are ended ;”
And, with light in her looks, she entered the cham-
bers of sickness.
Noiselessly moved about the assiduous careful
attendants,

Moistening the feverish lip, and the aching brow,
and in silence
Closing the sightless eyes of the dead, and con-
cealing their faces,
Where on their pallets they lay, like drifts of snow
by the road-side.
Many a languid head upraised as Evangeline
entered,
Turned on its pillow of pain to gaze while she
passed, for her presence
Fell on their hearts like a ray of the sun on the
walls of a prison.
And, as she looked around, she saw how Death,
the consoler,
Laying his hand upon many a heart, had healed it
for ever.
Many familiar forms had disappeared in the night-
time ;
Vacant their places were, or filled already by
strangers.

Suddenly, as if arrested by fear or a feeling of
wonder,
Still she stood, with her colorless lips apart, while
a shudder
Ran through her frame, and, forgotten, the flowerets
dropped from her fingers,
And from her eyes and cheeks the light and bloom
of the morning.
Then there escaped from her lips a cry of such
terrible anguish,
That the dying heard it, and started up from their
pillows.

On the pallet before her was stretched the form of
an old man.
Long, and thin, and grey were the locks that shaded
his temples ;
But, as he lay, in the morning light, his face for a
moment
Seemed to assume once more the form of its earlier
manhood ;
So are wont to be changed the faces of those who
are dying.
Hot and red on his lips still burned the flush of the
fever,
As if life, like the Hebrew, with blood had be-
sprinkled its portals,
That the Angel of Death might see the sign, and
pass over.
Motionless, senseless, dying, he lay, and his spirit
exhausted
Seemed to be sinking down through infinite depths
in the darkness,
Darkness of slumber and death, for ever sinking
and sinking.
Then through those realms of shade, in multiplied
reverberations,
Heard he that cry of pain, and through the hush
that succeeded
Whispered a gentle voice, in accents tender and
saintlike,
"Gabriel! O my beloved!" and died away into
silence,
Then he beheld, in a dream, once more the home of
his childhood ;
Green Acadian meadows, with sylvan rivers among
them,

Village, and mountain, and woodlands ; and, walking
under their shadow,
As in the days of her youth, Evangeline rose in his
vision.
Tears came into his eyes ; and as slowly he lifted
his eyelids,
Vanished the vision away, but Evangeline knelt by
his bedside.
Vainly he strove to whisper her name, for the
accents unuttered
Died on his lips, and their motion revealed what
his tongue would have spoken.
Vainly he strove to rise ; and Evangeline, kneeling
beside him,
Kissed his dying lips, and laid his head on her
bosom.
Sweet was the light of his eyes ; but it suddenly
sank into darkness,
As when a lamp is blown out by a gust of wind at a
casement.

All was ended now, the hope, and the fear, and
the sorrow,
All the aching of heart, the restless unsatisfied
longing,
All the dull, deep pain, and constant anguish of
patience !
And as she pressed once more the lifeless head to
her bosom,
Meekly she bowed her own, and murmured, "Father,
I thank Thee !"



STILL stands the forest primeval ; but far away
from its shadow,
Side by side, in their nameless graves, the lovers
are sleeping.
Under the humble walls of the little Catholic
church-yard,
In the heart of the city, they lie, unknown and
unnoticed.
Daily the tides of life go ebbing and flowing beside
them,
Thousands of throbbing hearts, where theirs are at
rest and for ever,
Thousands of aching brains, where theirs no longer
are busy,
Thousands of toiling hands, where theirs have
ceased from their labors,
Thousands of weary feet, where theirs have com-
pleted their journey !

Still stands the forest primeval ; but under the
shade of its branches
Dwells another race, with other customs and
language.
Only along the shore of the mournful and misty
Atlanti:
Linger a few Acadian peasants, whose fathers from
exile
Wandered back to their native land to die in its
bosom.

In the fisherman's cot the wheel and the loom are
still busy ;
Maidens still wear their Norman caps and their
kirtles of homespun,
And by the evening fire repeat Evangeline's story,



While from its rocky caverns the deep-voiced,
neighboring ocean
Speaks, and in accents disconsolate, answers the
wail of the forest.



LONDON:
R. CLAY, SONS, AND TAYLOR,
BREAD STREET HILL.

