Bayard Taylor.  
Traveler and Poet.  
(1825-1878)

Bayard Taylor was the first literary American to travel widely and to use the material thus gathered for "Travel-books". Early in life he visited England and the Continent, and in 1851 proceeded to Egypt and the Far East. The impressions gathered in the East greatly influenced his poetry as is evidenced by one of the poems here given, "To a Persian Boy".

He was appointed American Minister to the newly formed German Empire but died in Berlin only a few months after his arrival in that city in 1878.

To a Persian Boy.

The gorgeous blossoms of that magic tree  
Beneath whose shade I sat a thousand nights  
Breathed from their opening petals all delights  
Embalmed in spice of Orient Poesy.  
When first, young Persian, I beheld thine eyes  
And felt the wonder of thy beauty grow  
Within my brain, as some fair planet’s glow  
Deepens, and fills the Summer’s evening skies:  
From under thy dark lashes shone on me  
The rich voluptuous soul of Eastern land,  
Impassioned, tender, calm, serenely sad,—  
Such as immortal Hafiz felt when he  
Sang by the fountain-streams of Roorabad  
Or in the bowers of fam’d old Samarcand!

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Serapion.

Come hither, Boy! For while I press
Thy lips' confiding tenderness,
Less broad and dark the spaces be
Which life has set 'twixt thee and me.

Love Returned.

He was a boy when first we met;
His eyes were mixt of dew and fire
And on his candid brow was set
The sweetness of a chaste desire.
But in his veins the pulses beat
Of passion waiting for its wing,
As ardent veins of summer-heat
Throb through the innocence of Spring.

A Painter speaking to his Young Boy Model.

"As Ganymede's
Thy rosy limbs against the dark blue sky
Shall press the eagle's plumage as he speeds;—
Or darling Hylas, 'mid Scamander's reeds,
Thy beauty borrow!"
Walt Whitman.
Prophet and Poet.
(1819-1892)

Walt Whitman, born of Quaker parentage, left school at the age of eleven, and drifted finally into newspaper work. In 1848 he spent six months in New Orleans, where he met a man who is the subject of one of his earliest efforts in Free Verse.

In 1855 he published his Opus Magnum, "Leaves of Grass" in its first form. The philosopher Emerson recognized its great merits and termed the book "the most extraordinary piece of wit and wisdom America has yet contributed."

In 1862 Whitman volunteered as a male nurse in the hospitals of Washington during the American Civil War. He took a great interest in the hapless young men in his care. Of one he wrote: "He looks so handsome as he sleeps, one must go nearer to him." Of a young Confederate Captain he wrote: "I have struck up a tremendous friendship with a young Mississippi captain (about 19) that we took prisoner badly wounded. He has followed me here, is in the Emory hospital here. Our affection is an affair quite romantic,—sometimes when I lean over him to say 'I am going' he puts his arms around my neck, draws my face down, etc."

When the war ended, Whitman was given a government position in one of the Federal offices at Washington. These ten years 1864-1873 were some of the happiest in Whitman's life. He met a young street-car conductor, Pete Doyle, to whom he became greatly attached. Whitman's letters to Doyle, both at this time and later, were collected after Whitman's death and published under the title of "Calamus."

Whitman was continually adding to his "Leaves of Grass." He had this manuscript in his desk in the government offices. His superior chanced to find this and read it. Whitman was summarily dismissed from the government service.

Soon after the loss of his position, Whitman was stricken with partial paralysis and went to live with some friends in Camden, New Jersey. There he remained until his death in 1892. He had never married. Whitman's pioneer work in Free Verse and his breadth of vision have rendered him one of the foremost poets America so far has produced.
"Once I passed through a Populous City."

"Once I passed through a populous city, imprinting on my brain for future use its shows, architecture, customs and traditions.
But of all that city I remember only the man who wandered with me there for love of me.
Day by day and night by night, we were together.
All else has long been forgotten by me,—I remember I say, only one rude and ignorant man who, when I departed, long and long held me by the hand, with silent lip, sad and tremulous.

Calamus.

"For the one I love most lay sleeping by me under the same cover in the cool night,
In the stillness, in the autumn moonbeams, his face was inclined toward me,
And his arm lay lightly around my breast—and that night I was happy!"

"Publish My Name."

"Publish my name and hang up my picture as that of the tenderest lover,
The friend, the lover's portrait, of whom his friend, his lover, was fondest,
Who often walk'd lonesome walks, thinking of his dear friends his lovers,
Who oft as he saunter'd the streets curv'd with his arm the shoulder of his friend,—while the arm of his friend rested upon him also."
"Clement Andrews."
Poet and Essayist.
(1880-)

"Clement Andrews" is the pseudonym of an American newspaper man. He was born in the state of Massachusetts and educated at a small college in New York State. For several years he was in Welfare Work among children. He is now the assistant editor of a publication in the Middle West.

"Perfection."

I saw him once - - -
His beauty girt about him like a dress,
Pristine, resplendent, in his loveliness.
   So had he seemed in many a furtive dream
Standing alert, beside the sunlit stream;
Or, resting idly, by some ancient tree,
Within his hands the vase of mystery,
The fragrant flowers of the lotus rare
Drooping in bliss for crowning of his hair - - -
Ah! dreams are fair, but fairer far to see
The ntid grace of this reality.
"To a Boy seen Swimming."

Somewhere he lies asleep
Serene and free from dread
I would that I might keep
My vigil by his bed.

I saw him by the shore
Naked and stripped and bare,
I lingered to adore.
He passed me unaware.

Somewhere he lies asleep
With slender arms flung wide
I would that I might creep
And nestle at his side.

Morn's Recompense.

I woke at dawn—and you were lying there
Close to my side, yet turned away from me.
So when sleep caught us, you lay wearily
Within my arms; the fragrance of your hair
Like a narcotic drugged me into rest;
Though I would fain have foresworn sleep for joy,—
That you, quintessent Youth, my darling Boy,
Should lie abandoned on my throbbing breast.
So as I yearned above you, the first ray
Of the glad morning quickened through the gloom,
You felt my eager kisses on your face,
Opened your eyes and smiled—And it was day!
The sun burst forth and flooded all the room
With radiance as you turned to my embrace!
"Edmund Edwinson" is the pseudonym of an American technical man. He was born in the South and educated there. He has travelled widely in his work and visited China, Korea, Annam, Australia, New Zealand, India etc. He is now engaged in University work.

Il Penseroso.

Thinkest thou now of me?
In our loves in bright days gone by
Oft did I think of thee.

Thinkest thou now of me?
For us twain, full many a flower
Hangs on memory's tree.

Thinkest thou now of me?
Knewest thou well my heart's best love
Was one time given thee!

To E. K.

Three lovelier things there be
Than all else on land or sea:—
The friendship of a friend both tried and true,
The gleam of silver lads 'gainst Heaven's blue
And,—need I say 't—-the loveliness of You!
Boy Love in Springtime.

Like a yellow Jonquil
Peeping timidly
Up through Winter's white expanse
Came'st thou first to me.

Like a yellow Jonquil
Smiling merrily
Under Spring's soft warm caress
Bloomed thy love for me.

But as after May-time
Springtime flowers flee
Flying with the Springtime hours
Fled thy love from me.

To a Traitor.

Once thou reigned o'er my heart and soul;
Now,—Lord of my despair;
Once thy love was my fairest crown,—
Now is the shame I wear.

Like to the Centaur's dying gift
Thy lying love-hours were;
Thy smiling face, thine arms' embrace
But fawnings of a cur.

The sting of whips was in thy lips
Though oft they spake me fair;
"Love, honour, trust," thou laughed at such
For these thou canst-not care.

And yet I cared,—ah, Hell's worst flame
Can sear my heart no more
Than thought of thee as thou used to be
Before my dreams were o'er.
Eros in Dolore.

I would not care to see him come once more,
I would not hear his step upon the stair,
See his lov'd face enframed in my door
   Nor feel the heart-throb of his presence near.

I would not wish his silences to cool
   The weary clamor of my tugging heart
Nor have the fragrance of his golden hair
   Heal with his medicine its smart.

For he is gone—and all my hopes are gone
   That he a friend in word and deed might be:
The weary round as formerly goes on;
   Life is just somewhat drearier for me.

A Valentine.

My love is a flower in bloom
   Of his sweet youth so fair,
My love is a bonnie lad
   With sun-glint in his hair.

My love is a lilting song
   Gladdening all who hear him;
My love is an Oak-tree strong
   For all who may need him.

My love is a lark that soars
   To the Heavens above;
My love is a boy who pours
   To my heart his sweet love.
Lament.

He is gone with his blue eyes
Whom I love most,
Gone among the cliffs and fog
Of a far coast.

He whose joy was in sweet words
And kindness,—
Whom old men loved, and little boys
No whit the less.

Love, the blind importunate
Craves touch and sight,
Briefly parted, feels and fears
Eternal night.

I. Holt.

"Boy."

When my evening fire is gilding
Picture, table, wall and chair,
Dreamily I fall a-building
Fairy castles in the air,—
Boy, Boy, Boy!

Then the joyous dream retreating
Fades again to empty air,—
Golden visions, false and fleeting!
O that you were true as fair,
Boy, Boy, Boy!

E. W. H.

A Boy's Absence.

All I could say thou knowest; how I long
To clasp thine hand, to feel thy cheek on mine,
To see thee smile, to watch thee at thy play;
So in thine absence, will I make a song:
A Friendship's garland let the hours entwine
That miss thee, since we parted yesterday.

By a Schoolmaster.
The Roads.

The roads were white with April
And new with rare delight,
And there I saw an elm-tree fill
With blackbirds poised in flight.

Above that way 'twas after rain,
The skyey pennons flew,
While every hoof-print down the lane
Was brimmed with April blue.

To a slender lad I turned me
Beneath those wondrous skies,
And then the fairest blue did see
Alight in his young eyes.  

S. Strahan.

"I like little Boys."

I like rumpled little boys,
With collars upstanding
And buttons missing;
Little boys with rough red cheeks
And freckled noses,
And restless hands
That are never still.

I like neat little boys
In Norfolk suits
With white collars and dotted windsor ties
And slicked black hair, still wet,
And restless hands
That are never still.

I like little boys.  

Clifford Whitford.

This a Boy Can Do.

This a little boy can do,—
Cheer you up when you are blue,
Give you hope when hope is gone,
Get you up before the dawn;
Make the dull world bright and gay,
Keep you in the higher way,
Give you back your youth again,
At your heart strings tug and strain,
Keep you in an awful stew,—
This and more a boy can do!  

Bert Adair.