

Edward Roberson Taylor

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To Henry George, whose honored name  
Has met with world-encircling fame;  
Whom both the humble and the great  
Deem born to high prophetic state;  
Who went from us ten years ago  
To meet the universal foe,  
And give mankind another hope  
Beyond the dream of human scope;  
Who now returns in Victors' car  
To wage in other lands his war,  
And whom we speed upon his way  
With all the prayers the heart can say;  
With love which nothing can abate  
This verse I humbly dedicate. ~

# Odes

read at dinner given Henry  
George at San Francisco, Feb 5. 1890.

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The universe of things, how great!  
The individual man, how small!  
And yet, with pride & strength of state,  
He fain would grasp it all. —

He climbs the loftiest mountain peaks,  
He plunges into deserts vast,  
And farthest distant countries seeks,  
Defying storm and blast.

No dangers daunt, no labors tire,  
He answers every single call,  
And rushes on with fierce desire  
No matter who may fall.

He weighs the worlds that swim in space,  
And dares to guess how they were made,  
And evolution's course can trace  
In every form displayed.

With insight born of patient years  
He sees beyond the aided eye,  
To measure the atomic spheres  
That roll in matter's sky. —

He wrestles with the stones of earth,  
He plunders ocean of her brood,  
That these may be, from very birth,  
Laid bare and understood. -

The human body he explores  
With acid, microscope and knife,  
And thirsts to find the hidden stores  
And final cause of life. -

Before him, as in pictured books,  
Mankind in long procession pass,  
From when men lived with tree & brook,  
And fed on root and grass. -

He spins out systems which explain  
What mortal men may hope to reach,  
And loses every chance of gain  
In wilderness of speech. -

His ancient dogmas he supplies  
To souls that thirst for heavenly dews,  
While sweet Religion gasps & dies  
Amidst his empty fues. -

He binds his brother to the wheel  
Of endless tasks & hopeless woes,  
And tries to make his conscience feel  
'Tis God who strikes the blow. -

He gathers hoards he cannot use,  
And dies while still demanding more,  
Leaving unfulfil'd souls to lose  
Or waste the heaping store.

No wealth of thought or thing can sate  
The appetites that stir his breast,  
And man remains through every fate  
Unsatisfied, unrest.

Ah, true it is, this restless mind,  
This craving which has <sup>no</sup> ~~no~~ <sup>surcease,</sup> ~~cessation,~~  
Have brought Progression to mankind,  
And all the arts of Peace. -

But yet, while Progress holds her throne  
Amid <sup>incalculable</sup> ~~unnumbered~~ gains,  
The Love which Christ proclaimed his own  
And bleeding in her chains.

Invention yields to Man's demand,  
He makes the forces all his own,  
And yet, to Heaven from every land  
Still rises ceaseless moan;

Still toil the Many for the Few,  
Companions by relentless Death;  
Still slum and hovel near the view  
Of church and palace front.

The individual man, how small!  
But in the mass, what giant he!  
Who might the world from every thrall  
Triumphantly set free—

The thralls that bind unnumbered souls  
In wretchedness so wide & deep,  
That were it writ, the dreadful rolls  
He would not dare to keep.—

The Intellect has had her sway  
For full five hundred years, & more,  
And now there dawns another day  
Laden with richest store.

Mankind are now to wisely learn,  
To love is better than to know;  
That naught but Justice e'er can turn  
Aids Life's bitterest woes.

That Law must loose the cruel things  
Which bind the flesh & souls of men,  
And on the wreck of monstrous wrongs  
Raise Freedom's sacred fane. -

When Justice shall employ her arms  
Against Restrictions selfish ice,  
The humblest, free from Dante's alarms,  
May hopefully aspire. -

When Faith shall fill the human heart  
With peace it e'er has known before,  
While Poverty's engorged heart  
Shall wing the air no more.

O God! let now Thy kingdom come,  
O send Thy Christ again to earth,  
And on Thy footstool as his home  
Man have another birth!

Wm Robson Taylor