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On Reading One of Werther's Letters

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ON READING ONE OF WERTHER'S LETTERS

Serenity, so sweet
Has taken o'er my soul;
With joy my heart is beating
As I enjoy these soft, sweet morns of spring.

I stand alone!
And in this Paradise
I feel the charm of Life—
Of living without strife—
A bliss, for souls like mine.

My Friend!
I feel so happy, so absorbed
In this tranquility.
My talents are but for the Past,
I do not draw a single stroke,
But to the last
I feel, with greatest joy
That Art is not forgotten;
But rather that it lives—
A glowing ember in my heart
For me alone.

The valley teems with vapor
All around me;
The Sun strikes through the foliage of yonder trees—
And so it seems
The few stray gleams
Steal like a thief
Into the hidden Sanctuary.

I rest beside the trickling stream—
Deep in the grass
So close to fragrant Earth.
A thousand unknown plants I see

KHIVA

With boundless ecstasy,
As the little world, beneath the stalks
Becomes familiar.

I hear the buzz of tiny things—
God's own creatures.
They seem so close
And yet so far away.
I feel, as oft I've felt,
That God is present in that little world,
And I must stay.

He breathes His love on us below;
He gives us strength to carry on with life.
Dear Lord, I know
That Thy love bears us far above
The common hurts of poor mankind.

Would but that I could clearly speak
Of God, of Love, of Life,
Of all that's warm within me.
And is my soul the mirror of God Almighty,
Pray make my words the mirror of my soul.

—Albert E. Smigel.

KHIVA

Khiva—it is a strange place;
Penan, you should go there to get the taste of mare's
fermented milk;
Or slide your hand over Tartor's shiny silk;
See the wooly Kuzzah draw low on wild Kalmune.
What? Have I been there?
Oh no! I just assume.

—Edmund H. Tarbutton.