

“TOWARDS DEMOCRACY”

BY EDWARD CARPENTER

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EXTRACTS FROM FOREWARD

E. M. Forster said, in August 1944, on the occasion of the centenary of Carpenter's birth:

"Edward Carpenter is rather forgotten to-day, partly because he was a pioneer whose work has passed into our heritage. He was a poet and a prose writer, and a reformer and a mystic and socialist and a manual worker who preferred the working classes to his own. He won't be easy to sum up."

Edward Carpenter was born at Brighton in 1844 and died at Guildford in 1929. The Theme of his Towards Democracy can perhaps best be described as the immortality of life; the immortality of love; the insignificance of death, except as a natural partner to that great trinity. The first installment of the book was published in 1883. Its birth pangs are vividly set forth by Carpenter in his autobiography My Days and Dreams, where he describes it as, "the start-point and kernel of all my later work, the centre from which the other books have radiated....."

Gilbert Beith

Hollywood,
Gomshall, Surrey.
February 1949.

EXTRACTS FROM
TOWARDS DEMOCRACY

PART ONE

The sun, the moon and the stars, the grass, the waters that flow round the earth, and the light air of heaven: To You greeting. I too stand behind these and send you word across them.

I

Freedom at last! Long sought, long prayed for -- ages and ages long:

The burden to which I continually return, seated here thick- booted and obvious yet dead and buried and passed into heaven, unsearchable;

[How know you indeed but what I have passed into you?]

And Joy, beginning but without ending--the journey of journeys-- Thought laid quietly aside:

These things I, writing, translate for you -- I wipe a mirror and place it in your hands.

II

The sun shines, as of old; the stars look down from heaven; the moon, crescent, sails in the twilight; on bushy tops in the warm nights, naked, with mad dance and song, the earth-children address themselves to love;

Civilisation sinks and swims, but the old facts remain -- the sun smiles, knowing well its strength.

The little red stars appear once more on the hazel boughs, shining among the catkins; over waste lands the pewit tumbles and cries as at the first day; men with horses go out on the land -- they shout and chide and strive -- and return again glad at evening; the old earth breathes deep and rhythmically, night and day, summer and winter, giving and concealing herself.

I arise out of the dewy night and shake my wings.

Tears and lamentations are no more. Life and death lie stretched below me. I breathe the sweet aether blowing of the breath of God.

Deep as the universe is my life -- and I know it; nothing can dislodge the knowledge of it; nothing can destroy, nothing can harm me.

Joy, joy arises -- I arise. The sun darts overpowering piercing rays of joy through me, the night radiates it from me.

I take wings through the night and pass through all the wildernesses of the worlds, and the old dark holds of tears and death -- and return with laughter, laughter, laughter:

*Sailing through the starlit spaces on outspread wings, we two -- O laughter! laughter!
laughter!*

III

Freedom! the deep breath! the word heard centuries and centuries beforehand; the soul singing low and passionate to itself: Joy! Joy!

Not as in a dream. The earth remains and daily life remains, and the scrubbing of doorsteps, and the house and the care of the house remains; but Joy fills it, fills the house full and swells to the sky and reaches the stars: all Joy!

O freed soul! Soul that has completed its relation to the body! O soaring, happy beyond words, into other realms passing, salutations to you, freed, redeemed soul!

What is certain, and not this? What is solid? -- the rocks? The mountains? destiny?

The gates are thrown wide open all through the universe. I go to and fro -- through the heights and depths I go and I return: All is well.

I conceive the purport of all suffering. The blear-eyed boy, famished in brain, famished in body, shivering there in his rags by the angle of the house, is become divine before me; I hold him long and silently by the hand and pray to him.

I conceive a millennium on earth -- a millennium not of riches, nor of mechanical facilities, nor of intellectual facilities, nor absolutely of immunity from disease, nor absolutely of immunity from pain; but a time when men and women all over the earth shall ascend and enter into relation with their bodies -- shall attain freedom and joy;

And the men and women of that time looking back with something like envy to the life of to-day, that they too might have borne a part in its travail and throes of birth.

All is well: to-day and a million years hence, equally. To you the whole universe is given for a garden of delight, and to the soul that loves, in the great coherent Whole, the hardest and most despised lot is even with the best; and there is nothing more certain or more solid than this.

IV

Freedom! the deep breath! The old Earth breathes deep and rhythmically, night and day, summer and winter; the cuckoo calls across the woodland, and the willow-wren warbles among the great chestnut buds; the labourer eases himself under a hedge, and the frog flops into the pond as the cows approach;

In the theatre Juliet from her balcony still bends in the moonlight, and Romeo leans up from the bushes below; in the pale dawn, still, faint with love he tears himself away; the great outlines of the fields and hills where you were born and grew up remain apparently unchanged.

If I am not level with the lowest I am nothing; and if I did not know for a certainty that the craziest sot in the village is my equal, and were not proud to have him walk with me as my friend, I would not write another word - for in this is my strength. My thoughts are nothing, but I myself will reach my arms through time, constraining you....

TOWARDS DEMOCRACY

PART TWO

Who are You

Who are you who go about to save them that are lost? Are you saved yourself?
Do you not know that who would save his own life must lose it? Are you then one of the "lost"?

Be sure, very sure, that each one of these can teach you as much as, probably more than, you can teach them.

Have you then sat humbly at their feet, and waited on their lips that they should be the first to speak - and been reverent before these children - whom you so little understand?

Have you dropped into the bottomless pit from between yourself and them all hallucination of superiority, all flatulence of knowledge, every shred of abhorrence and loathing?

Is it equal, is it free as the wind between you?

Could you be happy receiving favors from one of the most despised of these?

Could you be yourself one of the lost?

Arise then, and become a saviour.....

TOWARDS DEMOCRACY

PART THREE

All Night Long

All night long in love, in the darkness, passing through your lips, my love --

Breathing the same breath, being folded in the same sleep, losing sense of Me and Thee,

Into empyreal regions, beloved of the gods, united, we ascend together.

Then in the morning on the high hill-side in the sun, looking down upon the spires of the larches and Scotch firs, Mortal, we tread again the earthy floor.

O Earth, the floor of heaven --

O Sun, shining aloft in the sky so pure --

O children of the sun, ye flowers and streams, and little mortals walking the earth for a time --

And we too gazing for a time, for a time, for a time, into each other's eyes.

When a Thousand Years Have Passed

Think not that the love thou enterest into to-day is for a few months or years:

The little seed set now must lie quiet before it will germinate and many alternations of sunshine and shower descend upon it before it become even a small plant.

When a thousand years have passed, come thou again. And behold! a mighty tree that no storms can shake.

Love does not end with this life or any number of lives; the form that thou seekest lies hidden under wrapping after wrapping;

Nevertheless it shall at length appear -- more wondrous far than aught thou hast imagined.

Therefore leave time: do not like a child pull thy flower up by the roots to see if it is growing;

Even though thou be old and near the grave there is plenty of time.

I saw a Vision

I saw a vision of Earth's multitudes going up and down over the Earth -- and I saw the great earth itself wheeling and careering onward through space.

And behold! here and there to one among the multitude a change came;

And to whomsoever it came continued onward apparently as before, yet as from the larva springs the perfect image,

So (as it appeared to me) from that mortal form a new being, long long long in preparation, glided silently up unobserved into the breathless pure height of the sky.

Ah! Blessed is He

Ah! blessed is he that hath escaped --

Whom love hath opened the doors of his cage:

No more returning

Shall he be subject again to sin and sorrow.

The Great Leader

I use my name and powers, I use my great prestige,
As a joiner uses a tool: they serve my purpose well.
Nevertheless think not that I regard them
Except as things to be destroyed in using.

I Accept You

I accept you altogether -- as the sea accepts the fish that swim in it.
It is no good apologising for anything you have done, for you have never been anywhere yet
but what I have sustained you --
And beyond my boundaries you cannot go.

Sol

Coruscating flame I behold the soul,
Mine, yours, whoever it may be --
Darting great tongues of flame thousands of miles long,
Thousands of years.

A Glimpse

Here at last having arrived I take my rest, my long long fill of rest, no more to move;
The roaring subsides, the wheels cease to go round, a calm falls on all -- the stars and the
daisies shine out visibly from the bosom of God.
You cannot balk me of my true life.
Climbing over the barriers of pain -- of my own weaknesses and sins - I escape.
Where will you hold me? by the feet, hands? by my personal vanity? would you shut me in
the mirror-lined prison of self- consciousness?

Behold! I acknowledge all my defects -- you cannot snap the handcuffs faster on me than I snap them myself: I am vain, deceitful, cowardly - yet I escape.

The handcuffs hold me not, out of my own hands I draw myself as out of a glove; from behind the empty mask of my reputed qualities I depart, and am gone my way,

Unconcerned what I leave behind me.

Into the high air which surrounds and sustains the world, Breathing life, intoxicating, with joy unutterable, radiant, As the wind of Spring when the dead leaves fly before it- I depart and am gone my way.

The Curse of Property

Are they not mine, saith the Lord, the everlasting hills?

(Where over the fir-tree tops I glance to the valleys.)

The rich meads with brown and white cattle, and streams with weirs and water-mills,

And the tender-growing crops, and hollows of shining apple-blossom
From my mountain terraces as from a throne beholding my lands -
Are they not mine, where I dwell, and for my children?

How long, you, will you trail your slime over them, and your talk of rights and of property?

How long will you build you houses to hide yourselves in, and your baggage? to shut yourselves off from your brothers and sisters -- and Me?

Beware! for I am the storm; I care nought for your rights of property.
In lightning and thunder, in floods and fire, I will ruin and ravage your fields;
Your first-born will I slay within your house, and I will make your riches a mockery.

Fools! that know not from day to day, from hour to hour if ye shall live,
And yet will snatch from each other the things that I have showered among you.
For I will have none that will not open his door to all, treating others as I have treated him.

The trees that spread their boughs against the evening sky, the marble that I have prepared beforehand these millions of years in the earth; the cattle that roam over the myriad hills -- they are
Mine, for all my children --
If thou lay hands on them for thyself alone, thou art accursed.

The curse of property shall cling to thee;
With burdened brow and heavy heart, weary, incapable of joy, without gaiety,
Thou shalt crawl a stranger in the land that I made for thy enjoyment.

The smallest bird on thy estate shall sing in freedom in the branches, the plough-boy shall whistle in the furrow,

But thou shalt be weary and lonely -- forsaken and an alien among men:

For just inasmuch as thou has shut thyself off from one of the least of these my children,
thou hast shut thyself off from Me.

I the Lord Demos have spoken it -- and the mountains are my throne.

The End of Love

Seek not the end of love in this act or in that act -- lest indeed it become the end;
But seek this act and that act and thousands of acts whose end is love -

So shalt thou at last create that which thou now desirest;

And then when these are all past and gone there shall remain to thee a great and immortal
possession, which no man can take away.

To Thine Own Self be True

Not by running out of yourself after it comes the love which lasts a thousand years.

If to gain another's love you are untrue to yourself then are you also untrue to the person
whose love you would gain.

Him or her whom you seek will you never find that way - and what pleasure you have with
them will haply only end in pain.

Remain steadfast, knowing that each prisoner has to endure in patience till the season of
his liberation; when the love comes which is for you it will turn the lock easily and loose
your chains --

Being no longer whirled about nor tormented by winds of uncertainty, but part of the
organic growth of God himself in Time --

Another column in the temple of immensity,
Two voices added to the eternal choir.

TOWARDS DEMOCRACY

PART FOUR

The Lake of Beauty

Let your mind be quiet, realising the beauty of the world, and the immense, the boundless treasures that it holds in store.

All that you have within you, all that your heart desires, all that your Nature so specially fits you for - that or the counterpart of it waits embedded in the great Whole, for you. It will surely come to you.

Yet equally surely not one moment before its appointed time will it come. All your crying and fever and reaching out of hands will make no difference.

Therefore do not begin that game at all.

Do not recklessly spin the waters of your mind in this direction and in that, lest you become like a spring lost and dissipated in the desert.

But draw them together into a little compass, and hold them still, so still;

And let them become clear, so clear - so limpid, so mirror-like;
At last the mountains and the sky shall glass themselves in peaceful beauty,

And the antelope shall descend to drink, and to gaze at his reflected image, and the lion to quench his thirst,
And Love himself shall come and bend over, and catch his own likeness in you.

So Thin a Veil

So thin a veil divides
Us from such joy, past words.
Walking in daily life the business of the hour, each detail seen to;
Yet carried, rapt away, on what sweet floods of other Being:
Swift streams of music flowing, light far back through all
Creation shining,
Loved faces looking-
Ah! from the true, the mortal self
So thin a veil divides!

O joy divine of friends!

O joy divine of friends!
To hold within the circle of one's arms
More than the universe holds:
So sweet, so rare, so precious beyond words,
The god so tenderly mortal!
Not kisses only or embraces,
Nor the sweet pain and passion of the flesh alone;
But more, far more,
To feel (ah joy!) the creature deep within
Touch on its mate, unite, and lie entranced
There, ages down, and ages long, in light,
Suffused, divine - where all these other pleasures
Fade but to symbols of that perfect union!

O Child of Uranus

O child of Uranus, wanderer down all times,
Darkling, from farthest ages of the Earth the same
Strange tender figure, full of grace and pity,
Yet outcast and misunderstood of men -
Thy Woman-soul within a Man's form dwelling,
[Was Adam perchance like this, ere Eve from his side was drawn?]

So gentle, gracious, dignified, complete,
With man's strength to perform, and pride to suffer without sign,
And feminine sensitiveness to the last fibre of being;
Strange twice-born, having entrance to both worlds-
Loved, loved by either sex,
And free of all their lore!

I see thee where down all of Time thou comest;
And women break their alabaster caskets, kiss and anoint thy feet, and bless the womb
that bare thee,
While in thy bosom with thee, lip to lip,
Thy younger comrade lies.

Lord of the love which rules this changing world,
Passing all partial loves, this one complete - the Mother love and sex emotion blended-
I see thee where for centuries thou hast walked,
Lonely, the world of men
Saving, redeeming, drawing all to thee,
Yet outcast, slandered, pointed of the mob,
Misjudged and crucified.

Dear Son of heaven - long suffering wanderer through the wilderness of civilization -
The day draws nigh when from these mists of ages
Thy form in glory clad shall reappear.

The Dead Comrade

There among the woods, after the battle returning,
In a little open spot - how well I remember it -
Where the ground was red with the blood of my lover, my dead
comrade.

[Him whom to save I would have died so gladly, O so gladly,
Whom I could not at any time bear to see suffer even a little hurt,
So tenderly we loved, so tenderly,]

There on the stained red ground, in the midst of the clotted precious blood, not even yet
dry, stood a small yellow flower -
The little Cow-wheat they call it, with its slender yellow blossoms in pairs, and its faint-
tinged lips.

And now in the woods each year - in the silent beautiful woods, so calm, so sweet - though
the same flowers spring by hundreds -
Not a word do they utter of that awful scene, not a word of all that carnage,
Of the splintered trees, the blood-smearred corpses, the devilish noises and the sights and
smells,
Or of the livid face and faint-blue lips of him I loved as never another I could love.

O how can you grow so careless, little flowers, and yet continue ages to grow under the
trees the same -
And all the light gone out of the world for me?

Each year when summer comes and July suns,
To the woods I must go like one drawn by a fatal dread and fascination,

To see the sight I most abhor to see -
The patch of blood, and the unharmed flower in the midst
And faint in death the lips I love so well.

A NOTE ON "TOWARDS DEMOCRACY"

By Edward Carpenter

(taken from *THE LABOUR PROPHET*, May, 1894)

Having sometimes been asked questions about "Towards Democracy" which I found it difficult to answer, I will try and shape a few thoughts about it here.

Quite a long time ago (say when I was about 25, and living at Cambridge) I wanted to write some sort of a book which should address itself very personally and closely to anyone who cared to read it - establish so to speak an intimate personal relation between myself and the reader; and during succeeding years I made several attempts to realise this idea - of which beginnings one or two in verse may be found in a little volume entitled "*Narcissus and other Poems*," now well out of print, which I published in 1873. None of these attempts satisfied me however, and after a time I began to think the quest was an unreasonable one - unreasonable because while it might not be difficult for any one with a pliant and sympathetic disposition to touch certain chords in any given individual that he might meet, it seemed impossible to hope that a book - which cannot in any way adapt itself to the idiosyncrasies of its reader - could find the key of the personalities into whose hands it should happen to come. For this it would be necessary to suppose, and to find, an absolutely common ground to all individuals (all at any rate who might have reached a certain stage of thought and experience) - and to write the book on and from that common ground: but this seemed at that time quite impracticable.

Years followed, more or less eventful, with flight from Cambridge, and university lectures carried on in the Provincial Towns, and so forth; but of much dumbness as regards writing; and inwardly full of tension, and suffering. At last early in 1881, no doubt as the culmination and result of struggles and experiences that had been going on, I became conscious that a mass of material was forming within me, imperatively demanding expression - though what exactly its expression would be I could not then have told. I became for a time overwhelmingly conscious of the disclosure within of a region transcending in some sense the ordinary bounds of personality, in the light of which region my own idiosyncrasies of character - defects, accomplishments, limitations, or what not - appeared of no importance whatever - an absolute Freedom from mortality, accompanied by an indescribable calm and joy.

I also immediately saw, or rather *felt*, that this region of Self existing in me existed equally (though not always equally consciously) in others. In regard to it the mere diversities of temperament which ordinarily distinguish and divide people dropped away and became indifferent, and a field was opened in which all might meet, in which all were truly Equal. Thus I found the common ground which I wanted; and the two words, Freedom and Equality came for the time being to control all my thought and expression. The necessity for space and time to work this out grew so strong that in April of that year I threw up my lecturing employment. Moreover another necessity had come upon me which demanded the latter step - the necessity namely for an open air life and manual work. I could not finally argue with this any more than with the other, I had to give in and obey. As it happened at the time I mention I was already living in a little cottage on a farm (at Bradway, near Sheffield) with a friend and his family, and doing farm-work in the intervals of my lectures. When I threw up the lecturing I had everything clear before me. I knocked together a sort of wooden sentinel-box, in the garden, and there, or in the fields and the woods, all that spring and summer, and on through the winter, by day and sometimes by night, in sunlight or in rain, by frost and snow and all sorts of grey and dull weather, I wrote "Towards Democracy" - or at any rate the first and longer poem that goes by that name.

By the end of 1881 this was finished - though it was worked over and patched a little in the early part of 1882.; and I remember feeling then that, defective and halting and incoherent in expression as it was, still if it succeeded in rendering even a half the splendour which inspired it, it would be good, and I need not trouble to write anything more (which, with due allowance for the said "if," I even now feel was a true and friendly intimation)!

The writing of this and its publication, (in 1883) got a load off my mind which had been weighing on it for years - a sense of oppression and anxiety which I had constantly suffered from before - and which I believe, in its different forms, is a common experience in the early part of life.

In this first poem were embodied with considerable alterations and adaptations a good number of casual pieces, which I had written (merely under stress of feeling and without any particular sense of proportion) during several preceding years. They now found their interpretation under the steady and clear light of a new mood or state of feeling which previously had only visited me fitfully and with clouded beams. The whole of "Towards Democracy"-I may say, speaking broadly and including the later pieces - has been written under the domination of this mood. I have tested and measured everything by it; it has been the sun to which all the images and conceptions and thoughts used have been as material objects reflecting its light. And perhaps this connects itself with the fact that it has been so necessary to write in the open air. The more universal feeling which I sought to convey refused itself from me within doors; nor could I at any time or by any means persuade the rhythm or style of expression to render itself up within a room - tending there always to break back into distinct metrical forms; which, however much I admire them in certain authors, and think them myself suitable for certain kinds of work, were not what I wanted, and did not express for me the feeling which I sought to express. This fact (of the necessity of the open air) is very curious, and I cannot really explain it. I only know that it is so, quite indubitable and insurmountable. I can feel it at once, the difference, in merely passing through a doorway - but I cannot explain it. Always especially the *sky* seemed to contain for me the key, the inspiration; the sight of it more than anything gave what I wanted (sometimes like a veritable lightning- flash coming down from it onto my paper - I a mere witness, but agitated with strange transports).

But if I should be asked - as I have sometimes been asked - What is the exact nature of this mood, of this illuminant splendour, of which you speak? I should have to reply that I can give no very concise and clear-cut answer. The whole of "Towards Democracy" is an endeavour to give it utterance; any mere single sentence, or direct definition, would be of no use - rather indeed would tend to obscure by limiting. All I can say is that there seems to be a vision possible to man, as from some more universal stand- point, free from the obscurity and localism which especially connect themselves with the passing clouds of desire, fear, and all ordinary thought and emotion; in that sense another and separate faculty; and as vision always means a sense of light, so here is a sense of inward light, unconnected of course with the mortal eye, but bringing to the eye of the mind the impression that it sees, and by means of a medium which washes as it were the interior surfaces of all objects and things and persons - how can I express it? - and yet this is most defective, for the sense is a sense that one is those objects and things and persons that one perceives, (and even that one is the whole universe,) - a sense in which sight and touch and hearing are all fused in identity. Nor can the matter be understood without realising that the whole faculty is deeply and intimately rooted on the far side of the moral and emotional nature, and beyond the thought-region of the brain.

And now with regard to the "I" which occurs so freely in this book. In this and in other such cases the author is naturally liable to a charge of egotism - and I personally do not feel disposed to combat any such charge that may be made. That there are mere egotisms and vanities embodied in these pages I do not for a moment doubt; and that so far as they exist they mar the expression and purpose of the book I also do not doubt. But the existence of these things does not affect the real question: What or Who in the main is the "I" spoken of?

To this question I must also frankly own that I can give no answer. I do not know. That the word is not used in the dramatic sense is all I can say. The "I" is myself - as well as I could find words to express myself: but what that Self is, and what its limits may be; and therefore what the self of any other person is and what its limits may be - I cannot tell. I have sometimes thought that perhaps the best work one could do - if one felt at any time enlargements and extensions of one's ego - was to simply record these, as faithfully as might be; leaving others, the science-man and the philosopher, to explain - and feeling confident that what really existed in oneself would be found to exist either consciously or in a latent form in other people. And I will say that I have in these records above all endeavoured to be genuine. If I have said "I, Nature" it was because at the time, at any rate, I felt "I, Nature"; if I have said "I am equal with the lowest," it was because I could not express what I felt more directly than by those words. The value of such statements can only appear by time; if they are corroborated by others then they help to form a body of record which may well be worth investigation, analysis and explanation. If they are not so corroborated, then they naturally and properly fall away as mere vagaries of self-deception. I have not the least doubt that anything which is really genuine will be corroborated. It seems to me more and more clear that the word "I" has a practically infinite range of meaning - that the ego covers far more ground than we usually suppose. At some points we are intensely individual, at others intensely sympathetic; some of our impressions (as the tickling of a hair) are of the most local and momentary character, others (as the sense of identity) involve long periods of time. Sometimes we are aware of almost a fusion between our own identity and that of another person. What does all this mean? Are we really separate individuals, or is individuality an illusion, or again is it only a part of the ego or soul that is individual, and not the whole? Is the ego absolutely one with the body, or is it only a small part of the body, or again is the body but a part of the self - one of its organs so to speak, and not the whole man? Or lastly is it perhaps not possible to express the truth by any direct use of these or other terms of ordinary language? Anyhow, what am I?

These are questions which come all down Time, demanding solution - which humanity is constantly endeavoring to find an answer to. I do not pretend to answer them. On the contrary I am sure that not one of the pieces in "Towards Democracy" has been written with the deliberate view of providing an answer. They have simply been written to express feelings which insisted on being expressed. Nevertheless it is possible that some of them - by giving the experiences and affirmations even of one person - may contribute material towards that answer to these and the like questions which in some region must assuredly be given.

That there is a region of consciousness removed beyond what we usually call mortality, into which we humans can yet pass, I practically do not doubt; but granting that this is a fact, its explanation still remains for investigation.

I have said in this brief note on "Towards Democracy" nothing about the influence of Whitman - for the same reason that I have said nothing about the influence of the sun or the winds. These influences lie too far back and ramify too complexly to be traced. I met with William Rossetti's little selection from "Leaves of Grass" in 1868 or 1869, and read that

and the original editions continuously for ten years. I never met with any other book (with the exception perhaps of Beethoven's sonatas) which I could read and re-read as I could this one. I find it difficult to imagine what my life would have been without it. "Leaves of Grass" "filtered and fibred" my blood: but I do not think I ever tried to imitate it or its style. Against the inevitable drift out of the more classic forms of verse into a looser and freer rhythm I fairly fought, contesting the ground ("kicking against the pricks") inch by inch during a period of seven years in numerous abortive and mongrel creations - till in 1881 I was finally compelled into the form (if such it can be called) of "Towards Democracy." I did not adopt it because it was an: approximation to the form of "Leaves of Grass." Whatever resemblance there may be between the rhythm, style, thoughts, constructions, etc., of the two books, must I think be set down to a deeper similarity of emotional atmosphere and intension in the two authors - even though that similarity may have sprung and no doubt largely did spring out of the personal influence of one upon the other. Anyhow our temperaments, standpoints, antecedents, etc., are so entirely diverse and opposite that, except for a few points, I can hardly imagine that there is much real resemblance to be traced. Whitman's full-blooded, copious, rank, masculine style must always make him one of the world's great originals - a perennial fountain of health and strength, moral as well as physical. He has the amplitude of the Earth itself, and can no more be thought away than a mountain can. He often indeed reminds one of a great quarry on a mountain side - the great shafts of sunlight and the shadows, the primitive face of the rock itself, the power and the daring of the men at work upon it, the tumbled blocks and masses, materials for endless buildings, and the beautiful tufts of weed or flower on inaccessible ledges - a picture most artistic in its very incoherence and formlessness.

"Towards Democracy" has a milder radiance, as of the moon compared with the sun - allowing you to glimpse the stars behind. Tender and meditative, less resolute and altogether less massive, it has the quality of the fluid and yielding air rather than of the solid and uncompromising earth.

- *Edward Carpenter*