There's a rule, as you know, which used to prevail
In the rollicking days of old.
Alike where peasants drained flagons of ale,
And nobles quaffed wine from ~~a~~ goblets of gold,
That every one who partook of the feast
Something must do to make it complete
Give a song or a story or ah the least
Whistle a tune, or stand on your head.

Perhaps the rule held good till now
And that is the reason why
I am drafted to give you a bit of prose
Or in the attempt to die.

CHAUTAUQUA COUNTY NY HISTORICAL SOCIETY 2013

Mistakes like ~~this~~ are nothing new
As Gottlieb found to be most true
When Hans his youngest ran away
And came not back for many a day
Thus Gottlieb told the woful tale
Of anxious search without avail.

Hans, – dat's mine son, You never mind him?
He runned away – I goes to find him?
I trubbels all de city streets
An' axes ebbery von I meets
You seen mine Hans? Now vare you spose
De lazy aussel somedimes goes?
But nobody knows naugh about him
So I tink dat I goes mitout him.

CHAUTAUQUA COUNTY NY HISTORICAL SOCIETY 2013

But jes de las' day dot I shtay
goes oop valkin' in
I take von mom look up Broadway
Ven haf I gets vay down de shtreet
Gottsdonner who'se you tink I meet
Jes' walkin' long way cross de shtreet?
Mein Gott im Himmel, Hans I see!
I crose to him he cross to me.
Den we meets oop an' dere we stans
Mein arm 'pout his neck, his pout mein,
All udder folks ve counted nein."
Ve take each udder py de hans
Und I hug him an' he hug me
So happy dat mein Hans I see.
Den I say "Hans Oh Hans mein Shon"
An' he say "Fader!" like he shust begun.

CHAUTAUQUA COUNTY NY HISTORICAL SOCIETY 2013

Den mine eyes fill oop to der brim
I look and look und't vasn't him!

So ladies, it may be, your poet
will prove a Tartar, ere you know it.

CHAUTAUQUA COUNTY NY HISTORICAL SOCIETY 2013

It's the orders though, and I may as well say,
From ~~one that~~ orders I feel myself bound to obey
Not from any old fashioned, humbugging notion
Of ~~wholesale~~ inherent gallantry and ~~indespread~~ wholesale devotion
But just from a matter of fact belief
That every ~~one~~ man needs a commander-in-chief.
~~Besides~~ And as ~~and~~ as she who orders the course of my life,
Subscribing herself my "affectionate wife,"
~~Fearing I might fall off in stays~~
Unable to keep me in constant review
~~And fearing that~~ Lest I fall off therefrom, say a point or two,
~~Has~~ Deputed her power, in a cousinly way
To the Admiral, regnant at Paradise Bay.
My allegiance, taking a vice-regal form,
And mindful of future distraction and storm,

CHAUTAUQUA COUNTY NY HISTORICAL SOCIETY 2003

Goes over to her, and obeys each behest,
With something of grace, if but little of zest.
So nothing would do but I must prepare
A verse for a Sewing Society's ~~Midsummer~~ fair;
~~To be~~ Held when the dog-star ~~hottest rages~~ fiercest doth rage
(~~Ice-creams~~ Ice-cold lemonade will ~~best~~ his force assuage)
In the hottest place that the town can afford
(They expect to sell ice-cream by the cord.);
Besides who would buy such goods as theirs
Good enough goods to be sold at fairs
And warm enough too when the sultry airs ~~go~~
Go straying o'er earth, regardless of gones
When sweat breaks out on the hardest stones
Humanity swelters and growls and moans
Begs for a ~~draft~~ drink in piteous tones

CHAUTAUQUA COUNTY NY HISTORICAL SOCIETY 2013

Would like to taste of the flesh it owns
And sit in a cellar awhile — in its bones.
'Twas a ~~very~~ hard command for one like me
Without any knowledge of occult or seer
Who knows no more of a cannibal's needs
Than he cares to know how the rascal feeds.
Who never yet could see aught but fun
In thrift and charity, rolled in one;
Or see how it pays to leave ~~shirts~~ home in the lurch
~~While~~ And dress a wax-doll for the sake of the church.
Or guess ~~how~~ why a farmer's overwrought wife
Should steal an hour from a weary life
To sew with a thread that is waxed with cares
And number her stitches with fresh gray hairs

CHAUTAUQUA COUNTY NY HISTORICAL SOCIETY 2013

Just to make some trinket to sell for a dime
A sempstress would make in half the time,
Which all things considered, the chances are
She'll buy herself when she comes to the fair.
It always reminds me of those silly elves,
Devising mean tricks to play on themselves.
to name the policy fair and plump
It is beating a gentleman round the stump
Who despite the notion attached to his name
Is rarely beaten at that sort of game.
But I see that the ladies think I'm in the wrong
For attempting a sermon instead of a song.
"Give us a rest" a lady cries
One of the tables guarding
We asked for a song and you give us instead

CHAUTAUQUA COUNTY NY HISTORICAL SOCIETY 2013

Rythmical portions of ethical bread
Flung at the working Society's head, —
A sort of moral bombarding."

It's very true, and it seems quite clear
The ladies have got the wrong pig by the ear.
They can't talk back and they've got to hear.
Before I have finished they may find out
That a poet's dreams are not all about

Bewitching eyes
And smiles and sighs
And cheeks of milk and roses,
Of two = lips sweet
Or fairy feet
Or ankles neat

CHAUTAUQUA COUNTY NY HISTORICAL SOCIETY 2013

Or even Grecian noses.

But in the rough a
Conjest the stuff
That life is made of — hard and tough.

And yet perchance they will exclaim
The trouble all is in the name
And thus proceed to show it.
We wished a song ~~not~~
Which was not wrong
But failed to find the poet.

~~Such incidents are nothing new~~

CHAUTAUQUA COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY 2013

But
I found one day
I've somewhere seen in an account book
very few people ever think
Where persons few even, deign to look
A story so grand, that if it be true,
'Twere a pity to keep it a moment from you,
And if it be not, I can only declare,
It's a pity indeed, to my mind, but it were.
So I ventured to dip off this orient gaze
And dress it anew for your accident eyes.
And if you will listen I'll try to disclose,
As brief as I can, how the story goes.

After Moses had killed the Egyptian, you know,
He concluded his health required him to go
To some other country and tarry awhile
Till Pharaoh found something to suit his bile.

CHAUTAUQUA COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY 2015

Jake picked himself up and slid quietly out,
Twixt sundown and sunrise, without any doubt,
And kept making time, till he reached the divide
And scrambled across to the Midian side.
There he got him a wife as the fashion was then
From 'mong the most transient of wayfaring men,

And no one can doubt who the story will read
He'd small fancy for trying to make a stampede
'Mong chaps who had rather, he clearly foreseen
Make adobe for nothing and furnish the straw.

Squatted down on a ranch with his Midianite
In camels and sheep took unbounded delight.

Raised a family up, and a partner became
Of his father-in-law, Mr. Jethro by name,
In the stock business ranging, with numerous flocks
Across the wide desert to Horeb's grim rocks;
Sticking close to his cattle and showing no sign
Of a wish to be caught in the exodus line
For no one can think, who the scripture will read
He'd the least inclination to try and stampede
A people so guileless of sand in the crew,
As to make bricks for nothing and furnish the straw.
He'd had quite enough of political strife
And was more than contented to settle right down
Forego all this chance for fame and a crown
And be a "cow-boy" the rest of his life.

So when ~~it was~~ the Lord hinted, that after a while
He might try it again, it brought never a smile;
But he put up excuses you know, by the score
To show that he wasn't ~~on that~~ that sort of a man any more.
By his own account, few people, it would seem
Were ever less fitted to harbor such dream.
Dyspeptic and weak, with a family now,
Little stomach at best, it would seem, for a row,
With a stammering tongue and afraid, too of snakes,
He declared he was fit ~~declared~~ to achieve but
He was born he ~~said~~ just to make mistakes.
He seemed fitted for naught but ~~the~~ grandest mistakes.

Thus far with the Scripture the story ~~we have~~ runs true
And the pastures of Horeb rise fresh on our view.
Tis here while he whined of his weakness and sins
That the story we spoke of in strictness begins.

CHAUTAUQUA COUNTY NY HISTORICAL SOCIETY 2010

Twas here one night while Moses slept

He thought one night as sound he slept
And days and slaves his cattle kept
And days and hinds the cattle kept

He heard a voice which seemed to say

"Arise and at the peep of day

"Take what I bid
"~~Pack up your duds and hie away~~

"A camel ~~take~~ and a servant take

"Three days ~~cooked rations for his~~ supplies, for comforts sake,

"Packed in a basket, and a fish

"Dead, salt and dry, as you would wish.

"This guard with care for it shall be

"Thy guide to heavenly mystery.

"At sunrise mount and from thy seat

"Guide the dull dromedary's feet

"Around a circle true and fair"

"Three furlongs, traced with earnest care

CHAUTAUQUA COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY 2013

"Three times three rounds, at highest speed
"See thou be made with careful heed.
"Then close thine eyes, breathe many a prayer
"And of thy course take thou no care,
"Look not behind — gaze not before
"Until thou reach the crumbling shore
"Then watch the fish with jealous care
"But let no soul thy secret share
"And whensoever it bursts away
"And spite thy hindering hand
"Goes dashing headlong on its way
"Down to its rotten strand
"There shalt ~~thou tarry till~~ one passeth by
"Bearing commandment from the ~~One~~ Lord Most High
"The I am that I am, lo he shall show.

CHAUTAUQUA COUNTY NY HISTORICAL SOCIETY 2015

"My Servant Moses what he needs to know"

Just as he was commanded, so he did
A faithful servant from the rest he picked
The fleetest dromedary to prepare
Himself within the basket hid.
The largest fish of all they had
'Twas full six months ago, or more
'Twas netted on the Red Sea shore
Smoked till its golden scales were dun
And dried beneath the desert sun.
They vaulted after morning prayer
Three times the mystic circle traced
Then closed their eyes and knew not where
The desert-born mysticks paced,

CHAUTAUQUA COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY 2015

That night they slept upon the sand;
Next day they struck a barren Shore
And journeyed by the rocky strand
Until the sweltering noontide hour.
~~Reached~~ Found then a mighty rock and crept
Within its shade; ate drank and slept.
Then on they rode till night came on
And Moses found his fish was gone
Then he was wroth and fierce he turned
With stammering tongue and face that burned
Upon the slave. Quick to his knee
The varlet slipped "I swear to thee,
Oh Master that it was not me!"
While thou didst lie beside the rock
There came ~~another fisherman~~ with shock great

CHAUTAUQUA COUNTY NY HISTORICAL SOCIETY 2013

And working Master I espied
The fish that had been smoked & dried
Upraise the basket's fastened lid
He did — I swear to thee he did —
I saw 't as plain as I see thee
Leapt out and ran down to the sea"!

Then Mose's anger rose apace
He smote the kneeling servant's face.
Nome knoweth what he had done more
But one he had not seen before
Came now between and sternly said
"Peace, wicked man! Would'st thou still shed
"Thy fellow's blood and make the sand
"Thy slaughtered victim's hidden grave
"As erst thou didst the Egyptian Isaland
"Thou Israelitish slave!"

CHAUTAUQUA COUNTY NY HISTORICAL SOCIETY 2013

Then down fell Moses ~~fell upon~~ on his face.

A fear ~~Terror~~ usurping anger's place!

For many ~~and many~~ a weary silent year

No tongue had ~~uttered~~ spoke that word of fear!

They who ~~had~~ once sought him had forgot

The Hebrew foundling ~~whom the princess~~ who was brought

Into the palace ~~kindly~~ reared and taught.

A prince by Pharaoh's ~~foolish~~ daughter

~~Only to magic ungrateful daughter~~

~~The past was~~ The past indeed was dead

The Lord himself had said

"None seeketh thee! — Not one

Remembereth to-day what thou hast done!"

So knew he, therefore ~~By this he knew that~~ this was he

Divinely sent to show

What Israel's leader erst must know

The things which Moses ~~t~~ sought to know

Of heavenly mystery.

CHAUTAUQUA COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY 2013

"Oh master, good," he cried "forgive!"
"For I was wroth, lest I
"Had missed the lesson thou canst give
" Without which I shall die."
"Oh let me follow where thou goest
"And learn of thee what e'er thou knowest!"

"Nay" said the presence, "Well I see
"Thou can't not bear to learn of me.
"I go my way; thou goest thine"
"Nay! Nay," cried Moses "thine is mine!
I will go with thee! I will bear
Whatsoe'er I must, thy love to share!"
Upspring he stood with manly grace
And scanned the strangers solemn face.

CHAUTAUQUA COUNTY NY HISTORICAL SOCIETY 2013

"God bless," the stranger cried and turned.
Then Mono's heart within him burned
And when the stranger strode away
His steps he sought no more to stay
But followed where the other went
To every word and ach attent.

Full soon they reached a river's side
Whose current swift and thunder wide
Stretched deep and far through all the land
A thousand leagues on either hand.
A city stone beyond the flood
Upon this bank a humlet rude
Of fishers' huts. Upon the shore
Their boats were drawn, with seine and oar.

CHAUTAUQUA COUNTY NY HISTORICAL SOCIETY 2013

All ready for the ~~morrow's rise~~ slumbering crew.
A mighty rock the stranger threw
~~And stove one fragile prow~~
~~Which tore one fragile bottom through~~
Which rent the fragile plank

All ready for the morrow's toil.
But one the stranger did despoil
Against ~~one~~ the fragile upturned keel
He dashed a rock with furious zeal
A gaping wound the missile made
Which all the river might rush through
If on its breast the keel were laid!
"Ah pity for the slumbring crew"
"Why dost thou that?" Moses began

CHAUTAUQUA COUNTY NY HISTORICAL SOCIETY 2013

Wouldst starve a worthy fisherman?

"Go back!" the stranger said "I see
Thou canst not bear to learn of me!
Here lies my pathway, There is thine!"
Upspoke the stutterer "Thine is mine!"
I will go with thee! I will bear
Whate'er I must thy love to share.

Fall soon they met as on they strode
A noble youth who bravely rode
A gallant barbs. The stranger threw
A javelin which pierced him through.
"Hold now!" cried Moses "thou hast slain
A guiltless man! His blood again —"

CHAUTAUQUA COUNTY NY HISTORICAL SOCIETY 2013

"Will sink into the desert sand,
"As did the blood of Goeland!"
The stranger said.
Then Moses' head
Sank low upon his heaving breast
Abashed he heard the stern behest
"Go thou thy way, full well I see,
Thou nien canst bear to learn of me!"
Replied the prophet "Now I swear
"Whatere thou dost I will forbear
"Thy wisdom only let me share!"

CHAUTAUQUA COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY 2013

They journeyed on through all the night
And just as dawned the morning light
They ~~came~~ stopped at length and saw where two
Digged ~~under~~ 'neath a city's tottering wall
The stranger's hand the ~~wall~~ tower o'er threw
And ~~buried~~ crushed the town ~~by~~ beneath its fall.

Then Nemes cried – "Now Chance hast slain
Two more without offence. Thy hand
Three times this day hath known the stain
Mine caught from murdered Iceland!
No more seek I thy love to gain
Fell vampire thou – blood loving Cain!"

CHAUTAUQUA COUNTY NY HISTORICAL SOCIETY 2013

~~Who~~ stern he gazed the stranger's face
Assumed a superhuman grace.
Quick the earth
~~The earthly~~ image fell away
Dissolved the ~~lineaments~~ form and face of clay,
Whom but a ~~wise~~ man ~~he had~~ the prophet guessed
The angel Gabriel stood confest.

CHAUTAUQUA COUNTY NY HISTORICAL SOCIETY 2013

Down fell the prophet then astonied
All trembling on the trembling ground
While o'er him towered the winged knight
Enhalved in eternal light,
While fast the piercing accents flung
Which fell like lightnings from his tongue,
Smiting the prophet's hidden cheek
Making his heart thenceforth so meek
That all the after ages strive in vain
To rival his humility again!

This was the word
The prophet heard:

CHAUTAUQUA COUNTY NY HISTORICAL SOCIETY 2013

Know thou weak and faithless man
God's hidden things ye may never scan!
See, while a moment I lift the vail
How the eye of the finite forever must fail
He only is wise that knoweth for aye
What is to be, has been, is ~~of~~ being today!
From the first to the last, in the cycle of time,
In eternity's mazes — the cycle sublime!
~~Of the things~~ that which thou sawest thou only couldst see
The ~~brief~~ present that is ~~and~~ while hidden from thee
Was the past that has been, — the to come that shall be!

Now list while I try to reveal unto thee
The truth of what seemeth but
~~Of that thou hast seen as a~~ mystery!

CHAUTAUQUA COUNTY NY HISTORICAL SOCIETY 2013

A mighty king with an army great
Came marching on in regal state
~~Against~~ To seize the city ~~which haughtily~~ thou wert shown
~~Across from the little~~ Over against fishing town
He had sent his messengers on before
To seize ~~every~~ each boat on the hither shore
To ferry his army quickly o'er.
And they had ~~taken~~ left not a single ~~one~~ prow
Both for the scuth ~~which I had done~~ you angrily saw
But the boat with ~~the~~ damaged keel beside was spared
~~In an~~ By an hour's work in was well repaired
And the fisher ~~folk~~ longtime shall feel
It was well indeed for them that I stove that keel.

CHAUTAUQUA COUNTY NY HISTORICAL SOCIETY 2013

The youngster slain in his youthful pride
Had met the doom of the parricide
If by thus by my hand he had not died
The young man but for me had died
Stained with the crime of parricide!

Who digged ~~beneath~~ the city's wall
Sought to
~~Would~~ rob an orphan of his all
A dying father with pious care
~~With pious care a father there~~
Had hid for his needy children there
~~Dying had hidden for his heir~~!"

~~Know thou oh weak and faithless man~~
~~God's hidden things ye may not scan!~~
~~What to thy folly seemeth wise~~
~~Is folly to all seeing eyes!~~
~~And what thou deemest fair and good~~
~~May evil be~~ May be with evil all imbued!
~~May evil~~ What to thy blindness is but ill
Freighted with blessing for thee still!

CHAUTAUQUA COUNTY NY HISTORICAL SOCIETY 2013

Know then, Oh ~~weak~~ foolish and faithless man
God's wisdom thou mayst never span!
What seems to thy weakness ~~seemeth~~ only wise
Is folly oft to the Perfect eyes!
And what thou deemest most fair and good
To God with evil is oft imbrued!
What to thy blindness ~~seemeth~~ fraught with ill
Freighted with blessing works oft his will!

CHAUTAUQUA COUNTY NY HISTORICAL SOCIETY 2015