

**MORNING LIGHTS  
AND EVENING  
SHADOWS**

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Morning Lights and Evening Shadows by Rossiter Johnson

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**ROSSITER JOHNSON**


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AND EVENING  
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L. M.*

# Morning Lights and Evening Shadows

BY

 ROSSITER JOHNSON



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MORNING LIGHTS AND  
EVENING SHADOWS





## Morning Lights and Evening Shadows

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### A SONG FOR A NEW YEAR.

**T**HE sea sings the song of the ages,  
The mountain stands mutely sublime,  
While the blank of Eternity's pages  
Is filled by the fingers of Time.  
But Man robs the sea of its wonder,  
Making syllabled speech of its roar;  
He rendeth the mountain asunder,  
And rolleth his wheels through its core;  
He delveth deep down for earth's treasure,  
And every locked secret unbars;  
He scanneth the heavens at pleasure,  
And writeth his name on the stars.

But purpose is weaker than passion,  
And patience is dearer than blood;  
And his face groweth withered and ashen,  
Ere he findeth and graspeth the good.  
He pursueth the phantom of beauty,  
Or peddleth his valor for pelf,  
Till the iron of merciless Duty  
Hath cloven the armor of self.

He soweth the life of his brother,  
He wasteth the half of his soul;  
The harvest is reaped by another,  
And Death dippeth deep for his toll.

So the march of triumphal procession,  
That Science were fain to begin,  
Is hindered with painful digression  
Of ignorance, folly, and sin.  
Through mazes of needless confusion  
The story of Freedom must bend,  
And the grandest and simplest conclusion  
Go stumbling along to its end.  
Yet a year does not slide o'er the border  
Of time but some progress it shows;  
And a lustrum proves prescience and order:  
Thus the drama creeps on to its close.

If the blood that was weaker than water  
Too thinly and sluggishly ran,  
Lo! the wine of the vintage of slaughter  
Giveth strength to the sinews of Man,  
And the shout of a lusty young nation  
Now greets his gray brothers with glee;  
And the swell of its ringing vibration  
Sweeps over the land and the sea;  
While Liberty looks for a morrow  
That promiseth joyous increase,  
As waneth her midnight of sorrow  
And waxeth her morning of peace.