

# **LEAVES OF GRASS**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9781760572334

Leaves of grass by Walt Whitman

Except for use in any review, the reproduction or utilisation of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the permission of the publisher, Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd, PO Box 1576 Collingwood, Victoria 3066 Australia.

All rights reserved.

Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.  
Cover @ 2017

This book is sold subject to the condition that it shall not, by way of trade or otherwise, be lent, re-sold, hired out, or otherwise circulated without the publisher's prior consent in any form or binding or cover other than that in which it is published and without a similar condition including this condition being imposed on the subsequent purchaser.

[www.triestepublishing.com](http://www.triestepublishing.com)

**WALT WHITMAN**

**LEAVES  
OF GRASS**



**L**EAVES OF GRASS.

---

BY  
WALT WHITMAN.

PREFACE TO THE ORIGINAL EDITION, 1855.



LONDON:  
TRÜBNER & CO.

## WALT WHITMAN.

### PREFACE TO THE FIRST EDITION OF "LEAVES OF GRASS" (1855) BY WALT WHITMAN.

*Demy 8vo., fine toned paper, Price 1s. 6d. (\$0.36).*

At the suggestion of the late THOMAS DIXON of Sunderland, and by permission of the Author, this beautiful Essay is now reprinted. It is not contained in any current edition whatever of Walt Whitman's works.

EMERSON described *Leaves of Grass* as "the most extraordinary piece of wit and wisdom that America has yet contributed. . . I have great joy in it. I find incomparable things said incomparably well, as they must be."

RUSKIN writes that the hostility WHITMAN'S writings have excited is due to the fact that "they are deadly true—in the sense of rifles—against our deadliest sins."

EDWARD DOWDEN, speaking of WHITMAN, says:—"In him we meet a man not shaped out of old-world clay, not cast in any old-world mould, and hard to name by any old-world name. He attracts us; he repels us; he excites our curiosity, wonder, admiration, love; or our extreme repugnance. He does anything except leave us indifferent. However we feel towards him we cannot despise him."

Only 500 copies have been printed and, as many of these have been subscribed for, early application is necessary to secure those which remain:

LONDON: TRÜBNER & CO.

## JOHN MACLEAY PEACOCK.

### POEMS BY THE LATE JOHN MACLEAY PEACOCK, Chosen and Edited, with an Introductory Notice, by WALTER LEWIN.

*Royal 16mo., pp. 160, Boards, 3s. 6d.*

"This is a welcome little volume of verse, the voice of a remarkable man, now dead."—*Yorkshire Post*. "Really a genuine poet."—*Cheshire Observer*. "Abounding in feeling and fancy."—*Daily Post*. "That Mr. Peacock was a Poet there can be no doubt."—*Robinson's Monthly*. "There are very few working men who can pour out their inner life as Mr. Peacock does; very few who have seen, and felt, and reflected, and sung as he has."—*Liverpool Mercury*. "Abounds in pieces of intrinsic merit."—*North British Daily Mail*. "Very daintily printed. . . . A book of intrinsic interest as a memorial of a life of singular pathos."—*Truthseeker*.

PUBLISHED IN AID OF THE SURVIVING RELATIVES OF THE AUTHOR.

LONDON: REEVES & TURNER.

NOTICE.—Copies of this work may be had direct from the Editor, 4 German Terrace, Birkenhead, *Carriage Free*, for 3s. (\$0.75) each. American Remittances should be by Post Office Order or Currency Notes, *Not Postage Stamps*. Autotype Portraits of Mr. Peacock, Price 6d. (\$0.12) each, may also be had.



# LEAVES OF GRASS

BY

WALT WHITMAN:

*PREFACE*

TO THE

ORIGINAL EDITION, 1855.



LONDON:  
TRÜBNER & CO.  
1881.

Bt. from Dobell






# LEAVES OF GRASS

BY

WALT WHITMAN.

*Preface to the Original Edition, 1855.*

MERICA does not repel the past, or what it has produced under its forms or amid other politics, or the idea of castes, or the old religions . . . accepts the lesson with calmness . . . is not so impatient as has been supposed that the slough still sticks to opinions and manners and literature while the life which served its requirements has passed into the new life of the new forms . . . perceives that the corpse is slowly borne from the eating and sleeping rooms of the house . . . perceives that it waits a little while in the door . . . that it was fittest for its days . . . that its action has descended to the stalwart and well shaped heir who approaches . . . and that he shall be fittest for his days.

*the to.* || The Americans of all nations at any time upon the earth, have probably the fullest poetical nature. The United States themselves are essentially the greatest poem. In the history of the earth hitherto the largest and most stirring appear tame and orderly to their ampler largeness and stir. Here at last is something in the doings of man that corresponds with the

broadcast doings of the day and night. Here is not merely a nation, but a teeming nation of nations. Here is action untied from strings, necessarily blind to particulars and details, magnificently moving in vast masses. Here is the hospitality which for ever indicates heroes . . . Here are the rougns and beards and space and ruggedness and nonchalance that the soul loves. Here the performance, disdaining the trivial, unapproached in the tremendous audacity of its crowds and groupings and the push of its perspective, spreads with crampless and flowing breadth, and showers its prolific and splendid extravagance. One sees it must indeed own the riches of the summer and winter, and need never be bankrupt while corn grows from the ground or the orchards drop apples or the bays contain fish or men beget children upon women.

Other states indicate themselves in their deputies . . . but the genius of the United States is not best or most in its executives or legislatures, nor in its ambassadors or authors, or colleges or churches or parlors, nor even in its newspapers or inventors . . . but always most in the common people. Their manners, speech, dress, friendships—the freshness and candour of their physiognomy—the picturesque looseness of their carriage . . . their deathless attachment to freedom—their aversion to anything indecorous, or soft, or mean—the practical acknowledgment of the citizens of one state by the citizens of all other states—the fierceness of their roused resentment—their curiosity and welcome of novelty—their self-esteem and wonderful sympathy—their susceptibility to a slight—the air they have of persons who never knew how it felt to stand in the presence of superiors—the fluency of their speech—their delight in music, the sure symptom of manly tenderness and native elegance of soul—their good temper

*... had a tremendous...*

and open handedness—the terrible significance of their elections—the President's taking off his hat to them, not they to him—these, too, are unrhymed poetry. It awaits the gigantic and generous treatment worthy of it.

The largeness of nature, or the nation, were monstrous without a corresponding largeness and generosity of the spirit of the citizen. Not nature nor swarming states, nor streets and steamships, nor prosperous business nor farms, nor capital nor learning, may suffice for the ideal of man . . . nor suffice the poet. No reminiscences may suffice either. A live nation can always cut a deep mark, and can have the best authority the cheapest . . . namely, from its own soul. This is the sum of the profitable uses of individuals or states, and of present action and grandeur, and of the subjects of poets.—As if it were necessary to trot back generation after generation to the eastern records! As if the beauty and sacredness of the demonstrable must fall behind that of the mythical! As if men do not make their mark out of any times! As if the opening of the western continent by discovery, and what has transpired since in North and South America, were less than the small theatre of the antique or the aimless sleep-walking of the middle ages! The pride of the United States leaves the wealth and finesse of the cities, and all returns of commerce and agriculture, and all the magnitude of geography or shows of exterior victory, to enjoy the breed of full sized men, or one full sized man unconquerable and simple.

The American poets are to enclose old and new, for America is the race of races. Of them a bard is to be commensurate with a people. To him the other continents arrive as contributors . . . he gives them reception for their sake and his own sake. His spirit responds to his country's spirit . . . he