

ON THE BACK COVER:

AN UNCOLLECTED WHITMAN PROSE MANUSCRIPT

This prose fragment, written by Whitman, was found in the front of a first edition copy of *November Boughs* (1888), now housed in the collection of the Historical Society of Pennsylvania. It is written on the back of a paid furniture bill from J. B. Van Sciver, Philadelphia. Originally published in a limited edition by The Cooper Union, the manuscript is reprinted here with permission. Heavily revised with interpolations and deletions, it reads:

I will want my poems (I had said ~~to myself~~ before beginning) to be the poems of Joy. I will want them to be the poems of ~~the~~ Woman entirely as much as of Man. I ~~have~~ had the wish to put the true Union of these States in songs without any [*illegible word*]. Henceforth if they live and are read, I ~~pray it may~~ hope it must be just as much South as North—just as much along the Pacific as Atlantic—~~just as much~~ in the valley of the Mississippi, in Kanada, in Texas, the shores of Puget Sound

The manuscript does not appear in Edward Grier's edition of Whitman's *Notebooks and Unpublished Prose Manuscripts* (1984).

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ED FOLSOM