

Emily Dickinson Poems for Cross-cultural Collaboration, Spring 2008

Emily Dickinson (1830–86). *The Poems of Emily Dickinson: Variorum Edition*, edited by R. W. Franklin, 3 vols., Harvard University Press, 1998.



I taste a liquor never brewed -
From Tankards scooped in Pearl -
Not all the Frankfort Berries
Yield such an Alcohol!

Inebriate of air - am I - 5
And Debauchee of Dew -
Reeling, thro' endless summer days -
From inns of molten Blue -

When "Landlords" turn the drunken Bee
Out of the Foxglove's door - 10
When Butterflies - renounce their "drams" -
I shall but drink the more!

Till Seraphs swing their snowy Hats,
And Saints - to windows run -
To see the little Tippler 15
Leaning against the - Sun -

(Volume 1: Number 207. Bound in Fascicle 12 in 1862)



Tell all the Truth but tell it slant -
Success in Circuit lies
Too bright for our infirm Delight
The Truth's superb surprise
As Lightning to the Children eased
With explanation kind
The Truth must dazzle gradually
Or every man be blind -

(Volume 2: Number 1263. Manuscript about 1872)



BECAUSE I could not stop for Death -
 He kindly stopped for me -
 The Carriage held but just Ourselves -
 And Immortality.

We slowly drove - He knew no haste 5
 And I had put away
 My labor and my leisure too,
 For His Civility -

We passed the school, where children strove 10
 At Recess - in the Ring -
 We passed the Fields of Gazing Grain -
 We passed the Setting Sun -

Or rather - He passed Us -
 The Dews drew quivering and Chill -
 For only Gossamer, my Gown -
 My Tippet - only Tulle -

We paused before a House that seemed 15
 A Swelling of the Ground -
 The Roof was scarcely visible -
 The Cornice - in the Ground -

Since then - 'tis centuries - and yet
 Feels shorter than the Day
 I first surmised the Horses' Heads
 Were toward Eternity -

(Volume 1: Number 479. Fascicle 23 in 1862)