

1825

A SONG OF PITCAIRN'S ISLAND

William Cullen Bryant

Bryant, William Cullen (1794-1878) - American poet and editor of the New York Evening Post who practiced law before devoting his life to writing. A master of blank verse, Bryant's earliest works are considered his best. A Song of Pitcairn's Island (1825) - Voiced by the young Polynesian wife of a British settler.

Opening lines: Come, take our boy, and we will go / Before our cabin door;...

A SONG OF PITCAIRNS ISLAND

Come, take our boy, and we will go
 Before our cabin-door;
 The winds shall bring us, as they blow,
 The murmurs of the shore;
 And we will kiss his young blue eyes,
 And I will sing him, as he lies,
 Songs that were made of yore:
 I'll sing, in his delighted ear,
 The island lays thou lov'st to hear.

And thou, while stammering I repeat,
 Thy country's tongue shalt teach;
 'Tis not so soft, but far more sweet
 Than my own native speech:
 For thou no other tongue didst know,
 When, scarcely twenty moons ago,
 Upon Tahete's beach,
 Thou cam'st to woo me to be thine,
 With many a speaking look and sign.

I knew thy meaning- thou didst praise
 My eyes, my locks of jet;
 Ah! well for me they won thy gaze,
 But thine were fairer yet!
 I'm glad to see my infant wear
 Thy soft blue eyes and sunny hair,
 And when my sight is met
 By his white brow and blooming cheek,
 I feel a joy I cannot speak.

Come, talk of Europe's maids with me,
 Whose necks and cheeks, they tell,
 Outshine the beauty of the sea,
 White foam and crimson shell.
 I'll shape like theirs my simple dress,
 And bind like them each jetty tress,
 A sight to please thee well;
 And for my dusky brow will braid
 A bonnet like an English maid.
 Come, for the soft low sunlight calls,

We lose the pleasant hours;
'Tis lovelier than these cottage walls,
That seat among the flowers.
And I will learn of thee a prayer,
To Him who gave a home so fair,
A lot so blest as ours
The God who made, for thee and me,
This sweet lone isle amid the sea.

THE END