

1829

TO THE RIVER ARVE

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. To the River Arve (1829) - Opening lines: Not from the sand or cloven rocks, / Thou rapid Arve! thy waters flow;...

TO THE RIVER ARVE

Not from the sands or cloven rocks,
 Thou rapid Arve! thy waters flow;
 Nor earth, within her bosom, locks
 Thy dark unfathomed wells below.
 Thy springs are in the cloud, thy stream
 Begins to move and murmur first
 Where ice-peaks feel the noonday beam,
 Or rain-storms on the glacier burst.
 Born where the thunder and the blast
 And morning's earliest light are born,
 Thou rushest swoln, and loud, and fast,
 By these low homes, as if in scorn:
 Yet humbler springs yield purer waves;
 And brighter, glassier streams than thine,
 Sent up from earth's unlighted caves,
 With heaven's own beam and image shine.
 Yet stay; for here are flowers and trees;
 Warm rays on cottage-roofs are here;
 And laugh of girls, and hum of bees,
 Here linger till thy waves are clear.
 Thou heedest not- thou hastest on;
 From steep to steep thy torrent falls;
 Till, mingling with the mighty Rhone,
 It rests beneath Geneva's walls.
 Rush on- but were there one with me
 That loved me, I would light my hearth
 Here, where with God's own majesty
 Are touched the features of the earth.
 By these old peaks, white, high, and vast,
 Still rising as the tempests beat,
 Here would I dwell, and sleep, at last,
 Among the blossoms at their feet.

THE END