

# Plant a Tree

He who plants a tree,  
Plants a hope.  
Rootlets up through fibers blindly grope;  
Leaves unfold into horizons free.  
So man's life must climb  
From the clods of time  
Unto heavens sublime.  
Canst thou prophesy, thou little tree,  
What the glory of thy boughs shall be?

He who plants a tree,–  
Plants a joy;  
Plants a comfort that will never cloy;  
Every day a fresh reality,  
Beautiful and strong,  
To whose shelter throng  
Creatures blithe with song.  
If thou couldst but know, thou happy tree,  
Of the bliss that shall inhabit thee!

He who plants a tree,–  
He plants peace.  
Under its green curtains jargons cease.  
Leaf and zephyr murmur soothingly;  
Shadows soft with sleep  
Down tired eyelids creep,  
Balm of slumber deep.  
Never hast thou dreamed, thou blessed tree,  
Of the benediction thou shalt be.

He who plants a tree,–  
He plants youth;  
Vigor won for centuries in sooth;  
Life of time, that hints eternity!  
Boughs their strength uprear:  
New shoots, every year,  
On old growths appear;  
Thou shalt teach the ages, sturdy tree,  
Youth of soul is immortality.

He who plants a tree,–  
He plants love,  
Tents of coolness spreading out above  
Wayfarers he may not live to see.  
Gifts that grow are best;  
Hands that bless are blest;  
Plant! Life does the rest!  
Heaven and earth help him who plants a tree,  
And his work its own reward shall be.

~ *Lucy Larcom* ~