

Booker T. Washington

The word is writ that he who runs may read.

What is the passing breath of earthly fame?

But to snatch glory from the hands of blame —

That is to be, to live, to strive indeed.

A poor Virginia cabin gave the seed,

And from its dark and lowly door there came

A peer of princes in the world's acclaim,

A master spirit for the nation's need.

Strong, silent, purposeful beyond his kind,

The mark of rugged force on brow and lip,

Straight on he goes, nor turns to look behind

Where hot the hounds come baying at his hip;

With one idea foremost in his mind,

Like the keen prow of some on-forging ship.