

Sonnet--to an American Painter Departing for Europe

by William Cullen Bryant

Thine eyes shall see the light of distant skies:
Yet, Cole! thy heart shall bear to Europe's strand
A living image of thy native land,
Such as on thy own glorious canvass lies.
Lone lakes--savannahs where the bison roves--
Rocks rich with summer garlands--solemn streams--
Skies, where the desert eagle wheels and screams--
Spring bloom and autumn blaze of boundless groves.
Fair scenes shall greet thee where thou goest--fair,
But different--every where the trace of men,
Paths, homes, graves, ruins, from the lowest glen
To where life shrinks from the fierce Alpine air.
Gaze on them, till the tears shall dim thy sight,
But keep that earlier, wilder image bright.

1829

<http://www.vcu.edu/engweb/webtexts/Bryant/sonnettocole.html> ACCESSED 7 FEBRUARY 2014