

The Sleeping Bear

WARREN W. LAMPORT

On the coast of Leelanau,
With his nose stretched on his paw,
And with eyes that tightly close
As if locked in calm repose,
In his bleak and storm-beat lair,
Lies the sailor's Sleeping Bear;
While the lake's deep, rolling tide,
Stretching westward far and wide,
And the forests on the land
And the dunes of drifting sand,
Round about their vigil keep
O'er his long, unbroken sleep.

With his head turned toward the strait,
As if set to guard its gate,
'Truant to his trust he seems,
Given o'er to misty dreams;
Dreaming of the days gone by
When no human foot was nigh,
When as yet no ship had traced
Pathway o'er the watery waste,
But o'er lake and virgin wood
Reigned primeval solitude;
And of all that passes 'round,
Naught disturb his sleep profound.

Indian war-whoops loud have rung,
Settlers' echoing axes swung,
Busy mills hummed night and day
As they stole his wealth away:
And ten thousand ships have crept
Slowly by him while he slept;
Like the sphinx in Egypt's clime,
He heeds not the things of time.
Fighting winds that vex the air,
Foaming waves that storm his lair,
Only lull him to his rest,
Sleeping calm on Nature's breast.

Sleep on, sluggard of the lake!
Undisturbed thy slumbers take!
But, adown the coming years,
When the Son of Man appears,
When He speaks and bids our clay
Waken for the judgment day,
Nature, too, shall hear His call,
Skies shall rend, and rocks shall fall,
Seas shall flee away in dread
From His stern and awful tread!
Thou wilt surely waken then,
With the waking sons of men.



WARREN WAYNE LAMPORT was born at Mishawaka, Ind., Nov. 17, 1855. His parents were pioneers of that region, and his father was a local preacher in the Methodist Episcopal church. When he was twelve years of age, the family moved to a fruit farm at Benton Harbor, Mich., where he grew to manhood; and where, at the age of twenty-three, he was married to Miss Ella Boyne, and entered the ministry of the Methodist Episcopal Church. Preaching has been his life's work, and he has served various churches of western Michigan, being at present (1904) in the sixth year of his pastorate at Leslie, Ingham County. Born in a log-house in the "thick woods," early transplanted to the orchards and vineyards of the "fruit belt," where he lived within a mile of the St. Joseph and the Paw-Paw rivers, and within sight and sound of the billows of Lake Michigan, there was much in his early environment to develop a love of the beautiful and a sense of the poetic. Many of his best songs are of the water and of the places and romances of Michigan. Perhaps no other writer has dwelt so frequently upon them. Mr. Lamport did not begin to write until well advanced in years; and what verses he has published have appeared mainly in Detroit and Chicago papers, and in some of the magazines.

From [a clipping](#) discovered by Harold and Linda Saffron of Honor, MI and submitted by Kimberly Mann. Photo and biographical sketch from *Michigan Poets And Poetry - With Portraits and Biographies* - Compiled by Warren W. Lamport and Floyd D. Raze; published at Leslie, Mich., Michigan Publishing Co., 1904