ALFRED, LORD TENNYSON

“Frater Ave atque Vale”

Row us out from Desenzano, to your Sirmione row!
So they rowed, and there we landed—“O venusta Sirmio!”
There to me through all the groves of olive in the summer glow,
There beneath the Roman ruin where the purple flowers grow,
Came that “Ave atque Vale” of the Poet’s hopeless woe,
Tenderest of Roman poets nineteen hundred years ago,
“Frater Ave atque Vale”—as we wandered to and fro
Gazing at the Lydian laughter of the Garda Lake below
Sweet Catullus's all-but-island olive-silvery Sirmio!

1880 1883