POEMS OF WILLIAM HODGSON

WILLIAM CHARLES HODGSON.

POEMS

OF

WILLIAM HODGSON

SELECTED AND EDITED

WITH AN INTRODUCTION AND EXPLANATORY NOTES

—BY—

ALFRED A. GRACE

NELSON, N.Z.

ALFRED G. BETTS

1896

All Rights Reserved.

POEMS OF WILLIAM HODGSON

INTRODUCTION.

We must not neglect the work of our best Colonial writers because we have, already, the vast bulk of English Literature as an inheritance. We should, rather, on that account, endeavour to preserve from obscurity writings which will make that literary inheritance the dearer to our descendants.

Consistent with such a sentiment, this present effort is made to cherish the work of one, who, in the midst of the labours of a busy life, spent in the public service, could find no opportunity of acquiring publicity. To the brief roll-call of New Zealand writers —Manning (the Pakeha-Maori), Grey, Domett, Bracken, O'Regan (our Keats who died too young)—we add the name of William Charles Hodgson.

Not a New Zealander by birth, William Hodgson was a type of the Colonist *par excellence*. His adopted country became his fatherland, and, "forgetting any other home but this," he never regarded the land of his birth with thoughts of regret. It is upon the resoluteness of such men as William Hodgson, and their loftiness of purpose, that the greatness of Britain's colonial Empire has been founded.

Born on September 28th, 1826, at Chorley, in Lancashire, England, he was educated at Manchester Grammar School, from whence, it was intended, that he should enter the University of Oxford, or Cambridge, where so many of the sons of his *alma mater* had distinguished themselves and their school. But in 1841 the fortunes of his family became overclouded. His father, who was a Manchester cotton-spinner, was ruined by the introduction of the power-loom into the manufacture of cotton, and

which, though finally it resulted in great benefit to the industry, was, at its inception, the cause of ruining many old-established firms. In 1843, William Hodgson the elder decided to migrate with his entire family to the settlement founded by the New Zealand Company in the previous year. Thus it was that at the age of seventeen years his son was obliged to relinquish the bright scholastic career which lay before him, and was forced to emigrate to what must have appeared in imagination, as it was in fact, the *ultima Thule* of the civilised world.

The voyage was made in the ship *Himalaya*, which, leaving England in August, reached the Colony early in 1844, at a time when the success of the Nelson Settlement was a matter of serious conjecture. Besides the dire effects resulting from the Wairau Massacre of the previous year, the suspension of the New Zealand Company in 1844 had caused widespread distress amongst the Nelson settlers, so that wages were but two shillings a day, and bread was so scarce that men dug up their seed potatoes to provide food for their families. Amid such unpromising conditions of life, it was, then, that William Hodgson commenced life in the Colony. During the first years he spent all his strength, energy and industry, in assisting his father to establish himself upon a farm at Whakapuaka, near Nelson, but subsequently, in conjunction with his brother James, he brought into cultivation a piece of land of their own in the same locality. Along with this tedious occupation, William Hodgson appears to have taught a private school in Nelson, which had been kept previously by Mr Thomas Arnold, who, it is said, was the son of Thomas Arnold, D.D., the famous headmaster of Rugby. After a time the scene of his scholastic duties was changed to Whakapuaka, where he opened a small school under the Education Board of the day, but this post was soon relinquished for the headmastership of the principal primary school in Nelson. This latter position he filled till the year 1863, when he received the appointment of Inspector of Schools in the Educational District of Nelson, which in those days included Marlborough and the West Coast. It is as Inspector of Schools that William Hodgson is best remembered, for he filled that position till the year 1893, when ill-health forced him to retire

from the Service. During the brief term of life that remained to him, it would appear that he turned his mind to the publication of that literary work which had filled the leisure hours of his long educational career, for at the time of his death, which occurred on July 28th, 1894, that portion of his writings which appears within these covers, was found to be in a large measure prepared for the press.

William Hodgson was ever regarded as a man of great industry, literary taste, and classical learning; it was not as a poet that he was best known. However, we feel that when the present small book has been read, the opinion will be that he has written some of the finest poetry published in New Zealand. There are poems of his which go straight to the heart—such for instance as the beautiful lines referring to his wife—and there are others which for literary grace and choice diction have been surpassed by few living writers. His "Greek Stories" in themselves justify this bold assertion, for what could be finer than the lines concluding "The Phocian's Tale," or what more pathetically beautiful than "Nausicaa's Lament"? With him words bear their proper value and signification, and fall into their allotted places without the least strain or overcrowding; they are manipulated easily, for they are used by one who is completely their master. However, we cannot hide the fact, that though the author gained much in smoothness of style by his exact knowledge of classical models, nevertheless he lost somewhat thereby in point of newness of treatment and expression. He was distinctly a writer of the old school; his style was not that of those later Victorian poets who rejoice in reproductions of the Australian shearer's 'lingo,' or the slang of private's of the Line. The poetry of the engine-room and fo'c'sle had no charm for William Hodgson; with him the classical models sufficed. Though hardly in the literary fashion of to-day, his influence upon Colonial taste will probably be felt in days to come. Only once does he appear to have abandoned his high classical standards for more modern ones—when he wrote his "Nelson Lays." And some of these attempts to attain a conventional style are without doubt the weakest efforts of his pen. They are included in this collection, chiefly on account of a local

interest attaching to them. But it is not by such a small portion of his work that his powers must be guaged, but rather by such strong flights as "The Phocian's Tale," "A L'Outrance" "Orakau," his wonderful translation of Horace's great ode "Carmen Seculare," and the beautiful "Lament of Nausicaa"; and these, whilst they will charm readers of a more conservative taste in poetry, should not necessarily prove unwelcome to lovers of productions such as "Danny Deever" and "How we beat the Favourite," so dear to the public mind. It is not for us, however, to criticise. Ours rather is the privilege of turning to the author himself, and of telling what manner of man he was.

First and foremost, William Hodgson was a great worker. He worked hard all his life, and even regretted that he could not die in harness. The literary legacy which he has left behind him, was accumulated during the scant respite he enjoyed from his professional labours; his choicest verses were written as a light recreation after the tedious drudgery of the day. And thus it was his writing was done: when his duties took him far into the wilds of the West Coast, or to the solitudes of the Wairau, and he found himself, at the end a long and dreary day, located for the night at some desolate, dismal accommodation-house, or in a noisy village hostelry, he would find solace in a pocket edition of one of his favourite classics, and his mind thus soothed and tranquilized, he often wrote ere he retired to rest, lines, some of which are now given to the public. It was during such evenings that he accomplished the many translations which he has left behind him, but which by their very bulk are debarred from appearing in the present slight volume. But someday these too may see the light, and should their publication be accomplished, it may safely be predicted that William Hodgson's English versions of "Œdipus Coloneus," "Antigone," "Philoctetes" and "Œdipus Tyrannus," and his finished and delicate reproduction in English of the poems of Valerius Catullus—in itself a stupendous work—will be recognised as the standard versions of those great classics in New Zealand.

Then, too, William Hodgson was a large-hearted man who loved human nature. To him all men stood in the light of brothers.

He enjoyed their company, and they his—and his was capital company. His conversation possessed a charm for all those who loved cultured talk. His was always the narration of the good in mankind; he seldom spoke in scorn of a fellow-being, though, when he did, it was scathingly. Most of all he loved to talk of times gone by, of friends and acquaintances lost sight of or dead, of the early colonial life, when as yet there was but a bullock-track to his farm at Wakapuaka and the high-road to Richmond was not; when the Nelson Settlement was but a few years old and Trafalgar Street a ploughed field. Ere he died he had seen the Nelson colony grow, as it were, from a seedling, a shoot, to a tall strong tree, and so it is ever to be regretted that he did not write for succeeding generations the story of that growth. Let us, however, be thankful that with the full weight of his public duties on him, he found time to give us so much that is of high literature value. And whilst his manliness, breadth of mind, and good-fellowship, will ever be remembered by those who knew him, it is hoped that this small portion of his writings will perpetuate his memory in the public mind.

ALFRED A. GRACE.

Nelson, N.Z., Nov. 25th, 1896.

NELSON LAYS.

THE LAY OF THE STATE SCHOOLBOY.

My age is ten, plus two, plus three,
  My height at 4·10 fix,
My rank is plain for all to see—
  I have passed Standard Six !
All capes I know, all watersheds,
  All surfaces can measure ;
I know the depths of ocean beds,
  The worth of Crœsus' treasure.
Of beasts that bore old Noah's brand
  I'll give, off hand, the number ;
I know how glass is made from sand,
  Why horses standing slumber.
All Shakespeare I can paraphrase,
  And turn to model prose ;
I can cut up Macaulay's Lays
  In analytic rows.
And when that great man's choler rose
  And for his foes he went,

With world-famed "every schoolboy knows,
A boy like me he meant.
Yet envious fogeys sneer at me,
Nay, call me "loathsome prig,"
And hint that without modesty
Naught else is worth a fig.
They mutter that it would be well
If schoolmates kicked me round,
And of mysterious blessings tell
Wrought by a flogging sound.
I know not what they mean, but shine
Superior to their tricks,
For my marks are nineteen ninety-nine,
And my Standard it is Six.

THE LAY OF THE LOAFER.

I will not dig, I dare not steal,
To beg I'm *not* ashamed;
Of unearned bread I make my meal,
So "Loafer" I am named.
In summer-time I blink and dose
Before the ale-house door.
When winter comes, I toast my toes
Where kitchen pine-logs roar.
When old friends meet, hard by I slink,
And bar-wards with them glide,
Their curses swallow—and their drink.
Because I have no pride.
I'm up to all the latest tricks

Of euchre and of loo,
And though at times I catch some kicks,
I catch some half-pence too.
Though thirsty friends desert the bar,
Though tricks at euchre fail,
Though stingy guests my prospects mar,
I still can get my ale.
'Tis worth a pint, when things are worst,
To hold a horse's head,
Or coach a bagman "on the burst,"
With candlestick, to bed.
But ah! how carefully I shirk
All toil of any kind.
Ah! how I scorn the fools who work
With body or with mind.
I like to watch yon bent old man
Cracking his heap of stones,
It does me good to think *my* plan
Saves all those aching bones.
'Tis sweet to hear yon woodman's stroke,
As on the bench I sprawl—
His industry is such a joke
To me who shun it all.
Don't prate to me of "primal cause,"
Of "penalty for sin,"
Here stand I, not one pin the worse,
Who neither toil nor spin.
I owe no debt—I own no pelf,
I know no hopes nor fears,
And save for mine own precious self,

I have nor smiles nor tears,
I have no "mate,"—like Lucy Gray—
Nor wife nor child have I,
Not one who will "poor fellow" say,
Or miss me, when I die.

THE TRAVELLER'S LAY.

Written at a Wayside Shanty.

What a jovial life is mine,
To sit in a frowsy room,
Where pipe and pot combine
The foul air to perfume!
How favoured is my lot,
To dwell in this house of beer,
While the thrice-told tale of the sot
Falls thickly on mine ear!
For my weary bones there is rest
On this bony, knock-kneed chair,
And who shall say with what zest
I welcome my homely fare?
It's hurrah for the sodden steak!
And hurrah for the greasy stew!
For the strange vile meats they bake
For the viler drinks they brew!
Of food, too, for the mind
I surely shall have no lack;
Here's a volume of sermons, I find,
And a last year's Almanac.
But hark! the spirit of song,

Born of the frequent pot;
How the boors the strain prolong,
And their chorus ceaseth not.
Enough—I will seek my bower,
Six feet it measures by four;
But its window no mortal power
Can open, or close its door.
Thin is my blanket above,
Thin my pallet below,
But the insects who bite whom they love
Keep up a genial glow.
They all are gorged at last,
I sleep, till roused by the tread
Of the drunkard staggering past,
Belated, home to his bed—
Then morn, with crowing of cock,
With yelping of stone-smitten dog,
Morn, with the tremulous knock
Of the feverish thirster for grog.
Live I not, then happily here,
Who dwell in a pot-house so free
With books and with beer and the best of all cheer,
With fleadom and minstrelsy?

THE LAY OF THE LARRIKIN.

In our Southern woods, when the day is done,
Strange birds roam to and fro,
The grave gray owl, that hates the sun

The weka brown, with its zig-zag run,
And the shy green kakapo.
But a stranger bird haunts our streets at night,
Bred of civilization and sin—
To look at, he is but a sorry sight,
And his looks by his manners are equalled quite;
We call him Larrikin.
But how shall this bird of night be known
From any other bird ?
By the noisome blast from the short pipe blown,
By the piebald jargon, all his own,
Where an oath is linked to a word.
You may know him by his slouching gait,
By the hands in his pocket thrust,
By his knowing wink when he meets a mate,
By the saunter of one who is always late,
And who knows not the meaning of *must.*
And thus will he spend the peaceful night ;
He will yell forth a ribald song,
Or will seize some weak, belated wight,
And "chivy" him home, half-dead with fright,
Or will slang from afar the strong.
But if he can find no fitting prey,
Who may serve the time to pass,
By the mark of the beast you may learn, next day,
On each wall and door, who has gone that way,
By the ruin of shattered glass.
In his sport he spares nor age nor sex,
Nor God nor man he fears ;

He will snatch his crust from the beggar to vex,
Or the school girl's penny ; for little he recks
Of helpless childhood's tears.
Can we not clip this foul bird's wings ?
For ever our souls shall he vex ?
Let us grasp our nettle, ere worse it stings ;
We Briton's have grappled with bigger things—
Come ! where is Policeman X ?
Let him ruthlessly chase from pillar to post
Each knot of two or three,
And wherever they "congregate the most"
Let him glide in their midst, like a stark, blue ghost,
And scatter their company.
Let us take a hint from the monarch grim
Who gave England the curfew bell ;
How fast would speed each larrikin limb
If cell and stripes were the portion of him
Who outstayed that warning knell !
And oh ! for an hour of Cromwell's hand,
Short-lived then the ruffians' glee—
In the stocks would he clap the worst of the band,
And some he would set to plough the land,
And some to plough the sea.
But we live in times when the game is such
That the rascal is sure to win,
For we prize the "Freedom of Man" so much
That a hair of his head we dare not touch ;
And so thriveth our Larrikin.

THE LAY OF THE WEATHER-BOUND.

(*Written at Sludgeville, Pactolus County.*)

Gods ! how I loathe the land between
These mountains and the sea,
Its wealth of all things vile and mean
Is horrible to me.
No tuft of grass dare rear its head
Above the sodden soil,
With rush and slimy moss o'erspread
To mock the yeoman's toil.
In yonder woods there is no bird,
In yonder brakes no flower,
Amid whose sunless depths is heard
Naught but the ceaseless shower
From weeping skies—well may they weep
To look on such a scene !
Whereat the sun just deigns to peep,
Six weeks each glimpse between.
Vale, brook, and grove, to poet dear,
Here changing name and dress,
As *gully*, *creek*, and *scrub* appear,
In conscious ugliness.
A sight like this met Noah's eyes,
When from his stranded Ark
He watched the dripping hill-tops rise
Above high-water mark.
Dame Nature, when her task was done,
That nothing might be lost,
Picked up the refuse scraps in fun,
And fashioned the West Coast.

THE TOURIST'S LAY.

Here am I come to measure you
To weigh you in my hand,
For nothing can escape my view
In all your raw young land.
I've seen—what is there I've *not* seen,
From Lapland to Japan ?
North, South, and East and West I've been,
Wherever treads a man.
I've swallowed curry in Bombay,
Munched groper in Fee-jee,
In Hungary I've sipped Tokay,
Quaff'd schnapps on Zuyder Zee.
Beneath a cellared Pyramid
I've poked my travelled nose ;
Where Ninevah's gray tombs lie hid
I've bruised my questing toes.
And now I'll tell you, for your good,
How mean you all appear.
'Tis well it should be understood
You've nothing striking here;
Your towns are one huge ugliness ;
Your buildings would afflict
Our Ruskin with a deep distress ;
Your etiquette's not strict ;
Your women dress in wretched taste ;
Your men don't dress at all ;
Your rich folks dine with vulgar waste ;
Your sitting rooms are small.

Don't prate of Egmont, or Mount Cook,
Of lakes and boiling springs;
No tourist such as I would look
At these Colonial things.
If you had ever been to Pau,
Or Jericho had seen,
Or gazed upon sublime Jungfrau,
Or to Lake Baikal been,
Then you might talk; but, as it is,
Leave it to us who know.
It will not hurt you if I quiz
You coarse Colonial "*blow.*"
"You have not "*blown*"? *I* did it all?"
You *meant* it, all the same;
Things by their proper names to call
Across the sea I came.
Hoping you've liked this talk of mine,
I really must not stay,
And (by the bye) mine host, your wine
Don't come up to Tokay.
Cook should learn how a goose to roast;
He quite spoiled that fine bird.
She should not overbrown her toast—
No thanks now, not a word!

THE OLD BACHELOR'S LAY.

A fig for the comforts of marriage!
A fig for the raptures of Love!
'Tis better to loll in one's carriage

Than to trudge home afoot to one's dove.
I have surely my fill of enjoyment;
I am ruddy, rotund, passing rich,
And, thanks to my outdoor employment,
Of gout I have never a twitch.
Whom I like I can ask home to dinner,
Whom I like not I keep far away;
No wife's mother, no parasite sinner,
In this sanctum one instant shall stay.
Here is heard not the giggle of maiden
Here matron's shrill clack is not heard,
The air with babe's shriek is not laden;
The heart with boy's yell is not stirred.
I can stay out all night, if it please me,
Lie abed through the day, if I choose;
There is none to cross-question or tease me,
None leave who can grant or refuse.
The butcher and baker I fear not;
No milliner makes me afraid;
The din at my knocker I hear not;
My landlady monthly is paid,
I've no daughters to settle and marry,
Whose sweethearts embitter one's life,
Nor sons whom no prudence bids tarry
In the leap that leads straight to a wife.
'Tis all very well—you can call me,
As Quiverful "selfish and base,"
But remember, whatever befal me,
T'is only myself I disgrace.
I risk not the peace of another,

That my life may be sweeter to me,
For that was your notion, my brother ;
So there's something on my side, you see.
And there may be one soft crumb of kindness
Beneath the old Bachelor's crust,
Which you wedded ones miss in your blindness
But which wins from his friends love and trust.

THE PATRIARCH'S LAY.

The man who fears to wed a wife,
Lest such a doubtful boon
Should plant some thorns in his poor life,
I deem but a poltroon.
What though the chequered past has wrought
Its tangled web of care ;
Though sickness, want, and death have brought
Each a fresh load to bear ;
No trouble have I borne alone ;
No fear has been unshared ;
Whate'er befel, I knew that one
Would fare as I had fared.
That oak fears not the tempest's brunt
Whose boughs spread broadly round ;
Unmoved that tree the blast can front
Whose roots strike deep the ground.
The fresh young lives that round me spring
Live life for me again ;
New pleasure still *their* pleasures bring,
That leave no after-pain.

Once more, in thought, I join the game
Which now my grandson plays ;
And share the beaming winner's fame,
A boy still, as I gaze.
My daughters' hopes are mine once more,
For those young buds they reared ;
Brighter they seem than those of yore,
And fuller of good cheer.
Forlorn indeed is he who dies,
And leaves no trace behind
More than the yellow leaf that flies
Before the Autumn wind.
Not all forgotten shall I sleep,
As one that has not been,
While kind ones live, my grave to keep
And memory ever green.

THE LAY OF THE SERVANT GIRL.

"Now, Maria, Jemima, and Jane,
Just sit down and listen to me ;
When you've heard me, I think 'twill be plain
Why so angry and hurt I should be.
'Twas only last night I requested
'My lady' to let me go out,
But she said 'Child, you'd better be rested,'—
What can she be thinking about ?
On Monday, I went to the races ;
On Tuesday, I danced at the ball ;
On Thursday, called at a few places—

And I really think that is all.
Then 'twas last Sunday morning I broke
A big dish (though it wasn't the first),
And the way that old curmudgeon spoke !
I thought that my heart would have burst.
But I told her 'twas useless to scold,
That plates to be broken were made,
There were lots in the shops to be sold,
And breakage was helpful to trade.
Then that daughter of hers, who looks down
On such people as you, Jane, or I,
Walks about in a common print gown,
Such as, rather than wear it, I'd die.
Why, I don't think she gets, in a year,
Twenty pounds of allowance, at most
So her airs I've no reason to fear,
While I my clear Thirty can boast.
She may prate of her high education,
Her German and French, and what not,
But I'll give her long odds at dictation,
And in Square Root could win in a trot.
Now you know your down-trodden friend's sorrow,
How she's fretting herself to her grave,
But I'll go back to Mother to-morrow ;
Better home than the life of a slave.

THE GOLD DIGGER'S LAY.

The sailor's lot I envy not,
Who maketh boast that he

Hath taken for his own domain
The gloomy, barren sea.
'Tis not for me, the barren sea,
Whose sad face knows no change ;
From North to South, from East to West
The rich broad Earth I range.
Where'er I range I find some change,
Fresh comrades, fresher scenes,
The night in one poor cabin pent
Knows not what freedom means.
Nor what it means the townsman weens,
Who, hived in one dull street,
Hath not one thought beyond where tread
His pavement-haunting feet.
The farmer's feet may leave the street,
To plod the same old fields,
The changeless round the mill-horse treads
An equal pleasure yields.
Whatever field red gold doth yield
There lies my shop, my land ;
My home, my purse, my household Gods
Are whereso'er I stand.
And where I stand and wave my hand
Stout comrades gather round,
And shops, and farms, and towns arise,
Where we have broken ground.
The desert ground, for miles around
With pick and shovel rings,
And where our snowy tents arise,
There are we miners' Kings !

THE LAY OF THE IMMIGRANT.

A cold, cold mother, my native land,
  Hast thou ever been to me,
So I care not to see again the strand,
That I left, a boy, with a weeping band,
  To speed o'er the trackless sea.
As I gaze on yon bright, blue vault on high,
  And drink in this sweet, pure air,
I think with scorn of the murky sky
That hangs, like a nightmare, far and nigh,
  O'er my native town so drear.
And I smile as I look on the well-fed boys
  Shouting for glee at their play,
While I sigh for the starvelings who know no joys,
'Mid their haunts of squalor, and rags, and noise,
  In that land so far away.
And I love to think that the beggar's whine
  Is heard not within our streets,
That no thousands here in the poor-house pine,
That the face of one who craves aught of mine
  Is the face one never meets.
For a freeman's greeting frank awaits
  Both the rich and the poor man here,
Nor know we that deadly peril of states
When the scornful peer the peasant hates,
  And the peasant hates the peer.
With hedge and with wall we have not shut in
  The breadth of this broad, fair land;
To stray from the pathway is not a sin,

And "pauper" we call not our fallen kin,
  Nor a human soul "a hand."
Then my native land, a long farewell!
  Cold hast thou been to me,
Yet I would that the squalid hordes, who dwell
In thy dens, the thriving ranks might swell
  Of us dwellers beyond the sea.

THE LONELY MINER.

(A true Story of Golden Bay.)

He lived his life alone—
  He never through the long years had a mate;
Early and late he toiled, his name unknown,
  Silent and stern as Fate.
Once in each month he came
  Among us, bearing back his monthly store;
Paid down his gold—its weight was aye the same—
  Gave a brief nod—no more.
Little by little grew
  The heap that came forth from his tunnel's jaw,
Till we all marvelled that two hands could do
  The mighty works we saw.
Some, who would penetrate
  His mile-long tunnel, said that stone on stone
Was piled within its rock-hewn walls, whose weight
  No man could stir alone.
He never sought to know
  What hidden treasures lurked beneath his mound,
Till a King's ransom, all men deemed, below,
  Would, one day, there be found.

In vain we sought to draw
  Some glimmering of the truth from that stern face.
A fleeting smile of triumph once we saw,
  Then grimness took its place.
There came a day at last
  When to our town he came not for his store ;
And then we whispered, when some weeks had passed,
  He would come back no more.
We felt no sudden shock,
  As we peered through the murky tunnel's gloom,
And rolled aside the crushing mass of rock,
  His slayer, and his tomb.
No tears, be sure, we shed
  For that lone man, of name and birth unknown ;
Now should we learn the secret of the dead,
  Hid 'neath his mound of stone.
The tell-tale waters poured,
  Day after day, o'er the mysterious mound,
Till bare was laid the last ounce of the hoard.
  The treasure ? None was found.
Surely some kindly Power
  Had hid the truth from that poor dreamer's eyes,
And bade him dwell, until life's latest hour,
  In a Fool's paradise.
' He was in luck ' we sighed,
  " Yea ! King and beggarman at once," we said,
' A King while living, with his heap untried,
  A beggar-man when dead.'

GREEK STORIES RE-TOLD.

PENTHESILEA.

[PENTHESILEA, Queen of the Amazons, was the daughter of Mars—so the legend runs. She came to the assistance of Priam towards the end of the Trojan war. There are many versions of the story of her death, one of these representing the body of the dead queen as being dragged out of the camp by Diomedes, and then being thrown into the river Scamander; whilst others represent Achilles as being killed by Penthesilea. Probably the author's account is the truest, and certainly has the advantage of being picturesque. It should be explained that Patroclus was the constant companion of Achilles, and lodged with him in the same tent before Troy. He was overthrown by Hector, who was assisted by Apollo. Achilles avenged his dead comrade in the death of Hector.]

The years rolled by, and still the heav'n-built towers
Of Ilion fronted the despairing foe,
In vain had Hector fallen, and in vain
All that was bravest and was best in Troy
Had drenched with blood that fatal battle-plain.

Still swarmed fresh myriads from the teaming East,
To fill the places of her fallen brave—
Now, last of all, a fiery portent, came
Penthesilea and her Amazons.
The stalwart Greek, who quailed not at the rush
Of Asia's hosts, now felt a new-born fear
Of those fierce virgins, in whose stern eyes shone
The cruel light of coming victory.
Who could abide the terror of their bow,
Whose shafts, unerring, smote the foe like Fate,
And, man or steed, whate'er was smitten, died?
Behind his seven-fold targe the giant bulk
Of Ajax cowered, to shun the deadly storm,
While calm Ulysses, facing still the foe,
Gave back a pace, for all his archery—
Full well he knew that mighty bow of his
Was quite o'ermatched by those strange warriors.
And as the wavering, half-broken line
Of struggling Greeks fell back upon the camp,
Arose a clamour that again had come,
A day like that when conquering Hector drave
Their host in panic to the sheltering mound.
One hope remained. Alone Achilles stood
Before his tent, in his own might secure,
And scarcely heeding those unmanly cries,
Deigned but one glance at the fast-coming foe;
For since that day when he avenged so well
His slaughtered friend, slight was the help he gave.
But still he brooded o'er Patroclus slain;
O'er his own past, and o'er his coming doom.
Now past the rampart, like a torrent, poured

The flying Greeks, while on their broken rear,
Rank upon rank, press'd hard the Amazons.
Still in the van, with triumph in her eye,
Penthesilea scattered death around.
Then surely madness seized the dauntless Queen,
And bade her rouse Achilles' slumbering might,—
'Wilt thou not try how keen mine arrows bite,
Thou sluggish champion of a beaten host?'
Rang the shrill accents o'er the startled plain.
Then rolled the deep-toned answer,—''Tis not mine
To match myself against a woman's wand;
Go, seek some feebler foe, and tempt not death!'
In vain—she fits an arrow to the string
Bending her brow above an eye of steel.
Then, half in anger, half in pure disdain,
The hero lifted up his mighty shield,
But just in time to meet the coming shaft,
So truly launched forth by that nervous arm,
That full it smote th' impenetrable targe.
Loud laughed the hero, raising high his hand
In deprecation, 'Maiden, now forbear!
Glory enough for thee that thou hast struck
Achilles' buckler, and art still alive.'
The Queen's sole answer was another shaft
That pierced th' uplifted, deprecating hand.
Then swept a storm of passion o'er his brow;
Bare-headed, with no armour save his shield,
He grasped that weighty spear whose stroke was death,
And forward, with a fearful war-cry, sprang.
Another well-aimed arrow sped—the last—
But broke in splinters on the ready shield.

Then flew th' avenging spear—like a crush'd worm,
Pierced through and through, the dying maiden lay,
While all the sternness faded from her brow,
And all the fierceness died from out her eye,
And the last grace of womanhood returned,
As with a pleading, half-reproachful gaze,
In low-toned words her conqueror she bespake,
'Thou hast prevailed, unconquerable one!
I know thee fearless: have compassion then
On one who never feared the face of man.
By thine own mother, hero, I adjure thee,
Strip not mine armour which has served so ill
Its hapless mistress—let not my young limbs
Be bared, a sport for mocking Myrmidons.
I dread not death, but dread lest after death
Thou shouldst profane my virgin modesty.'
Stern was Achilles, but those pleading tones
Smote deeper than her arrows—smote with shame—
That he with maiden's blood should stain his spear,
And hoarsely called he to his Myrmidons,
'Go raise a funeral pyre, and bear her hence
When she is dead, and leave her armour on her;
For of all women was she bravest, meet
For him who is the bravest of all men.
And I have slain her—'twas an evil deed.'
The maiden heard, and turned a grateful eye
Upon her conqueror, while a wintry smile
Play'd round her dying lips—and so she died.
Achilles gave her one remorseful look,
Then, once again, as when Patroclus fell,
Grieving he paced beside the sounding sea.

HOW EUTHYMUS WON HIS BRIDE.

(*From Pausanias.*)

[THIS is one of those beautiful legends which Pausanias in his credulity related as history. Temesa, the scene of the story, was a town of the Brutii, whose country is now the modern Italian province of Calabria. It is supposed to have been that Temesa which was so famed for its workers in copper, and was situated in what is now known as the Gulf of S. Eufemia.]

Euthymus, hail! crowned with thy wreath of bays,
Victor o'er all men in th' Olympic games;
And a yet greater victor in that fight
Whereby thou wonnest for myself as bride
The fairest maiden in all Temesa.
Know ye not, strangers, how the deed was done?
In the dim past—so dim the oldest here
Cannot pierce through it—came a storm-toss'd bark
In quest of shelter, to our friendly port.
And well with us the battered strangers fared,
Till, in an evil hour, a tumult rose,
The cause well-nigh forgotten now—belike
Some wench mishandled by a mariner;
Then steel was drawn, and one of them was slain.
The strife was healed, the strangers sailed away,
And all went well, till many a year had flown.
Then burst o'er all the land a sudden plague,
Blasting all fruits, and blasting all our kine,
And laying low ourselves, both young and old.
Humbly we sought Apollo's awful shrine,
Praying the Healer to avert the plague.
How deep the groan of horror that burst forth

From all the shuddering throng that stood without,
When from the oracle they learnt their doom,—
On each recurring year, on the same day
That our forefathers lawlessly had slain
Their guest, must we unto the temple bring
The fairest maiden in all Temesa,
When the fell Dæmon of the slaughtered man
Should bear her with him to the under world—
Thus should his manes be appeased, and thus
The pestilence should cease from out the land.—
—Year after year our weeping citizens
Have brought a victim to the darkened shrine,
All robed in white, her brow with fillet bound;
And some of us, the boldest, who have dared
To linger near the temple steps, have heard—
Or thought we heard—a single, deep-drawn groan.
Then followed deathlike silence. At gray dawn
We fearfully would peer within the shrine,
But never trace of maiden could we see.
Until this year, with agonizing shrieks
The struggling girls were dragged up to their doom,
So that at times we nerved ourselves to brave
The Dæmon's wrath, and face the pestilence.
Yet came submission with each coming year.
But she who by Euthymus yonder stands,
Looking so proudly on his laurelled brows,
Alone of all our maidens shrinking not
From grisly Death, the King of Terrors met
With an unmoved and tearless countenance,
Mildly rebuking those who shrieked aloud.
Euthymus stood hard by, and marked her mien,

And marked the pallid beauty of her face.
Then suddenly he bade the people halt;
Springing upon the temple's topmost step,
He lifted up his mighty voice on high,—
'Ye men of Temesa, I love this maid.
'Twere shame that I, the champion of all Greece,
Should let her die, and never strike a blow.
If Hercules could snatch from the dread jaws
Of death Alcestis, though another's wife,
Shall I not strive the Dæmon to withstand,
To win unto myself a bride like this?
Say, shall the maid be mine if I prevail?'
A mighty shout of acclamation rose
From all our people: though themselves not brave,
They reverenced this fearless, love-struck man.
Straightway he armed himself, and, hand in hand,
The twain fared onward to the inmost shrine,
And as we stood agape, an awful sound
Of conflict issued from behind the veil;
Then came a piercing and unearthly yell.—
Forth from the temple stepped, still hand in hand,
Pale to the lips, the champion and his bride.
Ere our fond laughter and our weeping ceased,
Boomed from the temple a dull clang of arms,
And well we knew it was our Archer God,
Apollo, faithful helper of the brave,
Thus signifying that the plague was stayed
By courage, and the last fair victim saved.
But as for what within the temple passed,
And how that ghastly combat was fought out,
No man can tell—bridegroom and bride alike

Keep silence, and when one too rudely pressed
Euthymus, and would fain drag forth the truth,
The champion turned on him with mien so fell
That nevermore until his dying day
Will he our hero plague with questioning.—
Hail then ! twice victor, crowned with wreath of bays !
Hail ! fairest bride in all our Temesa !

THE PHOCIAN'S TALE.

[THE Phocians, whose country was close to the battle-field of Thermpoylæ, though they failed to support the cause of Greece on this occasion, were nevertheless a people famed for their bravery, and it is worth noting that after they had been humbled by the armies of the Amphictyons and Macedonia, they were reinstated in all their former privileges on account of the signal courage they displayed against the common enemies of Greece. They quite retrieved the character lost at Thermopylæ .]

Once more, my children, do ye bid me tell
The shameful tale how ill we Phocians served
The cause of Hellas in the wars of old?
Although my head be whitened by the snows
Of ninety winters, 'tis my penance still,
While life endures for ever to repeat
To all who ask, the story of that day
When Phocis' sons lost all their manliness,
A warning and a stain for evermore!
'Twas dawn and 'twas the time of falling leaves ;
A thousand warriors were we stretched at ease
Beneath Mount Œta's shoulder, looking down
Upon the goat-path we were set to guard.
Our arms were piled, we recked not of a foe,

For none but Greeks knew of the track that led,
Behind the mountain to Thermopylæ,*
And how should Greek be traitor unto Greece ?
Then came a far off rustling sound—belike
The footfall of a startled drove of deer,
Stirring the sere leaves by the oak-woods shed.
Still lay we idly listening—louder grew
The rustling of the oak-leaves, and anon
Was heard the thund'rous tramp of marching men.
Then like a mighty serpent rolled in sight,
All glittering with sheen of gold and steel,
The broad battalions of the Persian van !
And one of us, who had campaigned before
In Sardis, told us these were Persia's best,
These the Ten Thousand, this th' immortal band.
Then, though our souls were chilled with deadly fear,
We leapt up lightly, and our armour donned,
And stood embattled 'neath the oak-woods sere,
For the foe gave us an unlooked for pause.
Before their halted van the leaders stood
In eager counsel. Brave Hydarnes† there
We could descry, and, standing by his side,
That traitor who had shewn the foe the pass,
Vile Ephialtes,‡ cursed to all time.
We knew not then, but knew in after days,
Why Persia's bravest shrank from coming on.
They deemed our band was of that lion breed
Who on that morn were combing their fair hair
For death down yonder at Thermopylæ,
And well they wist their thronging host would fall
As corn before the reaper, 'neath the blades

Of the fell Spartan harvesters of death.
Then once more upwards the broad column moved,
And a light rain of arrows and of darts
Fell in our midst, and some of us were slain.
And thinking our last hour was come, we climbed
Still higher up the mountain's brow, to bide
Our doom, but they, without a sound, passed by,
As though in scorn, and further harmed us not.
When the last foeman had quite disappeared
Behind the windings of the seaward track,
Burst forth from each of us a pent up sob,
The sob of men from deadly peril freed.
And for a space we gladly gazed around
On the blue ocean and the bluer sky,
On hoary Œta and his oak-woods brown.
Brief was our gladness ; sharper than a sword
A pang of horror rent our inmost souls,
When we awoke to all that we had done.
And not a man but would have welcomed back
Those lately dreaded Persians—nay, not one
Who would not blithely have leapt forth to meet
His doom, so might the shame be done away.
Too late ! We knew th' irrevocable hour
Had passed, and with it passed Leonidas‖
And his three hundred, who by now had won
That immortality we might have shared.—
'What boots it', do ye ask me, 'that once more
I tell the story of our Phocis' shame ?'
Said I not 'twas a warning and a stain ?
The stain, ye know, can ne'er be blotted out;
The warning, too, abideth for all time.

Once to each man, once to each tribe is given
The chance to show what manhood dwells in them.
Beaten they may be—yea, quite trodden down—
But they have battled. Though the partial Gods
May crown with vict'ry most unworthy brows,
Dishonour hath no kinship with defeat ;
And oft relenting fate hath lifted up
The downcast people whom she smote of yore.
But to the dastards who let fall the cup
That glory once hath proffered to their lips,
A cup of glory shall come back no more.—
Think on these things, my children, when ye lay
In his unhonour'd grave the last of those
Who shrank from Hellas in her day of need.

*. The battle of Thermopylæ was fought 480 B.C.

†. A Persian noble.

‡. The Trachinian Greek who discovered to the Persians the secret path through the mountains to Thermopylæ.

‖. With 300 Spartans Leonidas resisted the Persians host for three days, but succumbed when attacked in the rear through the treachery of Ephialtes.

THE MOTHER'S PRAYER.

(*See Herodotus Book I, Chapter XXXI.*)

In Argos* all men keep high holiday.
Throughout her streets is wealth of palm and flowers.

This day to Here's temple must be drawn—
A long five miles—to pay due sacrifice,
The gray-haired priestess on her sacred car.
Time presses; far afield the oxen fare—
Time presses—haughty Here may be wrath ;
The priestess may be shamed for this delay.
Comes Cleobis,† comes Biton to her aid.
In warlike Argos, mother of strong men,
These two were strongest. In the games where Greece
Sent all her best, the brethren stood apart,
Peerless, for no man durst to strive with them.
Those were the days when men did reverence
Their mothers.—Straight with oil their supple limbs
Anointing, round their sinewy necks they bind
The yoke, and strain their breasts against the hill.
Panting and labouring they reach the top,
Then rest them till the sacrifice be made,
While all the men of Argos stand around
Praising the sons because their youthful strength
Was spent in helping gray-haired motherhood.
And all the women round the priestess throng,
Praising her as the mother of such sons.
Then to the goddess the fond mother prayed—
'Thou seest, Here, what these twain have done,
A deed unmatched in all the bygone days,
A deed unmatchable in days to come.
Grant, for their piety to thee and me,
The greatest boon ye Gods can give to man.'
She ceased—no answer from the altar came.
The sons, triumphant, feasted with their friends,
Till quite forespent with gladness and with toil,

They fell asleep within the temple's walls.

* * * * * *

Faintly the first gray streaks of morning glanced
Upon the pale limbs of the slumbering pair.
Then a few curious ones peered from afar
Upon the sleepers who so moveless lay.
Nearer the watchers gathered—though so tired,
'Twas surely time those sleepers should awake.
The scarlet beams of sunrise fiercely broke
Right through the temple's open roof, yet still
No movement, nor of eyelid nor of hand.
Then some one, bolder than the rest, just touched,
With doubting finger him who nearest lay ;
So sound he slept, the touch he heeded not.
They called the priestess; her clear-seeing eyes
One look enlightened—her brave sons were dead !
Behind her robe the stricken mother's face
For a brief time was hid—then quivering,
But tearless, thus the Goddess she bespake :
'Great Here, this then is the greatest gift
Ye Gods on mortals can betow—to die !
To die in all the fulness of their youth ;
To die in all the fulness of their fame.
Supremely Wise One, thou hast judged well.
'Tis better thus, ere fell disease, or shame,
Or poverty, or age, have gripped my sons,
That they should end their fully-rounded lives
Within thy fane, one noble deed well done.'

(*) The capital of Argolis in Peloponnesus; a flourishing and splendid city, where Here was worshipped with especial honour.

(†) Sons of Cydippe the priestess.

RODOPES.

[This very ancient Egyptian Legend, which is probably the original of Cinderella, is told (dryly enough) by Strabo. 'The Rosy-cheeked Queen' is said to have lived about B.C. 2000.]

Fair Rodopes was bathing four thousand years ago,
And wist not Father Nile had caught her sandal in his flow,
And had borne it with him merrily past many a league of land,
Till weary of his plaything, he cast it on the strand.
On the strand the King was sitting, a thousand lords around,
And they all looked on and marvelled at what the King had found,
For the daintiest little plaything that ever had been known
Was the rosy-checked one's sandal, thus wafted to the throne.
'Now surely,' cried the monarch, 'she is fairest of the fair,
The maiden who this sandal on her ivory foot can wear;
He shall have a robe of purple, he shall have a golden crown,
Who brings this sandal's wearer before the sun goes down.'
Then up sprang many a noble, full fain that prize to win,
And the banks of Nile re-echoed to the busy searchers' din;

Till lo! a drooping palm tree, and a drooping maiden there;
One tiny foot was sandalled, its tiny fellow bare.
Before the throne they brought her, downcast, her cheek aflame;
Kneeling, she strove her naked foot to hide for very shame.
But the King's face caught a kindred glow when gazing on her face,
Right tenderly he raised her, and spoke with kingly grace,
'On that foot this missing sandal no hand but mine shall bind—
Father Nile meant when I found it, I then a bride should find.
And as I bind this sandal I bind thee to my throne,
In all this land of Egypt thou shalt be Queen alone.
Here a temple I will build me, where Nile goes murmuring by,
And the sandal that he wafted to my feet shall hang on high,
That still to coming ages the story may go down
How a maiden lost a sandal, and how she won a crown.'

* More usually spelt 'Rhodopis' or Rhodope.'

THE TRIAL OF THESEUS.

[ÆGEUS, the tenth King of Athens, having no son, consulted the oracle of Delphi, but the response not being considered explicit enough he consulted, amongst others, his friend Pittheus King of Trœzene. Pittheus solved the difficulty by giving Ægeus his daughter Æthra in marriage. By her he had a son, Theseus.]

In still *Trœzene, at the mountain's foot,
Dwelt little Theseus, with his mother Æthra,
And, day by day, the loving twain would fare
Along the yellow sands that fringed the sea,
To hear the deep-toned murmur of the waves.
But ever turned they inland to a grove
Within whose shadows lay a mossy rock,
Deep-bedded in the earth, and plumed with fern.
Oft, sitting on that rock, would Æthra tell
Such tales as mothers wont to tell their babes,
Till once, when her fast-growing stripling's limbs
Gave goodly promise of a stalwart man,
She told the boy the story of his sire—
How he bore sway in far-off Attica,†
Honoured by all as Ægeus, King of men.
And when th' impatient listener fain would know
Why he might not go forth and meet his sire,‡
The mother sighed, well knowing that the time
Would come when she must be bereaved of this,
Her sole remaining joy. But still she cried,
'Be patient, child, the time hath come not yet'—
Till, at the last, his ceaseless questionings
Fretted the mother's frail defence away.
'O boy,' she groaned, 'when thou can'st lift this rock
Whereon we sit, then will I tell thee all.'—

Straightway the fearless stripling toiled amain
With all his puny strength to move the stone
That would have tasked the thews of two strong men.
With a sad smile the mother watched her boy,
Who all unfledged, yet yearned to quit his nest.
'Theseus, thou seest the time hath come not yet,
When thou can'st lift this rock from its old seat
And I shall tell thee all—till then forbear.'
The child, abashed and speechless, hung his head,
But ever and anon he stole away,
And there in silence with no lookers-on,
Save the mute, solemn trees that stood around,
He strove to move the rock with growing power,
Straining and heaving till the blood would gush
From his broad nostrils, and his breath would fail.
'In vain,' he muttered, 'not yet is the time;
But it will come.' And so the years went by.—
There came a morn at last when on the rock
The twain were sitting, but the stripling towered
Far o'er his mother, and his brawny arms
Were knotted like the boles that grew around.
And he stood up exultingly, and cried,
'Now mother, will I once more make assay
To vanquish this old enemy of mine.'
'Nay,' pleaded the fond mother, half in smiles,
And half in tears, 'the time is hardly yet.'
Then spake he with unwonted sternness—'Now!
Now is the time, and I will win or die,'
And grappled with the stone, as with a foe.
The straining muscles of his steel-ribbed loins
The lab'ring breath that thickly came in gasps,

The sweat that poured in torrents from his brow,
All told the duel was for life or death.
And first the slim ferns bowed their drooping fronds,
And next the earth seemed slowly to upheave,
Then, inch by inch, the rock itself uprose,
And fairly beaten, turned upon its side.
Crushing beneath its mass both frond and flower.
With tight-clsped hands had Æthra watched her son,
Half hoping, yet half fearing, he would win.
Now from her lips burst forth a cry of joy,
A mother's greeting to a valiant child.
'Now, Theseus, look beneath the yawning gulf
Where lay the stone.' There marvelling he saw
A rusted blade, held by a hilt of gold.
'That was thy father's sword; a score of years
Have passed since noble Ægeus hid it there,
And with his mighty arms lowered down that rock,
And laid it on the sword. That none might know,
The monarch bound me with a solemn vow
To keep his secret till thou wert a man.
This was the test whereby he thought to prove
If he were sire of no degenerate son,
That thou by manly effort mightest raise
What he by mighty effort had laid down.
Hadst thou not in this feat supreme prevailed
That rock had been the good sword's sepulchre,
And thou hadst never seen thy princely sire.'

* * * * *

In Athens all her citizens have thronged
Within the courts of Ægeus, King of men—
Great state this day the gray-haired hero keeps.

A stranger enters, unannounced, the hall.
All eyes are turned upon a goodly youth,
Who stalks, undaunted, right up to the steps
That lead unto the throne of Attica.
'Now who art thou, bold stranger?' cries the King
With hand upon his ever-ready sword.
'Hail, Father! this the token that I bring.'
And bending low, the stranger draws the blade—
The golden-hilted blade his father knew—
And humbly lays it down before the throne.
Why tell how proud the sire that such a son
Was his? How proud the son of such a sire?
Then thus the King bespake his citizens:
'Not without toil and striving comes to man
The meed of greatness; not without much toil
And many grevious failures did I place
Yon rock upon this golden-hilted sword;
Not without struggles, through long years renewed,
This my son tore the stubborn rock from earth.
Now is he worthy to reign after me.'

(*.) An ancient city of Argolis. Its ruins may be seen near the modern village of Damala.

(†.) The coast of Attica was but 35 miles from Trœzene, but would seem far off to the boy.

‡. Ægeus did not wish to make an early public discovery of his son because of the Pallantides, his nephews, who expected the crown.

NAUSICAA.

[NAUSICAA was the daughter of Alcinous King of Phæacia, an island in ihe Ionian sea. She first met Ullysses, who had been shipwrecked on the shores of the island, whilst she was busy with her maidens washing her fathers garments by the sea. The rest of the story is told by the author with the utmost tenderness and art.]

I should be happy—all men tell me so.
To-morrow's sun will see my wedding day,
And all mine handmaids, comrades of my youth,
Cluster around me, babbling of the feast,
Spread in the broad halls of Alcinous,
And never cease to prate of the rich robes
And priceless gems around my chamber hung ;
While my fond mother's face is that of one
To whom the days of far past youth return.
Nay, when my stately father looks on me,
Plays round his firm-set lips a rare, faint smile.
Surely I should be happy, yet, ah yet,
The comely bridegroom* whom they chose for me
Stirs not my pulses with his homely speech
And homely manners, by this dull land bred,
Where never yet was heard the clash of arms,
The shout of victory, the warrior's joy.
The too kind Gods have compassed us about
With the broad buckler of the restless sea,
And great Poseidon watches over us,
So that no foeman e'er can work us harm.
In sooth it is not well that men should live
Thus lapp'd in peace through all the countless years.
The very heart of manhood must rot out,

Where none have braved a foe, or dared a wound.
Not always did I think so—these new thoughts
Of manliness and glory broke on me
When first that godlike hero touched our shores,
And told his story, five long years agone.
Let me recall, though the last time it be,
The first sweet words he uttered at my feet,
' O Queen, I kneel before thee, whether thou
Be goddess or be mortal ; if thou be
A goddess—one of them that hold broad Heaven—
To Artemis, the daughter of great Zeus,
For beauty and for stature and for grace,
Fain would I liken thee ; but if thou be
A child of men who dwell upon this earth,
Thrice blessed are thy sire and sainted mother—
Thrice blessed are thy brethren ; yea their souls
Must burn with gladness for the love of thee
When they behold thee, flower of maidenhood,
Leading the dance. Beyond all others blest
Is he who wooes and wins thee for his home.
For never yet mine eyes have seen thy peer,
Or man or maid ; it awes me to look on thee.
In Delos once I saw a thing as fair—
A palm-shoot springing by Apollo's altar.
(For thither went I, and much people with me ;
Sore woe in time to come, that journey wrought me.)
When I long time had gazed thereon, I marvelled,
For never yet from earth rose stem so fair.
So lady do I marvel at thee, and much dread
To touch thy knees, though grief weighs sorely on me.
But yesterday, the twentieth day, I 'scaped

The darkling sea; till then the wave still bore me,
And fierce blasts drave me from Ogygia's isle.†
And here some God hath cast me, that perchance
Still further evil I may yet endure;
For trow I that not yet my woes will cease,
But many more the Gods have still in store.
Then, queen, have mercy on me; unto thee
First, after many sufferings, have I come;
None other do I know of those who hold
This city and this land. Show me the town,
And if some wrap thou didst bring for thy linen,
Give it me for a garment to cast round me:
So may the Gods grant thee thy heart's desire—
A husband and a home—a mind be thine
At one with his, for nought can better be
Or nobler than when wife and husband keep
Their household with one single heart and mind.'
These were the words the kneeling outcast spake.
But though his limbs were all befoulded with slime,
And his thick locks were clotted o'er with brine,
His native nobleness shone out through all.
We pitied him. Who would not pity him?
Meat, drink and raiment, these my maidens gave;
The pure stream washed away the rude sea's stains,
While all my handmaids marvelled at the grace
And beauty of this poor waif of the deep.
Then greatly moved, I earnestly bespake them,
'Not without will of all the Gods who hold
Olympus, to Phaeacia came this man,
For, whereas erst he seemed uncomely, now
Like to the Gods who hold broad Heaven is he;

May such be called my husband, dwelling here,
Where it may please him to abide with me.'—
Not in our time that day shall be forgot
When—a poor suppliant in my father's halls—
The tale of Troy our blind old minstrel sang
Wrung from the stranger no unmanly tears.
Erect he stood, and flung aside disguise,
Confest a hero and born king of men.
Then, day by day, fell from his honied lips
The wondrous story of his full, brave life,
While, spell-bound, all our dull Phæacian youth,
And my dull bridegroom with them, stood agape.
Then came the bitter time, so long delayed,
When from our noble guest we needs must part;
Few were my farewell words, and his as few.
Before the portal of my father's house
I stood and said, 'Farewell! And think of me
When thou returnest to thy native land,
As of one unto whom thy life thou owest.'
Then, as one deeply stirred, these words he breathed:
'Nausicaa, should Zeus and Here grant
That I once more should see my island home,
Daily as to a Goddess, will I pay
My vows to thee, for thou, girl, gav'st me life.'—
Did the man love me then? Ah me! I know not.
It were unworthy of a great king's child,
Yes! most unworthy of a modest maid,
To show my liking for a parting guest;
Phæacia's daughters are not wont to woo.
So, without further speech, he sailed away.
But yet, at times, I think the stranger loved me,

And, all those years, no day has glided by
But I have seaward cast my longing eyes,
If I might o'er the waves perchance descry
His white sails swollen by the eastern breeze.
In all these years no tidings yet have sped
From the broad outer world to this lone isle,
Girt by the main as by an iron band.
And day by day my home-bred suitor came,
Wooing me with his rough Phæacian speech,
Not like that other's whose clear accents fell
As the smooth rippling of a full-fed stream.
And, as I still delayed, my handmaids said,
'The youth is comely, princess why delay?'
And my gray mother spake in mild rebuke,
'Daughter, why let the glory of thy youth
Slip idly by? Long hath the patient youth
Stood by, expectant; make him happy now.'
Then last of all, my sire, in weighty words,
Told me it was not well a girl of his
Should lack a guardian when her sire was gone,
For his own thread of life was nearly spun—
And so at last I yielded. Well I wist
That other one would come back nevermore,
And that I had but fed me on a dream.

* According to Aristotle this was Telemachus, son of Ullyses.
† Supposed to have been situated off the south coast of Italy,

Those who know their Homer—I do not mean through the distorting medium of Pope's translation—will, it is to be hoped, recognise the original of this address, which I have striven hard to render almost word for word.—W.H.

MISCELLANEOUS VERSE.

THE MERMAN'S WIFE.

A sequel to the Matthew Arnold's 'Forsaken Merman.'

'Tis but the moan of the sea I hear,
As the billows landward swing,
Yet at times my heart stands still for fear
Of the cry of one who erst was dear—
Of a living, wounded thing.
Long years ago, beneath that sea—
Half bitter those days, half sweet—
Did I dwell with one who was dear to me,
But not so dear as the little three
Who gambolled round our feet.
And a loving soulless life we led
In those dim-lit plains below,
For I recked no more of those o'erhead,
Or whether my earth-kin were living or dead,
Than I recked of the tidal flow.
Then smote me of God a sudden thought,
Of the God I must meet when I die;
And leave on my bended knees I sought
From the kind mate who could deny me naught,

To go churchward at Easter-tide.
With many a kiss to my mate I swore,
With many a kiss to the three,
That my soul's peace made, from the old church-door
I would hie me back to them there on the shore,
To dwell evermore in the sea.
And the good priest shrived me of my sin,
On that holy Easter-tide ;
But he said, if Heaven I hoped to win,
On earth I must bide with my Christian kin—
Our good priest hath he lied ? hath he lied ?
And bitter things the good priest said
Of the sire of my darlings three—
How 'twere better for me that I were dead
Than thus with a soulless thing to wed—
So I went back no more to the sea.
But when winds and waves are high I hear,
Or dream that I hear, a cry,
'Come back, we are waiting, mother dear !
'Tis weary waiting year after year,
Come back to us ere we die.'
And I cannot but think that the One above
Who made all things on land or in sea,
Will pardon a silly woman's love
Who longs with the longing of a dove,
For her mate and her younglings three.
And fain would I hope that the Christ who died
For the sinful race of men,
May grant us a nook in Heaven so wide,
Where my kind old sea-king may sit by my side,
While our babes play round us again.

THE BIRTHDAY FEAST.

Ho ! landlord bring me lights and wine,
And bring thy choicest cheer,
For at this birthday feast of mine
Strange guests will soon appear.
I'll sup to-night, though 'twere my last,
With the brave spirits of the past.
Come, dark-eyed damsel, whom I woo'd
Some forty years ago.
Sit thou by my right hand, thy mood
Was merry once, I know;
For one short night that merry strain
I bid thee wake for me again.
And sit thou here upon my left,
My schoolmate and my friend,
Whatever else old Time hath left
Thy wit he cannot end ;
Pour forth those burning words once more
That held us all entranced of yore.
Old comrades too, that sit below,
Come, aid the general cheer,
Troll forth the songs of long ago,
And bring the far past near.
The past alone shall reign to-night,
Come what may with to-morrow's light.
What, silent all ? Old sweetheart, thou !
And thou, my soul-bound friend !
No answering light beneath that brow,—
Those lips no message send.
I wot not if alive ye be,

But know ye all are dead to me.
There is a viewless gulf between
Your souls, old friends, and mine,
We may not bridge it by this scene
Of lights, good cheer, and wine ;
The thick mists of the years arise,
And hide us from each others' eyes.—
Ho ! landlord, our strange guests are gone,
Take wine and lights away.
Throw wide the windows, every one,
Let in the new-born day ;
My ghastly birthday-feast is o'er—
I sup with those old friends no more.

A REVERIE.

Methought a stately vessel sped
Across a waveless sea ;
Blue skies were smiling overhead,
Green shores smiled on her lee ;
The only sound without, within,
The beating of her iron fin.
Then suddenly the great ship's heart
With one wild death-shriek broke,
Her mighty ribs burst all apart,
And a thick fall of smoke
Veiled for awhile the ghastly scene
Where life and strength but now had been.
The pall was lifted, all was o'er,
Unwrinkled lay the sea—
The skies were smiling as before,

The shores smiled on the lee ;
The drifting smoke, with eddying wreath,
Sole witness of what lay beneath.
I could have cursed those tearless skies,
With their cold sapphire light,
I loathed the shore with heedless eyes
That looked upon such sight ;
And cruel seemed th' unruffled sea
Smiling o'er her sunk argosy.
Then came the thought—'Tis better far
That kindly earth should hide
With turf and flower each ugly scar,
Than let her wounds abide ;
If nature mourned each loss, then all
Were wrapped in one huge funeral pall.
'Tis meet that ocean's glassy heart
Her sunken fleets should hide
From mourners—learn then from her rest,
And deem not in thy pride
That woods will droop and skies will frown
Because thy Life's frail bark goes down.

TO DEATH.

I do not fear thy coming, grisly Death ;
Thy dart at me thou brandishest in vain,
Whose icy touch I know may stop my breath
With one brief spasm of supremest pain.
My bygone life thou canst not wrest from me ;
The happy memories of many years.
My loves, my friendships from thy clutch are free,

Free all of life that elevates and cheers.
These shall I bear with me beyond thy ken,
Immortal as the soul that holds them fast;
Leaving, I trow, to the kind sons of men
A kindly judgment of my chequered past.
Yet, in thine own despite, some good must flow
From thy rude smiting—gone, then, all the fears
Of shadowy ills that menace us below;
These clouds thy touch, as day is sinking, clears,
And thou the nameless dread dost mitigate
That aye besets the man of many ties,
Lest one by one they snap, and desolate
Leave him with none to close his glazing eyes.
Go! scare the bigot whose accursed creed
Shows him an angry judge beyond the grave;
Who loses hope when comes his hour of need,
Who crouches at thy presence like a slave.
Not such the Father whom I trust to meet,
When thou, O Death! hast sped me on the way,
Which let me tread with not unwilling feet,
Passing through thy short night to endless day.

Let me repose on the banks of the Seine amidst the people I have loved so well.'—NAPOLEON'S WILL.

Why, through each crowded street
And stately square, gay city of the Gaul,
Ceaseless resounds the tramp of eager feet,
As hastening to some gladsome festival?
Hark to the thunderous cry
Of myriads, blending with the martial swell

Of music, while by fits th' artillery
Drowns with its roar the deep cathedral bell!
Robed in the hue of gloom
While many a time-worn banner floats around,
Whose ashes bear ye, soldiers, to the tomb,
With myrtle and unfading laurel crowned?
'These are the bones of him
On Fortune's flood who long triumphant rode,
Before the splendour of whose rising sun
The prostrate nations bowed, as to a God.'
Not wisely to the day,
France, hast thou dragged the wreck of him whose track
Was blinding bright, as is the lightning's ray,
But leaving all behind it bare and black.
Was there, vain land, not one
Of all thy sons whose stream of life unseen,
Unmarked had flowed, save by the good he'd done,
By smiling harvests, and by banks of green?
Not one whose life-long joy
Was still to dry a suffering people's tears,
Who strove to build what such as he destroy
Whose bones receive the homage of thy fears?
Arise! in pale array,
Ye myriads bleached on Russia's snowy plain,
And ye who crushed beneath his chariot lay,
Whose blood still cries aloud from sultry Spain.
'Twere better far to sleep
Where the lone willow mourns his blighted fame,
Than, thus dragged forth, in grim remembrance keep
His country's glory and his country's shame.

TO THE SABBATH.

Sweet Sabbath morn ! in Summer's golden prime
We hail thy presence, breathing of pure flowers
And purer thoughts ; although to hear the chime
From England's steeples be no longer ours,
Yet thou hast much that distance hath not shorn,
So from this Island of the South we hail thee, Sabbath morn !
Thee may the toil-worn yeoman fitly praise,
His ark of refuge from rude labour's wave,
His green spot in the multitude of days,
That else would bear him, outworn, to the grave,
Without a glimpse of that celestial light
That bids thee still shine glorious in our sight
Since, at creation's dawn, first Time to see thee smiled
And clad in brightest hues his last, his favourite child.

THE ARAB AND THE ENGLISHMAN.

A sea of hot sand in the desert, a quivering haze in the air—
A withering outburst of fire from the flanks of a fire-begirt square—
For surging and howling around us the Arabs in thousands are here ;
They are pressing hard home on our hundreds with sabre, with dart and with spear.
By Heavens ! our square they have broken, they are in—but five minutes more,
If that inrush is not beaten back, why, our desert campaigning is o'er.

No time left for loading or aiming—men ! give them the thrust of cold steel—
Yet the dark masses throng ever inwards, and our hard-pressed young fellows they reel.
Then a towering form leaps lightly to the front of the horrible fray,
And well for our sore beset soldiers they had Burnaby with them that day;
For our fainting young lads caught new spirit when they saw their tall champion stride
To the forefront of all that grim battle, some veterans hard by his side ;
And the death-dealing sweep of his broadsword, and their bayonet-thrusts gave some space
For the crowd that was swaying behind them to fill up the square's shattered face.
Shall I tell of our English Achilles, how he smote on the right and the left—
How a ghastly ring lay prone around him of Arabs all mingled and cleft ?
How the dread of that terrible swordsman made even their boldest shrink back ?
For short was the life of the fighter who stood in our champion's track.
No ! I speak of one braver than Hector, for *he* feared not Achilles to meet,
Though he knew that our giant would stretch him next instant a corpse at his feet:
He knew that his limbs, in the grasp of that stark one, as infant's were weak,

But he knew that ere death could o'ertake him, his will on that foe he could wreak.
So he stood, the lithe Arab, unshrinking, and hurled with his life's force his spear,
And laughed when it smote, and smote deeply, laughed, though his own doom was near.
One blow from our death-stricken hero—the jubilant spearsman lies low,
Crushed to earth by the fall of his victim, and drenched by the blood of his foe.
But the Arab still smiled in the death-throe, to think that he well had repaid
With that thrust of his far-reaching spear the stroke of brave Burnaby's blade.
And poor is that Briton in spirit, who has not the courage to say
That stretched on the sand of the desert two heroes lay lifeless that day.

A DIRGE FOR THE OLD.

Why should we weep for the death of him
Who, bowed with the load of years,
With a smile hath welcomed the tyrant grim
That the trembling sinner fears,
And hath met the summons from on high
With Samuel's ready, 'Here am I.'

Why need we mourn for the time-worn oak,
Of its early greenness shorn,
If it fell not by the woodman's stroke,
Nor by the blast was torn,

But bowed its crest at Nature's call,
So slow, 'twas scarcely seen to fall.

Why drop a tear for the honoured dead
Who breathed life's latest sigh
With his children's children round his bed
To close his glazing eye—
The ripples on a summer sea
Kiss not the strand more silently.

Why sigh for him whom the kind arms of Death
Have borne from this earth of ours?
Let us crown his bier with a laurel wreath,
Let us deck his tomb with flow'rs,
For 'twere vain to plant for such as he
The gloomy yew, or the cypress tree.

THE ELDER BROTHER OF THE PRODIGAL.

'Audi alteram partem.'

To whom shall I turn me for justice, if I find it not, father, in thee?
Who hast kept me beside thee till manhood, since first I was nursed on thy knee,
Who hast called me sole prop of thy household, sole comfort and stay of thine age,
Who hast read all the book of my life, and knowest how pure is each page.
Now a poor tale of sin and of weakness, a pitiful shedding of tears,
Have won all the love and the trust that were mine by the service of years.

Now sits in the seat of the first-born, upheld by the hand of his sire,
The man who hath wallowed himself, and hath dragged our fair fame in the mire!
Nay, deem not I speak but in envy, no bidding of thine can bring back
To such place as I claim, by my right, one who wandered so far from the track ;
If the life I have led is unworthy full harvest of honour to bring,
I would scorn to receive from compassion a feast, and a robe and a ring.
Nor think that I grudge a poor brother, so fallen, the shelter of home,
With such measure of kindness that ne'er he again should be tempted to roam;
But that, reeking with vice, and just touched with a new-born remorse, he should share
All that virtue unspotted could hope for—'tis hard, O my father ! to bear.
Perchance, after long years of trial, when taught what he owed to thy grace,
When the furnace of sorrow and suff'ring had purged what was selfish and base,
When the sin-besmirched face that I look on had cast off the slough of its shame,
When patient well-doing had brought back to him, and to us, our good name,
Then some seat at thy board, but low down, some space in thy heart might'st thou grant—

Far removed should that seat be from honour, that space in thy heart should be scant—
Yet still, though repentant, the sinner should feel that the full trust of yore
His own hand had slain, and had buried to rise on this earth nevermore.
Enough ! let him reap where he sowed not, and trade on the weakness of age—
In my turn I go forth to the world, all unaided life's battle to wage.
Farewell ! and withold not thy blessing from one who must wander like Cain,
But, unlike the first slayer, submits when the hope of his own life is slain.
And, father, the day may yet come when danger shall threaten thy home;
From the uttermost parts of the earth then call me—thy first-born will come.
Till then, have no care for the lost one, in the future twofold is my trust,
I carry a heart that is pure, and the God whom I worship is just.

A BIRTHDAY RETROSPECT.

Here let me pause awhile on Life's steep hill,
Which I have climbed for sixty-four long years.
Onward to-day I press not, backward still
Mine eye turns, where the dim gray past appears.

At the hill's foot a childish form I see,
That, toddling, holds a loving father's hand,

And knows no grief to mar its day-long glee,
  But deems this earth a new-found wonderland.

Next, laughing, leaps a stripling into sight,
  And still the father's hand is there to guide,
But now the outlook is not always bright,
  And coming ills flit by the youngster's side.

And then I look on early manhood's form ;
  The father's guiding hand no longer there,
Toss'd is th' unstable soul by many a storm,
  Now raised by Hope, now cast down by Despair.

But lo ! the stalwart form of manhood's prime
  Breasts, with unfaltering step, the lessening height,
Less dark the shadows than in byegone time,
  But rarer now Hope's sunbeams, and less bright.

Still as I gaze, far other forms I see,
  Sisters and brothers who have gone before,
And long-dead little ones, whose hands to me
  Seem softly beckoning from a far-off shore.

These are not all, for hover all around
  The formless ghosts of half-forgotten sins,
Thronging resolves, to each new birthday bound
  Which each year's poor performance sadly thins.

Ah ! could I but retrace—fond dreamer, on !
  Short space between thee and that hill-top now ;
Thousands before thee up that path have gone,
  And have found peace at last—then why not thou ?

A L'OUTRANCE.

'Why, brother mine, is thy brow so dark ?
  And why is thy cheek so pale ?
Once thou wert blithe as is the lark—
  Sweet brother, what makes thee quail ?'

'My tale, how can I, sweet sister, tell,
  And die not before thee of shame ?
For never disgrace like mine befel
  One who beareth our honoured name.

At morn our house's foe must I meet,
  And one of the twain must die,
He will slay me, and never before so sweet
  Seemed the earth, and the sea, and the sky.

'Tis base for a man to be afraid,
  But I fear, ah ! sister, I fear
The deadly sweep of his trenchant blade,
  And the grinding thrust of his spear.

The death-pang is sharp, and the grave it is cold,
  I am all too young to die,
And I shrink from the crawling worms, and the mould
  Where my bleeding corse must lie.'

'Brother no more—I may not hear
  The tale of our house's shame,
The listening birds will prate of thy fear,
  And the green boughs will whisper thy name.

Ah me ! that thy danger I cannot share,
  Twin sister and brother are we—

God hath given *thee* the heart of a hare,
  And a lion's heart to *me*.

I bethink me of one who will take thy place,
  Slender he is, but bold,
With the visor barr'd he shall hide his face,
  So our secret shall not be told.

Then sleep in peace—if thou canst sleep
  'Neath that gruesome load of shame—
While thee will I strive unstained to keep,
  And the honour of our name.'

The champions met, as daylight broke,
  Ill-matched, as all might see,
The mighty strength of a giant oak
  'Gainst a pliant willow-tree.

Short was the fight. How could it last?
  For the slender knight gave way,
As the reed gives way to the sweeping blast,
  When wintry winds have sway.

'Unclasp the helm, and give him air,
  For stricken sore must he be,
And quick from his breast the hauberk tear,
  For a dying man is he.'

They loosed the helm for breathing space,
  From the breast they drew the blade,
But the fair dead face was a maiden's face
  And the breast was the breast of a maid !

CARMEN SECULARE.

[HORACE wrote this ode at the command of the Emperor Augustus, for the celebration of the Secular Games in the year 17 B. C. The ode was sung while the Emperor was offering sacrifices at night attended by the Fifteen who presided over all religious affairs. The singers consisted of a chorus of 27 boys and 27 girls, well-trained, and under the care of a leader.]

Hail Phœbus ! and Diana, thou
Who dost the greenwood sway—
Twin glories of the sky, we bow
Before you—grant our prayers now,
  Upon this holy day,
Whereon, as Sibyl's rhymes command,
The hymn shall ever rise
From youth and maid, a spotless band,
To all the Gods who guard our land,
  Our seven hills who prize.
All-fostering sun, whose car of flame
Now shows, now hides the light,
Thou daily changeling, aye the same,
May naught arise this city's fame
  Eclipsing in thy sight.
Kind helper in their hour of need,
Whose care all matrons own,
Still to the new-born babe give heed,
Known as Lucina births to speed,
  Or as Life-giver known.
Smile Goddess, on our offspring, lend
The Fathers' laws thine aid,
May wide-spread increase be their end ,

May fruitful wedlock still attend
  The statutes they have made.
As brings the circling age's flight
Its hundred years and ten,
So surely, fraught with each delight,
Comes thrice the day and thrice the night
  To bless the sons of men.
And ye, O Fates, whose truthful song,
Once given forth, stands fast,
By stedfast Nature, kept from wrong,
A happy future-time prolong—
  A future like the past.
With full-ear'd wreath be Ceres crowned,
The gift of teeming Earth—
Health-giving streams her young surround,
And let Jove's breezes play around,
  To foster each new birth.
Thy bow and terrors laid aside,
Hear while our youths recite
Thy praises, ruler of the day—
And hearken while our maidens pray,
  Queen of the starry night!
For Rome the work is of your hand,
And at your bidding came
To Tuscan strand the Trojan band,
Their household Gods who left and land,
  Escaping sword and flame.
For them through blazing Troy a way
The pure Æneas clave,
Survivor of his land's decay,
He led them where, another day,

  More than they left he gave.
Ye Gods! our youth with pure lives grace—
On peaceful age a rest
Bestow, ye Gods, of ample space;
With wealth and children may the race
  Of Romulus be blest!
When Venus' and Anchises' heir
The milk-white kine hath slain,
Grant all the noble victor's prayer,
For he the vanquished foe doth spare,
  Who never sues in vain.
Our fleets at sea, our hosts on shore
Have quelled the haughty Mede—
Scythian and Indian, proud of yore,
Now ask our will, and scorn no more
  What Romans have decreed.
Now Truth once more with Peace appears,
Now Honour dreads no scorn,
Lays Modesty aside her fears,
Comes Virtue back, while Plenty cheers
  The land with brimming horn.
Let him, so goodly in his might,
The bow-girt Prophet God,
In whom the Muses nine delight,
The Healer, skilful to make light
  The suffering body's load,
Watch Latium with approving eyes,
And fane-crowned Palatine,
And bid a coming age arise
Still happier than this age we prize,
  For all the Roman line.

May she on Algidus who stays
Enthroned, or Aventine,
Regard the Fifteen's hymn of praise,
And to our youthful suppliants' lays
A friendly ear incline.
That Jove and all his Gods befriend
These songs, I homeward bear
A steadfast hope—I, skilled to blend
The hymns to Phœbus that ascend
With holy Dian's prayer.

Probably the leader of the chorus would sing the last stanza, thereby declaring the confidence of the singers that their prayers had been heard by the gods.—Ed.

ORAKAU.

Come, white man, listen, the tale we will tell
How, at Orakau we fought so well—
Fought your men in red, and your men in blue,
Though ye were so many, and we so few ;
How we swore that we would yield us never,
But would fight to the death, for ever and ever !

The night cloud was lifting from Orakau,
As we crouched beneath his broad, steep brow,
And heard the roll of your morning drum,
And heard the gathering soldiers' hum ;
Then we swore that we would yield us never,
But would fight to the death, for ever and ever !

Then the morning sunbeam flashed amain,
And lit up the rolling, fern-clad plain,
And we saw, as we peered from our earthen mound,
That their thousands had compassed us around ;
Still we swore that to these we would yield us never,
But would fight to the death for ever and ever !

Then—peal on peal—came the cannon's roar,
Then the crashing ball through our ramparts tore,
And each of us crouched 'neath his scooped-out bed,
As the rising shell burst overhead ;
Yet again we swore we would yield us never,
But would fight to the death for ever and ever !

Next we heard the firm earth-shaking tread
Of the stern advance of the men in red,
That massive column tipped with steel,
Made our stoutest hearts a quiver feel ;
Still once more we swore we would yield us never,
But would fight to the death, for ever and ever !

Nearer they came—not a trigger we drew ;
Nearer yet—not a bullet flew.
To our earthwork's very foot they came—
Then burst from our ranks a sheet of flame !
And we laughed as we swore we would yield us never,
But would fight to the death, for ever and ever !

One volley more, and the stricken foe
Lay in mangled heaps in the trench below—
Yet a third, and your red-coats fled amain,
And strewed with their dead the fern-clad plain ;
While we yelled in our glee we would yield us never,
But would fight to the death, for ever and ever !

Then sprang to the rescue the men in blue,
And our deadly task seemed begun anew,
  Right o'er the blood-stained trench they leapt—
  Right up the rampart they swarmed and crept;
Yet still we cried we would yield us never,
But would fight to the death, for ever and ever!

Then our deadly guns we plied so well
That the last of your blue-clad stormers fell,
  And not a man could be brought from the rear,
  To face the mound that had cost so dear;
And in triumph we shrieked we would yield us never!
But would fight to the death, for ever and ever!

Then the night-cloud gathered o'er Orakau,
Our loss we had counted not till now,
  And knew not how thickly our bravest fell
  Mangled by bullet or rent by shell;
But we grimly swore we would yield us never
And would fight to the death, for ever and ever!

Came morn, and closer and closer we found
The red coats had drawn their lines around.
  Then their leader cried, 'Brave men, forbear!
  Yield but your arms—your lives we spare.'
But we answered him 'We would yield us never,
But would fight to the death, for ever and ever!'

Yet 'twere vain, we knew, for all our boast,
To hold out longer against yon host,
  And well we wist that ere eventide
  Their stormers would take our bare hillside,

But once more we swore we would yield us never,
And would fight to the death, for ever and ever!

One chance was there left us—from Orakau
Slopes to the north the hill's broad brow,
  Slopes to the brink of a deep morass;
  That way we knew, might brave men pass,
And keep their vow they would yield them never,
But fight to the last, for ever and ever!

Like a storm came we thund'ring down; the few
Who stood in our path we trampled or slew,
  And fought out our way through slime and through reed,
  Mocking the following rider and steed
With our farewell oath we would yield us never,
But would fight to the death, for ever and ever!

[The only reply of the beleaguered Maoris to General Cameron's repeated summons to surrender was 'We will fight on, ake, ake—for ever and ever!'—and they kept their word. I am sorry to learn that the accent falls on the middle syllable of Orakau. So much the worse for an impracticable word—'*quod versu dicere non est.*'—W.H.]

SONG.

I was young when she stood 'mid a girlish band,
  And she too was young and fair,
And I swore I would give all I had in the land
For a single clasp of her little hand,
  For a tress of her raven hair.

And my love for that little hand was such
That I clasped it for ever there,
Yet for many a year I cared not much,
Far less than I ought, for that hand's fond touch,
Or the touch of that raven hair.

But the years went by, and my love came back—
With her it was always there;
And the early fondness stole in their track
For a hand-clasp that late had grown but slack,
For a touch of her grey, grey hair.

Still the years go by, on life's brink we stand,
But the love of our youth is there;
As together we gaze on the Coming Land,
I thrill at the clasp of her wrinkled hand,
At the touch of her snow-white hair.

Printed by ALFRED G. BETTS, Hardy St., Nelson.