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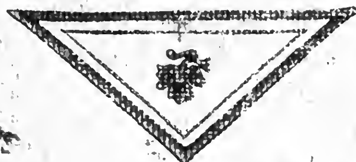

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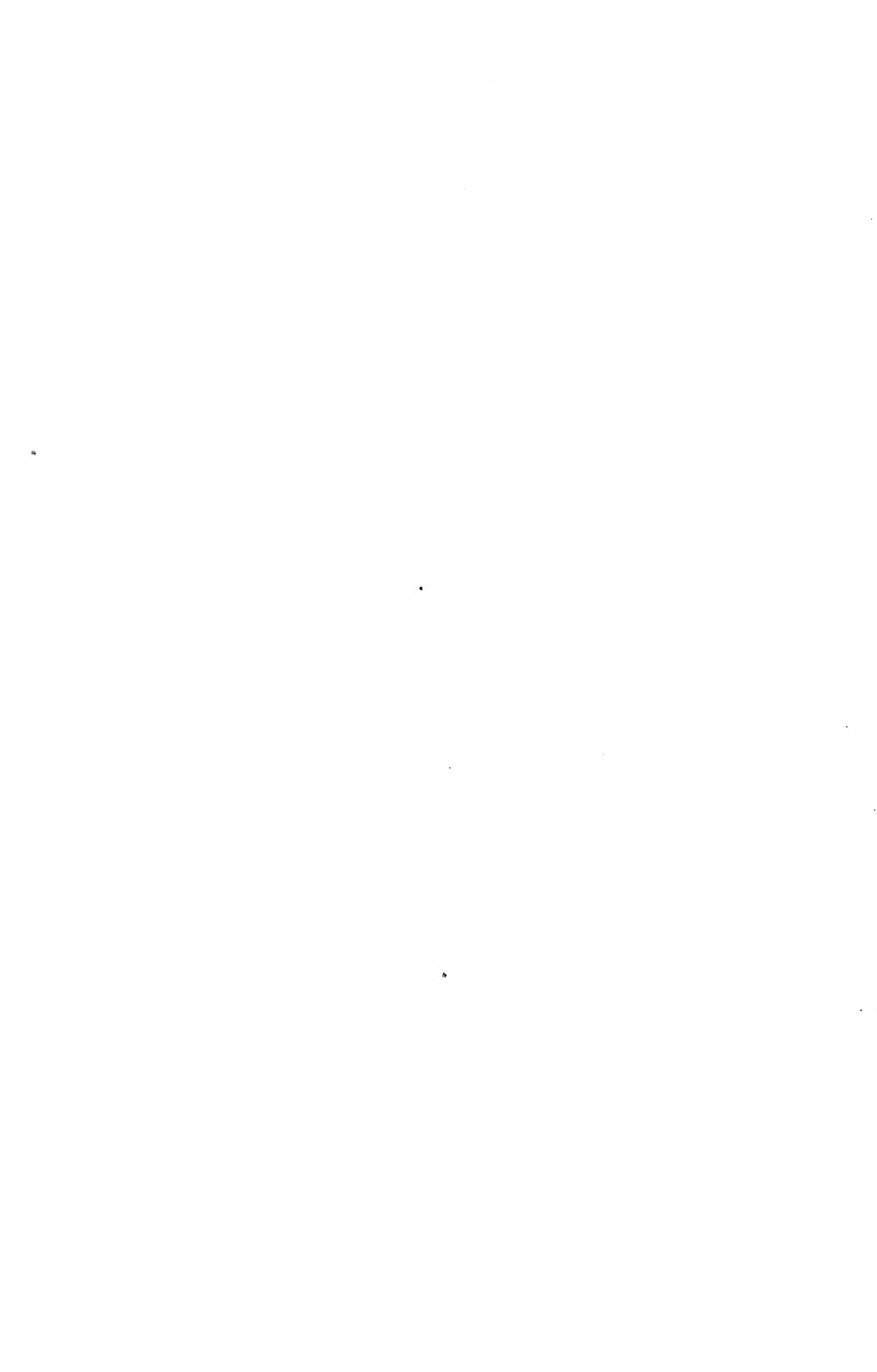

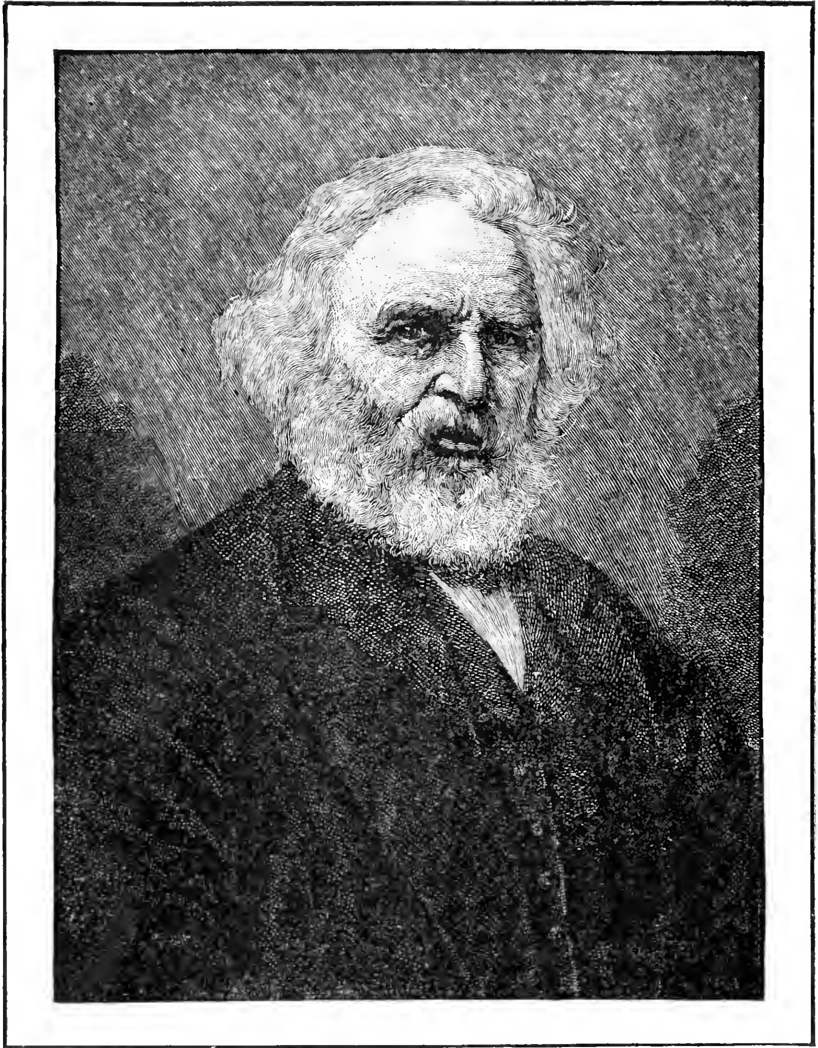

HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW.

STANDARD LITERATURE SERIES

THE COURTSHIP OF MILES STANDISH

AND OTHER POEMS

BY

HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW

WITH AN INTRODUCTION AND NOTES

BY

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NOTE TO TEACHERS.

THE present editor of "The Courtship of Miles Standish" has aimed to adapt his style and treatment to a comparatively young class of pupils. Having in mind especially those just below the high-school grades, he has made his suggestions for study as simple and practical as is consistent with thorough work. To this end he invites the coöperation of the teacher, for the best results are reached when instructor and editor understand each other's aims. Even the lightest study of a piece of literature calls for some definite plan of work to differentiate it from mere casual reading for amusement. A class even in literature must have a lesson to learn. The first reading may still be for pleasure, but the skilful teacher will use this as a basis for training in the simpler principles of criticism, for the acquisition of knowledge and culture, and for mental discipline. It is not hard to interest pupils at the story-loving age in what is meant by a plot, how it is put together, what part the actors play, and in the teachings of the book. The study of the poet's materials will open up naturally the important relation of history to literature, of facts to art, and the author's method of work. From this higher ground the advance is easy and gradual to the mastery of some of the great principles of poetic art. The list of topics and questions in the introduction will indicate the editor's plan, which is to start each pupil out, note-book in hand, to find illustrations of points already made, to whet his powers of observation, to draw out his reasoning faculties, and cultivate a taste for critical research.

A number of the favorite shorter poems of the author have been included in this volume, to meet the desire of many teachers.

G. A. WAUCHOPE.

SOUTH CAROLINA COLLEGE.

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INTRODUCTION.

I. Historical Material.

§ 1. *An American Poem.*

Eleven years after the appearance of "Evangeline," Longfellow again attempted a long narrative poem in the hexameter meter. The result was "The Courtship of Miles Standish," published in 1858. The background is still American, but the poet has passed from the ruined hamlets of French Acadia to the bustling village of Puritan Plymouth. In subject, the transition is from a romance of tragic pathos and gloom to a half-humorous story of love and friendship. "Evangeline" presents scenes of domestic happiness followed by disaster and heart-breaking separation; "The Courtship" pictures the stern struggle between two races, and crowns with gladness two devoted hearts.

In the later poem Longfellow has come nearer home for a subject, and written a lovely idyll based on the simple but strenuous life of his Puritan ancestors. He had previously composed a number of ballads and lyrics dealing with the legends of New England, and tales of the early pioneers possessed a peculiar charm for his imagination. These poems have touched the hearts of his readers as none of his foreign subjects have done, and caused him to be regarded as our most popular and representative poet.

"The Courtship" has as its scene, or background, a real and famous chapter in history—the settlement of the Pilgrim Fathers at Plymouth on the coast of Massachusetts. Now,

in order to study the poem thoroughly, we shall first have to make ourselves familiar with the time and place of its setting. We must also know a good deal about the customs, opinions, and character of those quaint old Pilgrims. All this is a matter of history, and the best plan will be to read some of the very same old journals and chronicles which Longfellow read before writing his poem. We may then compare the bare facts of the story with the finished masterpiece which his art has made out of those crude materials. This will be having a glimpse into the poet's workshop, for we may see something of the process by which he changed a rough backwoods story into a charming piece of literature.

One of the first things that we shall notice is that our author has taken a poet's license and made free use of his sources. He has cut out some of the facts and put in others of his own invention; and the parts which he has selected to use, he has changed and rearranged to suit his purpose. He has changed the time and relative position of certain events, developed the more important, and toned down harsh and disagreeable features. He has thus done what all great artists know so well how to do—*idealized* his subject.

§ 2. *The Pilgrims.*

We must first know something about the people in the little community of which Priscilla and Alden and Captain Standish formed a part. Who were they, where did they come from, and how did they happen to be living in that little row of eleven log-cabins on the "high and rock-bound coast" of New England?

The Pilgrims came originally from England, where they formed part of the great body of Puritans, who were a plain, pious, industrious people. By the sixteenth century the Established Church of England, which had always been ritualistic, had also grown exceedingly worldly. It was an age of intolerance, and men persecuted one another for not hold-

ing similar religious views. The Puritans, as the name implies, tried to purify the English Church from what Calvin called "Popish dregs," such as making the sign of the cross, using the ring in the marriage service, and wearing the surplice. They were strict in the observance of moral, social, and religious duties, and held that creeds, ritualistic modes of worship, and the lordly pomp of bishops were opposed to the simple and equal spirit of Christianity. They were consequently persecuted by the civil authorities for their nonconformity to the views of the State Church.

In 1580 a number of the Puritans, known as Separatists, who believed in free preaching and a simpler form of worship, separated themselves from the congregations and held services in private houses. William Brewster was their ruling elder, and John Robinson, who had been suspended by the bishop, was their pastor. King James, who came to the throne in 1603, took the view that dissent would lead to disloyalty, and persecuted this reformed church.

After being continually harassed by the ecclesiastical authorities, the Separatists, with other dissenting churches, removed, in 1608, to Holland, where they found an asylum and religious toleration. They first settled in Amsterdam, and thence went to Leyden. "After residing several years in that city," says Holmes, "various causes influenced them to entertain serious thoughts of a removal to America. These causes were, the unhealthiness of the low country where they lived; the hard labors to which they were subjected; the dissipated manners of the Hollanders, especially their lax observance of the Lord's day; the apprehension of war at the conclusion of the truce between Spain and Holland, which was then near its close; the fear lest their young men would enter into the military and naval service; the tendency of their little community to become absorbed and lost in a foreign nation; the natural and pious desire of perpetuating a church, which they believed to be constituted after the simple and

pure model of the primitive church of Christ; and a commendable zeal to propagate the gospel in the regions of the New World."[1]

The problem of getting across the Atlantic was a difficult one for a whole community, many of whom were poor. The Pilgrims sent their agents to England to see what could be done. A joint stock company was formed with about seventy London merchants, who agreed to provide the transportation.[2] Hard terms were imposed on the colonists, which their circumstances compelled them to accept. The king signed a patent incorporating "the adventurers to the northern colony of Virginia," by which they were authorized to establish a plantation somewhere about Hudson's river.[3]

The Pilgrims came over from Leyden in July, 1620, to prepare for the dangerous voyage, and to take a last farewell of their native land. The parting scene at the beach in Holland is the subject of one of the great national paintings which hang in the Capitol at Washington. After a solemn service and many pathetic good-byes, they embarked from Southampton in two old-fashioned sailing ships, the "Mayflower," one hundred and eighty tons burden, and the "Speedwell," sixty tons. They were, unfortunately, obliged to return twice on account of the leakiness of the smaller vessel. At last, after many discouragements, on September 6, 1620, the "Mayflower" sailed alone with one hundred and one passengers, among them being Miles Standish and his wife Rose, Elder Brewster, Stephen Hopkins, Richard Warren, Gilbert Winslow, Jones, captain of the ship, John Alden, and Priscilla Mullens or Molines, all of whom are mentioned in our poem.[4] Carver, Bradford, and Edward Winslow were also on board, each of whom became governor of the colony. It was a remarkable company, all with stout hearts and godly char-

[1] Holmes's *Annals of America*, Part II., Period I., pp. 158, 159.

[2] Capt. John Smith's *General History of Virginia*, ii., p. 251.

[3] Hazard's *State Papers*, i., p. 340.

[4] Bradford's and Winslow's *Journal* in Young's *Chronicles*, chap. ix.

acters, and worthy to be the founders of a new nation beyond the sea.

After a stormy voyage, in the course of which their ship became leaky and at times unmanageable, they joyfully discovered land off Cape Cod. This was far northward of their destination, but owing to the advanced season of the year and the unseaworthy condition of the "Mayflower," and especially to the treachery of the captain, they dropped anchor in the harbor of Plymouth.[1] After prayer and thanksgiving, a compact was signed by which the Pilgrims organized themselves into a body politic with Carver as first governor.[2] On November 13th, says Bradford, "Our people went on shore to refresh themselves, and our women to wash, as they had great need." On the 15th Captain Standish and others were sent out in the shallop to fetch wood and seek a suitable spot for a settlement. On this expedition they brought back ten bushels of Indian corn.

The feelings of these homeless wanderers are well expressed in the following letter, written by one of them from the cabin of the "Mayflower": "At last, praise be to God! we lie within sight of land, but what a land! Stern rocks with cruel waves forever dashing upon them, black forests sheltering who knows what fearful creatures and still more fearful savages; snow, ice, desolation, at every hand; no houses, no Christian people, no sign of the work of man. I had almost said no sign of the work of God. Such is our new home; and yet we have no choice but to accept it, for the captain says and swears that he will carry us no farther, and unless we settle where we will establish ourselves without more delay, he will put us ashore at the nearest point."

The final landing occurred on Thursday, December 21, 1620, on a high ground where some land had been cleared by the savages for planting corn, and a sweet brook ran under

[1] Prince's *Chronological History of New England*, Part II.
[2] Morton's *New England's Memorial*, pp. 37–39.

the hill-side. They selected an eminence, and erected a platform on which they planted their ordnance so as to command all the country about.[1] This was Burial Hill, referred to in the poem, from which was an extensive prospect of Gurnet's Nose, the shore and ocean for miles around. The spot had been marked Plymouth on a chart of the coast made by Captain John Smith, and was the name of the port from which they had last sailed in England.

Here the men erected a log-cabin "twenty feet square for their common use, to receive them and their goods." In a short time they had built three more houses for the use of the plantation and seven for individual families, which were arranged in two rows.[2] Lots were measured off and assigned "for meersteads and garden-plots" to the nineteen families into which the hundred colonists had been grouped. They were fortunately not molested by the Indians, for a recent plague had swept away most of the natives of that region.[3] Later, however, the settlers wêre frequently alarmed by the cries of the savages and the great forest fires kindled by them. The first visit from an Indian was that of the sagamore Samoset, who on March 16th walked boldly into the settlement calling out, "Welcome, Englishmen!" He was soon followed by Massasoit, the king of the neighboring tribe, who made a league of friendship with the whites which was kept inviolably for fifty years.[4] In 1623 a formidable conspiracy against the English settlers was formed by the Massachusetts tribe, under the leadership of Wittuwamet and Pecksuot. It was promptly put down by Standish, both the chiefs being killed, and the former's head being set up on the fort.[5] This incident forms a part of Longfellow's plot.

[1] Bradford's *Journal*, December 20.

[2] Prince's *Chronological History*, p. 168.

[3] Higginson's *New England Plantation*, 1630, and Morton's *New England's Memorial* (Davis), pp. 51, 52.

[4] Holmes's *Annals of America*, pp. 166–68.

[5] *Idem*, p. 181.

The sufferings of the first winter (1620–21) failed to shake the resolution of the Pilgrims. Though frost and foul weather hindered them much in their building, it was providentially a very mild winter for that latitude,[1] otherwise the colony could hardly have survived. Half of the entire company died, "the greatest part," says Bradford, "in the depth of winter, wanting houses and other comforts, being infected with the scurvy and other diseases, which their long voyage and unaccommodate condition brought upon them."[2] Dudley wrote home: "It may be said of us almost as of the Egyptians, that there is not a house where there is not one dead, and in some houses many."[3] Wood tells us that this terrible mortality was due to their tainted sea-diet and lack of warm housing and bedding.[4] Their sublime faith enabled them to support all these discouragements and disasters with extraordinary patience. Their manner of disposing of the dead alluded to in the poem is explained by this quotation from Dr. Holmes: "Tradition gives us an affecting picture of the infant colony during this critical and distressing period. The dead were buried on the bank, at a little distance from the rock where the fathers landed; and, lest the Indians should take advantage of the weak and wretched state of the English, the graves were levelled and sown for the purpose of concealment."[5]

In spite of these accumulated hardships and appalling losses, the Pilgrims did not abandon their settlement. Strange to say, when the "Mayflower" set sail for England in April, not one took advantage of the chance to return home. Henceforth America was to be their home.

The Plymouth colony grew so slowly that by 1630 there were only three hundred persons in the community. Lack of

[1] Young's *Chronicles of the Pilgrim Fathers*, p. 123.
[2] Bradford's *Journal*, in Young, pp. 197, 198.
[3] *Massachusetts Historical Collections*, viii. 43.
[4] Wood's *New England's Prospect*, chap. ii.
[5] Holmes's *Annals of America*.

capital prevented them from engaging in cod-fishing, and furs bartered from the natives were almost their only articles of export. The merchant adventurers were disappointed at the small return from their investment; and though holding the settlers to their labor contract, refused them further aid. The colonists did succeed, however, in 1625, through their agent, Captain Standish, in borrowing £200 at the exorbitant rate of 30 per cent.

During the next six years they managed, by hard labor and strict economy, to buy up the shares of the London merchants for £1,800. From this time they were really free men, and could spend what they earned in developing the settlement. The Plymouth Plantation ended its distinct existence in 1691, when it was incorporated with the Massachusetts Bay Colony.

§ 3. *The Characters.*

Such was the community that Longfellow chose as the setting for his story. He makes us feel, as we read the poem, that old Plymouth atmosphere with its strange mixture of stern enthusiasm, austere piety, and undemonstrative tenderness. Under a cold and forbidding outside glowed many a heart that was warm and true. The deep human feelings of the characters stand out in all the stronger relief because of this contrast with their surroundings. Just as the little mayflower (our trailing arbutus) is all the sweeter and more precious because it blooms among the rocks and dying leaves and melting snow, so is the blossoming of the love of the dear Puritan girl the more beautiful for its uncongenial environment.

This scenic background of "The Courtship" is not its only historical feature, for all the principal characters are based on real persons. Priscilla, Alden, and Standish had in Plymouth their living counterparts who are mentioned by name in the early chronicles. By comparing these originals with Longfellow's characters we may get a glimpse of his method of work. We shall then be able to say how far the poet has

added to or subtracted from their characters, and to what extent he has idealized them.

Much less is known of Priscilla Mullens than of either of her rival suitors. From this simple fact we may infer that hers was a sweet, retiring nature that avoided publicity. No doubt she regarded the log home her proper sphere, and was happy with the domestic duties of the fireside and garden.

On the passenger list of the "Mayflower" were the names of "Mr. William Mullines and his wife, and two children, Joseph and Priscilla; and a servant, Robart Carter." A later record states that "Mr. Molines, and his wife, his son, and his servant, dyed the first winter. Only his daughter Priscilla survived and married with John Alden, who are both living and have eleven children."[1] Her father was the tenth signer of the Compact, and Morton mentions him as "a man pious and well deserving, endowed also with a considerable outward estate; and had it been the will of God that he had survived, might have proved a useful instrument in his place."[2] It was a dreadful experience thus to lose all her relatives within a few weeks in a strange land. But there is evidence that she did not give herself up entirely to grief, but ministered to the sick and dying. "There die sometimes two or three a day," says an eye-witness. "Of a hundred persons scarce fifty remain; the living scarce able to bury the dead; the well not sufficient to tend the sick, there being, in their time of greatest distress, but six or seven, who spare no pains to help them."[3]

The records are meager, but from what we know of conditions at Plymouth, we may infer much in regard to Priscilla's good constitution, which must have been sound indeed to withstand such hardships. She must have been a brave girl to outlive those distressing experiences, and her womanly

[1] Bradford's *History of the Plimouth Plantation*, p. 452.

[2] Morton's *New England's Memorial*, p. 50.

[3] Bradford's and Winslow's *Journal* (Young), p. 198.

character must have matured rapidly. Longfellow was descended from his beautiful heroine through his mother, Miss Wadsworth, and no doubt has drawn her true in the main to the family traditions faithfully handed down. She was "the loveliest maid in Plymouth," modest, yet frank, and true to her own heart; industrious, sympathetic, endowed with a delicate sense of humor, practical, and deeply pious. From an entry in the poet's Journal in December, 1857, we learn that he thought then of giving her name to the poem. "I begin a new poem," he wrote, "'Priscilla,' to be a kind of Puritan pastoral; the subject, the courtship of Miles Standish."

We know slightly more of John Alden. He was born in England in 1599. His trade and general reputation are settled by a reference in Bradford: "He was hired for a cooper at Southampton where the ship victualled; and being a hopeful young man, was much desired, but left to his own liking to go or to stay, when he came here (to Plymouth, that is); but he stayed and married here."[1] He was twenty-one years of age when he embarked in the "Mayflower," and we find it hard not to believe that the presence of a certain maiden on that ship helped him to decide.

He was the seventh to sign the Compact, and took an active share in organizing the government of the new settlement. When the Pilgrims grouped themselves into nineteen families, so that they might build fewer houses, all single men that had no families being willing to join with some family, Alden, being a ready writer, was attached to Captain Standish as his secretary. Further than the fact of his having wedded Priscilla, little more is known of his history, except that he served as a magistrate for more than fifty years, and was of great assistance in planting the colony firmly. He died at Duxbury on September 12, 1687.

From these suggestions we may trace the character of Alden

[1] *History of the Plimouth Plantation.*

as it rounded out in all its gentleness, unselfishness, sensitiveness, and nobility. The poet has so delicately and strongly treated the young man's loyalty to his companion, that he has immortalized it as one of the famous friendships of literature.

Captain Standish is more of a genuine historical personage than his scholar-friend. He was born in Lancashire, England, in 1584, "a gentleman," says Morton, "and heir apparent unto a great estate of land and livings, surreptitiously detained from him, his grandfather being a second or younger brother from the house of Standish."[1] One of his name had been knighted for slaying Wat Tyler, and another, Sir John Standish, had fought at Agincourt in 1415. Young thinks that the captain was "a scion of this ancient and warlike stock from his giving the name of Duxbury to the town where he settled, and calling his son Alexander."[2]

From his subsequent career it is evident that plenty of good warrior blood flowed in his veins. Educated as a soldier, he fought as a lieutenant in the forces sent over by Queen Elizabeth to aid the Dutch against the Spaniards. During the truce he attached himself to Robinson and his congregation, though he never became a member of the church. Liking their principles, or perhaps through mere love of adventure, he accompanied them to America as their military leader.

There is frequent mention of him in the Plymouth chronicles. He is described as "a man of small stature, but of such an active and daring spirit that he spread terror through all the Indian tribes." His little army of sixteen men, which had been drilled into a perfect fighting machine, was able to defeat twenty times their number of savages. Their captain's daring, skill in dealing with the natives, and his promptness in suppressing their conspiracies is shown in an expedition against the Massachusetts in 1623. Longfellow works the

[1] *New England's Memorial*, p. 262.

[2] Young's *Chronicles*, chap. ix., p. 126.

incident into his poem finely. "The governor, on receiving this intelligence," says Holmes, "which was confirmed by other evidences, ordered Standish to take with him as many men as he should judge sufficient, and, if a plot should be discovered, to fall on the conspirators. Standish, with eight men, sailed to the Massachusetts, where the natives, suspecting his design, insulted and threatened him. Watching his opportunity, when four of them, Wittuwamet, Pecksuot, another Indian, and a youth of eighteen, brother of Wittuwamet, and about as many of his own men, were in the same room, he gave a signal to his men; the door was instantly shut; and snatching the knife of Pecksuot from his neck, he killed him with it, after a violent struggle; his party killed Wittuwamet, and the other Indian, and hung the youth. Proceeding to another place, Standish killed an Indian; and afterwards had a skirmish with a party of Indians, which he put to flight. Weston's men also killed two Indians. Standish, with that generosity which characterizes true bravery, released the Indian women, without taking their beaver coats, or allowing the least incivility to be offered to them."[1]

The military training of Captain Standish was invaluable at a time when fighting was necessary to existence. But he knew how to do other things as well. Another and equally admirable side of the little soldier appears in Governor Bradford's narrative of "the terrible winter" already referred to. When all but seven of the settlers were ill, "a rare example and worthy to be remembered were Mr. William Brewster, their reverent elder, and Myles Standish, their captain and military commander, unto whom myself, and many others were much beholden in our low and sick condition; and yet the Lord so upheld these persons, as in this general calamity they were not at all infected either with sickness or lameness." Elsewhere we are given particulars of how these men "spared no pains, night nor day, but with abundance of toil

[1] *Annals of America*, p. 181.

and hazard of their own health, fetched them wood, made them fires, dressed them meat, made their beds, washed their loathsome clothes, clothed and unclothed them."[1] Miles Standish performed for his friends and brethren all of these homely and necessary offices willingly and cheerfully without any grudging. One of the deaths was that of his wife, Rose Standish, who came over in the "Mayflower." His second wife was Barbara (family name unknown), an orphan sister of Rose. She was left behind in England, but reached Plymouth afterwards in the "Fortune." They had six children, and many of their descendants are now living. In 1625 he was selected as agent of the colony to make a settlement with the company in London, and negotiated the loan mentioned above. He was one of the proprietors and first settlers of Duxbury, where he served as magistrate for the rest of his life. In 1649 he assisted in the settlement of Bridgewater. He died on October 3, 1656, leaving a name, like that of Captain John Smith of Virginia, forever enrolled in the history of his country. At Duxbury there has been erected in his honor a lofty stone shaft surmounted by a bronze statue.

II. Study of the Poem.

§ 4. *Its Form and Structure.*

One of the first things to do in studying a piece of literature is to determine its form. Is it prose or poetry? If the latter, is its structure dramatic, lyric, or narrative? In case it belongs to the last named class, we examine it further to see whether it is an epic, an allegory, a ballad, a pastoral poem, or a verse-romance. Many of the scenes of "The Courtship," especially in Parts III., VIII., and IX., are pastoral, or idyllic, in their character, but its unity of purpose, its well-ordered plot, its sustained narrative power, its dra-

[1] Bradford's *History of the Plimouth Plantation*, Hart reprint, pp. 349, 350.

matic situations, and its picturesque and romantic features will incline us to class it as a verse-romance.

Like its companion poem, "Evangeline," it is a tale of true love whose course does not run smooth, but of which it may be happily said that all's well that ends well. It is less tragic and passionate than the story of the wandering French girl, but in both we breathe the sweet fresh air of the forest. "The Courtship" keeps more on the plane of everyday life, and to that extent is less idealistic and more realistic. One evidence of this is the greater amount of humor in the Puritan poem and the absence of any deep and soul-stirring pathos. The underlying motive of the poem is to be found in the question which Priscilla asks so coyly yet tremulously:

"Why don't you speak for yourself, John?"

In "Evangeline" the improbable happens, but in "The Courtship" it is the likely, the probable, and the inevitable. Both strike a homely, tender note in the heart, and we are reminded of the sadness as well as the gladness of living. In both are simple lives, deep piety, and unaffected manners, but there is a wide difference in the real character of the people. The Acadians are weak, childlike, emotional; the Puritans, strong, practical, undemonstrative. The former are ready to bubble over with sentiment, and are willing to submit to their fate; the latter are proud, masterful, inclined to brood, and have iron in their blood. We see the racial distinction between the Celt and the Saxon. In the present work Longfellow was among his own people, and more at home, and his touch is surer in detail, he is more humorous, more colloquial. In the revelation of the universal human heart neither poem can claim precedence.

The *plot*, or chain of events that make up the story, of "The Courtship" is more simple, and more skilfully constructed than that of "Evangeline." It is true, the movement in the former is less complex than in the latter. The

introduction to "The Courtship" is shorter, more dramatic, and puts you more quickly right into the midst of the action.

There is always something in every story to cause the trouble and delay the happy ending. We may call this the *exciting force*, or motive, which is that two good friends want the same girl. The love of Alden and Standish for Priscilla runs counter to their long friendship, and makes them all unhappy for a time, but the heart and good sense of the girl solve one problem, and the friendship of the rivals stands the test. The contrast between the robust, active soldier and the refined, dreamy scholar is so great that we never seriously expect a tragedy. The author avoids too serious a tone because that would have been out of keeping with his plan.

The course of the story is marked by *crises*. A crisis is some exciting, or dramatic, situation worked up between two or more people, but sometimes a crisis may be in the mental agony or the soul-conflict of one person. The first crisis in this poem is when Standish asks Alden as a friend to do an almost impossible thing; the second is the struggle in Alden's mind between his friendship for the man and his love for the woman. It will be interesting for the pupil to find other crises, and explain the interest of each situation.

The entire plot may be divided into two more general movements, which we shall call the *complication* and the *resolution*. They bear to each other the relation of cause to effect. The turning-point from one to the other is the most important crisis of the book, and is called the *climax*. In "The Courtship" the climax is placed in the mechanical center of the poem in Part V., where Alden is restrained from sailing away in the "Mayflower" by the love-luring look of Priscilla. Everything goes wrong up to that point; all the difficulties both external and conscientious begin to unravel after that soul-revealing glance by which the girl holds her lover from taking the irrevocable step. Had he taken it, the result would have been tragic, but Longfellow wished this tale,

unlike "Evangeline," to have a happy ending, like a comedy. The ending of a tragedy is called the *catastrophe;* that of a comedy, the *dénouement*.

The tangling of the plot goes on steadily, step by step, each crisis adding another knot, until we reach the great central crisis, the climax at the beach scene. From this point the unravelling of the knot goes on rapidly. After that there can be no doubt of the final result. The interest of the story is reawakened by shifting the story from the lovers to the bold exploit of Miles Standish, his exciting fight with the Indians, and the danger to the colony. This also gives a pleasing variety to the reader, who besides is kept in an anxious state of mind as to how the captain will act toward the lovers. This *suspense* is broken by the report of his death, only to have the surprise and anxiety renewed when he suddenly appears at the wedding. The scene at the end of Part III. also plays an interesting part in the development of the plot. What at first seems to make matters worse for poor John, really brings in an element which in the end is to straighten out the whole tangle, and so Priscilla's choice is hinted at very delicately and humorously. We feel that if she loves and prefers Alden, then the soldier will never get her. A woman's heart will always find a way to its love. But even after the love-story becomes stationary, we do not lose interest, because there is still the possible danger from Alden's military rival.

When we compare the poem with the actual events given under "Historical Material," we see with what freedom Longfellow treats his material. He rearranges the order of certain events, and regulates the length of time which he wishes to elapse between the various parts of his story. There is this entry in Governor Bradford's "Journal":[1] "Jan. 29, dies Rose, the wife of Captain Standish." Another entry settles the date of the sailing of the "Mayflower": "April 5.

[1] Prince's *Chronological History of New England*, p. 184.

We despatch the ship with Captain Jones, who this day sails from New Plymouth."[1] Again, the suppression of the Indian conspiracy occurred in March, 1623, according to Winslow's "Journal." All these events are brought together in the poem. The dates help us to determine the time of the action. It is strange that the poet should represent the captain as sending Priscilla a proposal of marriage only about two months after the death of his wife Rose. We conclude, however, that Longfellow chose the spring of 1621 for the time of the action, and has grouped all of the events which took place from 1621 to 1623 in the former year. He has not held closely to the history, but has aimed to present a vivid and true picture representative in its main outlines of the life of the Puritan colony. All this shows that Longfellow was both a good story-teller and a wise and clever artist.

§ 5. *The Style of the Poem.*

After having studied the framework of our poem, and seen how the author has put the various parts together, we are ready to examine the style and various internal features, such as the method of character drawing, the humor, the pathos, the description, the figures of speech, and the literary influences.

Considered as a piece of *narration*, "The Courtship" is a model of concise and rapid story-telling. Each part contains an incident of its own, and each is told in such a spirited way as to hold the reader's interest. We never saw any one who did not enjoy a lively tale of love and adventure. When we compare the events in the poem with the original records, we feel that there is a wide difference between the dry, commonplace style of the annalists, and the lively, fresh, and imaginative style of the poet. There is ease, grace, and life in Longfellow's way of telling the old Puritan legend. This is the result of his good training and artistic taste. When he

[1] Young's *Chronicles of the Pilgrim Fathers*, p. 199.

wrote this poem he was at his best in point of mental maturity and technical skill. He is never obscure, the right word is invariably found, and there is a knack of making phrases that stick in the memory. Longfellow's imagination was not of the highest order, and there is here no attempt to carry us to depths of profound thought, or to heights of human passion. He rather strikes the happy medium of feeling and reflection, and thus appeals more than any other poet of our country to the young.

A pleasing feature of the style is the use of *balance,* in which words or phrases are paired off so as to produce the effect of light and shade. Examples are:

"*Angels of light* they seem, but are only *delusions of Satan,*" III. 18.
"Borne on *the send of the sea,* and the swelling *hearts of the Pilgrims,*" V. 127.
"*Friendship* was in their *looks,* but in their *hearts* there was *hatred,*" VII. 29.

The meter, whose movement is like climbing a roof to the apex and then descending, lends itself admirably to this principle of contrast. Another favorite device is that of *repetition,* which produces an effect of emphasis and clearness and introduces more realistic detail. Instances are found in IV. 10, 11; 21, 22; V. 9, 10; 26, 27; 36, 37; 89, 90; VIII. 3, 7; 31–32.

Longfellow is by instinct artistic, and naturally looks at things from the side of beauty. There is a tendency to give a flavor of romance to his work, but his good sense and sanity of feeling do not allow him, even in his most idealistic moods, to rise too high above the kindly earth. Comparing again what he has put into his poem with the facts of the chronicles, we see how much that is merely disagreeable he has left out. He has written to please, not to give scenes of suffering, either mental or physical. Furthermore, he carefully avoids preaching a sermon or inflicting a lesson on his readers.

Having made ourselves familiar with the principal external qualities of our author's style, we are ready to study his *characters,* and see how and why he has drawn them in a certain way. The characters in "The Courtship" are well chosen for purposes of contrast and relief. The interest in a love-story will always center in the heroine. Priscilla is no exception. It is her heart that is at stake, and she holds the key to every situation. Underlying her vein of arch humor, which reveals but one side of her girlish mischievousness, there is the deeper womanly nature, patient, wise, and sympathetic. Her nature is a simple, wholesome one, characterized by humor, tenderness, and good sense. She is not to be had for the asking, and she will bestow her heart only where it is deserved. The refined and scholarly temperament and youth of Alden are more congenial to her than the experience, courage, and warlike nature of Standish. She is sweet, pure-minded, unselfish, and good to look upon. To her, love is the supreme test, and her memorable advice to her lover is in complete accord with what Shakespeare says on the same subject:

> "Friendship is constant in all other things
> Save in the office and affairs of love :
> Therefore all hearts in love use their own tongues ;
> Let every eye negotiate for itself
> And trust no agent." [1]

And therein lies the chief motive and moral purpose of the poem. It shows us what to expect whenever love and friendship are placed in opposition or conflict.

John Alden, like Orlando in "As You Like It," cannot seem much of a hero, for Priscilla has already made her choice in his favor before he takes her the captain's proposal. He has in him a strain of tender and pensive sentiment befitting his character of scholar. He reflects a mood that the poet is fond of treating, and indeed there is much in this

[1] *Much Ado About Nothing*, Act II., Scene i., ll. 157-161.

high-toned, sensitive, beautiful-souled young man that suggests the maiden-hearted Longfellow himself. The clerk sharply contrasts with the soldier. Each is a loyal type of a true man, but each has something the other lacks. No doubt this like-unlikeness was the bond of their friendship. One is a man of thought, the other a man of action. Both aspire from different motives to the beautiful heiress of the settlement. Alden is fitted for conjugal affection and domestic duty; Standish for drilling of musketeers and browbeating Indian chiefs. The latter is a trifle uneasy in the presence of a woman, whose nature he does not understand. He imagines Priscilla thundering at him a point-blank "No!" and thinks that wooing should be conducted in the elegant and conventional language of books! He will make a better husband than lover, but Priscilla has her doubts. He has, however, a profound respect for her sex, and speaks affectionately of his dead Rose. Even in his armor he is not an imposing figure, nor one likely to impress a girl's imagination. He is too quick and abrupt in his movements, too self-assertive and violent, and has something very like the strut of the bantam game-cock. Yet his heart is right, and he is capable of true friendship under the most humiliating circumstances.

Longfellow's *descriptions* will repay analysis. The strangeness of natural phenomena is made to suggest the wonder and mystery of human life. The external world—the sea, the forest, the sunset, the gray mist, the bright leaves, the ripe fruit, the cold rain—gives an instrumental effect nicely and appropriately harmonizing with the spirit of man. The prevailing hue of the poem is gray, befitting the sombre Puritan mood, but it is sometimes relieved with richly colored pictures, such as the gorgeous sunset in Part IV., and the autumnal forest in Part IX. The figures of his persons are sketched with a few rapid, telling strokes, suggestive rather than detailed. They are individualized and vitalized rather by what they say and do than by the descriptive portraits,

and yet there is enough of the merely pictorial to catch the eye. The poem lends itself readily to illustration. Before it had been out of the press a month, Longfellow wrote in his diary: "November 28, 1858: Ehringer has sent me a beautiful illustration of 'Miles Standish.' It is the bridal procession going through the woods, and is full of feeling." Many artists have since then embellished the story with pencil and brush.

The whole poem is sweetened and humanized by the many delightful sallies of *humor*, which is relieved now and then by touches of pathos. "Evangeline" is full of pathos, but "The Courtship" keeps us more cheerful than sad. Many of the speeches are bright with grave wit and pleasantries. The Puritans were not noted for their sense of the ludicrous, but the settlers at Plymouth were a shade less austere than those at Boston. That they had a species of grim humor, however, is evident from their methods of punishment. Thus one who had offended by the use of improper language had his tongue pinched for two hours in a cleft stick. The humor of the poem is of the quiet, homely sort, not broad nor forced. It scarcely makes us smile, so unobtrusive is it. It is just the sort of fun-making we should look for among a people with such strict religious views, and to whom life was such a serious business. The author has evidently put far more sunshine into his characters than he found in the originals. And yet there is throughout the poem that unobtrusive and pleasing under-note of sadness, deepening now and then into pathos, which is often noticed even in the happiest lives.

With one exception, the poem is singularly free from bookish influences. That exception is the Bible, from which there are a large number of quotations direct and indirect. The phraseology is full of scriptural words and allusions. But we must remember that the language of the Bible is merely the English of the time of King James I., so that a large part of the vocabulary of the characters may be simply that of the

seventeenth century. The Puritans were not a literary people, but the effect of their one book upon their style was highly beneficial. "The Courtship" should be read Bible in hand. The pupil who wishes to know more about the religious atmosphere in which the Puritans lived, will do well to read Macaulay's brilliant essay on "Milton," especially the last ten pages. He will then understand what the sacred writings meant to a sect who found in them almost their sole means of intellectual and spiritual culture.

§ 6. *Figures of Speech.*

Imagery is frequently used in poetry. Its purpose is to ornament the style and to give life and vigor to the thought. Figures are to a poet what colors are to a painter. Poetic thought is, on the whole, more condensed, and appeals more to the imagination than prose work, and figures are a convenient means of reaching those ends. Sometimes they have an argumentative value, because they make the subject clearer and more convincing.

Longfellow's figures of speech are generally of a homely and familiar kind. They are pictorial in their effect, and give pleasure to the mind by suggesting a comparison between objects not usually associated together. Thus we find many striking *similes*. In these the resemblance is indicated by *as* or *like*, as in—

(*a*) "Brown as a nut was his face," I. 13.
(*b*) "Where thumb-marks . . . like the trample of feet," I. 79, 80.
(*c*) "To and fro in his breast his thoughts were heaving and dashing,
As in a foundering ship, . . . washes the bitter sea," III. 8–10.
(*d*) "The carded wool like a snow-drift," III. 44.

In each of these examples two objects are brought together in thought and a ground of comparison is discovered. In (*c*) there is a relation of the objects something like a proportion with its equality of ratios—$A : B :: C : D$; thus, *thought* : *breast* : : *sea* : *ship*. In III. 16, 17, one member of

the proportion is implied—*phantom* : *heart* : : *exhalation* : [*marsh*]. It will be observed that each figure produces a certain definite effect, conveying a more vivid impression of color, number, size, shape, movement, etc.

There is a second class of figures called *metaphors*. Here the similarity of one object to another is more concisely stated with a gain in force. A metaphor is thus an abridged simile. For example, in I. 13, 14, a set of four objects are brought into relation to one another; viz., [*gray hairs*] : *beard* : : *snow-flakes* : *hedges*. Other uses are "sinews of iron," I. 12; "my brazen howitzer . . . a preacher," I. 46, 47; "robins were building towns in the populous trees," III. 3, 4; "the mayflowers blooming around him . . . children lost in the woods," III. 26–28.

Still a different kind of figure is found in I. 81, "Nothing was heard in the room but the hurrying pen of the stripling." There the cause (*the pen*) is put for the effect (*the sound*). In VII. 80, "death unseen ran before it," the effect (*death*) is put for the cause (*bullet*). This figure is known as *metonymy*, which means a change of name, and the idea is named by an accompaniment which serves the writer's purpose better.

Another figure called *synecdoche* is seen in IV. 80, "You, who lived under my roof," and in IV. 81, "You, who have fed at my board," in which a part of some object or the material (*roof, board*) is put for the whole (*house, table*).

There is a figure called *allegory*, which is a sort of continued metaphor, used by Longfellow in IV. 105: "God hath sifted three kingdoms (*i.e.*, England, Scotland, and Holland) to find the wheat for this planting, then had sifted the wheat, as the living seed of a nation." In a perfect allegory all mention of the real object in the writer's mind is omitted. A better illustration may be seen in Psalm lxxx., "Thou hast brought a vine out of Egypt," etc.

In IV. 10, 11, "Welcome, O wind of the East!" etc., is a beautiful specimen of *apostrophe*, which consists in personi-

fying some inanimate object and then addressing it. It thus includes the figure called *personification.* In the passage quoted Alden thinks of the wind as a living being, and calls upon it to wrap him in its mist-garments. Another similar use is seen in V. 99: "Float, O hand of cloud, and vanish away in the ether!"

§ 7. *The Meter.*[1]

When we begin to read poetry aloud, we become aware that one of the great differences between poetry and prose lies in what is called *meter.* Another difference lies in rhyme; but although rhyme is common in poetry, it is not necessary. Much of the world's greatest poetry has no rhyme. The poetry of the Greeks and Romans had none; the poetry of the Hebrews had none. Much English poetry has none, as, for example, "Evangeline" and "The Courtship of Miles Standish." Modern English poetry, however, almost invariably has meter.

Meter is practically but another name for rhythm in poetry. We use the word "rhythm" for other things than poetry; we mean by it a regular recurrence of sounds and intervals. We might speak of "the rhythm of the surf upon the beach," meaning the regularly recurring sound of the breakers. In poetry the regular recurrence is called meter or rhythm, the former being a more definite word.

In English, rhythm is the regular recurrence of accented syllables among unaccented syllables. In prose the accent of the words is not regular; the accents in a sentence come at no fixed interval. But in poetry the accents come at intervals that we can realize.

> "On the mountains of the Prairie, on the great Red Pipe-stone Quarry, Gitche Manito the Mighty, he the Master of Life descending, on the red crags of the quarry, stood erect and called the nations, called the tribes of men together."

[1] Adapted by permission from the introduction to *Evangeline*, pp. 16–19. (S. L. Series, No. 21.)

In these lines from Longfellow's "Hiawatha," the fact that they are printed as prose will not conceal the fact that the accent falls regularly on every other syllable, beginning with the first. Sometimes it is not a very strong accent, as in the fourth word, *of;* but even on *of* there is more accent than on the syllables *-tains* and *the* just before and after it. In "Máster of Life" there are two syllables between the accents, but generally the recurrence is so regular that we become accustomed to it and hardly notice a slight variation. It is usual in writing and printing poetry to divide it into lines, commonly with an equal number of accents in each line, and the disposition of the accents in the line is taken as the basis for the meter.

There are many different arrangements of rhythms, differing in the arrangement of the accented and unaccented syllables. The meter of "The Courtship" is called *hexameter*, because there are six accents to the line. In the hexameter, as written in English, we have a recurrence of accented syllables, with sometimes one unaccented syllable following, sometimes two. It is also the rule of the meter that the line shall begin with an accented syllable, and that the last accent but one of each line shall be followed by two unaccented syllables and the last by one only. If, then, we represent an accented syllable by *a*, an unaccented syllable by *x*, we may write the scheme of the hexameter line as follows:

ax or *axx*, *ax* or *axx*, *ax* or *axx*, *ax* or *axx*, *axx*, *ax*.

To show how the meter really sounds, let us take the first line of "The Courtship of Miles Standish":

"Ín the Old Cólony dáys in Plýmouth the lánd of the Pílgrims."

The first syllable has the accent, and each accented syllable is followed by one or two unaccented syllables. The first, second, fourth, and fifth feet have one accented and two

unaccented syllables; and the third and sixth feet have one accented and one unaccented syllable.

> "Tó and fró in a róom of his símple and prímitive dwélling."

Here the first and sixth have one unaccented syllable following the accented one.

> "Clád in doúblet and hóse, and bóots of Córdovan léather."

In this line only the second and fifth feet have the three syllables, while all the others have two. If we write the first three lines with *a* and *x*, as above, we shall scan them thus:

axx *axx* *ax* *axx* *axx* *ax*
ax *axx* *axx* *axx* *axx* *ax*
ax *axx* *ax* *ax* *axx* *ax*

Let us read a number of lines, noting the accent. We find that it falls on the syllables that would be accented in prose, but that the words are so arranged as to have this regular recurrence, which gives the language a special character.

In scanning and reading the hexameter the following points should be noticed:

1. There is almost always about the middle of a line a short pause, which gives a pleasant effect; it is called a *cæsura.* The line is long; this divides it. But the variation in placing the pause does away with monotony.

2. One must not mark the ends of the lines strongly unless there is a punctuation mark.

> "Brown as a nut was his face, but his russet beard was already
> Flaked with patches of snow, as hedges sometimes in November."
> I., 13, 14.

Here, as often, the reader should run right on from one line to another without pause.

3. The line usually ends *axx ax,* and any variation occurs in the first four feet. But II. 4, and III. 61, end *ax, ax*—

"After a while he exclaimed, as he smote with his hand, palm downwards."
"Let not him that putteth his hand to the plough look backwards."

Both of these lines move smoothly up to the cæsural pause, then descend abruptly, almost harshly. This is caused by the fifth foot having only one unaccented syllable.

4. Other lines show special but appropriate effects, *e.g.*:

"*Sudden* and loud as the *sound* of a *soldier* grounding his musket," II. 38 (alliteration).

"*And* at the end of the street, the village church," etc., III., 90 (light, unaccented beginning).

"*Me*, Miles Standish, your friend! have *supplanted, defrauded, betrayed me*," IV. 76 (harsh but emphatic).

"Up leaped the Captain of Plymouth, and stamped on the floor," IV. 71 (abrupt).

"Sunless and silent and deep, like subterranean rivers," VI. 33 (gliding).

"Strange is the heart of man," etc., V. 89, 90 (repetition and emphasis).

When one has become accustomed to the movement of the hexameter, it is not at all difficult to scan except in a few cases. The meter, however, has some inconveniences, the most important of which arise from the fact that the line must begin with an accent. Now an English sentence sometimes begins with an accent, but rather more often it does not. One will easily notice, by reading a good number of sentences, that less than half begin with an accented syllable. Hence the poet will often find a difficulty in beginning the line with a sentence, and yet he may often wish to do so. Longfellow gets around the difficulty in three ways, none good in their effect.

1. He puts an unnatural accent on the first word.

"While underneath, in a corner, were fowling-piece, musket, and matchlock," I. 10.

2. He inverts the usual word-order.

> "Brown as a nut was his face," I. 13.
> "Strange is the life of man," V. 89.
> "Silent and moody he went," VII. 6.

Inversion is often met with in poetry, and is not displeasing. It should occur but seldom, and then to give emphasis. But when often used it ceases to be emphatic; for we become accustomed to it, and it becomes a conventionality.

3. He begins a sentence or a clause in the middle of the line, and lets it run over into the next. In itself there is no harm in this practice, but it tends to diffuseness. That is to say, the habit of running the sentence over the line to the next, tends to accustom one to ending a sentence in the middle of a line. It is then necessary to begin a new sentence, and this usually runs over into the next line, and so the temptation is to run on and on, and spin the story out.

These, however, are but slight drawbacks and will not greatly bar one's enjoyment of the poem.

§ 8. *Chronological Outline of the Life of Longfellow.*

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow was the second son of Judge Stephen Longfellow, a Federalist and Congressman (1822–24), and Miss Zilpah Wadsworth, a daughter of General Peleg Wadsworth, adjutant-general of Massachusetts during the Revolutionary War, and a descendant of John Alden and Priscilla Mullens, two Pilgrims who came over in the "Mayflower" in 1620.

1807. February 27. Born at Portland, Maine.
1813. Entered Portland Academy. Fond of Irving.
1820. Published first verses in "Portland Gazette."
1821. Entered Bowdoin College. A fine student and beloved by classmates. Showed strong literary bent.
1824–25. Contributed "Hymn of the Moravian Nuns" and other pieces to the "United States Literary Gazette" of Boston.

1825. Graduated fourth in a class of thirty-eight, including Hawthorne. Aspired after literary fame. Read law in his father's office.

1826–29. Elected Professor of Modern Languages in Bowdoin. Went to Europe to fit himself for the chair. Visited France, Spain, Italy, Germany, and England, and studied languages, customs, etc.

1828–33. Taught in Bowdoin with graceful dignity, inspiring his students with affection.

1833–34. Published, in the "North American Review," "Outre Mer," a prose record of his European travels. Wrote linguistic and grammatical works, 1830–32. Translated Manrique's "Coplas."

1831. Married Miss Mary Storer Potter, of Portland, a lovely and highly educated woman.

1832. Read poem on education, "The Past and the Present," before the Phi Beta Kappa Society at Bowdoin Commencement.

1833. Repeated the same by request at Harvard.

1835. Elected Professor of Modern Languages and Literatures in Harvard College to succeed George Ticknor. Went to Europe to study the languages of Holland, Germany, and Sweden. November: Mrs. Longfellow died in Rotterdam: the poet's first great sorrow, commemorated in "Footsteps of Angels."

1836. December. Returned to Cambridge, with quarters in the old Craigie House, built 1756. Taught with great success in Harvard.

1839. Published "Hyperion, a Romance," a prose diary of his German travels, introducing German legends, lyrics, and life to Americans. Published "Voices of the Night," containing "The Psalm of Life," "The Reaper and the Flowers," etc.

1841. Published "Ballads and Other Poems," which contained such favorites as "The Skeleton in Armor," "The Wreck of the Hesperus," "Excelsior," "The Village Blacksmith," etc.

1842. Went to Europe, and studied mediæval literature. Published "Poems on Slavery."

1843. Married Miss Frances Elizabeth Appleton, a beautiful and accomplished lady of Boston, whom he had met in Europe in 1835. She was the original of Mary

Ashburton in "Hyperion." They had five children. Published "The Spanish Student," a drama to be read.

1845. Edited an anthology of "The Poets and Poetry of Europe," containing 400 verse translations from ten languages. He was assisted by Prof. C. C. Felton. Birth of his son Ernest, who became a distinguished artist. Published "The Waif." December: Published "The Belfry of Bruges, and Other Poems," containing "Nuremberg," "The Day is Done," "The Arsenal at Springfield," "The Old Clock on the Stairs," etc., some of his best work.

1847. Published "Evangeline," a long poem of Acadia in hexameters, which Holmes considered his masterpiece. Published "The Estray." Attacked by Poe for plagiarism, and satirized by the "Dial" as "a dandy Pindar." A period of literary dearth, 1848–49.

1849. Published "Kavanagh," an unsuccessful prose tale, praised by Hawthorne.

1850. Published "Seaside and Fireside," which includes "The Building of the Ship"; "Resignation," in memory of his daughter Fanny. His poems yield a comfortable income.

1851. Published "The Golden Legend," a story from the Minnesinger Hartmann von der Aue, giving a vivid picture of Christianity in the thirteenth century. It was the first part of the trilogy "Christus."

1854. Resigned his chair in Harvard College to devote himself exclusively to literature. Author was at his intellectual prime.

1855. Published "The Song of Hiawatha," an epic poem treating the old Indian legends: a great literary sensation.

1858. Published "The Courtship of Miles Standish," "The Ladder of St. Augustine," "The Two Angels," "Children," etc.

1861. Death of his wife, whose clothes caught fire from a candle. Begins to translate the great Italian poet Dante.

1863. Published "Tales of a Wayside Inn," Part I.; in 1872 Part II., and in 1873 Part III. A collection of stories

borrowed from mediæval, Talmudic, and modern sources; includes the famous "Paul Revere's Ride," "The Falcon of Ser Federigo," "King Robert of Sicily," "Torquemado," etc.

1867. Published "Flower-de-Luce." Translated Dante's "Divine Comedy" 1867–70.

1868. Published "The New England Tragedies," a depressing poetical record of deeds of cruelty, delusion, and intolerance; Part II. of "Christus."

1868–69. Last trip to Europe, covered with honors and attentions; received LL.D. from Cambridge, and D.C.L. from Oxford; met Queen Victoria.

1871. Published "The Divine Tragedy," Part III. of "Christus."

1872. Edited "Poems of Places," in thirty-one volumes.

1874. Published "Aftermath."

1875. Published "Morituri Salutamus," on fiftieth anniversary of his class at Bowdoin; "The Hanging of the Crane," "The Masque of Pandora."

1878. Published "Keramos," a poem in the style of Schiller's "The Bell."

1880. Published "Ultima Thule."

1881. Published "In the Harbor."

1882. March 24: Died at Cambridge of peritonitis; buried in Mt. Auburn Cemetery; a statue has been since erected to him in Portland, and a bust of him in Poet's Corner in Westminster Abbey (1884). He left two sons and two daughters.

1884. "Michael Angelo," a posthumous volume, published.

1886–90. Publication of complete edition of his poems in eleven volumes. Publication of Longfellow's "Life and Journals," edited by his brother Samuel.

1887. "Final Memorials," published by his brother; also "A Biographical Sketch," by F. H. Underwood of Boston.

§ 9. *Longfellow's Poetry—Various Critical Opinions of his Mind and Art.*

AN AMERICAN POET.

As one meditates upon the full exercise of his poetic gift, one is likely to feel that this beloved singer's just claim upon

the affectionate memory of after time is due to his felicitous handling of subjects, humorous or tragic, which get their rootage in American soil. Despite much culture and a cosmopolitan range of themes, Longfellow stands forth as a representative poet of our earlier period, because he drew the inspiration for his best work from motives lying ready to hand in his own country. Neither Whittier nor Holmes, neither Emerson nor Lowell, are more American in this sense. . . . The delightful narrative poem of "The Courtship of Miles Standish" is one of those typical creations we have in mind. It is a rendering playful, yet tender, realistic in setting, yet touched with romance, of a story from our early colonial history, in which characters, who are in danger of being names and nothing more in the hands of the formal chronicler, are brought near to us and made warm and sympathetic by means of imaginative presentation.—RICHARD BURTON.

AN APOSTLE OF THE BEAUTIFUL.

We shall think rightly of Longfellow's poetry if we remember what it was to the American people of his time. Longfellow served to awaken and kindle the taste and feeling of the American people for what was poetic and beautiful. Not that no one in America had enjoyed poetry and beauty before Longfellow—far from that. But no one had expressed it in America as he expressed it; we had no great poets before Longfellow. Indeed, as a people, we had very little poetic appreciation. Longfellow was a sort of Apostle. He showed us much. He was a Discoverer in our behalf; a Discoverer, as I have said, of the Beautiful in life. So he was a great educator; he attuned the mind of our people to the beautiful and the ideal.

Something of the same sort is Longfellow apt to be to every one of us. We all read Longfellow early in life, often in school, before we have read much else, before we have seen much of this world that the poets write of. It is an impressionable age. Longfellow moulds our taste. He delights us, and it is from him that we learn a kind of delight different from the ordinary pleasures of life. He is simple and direct. We read his beautiful verse without difficulty; it seems natural, and we become habituated to poetic thought and to poetic form. Later in life, if we desire, we may pass from

his exquisite and gracious mood to poets of a more profound or a more passionate nature. But Longfellow never loses his place with us. He is the guide who first led us to the enchanted country, the interpreter who first made us understand its language.—EDWARD E. HALE, JR.

THE METER.

The poet's friends told him he must take a familiar meter, that hexameters "would never do." He found, as reported by David Machrae, that his "thoughts would run in hexameters" and declared that the measure would "take root in English soil." "It is a measure," he said, "that suits all themes. It can fly low like a swallow, and at any moment dart skyward. What fine hexameters we have in the Bible: 'Husbands, love your wives, and be not bitter against them;' and this line, 'God is gone up with a shout, the Lord with the sound of a trumpet.' Nothing could be grander than that!"

Over-dactylic, and therefore monotonous, as Longfellow's hexameters often are, they have the merit of being smooth to read, without analysis, like any other English verse. This primary easy lilt was needed for an introduction, until, stage by stage, the popular ear should be wonted to more varied forms. . . .

"The Courtship of Miles Standish" was an advance upon "Evangeline," so far as concerns structure and the distinct characterization of personages. A merit of the tale is the frolicsome humor here and there, lighting up the gloom that blends with our conception of the Pilgrim inclosure, and we see that comic and poetic elements are not at odds in the scheme of a bright imagination. The verse, though stronger, is more labored than that of "Evangeline"; some of the lines are prosaic, almost inadmissible.—EDMUND CLARENCE STEDMAN.

A LITERARY PREDICTION.

We hope that Mr. Longfellow may live a great many years yet, and give us a great many more books. We shall not undertake to pass a sentence which he may compel us to revise. We shall only say that he is the most popular of American poets, and that this popularity may safely be

assumed to contain in itself the elements of permanence, since it has been fairly earned, without any of that subservience to the baser tastes of the public which characterizes the quack of letters. His are laurels honorably gained and gently worn. Without comparing him with others, it is enough if we declare our conviction that he has composed poems which will live as long as the language in which they are written.—JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL (1849).

OPINION OF AN ENGLISH NOVELIST.

The story of Miles Standish and of John Alden is as old as the hills, but it never was told with a clearer or more deliberate purpose, nor in the telling of it were the feelings of the three persons concerned made more conspicuous. . . . I do not intend to say that the story as told by Longfellow is deficient in pathos. No such story could be told by him so as to want it altogether. But the whole tale of John Alden—for he is the hero, and not Miles Standish—is narrated in the language of ordinary life, for which the Latin hexameters are hardly fitted. The history is given with great rapidity, and yet seems to include all that there is to be said. Indeed, the story as a story is admirably complete. "Evangeline" is not complete. It is vague and wandering, and given only in parts, whereas "Miles Standish" is round and finished from beginning to end.—ANTHONY TROLLOPE.

ITS STRONG INDIVIDUALITY.

The poet keeps throughout the grace and subtle power of the poet; he keeps all that was ever his own, even to the love of profuse simile, and the quaint doubt of his reader implied by the elaborated meaning; and he loses only the tints and flavors not thoroughly assimilated or not native in him. Throughout is the same habit of recondite and scholarly allusion, the same quick sympathy with the beautiful in simple and common things, the same universality, the same tenderness for country and for home. Over all presides individuality superior to accidents of resemblance, and distinguishing each poem with traits unmistakably and only the author's; and the equality in the long procession of his beautiful thoughts never wearies, but is like that of some fine bas-relief,

in which the varying allegory reveals one manner and many inspirations.—William Dean Howells.

TOPICS FOR STUDY AND REVIEW QUESTIONS.

I. Sources.—1. Where did Longfellow get the characters of his story? 2. Determine the place and time of the action. 3. What connection does the story have with the poet's family history? 4. Does the poem depict the painful or the pleasant side of colonial life? 5. How are two events, the sailing of the "Mayflower," in 1621, and the raid against the Indians, in 1623, connected? 6. How many actual events does Longfellow use?

II. Plot.—1. Show construction of the plot by table of events or by inverted ∧, the angle representing the *climax* and the two arms the *complication* and *resolution*. 2. Indicate each crisis in the poem. 3. Where has the author rearranged incidents to suit his plot? 4. Write a paragraph narrating the story told in Part III. or IV. 5. Show how Part V. contains the climax and pivot of the story. 6. Where in Part I. is preparation made for Part V.? 7. Whom do you think the hero of the poem? Why? 8. How is the report of Standish's death received by the lovers? 9. Note the number of surprises in the latter half of the poem. 10. How much time elapses between Parts I. and V.; between Parts VII. and IX.? 11. Give three reasons for Standish's going away from Plymouth in Part VII. 12. How are we informed of events that happened before the opening scene in Part I.? 13. Find five passages descriptive of natural scenery; show color and landscape effects of each; and point out connection between scenes and episodes. 14. Did Alden deliver his message to Priscilla as Standish expected?

III. Character Drawing.—1. Study the characterization of Priscilla by the description of her, by her previous conduct, by what she says to Alden, by what she does. 2. Why does she love Alden rather than Standish? 3. In social rank and

property which was more her equal? 4. Study the conflict between *love* and *friendship* in the mind of Alden. 5. Write a paragraph on Standish's changes of feeling toward Alden. 6. What do you consider the chief motive or moral of the poem? 7. What other lessons are taught? 8. What does the poet, in the person of Priscilla, show to be the special office, duty, and influence of woman in her relation to man? 9. How many traits has Priscilla peculiar to herself, *i.e., individual*, and how many that are *typical* of all women and *universal?* 10. Are the three chief persons fixed *types*, or do they change, or grow? 11. Compare differences of occupation, dress, custom, and manners in the seventeenth century from the nineteenth. 12. Which scenes do you think the most humorous, the most touching, the most interesting, the most beautiful? 13. Compare the rival lovers, in intellect, heart, feeling, energy, sensitiveness, courage, refinement, generosity, unselfishness. 14. At which crisis does Priscilla help Alden? 15. Study the characters of the Indians in Part VII.

IV. MISCELLANEOUS.—1. Look up the meaning of such words as *matchlock*, *doublet*, *wampum*, *azure-eyed*, *gules*, *thwarts*, *inkhorn*, *sagamore*, *ominous*, *homespun*, *subterranean*, etc. 2. Read the quotations from the Bible. 3. Find other examples of the various *figures of speech* than those given in the introduction. 4. Scan any ten lines of the poem. 5. Commit to memory any dozen lines that you care for. (Other questions will suggest themselves to the teacher *ad libitum*.)

G. A. W.

THE COURTSHIP OF MILES STANDISH.

I.

MILES STANDISH.

In the Old Colony[1] days, in Plymouth[2] the land of the Pilgrims,[3]
To and fro in a room of his simple and primitive dwelling,[4]
Clad in doublet and hose,[5] and boots of Cordovan[6] leather,
Strode, with a martial air, Miles Standish the Puritan Captain.
Buried in thought he seemed, with his hands behind him, and pausing 5
Ever and anon to behold his glittering weapons of warfare,
Hanging in shining array along the walls of the chamber,—

[1] Old Colony was the territory in eastern Massachusetts occupied by the Plymouth colonists.

[2] This town, the oldest in New England, is situated on the harbor of the same name on the coast of Massachusetts about thirty-five miles southeast of Boston.

[3] The Pilgrims, or Forefathers, were those emigrants who came to America early in the seventeenth century on account of religious differences in England, and founded the Old Colony. The "Mayflower" arrived first with one hundred persons on board, including John Alden, Priscilla, and Miles Standish, who disembarked December 21, 1620. The "Fortune" came next, in November, 1621, with twenty-nine passengers; and the "Anne" and the "Little James" brought forty-six more in August, 1623.

[4] The colonists built their first houses of rough-hewn logs filled in with mortar; the roofs were thatched, and oiled paper was used instead of glass.

[5] From the fifteenth to the seventeenth century the costume for men included hose or breeches, reaching to the knees, and a doublet, which was a close-fitting garment, double or wadded, covering the body from neck to a little below the waist.

[6] Cordova, a city and province in southwestern Spain, gave its name to a fine quality of leather manufactured from goat-skin by the Moors. Cordwainer, an English name for shoemaker, is derived from Cordovan.

Cutlass[1] and corselet[2] of steel, and his trusty sword of Damascus,[3]
Curved at the point and inscribed with its mystical Arabic sentence,
While underneath, in a corner, were fowling-piece,[4] musket, and matchlock.[5] 10
Short of stature he was, but strongly built and athletic,
Broad in the shoulders, deep-chested, with muscles and sinews of iron;
Brown as a nut was his face, but his russet beard was already
Flaked with patches of snow, as hedges sometimes in November.[6]
Near him was seated John Alden,[7] his friend and household companion, 15
Writing with diligent speed at a table of pine by the window;
Fair-haired, azure-eyed, with delicate Saxon complexion,

[1] A short. curved sword used by sailors.

[2] A coat-of-mail, or piece of armor, consisting of breastplate and backpiece, worn by pike-men to protect the body.

[3] Formerly the capital of Syria in Asiatic Turkey, and one of the oldest cities in the world. It was renowned for its sword-blades. which were made of such finely tempered steel that the point could be made to touch the hilt without breaking. They were often engraved with phrases from the Koran. The Pilgrim Society of Plymouth and the Massachusetts Historical Society both exhibit the alleged "identical sword-blade used by Miles Standish"!

[4] A light gun for shooting water-fowl or other birds.

[5] A form of musket invented about the end of the fourteenth century. It was fired by bringing a slow match of twisted rope fixed in a crooked iron lever into contact with the powder-pan, the lid of which was thrown forward by the hand. It was a very uncertain weapon in time of wind or rain, and was replaced by the flintlock about 1650.

[6] Miles Standish (1584–1656) was born in England; fought in the Netherlands in their heroic struggle against the King of Spain, emigrated to New England in 1620; took a leading part in the wars with the Indians; visited England for supplies (1625–1626); was magistrate of Duxbury, and aided in the settlement of Bridgewater. He is mentioned in Bradford's and Winslow's *Journal*, which was printed in Young's *Chronicles of the Pilgrims*. Little else is known with certainty of his history.

[7] John Alden (1599–1687) was born in England, emigrated to New England in 1620: married Priscilla Mullens; was a magistrate for over fifty years, and was active in the management of the new colony. He was one of the signers of the compact in the cabin of the "Mayflower."

Having the dew of his youth, and the beauty thereof, as the captives
Whom Saint Gregory[1] saw, and exclaimed, "Not Angles but Angels."
Youngest of all was he of the men who came in the "May-flower."[2] 20

Suddenly breaking the silence, the diligent scribe interrupting,
Spake, in the pride of his heart, Miles Standish the Captain of Plymouth.
"Look at these arms," he said, "the warlike weapons that hang here
Burnished and bright and clean, as if for parade or inspection!
This is the sword of Damascus I fought with in Flanders;[3] this breastplate, 25
Well I remember the day! once saved my life in a skirmish;
Here in front you can see the very dint of the bullet
Fired point-blank at my heart by a Spanish arcabucero.[4]

[1] St. Gregory the Great (540 ?-604), Pope, and author of a book, *Cura Pastoralis*, which was translated by King Alfred the Great. The story of Gregory and the English slaves is thus told by Greene: Years ago, when but a young deacon, Gregory had noted the white bodies, the fair faces, the golden hair of some youths who stood bound in the market-place of Rome. "From what country do these slaves come?" he asked the traders who brought them. "They are English, Angles!" the slave-dealers answered. The deacon's pity veiled itself in poetic humor. "Not Angles, but Angels," he said, "with faces so angel-like!"—*History of the English People*, p. 54. Gregory wished to go as a missionary to Britain, but was restrained by the Pope. Seven years after his election as Pope (597) he sent St. Augustine with forty monks to Ethelbert, King of Kent, who was baptized with 10,000 of his subjects in the space of a year.

[2] The ship which conveyed the Pilgrims from Southampton to Plymouth in 1620. It was a vessel of about 180 tons burden, and was named from the mayflower, which is the English hawthorn. In America the mayflower is the trailing arbutus.

[3] Flanders, also called the Low Countries, or Netherlands, an ancient country of Europe extending along the North Sea from the Strait of Dover to the mouth of the Schelde, and including Belgium and parts of Holland and France. Its territory has varied much in extent.

[4] A soldier armed with an arquebus, or ancient hand gun; also used loosely of a musketeer.

Had it not been of sheer steel, the forgotten bones of Miles Standish
Would at this moment be mould, in their grave in the Flemish morasses." 30
Thereupon answered John Alden, but looked not up from his writing:
"Truly the breath of the Lord hath slackened the speed of the bullet;
He in his mercy preserved you, to be our shield and our weapon!"[1]
Still the Captain continued, unheeding the words of the stripling:
"See, how bright they are burnished, as if in an arsenal hanging; 35
That is because I have done it myself, and not left it to others.
Serve yourself, would you be well served, is an excellent adage;
So I take care of my arms, as you of your pens and your inkhorn.[2]
Then, too, there are my soldiers, my great, invincible army,
Twelve men, all equipped, having each his rest[3] and his matchlock, 40
Eighteen shillings[4] a month, together with diet and pillage,
And, like Cæsar,[5] I know the name of each of my soldiers!"

[1] The Bible was the one great book of the Puritans, and its phraseology became unconsciously a part of their thoughts and speech. Cf. the language of Alden with Psalms, xxxiii. 6, 20.

[2] In the seventeenth century pens were commonly made of quills and ink-bottles of horn.

[3] The support upon which the heavy matchlock was rested while being fired.

[4] About four dollars and a half; but money was worth from three to five times as much at that time.

[5] Caius Julius Cæsar, born 100 B.C., killed at Rome by Brutus, Cassius, and other conspirators, 44 B.C. He was not only the first general and statesman of his age, but also, with the exception of Cicero, the greatest orator. He was also an accomplished mathematician, philologist, jurist, and architect, and the author of the famous *Commentaries on the Gallic and Civil Wars*, mentioned in l. 70.

This he said with a smile, that danced in his eyes, as the sunbeams
Dance on the waves of the sea, and vanish again in a moment.
Alden laughed as he wrote, and still the Captain continued: 45
"Look! you can see from this window my brazen howitzer[1] planted
High on the roof of the church, a preacher who speaks to the purpose,
Steady, straightforward, and strong, with irresistible logic,
Orthodox, flashing conviction right into the hearts of the heathen.
Now we are ready, I think, for any assault of the Indians: 50
Let them come, if they like, and the sooner they try it the better,—
Let them come if they like, be it sagamore, sachem, or pow-wow,[2]
Aspinet, Samoset, Corbitant, Squanto, or Tokamahamon!"[3]

Long at the window he stood, and wistfully gazed on the landscape,
Washed with a cold gray mist, the vapory breath of the east-wind, 55
Forest and meadow and hill, and the steel-blue rim of the ocean,
Lying silent and sad, in the afternoon shadows and sunshine.
Over his countenance flitted a shadow like those on the landscape,
Gloom intermingled with light; and his voice was subdued with emotion,

[1] A short, light cannon designed to throw large projectiles with comparatively small charges. The planting of the howitzer on the meeting-house occurred some time after the time of this poem. The settlement was fortified by five guns mounted on a platform on a neighboring hill.

[2] A sachem was chief of a tribe; a sagamore, of a lower rank; and a pow-wow, a medicine man and conjuror.

[3] These names were taken by the poet from the early histories of the colony.

Tenderness, pity, regret, as after a pause he proceeded: 60
"Yonder there, on the hill by the sea, lies buried Rose Standish;
Beautiful rose of love, that bloomed for me by the wayside!
She was the first to die of all who came in the 'Mayflower!'
Green above her is growing the field of wheat we have sown there,
Better to hide from the Indian scouts the graves of our people, 65
Lest they should count them and see how many already have perished!"[1]
Sadly his face he averted, and strode up and down, and was thoughtful.

Fixed to the opposite wall was a shelf of books, and among them
Prominent three, distinguished alike for bulk and for binding;
Barriffe's "Artillery Guide,"[2] and the "Commentaries of Cæsar," 70
Out of the Latin translated by Arthur Goldinge[3] of London,
And, as if guarded by these, between them was standing the Bible.
Musing a moment before them, Miles Standish paused, as if doubtful
Which of the three he should choose for his consolation and comfort,

[1] The colonists suffered terribly during the first winter here referred to (1620-21), and about fifty out of a hundred of them died. Dr. Abiel Holmes, in his *Annals of America*, records how the survivors buried the dead on a hill near the beach and left the graves unmarked, so that the weakness of the colony might not be perceived by the Indians.

[2] Colonel William Barriffe's *Militarie Discipline; or, The Young Artillery Man*, a work containing a system of tactics for gunners, musketeers, and pikemen. The author was a Puritan and added to the title of his book an appropriate passage of Scripture—Psalms, cxliv. 1.

[3] Arthur Golding (1536?-1605?), an English writer and friend of Sir Philip Sidney. He is remembered for his translations of Ovid, Cæsar, and De Mornay.

Whether the wars of the Hebrews, the famous campaigns of
the Romans, 75
Or the artillery practice, designed for belligerent Christians.
Finally down from its shelf he dragged the ponderous Roman,
Seated himself at the window, and opened the book, and in
silence
Turned o'er the well-worn leaves, where thumb-marks thick
on the margin,
Like the trample of feet, proclaimed the battle was hottest. 80
Nothing was heard in the room but the hurrying pen of the
stripling,
Busily writing epistles important, to go by the "Mayflower,"
Ready to sail on the morrow, or next day at latest,[1] God
willing!
Homeward bound with the tidings of all that terrible winter,
Letters written by Alden, and full of the name of Pris-
cilla,[2] 85
Full of the name and the fame of the Puritan maiden Pris-
cilla!

II.

LOVE AND FRIENDSHIP.

Nothing was heard in the room but the hurrying pen of the
stripling,
Or an occasional sigh from the laboring heart of the Captain,
Reading the marvellous words and achievements of Julius
Cæsar.
After a while he exclaimed, as he smote with his hand, palm
downwards,
Heavily on the page: "A wonderful man was this Cæsar! 5
You are a writer, and I am a fighter, but here is a fellow

[1] The ship sailed on April 5, 1621, taking only her crew on the homeward voyage. This line fixes definitely the time of the story.

[2] Among the emigrants on the "Mayflower" are mentioned: "Mr. William Mullines and his wife and two children, Joseph and Priscilla; and a servant, Robart Carter."

Who could both write and fight, and in both was equally skilful!"
Straightway answered and spake John Alden, the comely, the youthful:
"Yes, he was equally skilled, as you say, with his pen and his weapons.
Somewhere have I read, but where I forget, he could dictate 10
Seven letters at once, at the same time writing his memoirs."
"Truly," continued the Captain, not heeding or hearing the other,
"Truly a wonderful man was Caius Julius Cæsar!
Better be first, he said, in a little Iberian[1] village,
Than be second in Rome,[2] and I think he was right when he said it. 15
Twice was he married before he was twenty, and many times after;
Battles five hundred he fought, and a thousand cities he conquered;
He, too, fought in Flanders, as he himself has recorded;
Finally he was stabbed by his friend, the orator Brutus![3]
Now, do you know what he did on a certain occasion in Flanders, 20
When the rear-guard of his army retreated, the front giving way too,

[1] Iberia was an ancient name of Spain.

[2] Plutarch thus relates the incident: "In his journey, as he was crossing the Alps and passing by a small village of the barbarians with but few inhabitants, and those wretchedly poor, his companions asked the question among themselves by way of mockery if there were any canvassing for offices there; any contention which should be uppermost, or feuds of great men one against another. To which Cæsar made answer seriously, 'For my part I had rather be the first man among these fellows, than the second man in Rome.'"—*Cæsar*, in *Lives of Illustrious Men*, translated by Dryden, etc., vol. ii., page 511.

[3] Marcus Junius Brutus (85–42 B.C.), a Roman soldier, statesman, and scholar. He was in turn an adherent of Pompey and Cæsar, became governor of Cisalpine Gaul and afterwards City Praetor. He was induced by Cassius, on the plea of patriotism, to take part in the assassination of his friend Cæsar. After his defeat in the second battle at Philippi, he committed suicide.

And the immortal Twelfth Legion[1] was crowded so closely together
There was no room for their swords? Why, he seized a shield from a soldier,
Put himself straight at the head of his troops, and commanded the captains,
Calling on each by his name, to order forward the ensigns; 25
Then to widen the ranks, and give more room for their weapons;
So he won the day, the battle of something-or-other.[2]
That's what I always say; if you wish a thing to be well done,
You must do it yourself, you must not leave it to others!"

All was silent again; the Captain continued his reading. 30
Nothing was heard in the room but the hurrying pen of the stripling
Writing epistles important to go next day by the "Mayflower,"
Filled with the name and the fame of the Puritan maiden Priscilla;
Every sentence began or closed with the name of Priscilla,
Till the treacherous pen, to which he confided the secret, 35
Strove to betray it by singing and shouting the name of Priscilla!
Finally closing his book, with a bang of the ponderous cover,
Sudden and loud as the sound of a soldier grounding his musket,
Thus to the young man spake Miles Standish the Captain of Plymouth:

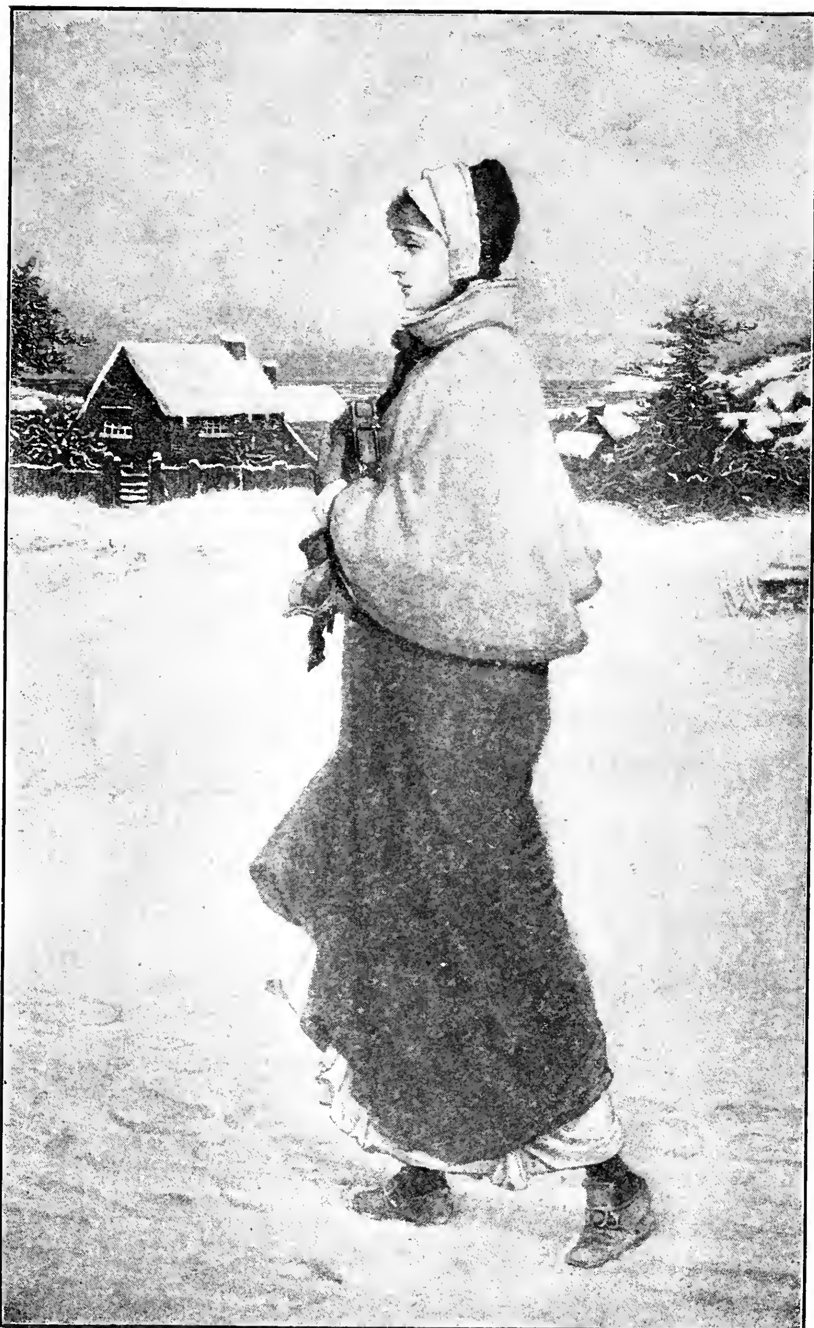
[1] A Roman legion, the most perfect fighting machine of ancient times, was, in the first century B.C., composed of about 6,000 men, divided into ten cohorts, each of these into three maniples, and these in turn into two centuries.

[2] Cæsar's *Commentaries*, Book II., chap. x.

"When you have finished your work, I have something important to tell you. 40
Be not however in haste; I can wait; I shall not be impatient!"
Straightway Alden replied, as he folded the last of his letters,
Pushing his papers aside, and giving respectful attention:
"Speak; for whenever you speak, I am always ready to listen,
Always ready to hear whatever pertains to Miles Standish." 45
Thereupon answered the Captain, embarrassed, and culling his phrases:
"'Tis not good for a man to be alone,[1] say the Scriptures.
This I have said before, and again and again I repeat it;
Every hour in the day, I think it, and feel it, and say it.
Since Rose Standish died, my life has been weary and dreary; 50
Sick at heart have I been, beyond the healing of friendship.
Oft in my lonely hours have I thought of the maiden Priscilla.
She is alone in the world; her father and mother and brother
Died in the winter together;[2] I saw her going and coming,
Now to the grave of the dead, and now to the bed of the dying, 55
Patient, courageous, and strong, and said to myself, that if ever
There were angels on earth, as there are angels in heaven,
Two have I seen and known; and the angel whose name is Priscilla
Holds in my desolate life the place which the other abandoned.
Long have I cherished the thought, but never have dared to reveal it, 60

[1] Genesis ii., 18.

[2] "Mr. Mollines," says Bradford. "and his wife, his sone and his servant, dyed the first winter. Only his daughter Priscila survived and married with John Alden, who are both living and have 11 children."—*History of Plymouth Plantation*, p. 452.



Painting by G. H. Boughton.

Priscilla.

Being a coward in this, though valiant enough for the most part.
Go to the damsel Priscilla, the loveliest maiden of Plymouth,
Say that a blunt old Captain, a man not of words but of actions,
Offers his hand and his heart, the hand and heart of a soldier.
Not in these words, you know, but this in short is my meaning; 65
I am a maker of war, and not a maker of phrases.
You, who are bred as a scholar, can say it in elegant language,
Such as you read in your books of the pleadings and wooings of lovers,
Such as you think best adapted to win the heart of a maiden."

When he had spoken, John Alden, the fair-haired, taciturn stripling, 70
All aghast at his words, surprised, embarrassed, bewildered,
Trying to mask his dismay by treating the subject with lightness,
Trying to smile, and yet feeling his heart stand still in his bosom,
Just as a timepiece stops in a house that is stricken by lightning,
Thus made answer and spake, or rather stammered than answered: 75
"Such a message as that, I am sure I should mangle and mar it;
If you would have it well done,—I am only repeating your maxim,—
You must do it yourself, you must not leave it to others!"
But with the air of a man whom nothing can turn from his purpose,
Gravely shaking his head, made answer the Captain of Plymouth: 80

"Truly the maxim is good, and I do not mean to gainsay it;
But we must use it discreetly, and not waste powder for nothing.
Now, as I said before, I was never a maker of phrases.
I can march up to a fortress and summon the place to surrender,
But march up to a woman with such a proposal, I dare not. 85
I'm not afraid of bullets, nor shot from the mouth of a cannon,
But of a thundering 'No!' point-blank from the mouth of a woman,
That I confess I'm afraid of, nor am I ashamed to confess it!
So you must grant my request, for you are an elegant scholar,
Having the graces of speech, and skill in the turning of phrases." 90
Taking the hand of his friend, who still was reluctant and doubtful,
Holding it long in his own, and pressing it kindly, he added:
"Though I have spoken thus lightly, yet deep is the feeling that prompts me;
Surely you cannot refuse what I ask in the name of our friendship!"
Then made answer John Alden: "The name of friendship is sacred; 95
What you demand in that name, I have not the power to deny you!"
So the strong will prevailed, subduing and moulding the gentler,
Friendship prevailed over love, and Alden went on his errand.

III.

THE LOVER'S ERRAND.

So the strong will prevailed, and Alden went on his errand,
Out of the street of the village, and into the paths of the forest,
Into the tranquil woods, where bluebirds and robins were building
Towns in the populous trees, with hanging gardens[1] of verdūre,
Peaceful, aerial cities of joy and affection and freedom. 5
All around him was calm, but within him commotion and conflict,
Love contending with friendship, and self with each generous impulse.
To and fro in his breast his thoughts were heaving and dashing,
As in a foundering ship, with every roll of the vessel,
Washes the bitter sea, the merciless surge of the ocean! 10
"Must I relinquish it all," he cried with a wild lamentation,—
"Must I relinquish it all, the joy, the hope, the illusion?
Was it for this I have loved, and waited, and worshipped in silence?
Was it for this I have followed the flying feet and the shadow
Over the wintry sea, to the desolate shores of New England? 15
Truly the heart is deceitful, and out of its depths of corruption
Rise, like an exhalation, the misty phantoms of passion;
Angels of light they seem, but are only delusions of Satan.
All is clear to me now; I feel it, I see it distinctly!

[1] The hanging gardens of Babylon were regarded as one of the seven wonders of the ancient world. They were a mass of terraces supported by pillars and elaborate masonry, forming an artificial hill of pyramidal shape in the vast plain of the Euphrates. They had an area of four acres, and were covered with luxuriant vegetation of all kinds, which was irrigated from a reservoir at the summit of the whole.

This is the hand of the Lord; it is laid upon me in anger, 20
For I have followed too much the heart's desires and devices,
Worshipping Astaroth[1] blindly, and impious idols of Baal.[2]
This is the cross I must bear; the sin and the swift retribution."

So through the Plymouth woods John Alden went on his errand;
Crossing the brook at the ford, where it brawled over pebble and shallow, 25
Gathering still, as he went, the Mayflowers blooming around him,
Fragrant, filling the air with a strange and wonderful sweetness,
Children lost in the woods, and covered with leaves in their slumber.[3]
"Puritan flowers," he said, "and the type of Puritan maidens,
Modest and simple and sweet, the very type of Priscilla! 30
So I will take them to her; to Priscilla the Mayflower of Plymouth,

[1] More properly Ashtoreth, the goddess of love, and principal female divinity of the Phenicians. Like the Greek Astarte, she is identified with the moon, and is represented under the symbol of the crescent. Groves were favorite places of her worship, which is denounced in the Old Testament. See Judges, ii. 13, 1 Samuel, xii. 10, and 1 Kings, xi. 5, 43.

[2] The supreme male deity of the Phenicians, representing the fertility and productive power of nature. He was worshipped as the sun-god, and incense, bulls, and human sacrifices, especially children, were offered to him. His worship, like that of Ashtoreth, was attended by wild and licentious orgies. See Joshua, xi. 17, Jeremiah, xxxii. 29, and 1 Kings, xvi. 32, and xviii. 26.

[3] Children in the wood, or babes in the wood. An old English ballad of unknown authorship, preserved in Ritson's, Percy's, and other collections. The ballad was entered in the *Stationer's Register*, in 1595. In 1601 a play was published "of a young child murthered in a wood by two ruffins with the consent of his unkle." The plot of this play was undoubtedly derived from the Italian, and the ballad may have been produced from the same source.—*Child.*

Modest and simple and sweet, as a parting gift will I take them;
Breathing their silent farewells, as they fade and wither and perish,
Soon to be thrown away as is the heart of the giver."
So through the Plymouth woods John Alden went on his errand; 35
Came to an open space, and saw the disk of the ocean,
Sailless, sombre and cold with the comfortless breath of the east-wind;
Saw the new-built house, and people at work in a meadow;
Heard, as he drew near the door, the musical voice of Priscilla
Singing the hundredth Psalm, the grand old Puritan anthem,[1] 40
Music that Luther[2] sang to the sacred words of the Psalmist,
Full of the breath of the Lord, consoling and comforting many.
Then, as he opened the door, he beheld the form of the maiden
Seated beside her wheel, and the carded wool like a snow-drift
Piled at her knee, her white hands feeding the ravenous spindle, 45
While with her foot on the treadle she guided the wheel in its motion.

[1] The tune sung by Priscilla is now familiarly known as Old Hundred; the version was the translation of Psalm c. by Ainsworth:

"Bow to Jehovah all the earth.
Serve ye Jehovah with gladness; before him come with singing mirth.
Know that Jehovah he God is. It's he that made us and not we, his flock and sheep of his feeding.
Oh, with confession enter ye his gates, his courtyard with praising. Confess to him, bless ye his name.
Because Jehovah he good is; his mercy ever is the same, and his faith unto all ages."

[2] Martin Luther, a German reformer and translator of the Bible. He was born at Eisleben, Prussian Saxony, Nov. 10, 1483, and died in the same place, Feb. 18, 1546. He translated the Psalms in 1524, and in the same year appeared his hymn-book.

Open wide on her lap lay the well-worn psalm-book of Ainsworth,[1]
Printed in Amsterdam,[2] the words and the music together,
Rough-hewn, angular notes, like stones in the wall of a churchyard,
Darkened and overhung by the running vine of the verses. 50
Such was the book from whose pages she sang the old Puritan anthem,
She, the Puritan girl, in the solitude of the forest,
Making the humble house and the modest apparel of homespun
Beautiful with her beauty, and rich with the wealth of her being!
Over him rushed, like a wind that is keen and cold and relentless, 55
Thoughts of what might have been, and the weight and woe of his errand;
All the dreams that had faded, and all the hopes that had vanished,
All his life henceforth a dreary and tenantless mansion,
Haunted by vain regrets, and pallid, sorrowful faces.
Still he said to himself, and almost fiercely he said it, 60
"Let not him that putteth his hand to the plough look backwards;[3]
Though the ploughshare cut through the flowers of life to its fountains,
Though it pass o'er the graves of the dead and the hearths of the living,
It is the will of the Lord; and his mercy endureth forever!"[4]

[1] Henry Ainsworth, an English separatist clergyman, controversialist, and rabbinical scholar. Born at Pleasington, Lancashire, England, 1571; died at Amsterdam about 1622.

[2] The chief commercial city of Holland, to which Ainsworth fled from the persecution of the Brownists. There he became porter to a bookseller and later pastor to a congregation.

[3] Luke, ix. 62.

[4] Jeremiah, xxxiii. 11.

So he entered the house; and the hum of the wheel and the singing 65
Suddenly ceased; for Priscilla, aroused by his step on the threshold,
Rose as he entered and gave him her hand, in signal of welcome,
Saying, "I knew it was you, when I heard your step in the passage;
For I was thinking of you, as I sat there singing and spinning."
Awkward and dumb with delight, that a thought of him had been mingled 70
Thus in the sacred psalm, that came from the heart of the maiden,
Silent before her he stood, and gave her the flowers for an answer,
Finding no words for his thought. He remembered that day in the winter,
After the first great snow, when he broke a path from the village,
Reeling and plunging along through the drifts that encumbered the doorway, 75
Stamping the snow from his feet as he entered the house, and Priscilla
Laughed at his snowy locks, and gave him a seat by the fireside,
Grateful and pleased to know he had thought of her in the snow-storm.
Had he but spoken then! perhaps not in vain had he spoken;
Now it was all too late; the golden moment had vanished! 80
So he stood there abashed, and gave her the flowers for an answer.

Then they sat down and talked of the birds and the beautiful springtime;

Talked of their friends at home, and the "Mayflower" that sailed on the morrow.
"I have been thinking all day," said gently the Puritan maiden,
"Dreaming all night, and thinking all day, of the hedgerows of England,— 85
They are in blossom now, and the country is all like a garden;
Thinking of lanes and fields, and the song of the lark and the linnet,
Seeing the village street, and familiar faces of neighbors
Going about as of old, and stopping to gossip together,
And, at the end of the street, the village church, with the ivy 90
Climbing the old gray tower, and the quiet graves in the churchyard.
Kind are the people I live with, and dear to me my religion;
Still my heart is so sad, that I wish myself back in Old England.
You will say it is wrong, but I cannot help it: I almost
Wish myself back in Old England, I feel so lonely and wretched." 95

Thereupon answered the youth: "Indeed I do not condemn you;
Stouter hearts than a woman's have quailed in this terrible winter.
Yours is tender and trusting, and needs a stronger to lean on;
So I have come to you now, with an offer and proffer of marriage
Made by a good man and true, Miles Standish the Captain of Plymouth!" 100

Thus he delivered his message, the dexterous writer of letters,—

Did not embellish the theme, nor array it in beautiful phrases,
But came straight to the point, and blurted it out like a school-boy;
Even the Captain himself could hardly have said it more bluntly.
Mute with amazement and sorrow, Priscilla the Puritan maiden 105
Looked into Alden's face, her eyes dilated with wonder,
Feeling his words like a blow, that stunned her and rendered her speechless;
Till at length she exclaimed, interrupting the ominous silence:
"If the great Captain of Plymouth is so very eager to wed me,
Why does he not come himself, and take the trouble to woo me? 110
If I am not worth the wooing, I surely am not worth the winning!"
Then John Alden began explaining and smoothing the matter,
Making it worse as he went, by saying the Captain was busy,—
Had no time for such things;—such things! the words grating harshly
Fell on the ear of Priscilla; and swift as a flash she made answer: 115
"Has he no time for such things, as you call it, before he is married,
Would he be likely to find it, or make it, after the wedding?
That is the way with you men; you don't understand us, you cannot.
When you have made up your minds, after thinking of this one and that one,
Choosing, selecting, rejecting, comparing one with an other, 120
Then you make known your desire, with abrupt and sudden avowal,
And are offended and hurt, and indignant perhaps, that a woman

Does not respond at once to a love that she never suspected,
Does not attain at a bound the height to which you have been climbing.
This is not right nor just; for surely a woman's affection 125
Is not a thing to be asked for, and had for only the asking.
When one is truly in love, one not only says it, but shows it.
Had he but waited awhile, had he only showed that he loved me,
Even this Captain of yours—who knows?—at last might have won me,
Old and rough as he is; but now it never can happen." 130

Still John Alden went on, unheeding the words of Priscilla,
Urging the suit of his friend, explaining, persuading, expanding;
Spoke of his courage and skill, and of all his battles in Flanders,
How with the people of God he had chosen to suffer affliction,[1]
How, in return for his zeal, they had made him Captain of Plymouth; 135
He was a gentleman born, could trace his pedigree plainly
Back to Hugh Standish of Duxbury Hall, in Lancashire, England,
Who was the son of Ralph, and the grandson of Thurston de Standish;
Heir unto vast estates, of which he was basely defrauded,
Still bore the family arms, and had for his crest a cock argent 140
Combed and wattled gules, and all the rest of the blazon.[2]

[1] Hebrews, xi. 25.

[2] Captain Standish had inherited, according to the laws of heraldry, the family armorial insignia. These were originally embroidered on the knight's hauberk, or coat-of-mail—hence the term, *coat of arms*—but later, on the shield or escutcheon. The Standish crest was a silver cock, with red comb and wattle, appended to the family shield. Blazon is the description in heraldic terms of the charges, or objects, on the shield.

He was a man of honor, of noble and generous nature;
Though he was rough, he was kindly; she knew how during the winter
He had attended the sick, with a hand as gentle as woman's;
Somewhat hasty and hot, he could not deny it, and headstrong, 145
Stern as a soldier might be, but hearty, and placable always,
Not to be laughed at and scorned, because he was little of stature;
For he was great of heart, magnanimous, courtly, courageous;
Any woman in Plymouth, nay, any woman in England,
Might be happy and proud to be called the wife of Miles Standish! 150

But as he warmed and glowed, in his simple and eloquent language,
Quite forgetful of self, and full of the praise of his rival,
Archly the maiden smiled, and, with eyes overrunning with laughter,
Said, in a tremulous voice, "Why don't you speak for yourself, John?"

IV.

JOHN ALDEN.

Into the open air John Alden, perplexed and bewildered,
Rushed like a man insane, and wandered alone by the seaside;
Paced up and down the sands, and bared his head to the east wind,
Cooling his heated brow, and the fire and fever within him.
Slowly, as out of the heavens, with apocalyptical splendors, 5
Sank the City of God, in the vision of John the Apostle,[1]

[1] Revelation of St. John, xxi. 10-27.

So, with its cloudy walls of chrysolite, jasper, and sapphire,
Sank the broad red sun, and over its turrets uplifted
Glimmered the golden reed of the angel who measured the city.

"Welcome, O wind of the East!" he exclaimed in his wild exultation, 10
"Welcome, O wind of the East, from the caves of the misty Atlantic!
Blowing o'er fields of dulse,[1] and measureless meadows of sea-grass,
Blowing o'er rocky wastes, and the grottos and gardens of ocean!
Lay thy cold, moist hand on my burning forehead, and wrap me
Close in thy garments of mist, to allay the fever within me!" 15

Like an awakened conscience, the sea was moaning and tossing,
Beating remorseful and loud the mutable sands of the sea-shore.
Fierce in his soul was the struggle and tumult of passions contending;
Love triumphant and crowned, and friendship wounded and bleeding,
Passionate cries of desire, and importunate pleadings of duty! 20
"Is it my fault," he said, "that the maiden has chosen between us?
Is it my fault that he failed,—my fault that I am the victor?"

[1] Sea-weed of a reddish brown color, adhering to the rocks in long strips, and sometimes eaten, as in Scotland.

Then within him there thundered a voice, like the voice of the Prophet:
"It hath displeased the Lord!"—and he thought of David's transgression,
Bathsheba's[1] beautiful face, and his friend in the front of the battle! 25
Shame and confusion of guilt, and abasement and self-condemnation,
Overwhelmed him at once; and he cried in the deepest contrition:
"It hath displeased the Lord! It is the temptation of Satan!"

Then, uplifting his head, he looked at the sea, and beheld there
Dimly the shadowy form of the "Mayflower" riding at anchor, 30
Rocked on the rising tide, and ready to sail on the morrow;
Heard the voices of men through the mist, the rattle of cordage
Thrown on the deck, the shouts of the mate, and the sailors' "Ay, ay, Sir!"
Clear and distinct, but not loud, in the dripping air of the twilight.
Still for a moment he stood, and listened, and stared at the vessel 35
Then went hurriedly on, as one who, seeing a phantom,
Stops, then quickens his pace, and follows the beckoning shadow.
"Yes, it is plain to me now," he murmured; "the hand of the Lord is

[1] The beautiful wife of Uriah the Hittite, afterwards the wife of King David and the mother of Solomon. The Prophet was Nathan. The story of Bathsheba will be found in II. Samuel, chaps. xi. and xii. It is the subject of an old play by George Peele, called *The Love of King David and Fair Bethsabe* (1599).

Leading me out of the land of darkness, the bondage of error,
Through the sea, that shall lift the walls of its waters around
me, 40
Hiding me, cutting me off, from the cruel thoughts that pursue me.[1]
Back will I go o'er the ocean, this dreary land will abandon,
Her whom I may not love, and him whom my heart has offended.
Better to be in my grave in the green old churchyard in England,
Close by my mother's side, and among the dust of my kindred; 45
Better be dead and forgotten, than living in shame and dishonor!
Sacred and safe and unseen, in the dark of the narrow chamber
With me my secret shall lie, like a buried jewel that glimmers
Bright on the hand that is dust, in the chambers of silence and darkness,—
Yes, as the marriage ring of the great espousal hereafter!" 50

Thus as he spake, he turned, in the strength of his strong resolution,
Leaving behind him the shore, and hurried along in the twilight,
Through the congenial gloom of the forest silent and sombre,
Till he beheld the lights in the seven houses[2] of Plymouth,
Shining like seven stars in the dusk and mist of the evening. 55
Soon he entered his door, and found the redoubtable Captain

[1] For the Biblical reference see Exodus, chaps. xiii. and xiv.

[2] "You shall understand," wrote Winslow, "that in this little time that a few of us have been here, we have built seven dwelling-houses and four for the use of the plantation."—Letter to a friend in England (December 11, 1621).

Sitting alone, and absorbed in the martial pages of Cæsar.
Fighting some great campaign in Hainault[1] or Brabant[2] or Flanders.
"Long have you been on your errand," he said with a cheery demeanor,
Even as one who is waiting an answer, and fears not the issue. 60
"Not far off is the house, although the woods are between us;
But you have lingered so long, that while you were going and coming
I have fought ten battles and sacked and demolished a city.
Come, sit down, and in order relate to me all that has happened."

Then John Alden spake, and related the wondrous adventure 65
From beginning to end, minutely, just as it happened;
How he had seen Priscilla, and how he had sped in his courtship,
Only smoothing a little, and softening down her refusal.
But when he came at length to the words Priscilla had spoken,
Words so tender and cruel, "Why don't you speak for yourself, John?" 70
Up leaped the Captain of Plymouth, and stamped on the floor, till his armor
Clanged on the wall, where it hung, with a sound of sinister omen.
All his pent-up wrath burst forth in a sudden explosion,
E'en as a hand-granade,[3] that scatters destruction round it.

[1] A county of the Netherlands, united in 1433 to the dominions of Philip the Good of Burgundy.

[2] A county and duchy of the Netherlands, to which Philip the Good succeeded in 1430.

[3] A small hollow ball of iron or glass filled with powder or other explosives. It was thrown from the hand into the trenches or head of a sap, or upon besiegers mounting a breach.

Wildly he shouted, and loud: "John Alden! you have betrayed me! 75
Me, Miles Standish, your friend! have supplanted, defrauded, betrayed me!
One of my ancestors ran his sword through the heart of Wat Tyler;[1]
Who shall prevent me from running my own through the heart of a traitor?
Yours is the greater treason, for yours is a treason to friendship!
You, who lived under my roof, whom I cherished and loved as a brother; 80
You, who have fed at my board, and drunk at my cup, to whose keeping
I have intrusted my honor, my thoughts the most sacred and secret,—
You too, Brutus![2] ah, woe to the name of friendship hereafter!
Brutus was Cæsar's friend, and you were mine, but henceforward
Let there be nothing between us save war, and implacable hatred!" 85

So spake the Captain of Plymouth, and strode about in the chamber,
Chafing and choking with rage; like cords were the veins on his temples.
But in the midst of his anger a man appeared at the doorway,
Bringing in uttermost haste a message of urgent importance,
Rumors of danger and war and hostile incursions of Indians! 90
Straightway the Captain paused, and, without further question or parley,

[1] This incident is recorded in Sir John Froissart's *Chronicles of England, France, and Spain*, chap. lxxvi., p. 287.

[2] *Et tu Brute!* were the reproachful words of Cæsar when he recognized his old friend Brutus among his assassins.

Took from the nail on the wall his sword with its scabbard of iron,
Buckled the belt round his waist, and, frowning fiercely, departed.
Alden was left alone. He heard the clank of the scabbard
Growing fainter and fainter, and dying away in the distance. 95
Then he arose from his seat, and looked forth into the darkness,
Felt the cool air blow on his cheek, that was hot with the insult,
Lifted his eyes to the heavens, and, folding his hands as in childhood,
Prayed in the silence of night to the Father who seeth in secret.[1]

Meanwhile the choleric Captain strode wrathful away to the council, 100
Found it already assembled, impatiently waiting his coming;
Men in the middle of life, austere and grave in deportment,
Only one of them old, the hill that was nearest to heaven,
Covered with snow, but erect, the excellent Elder[2] of Plymouth.
God had sifted three kingdoms to find the wheat for this planting,[3] 105
Then had sifted the wheat, as the living seed of a nation;
So say the chronicles old, and such is the faith of the people!
Near them was standing an Indian, in attitude stern and defiant,

[1] Matthew, vi., 4.

[2] William Brewster (1560?-1644), a ruling elder in the Plymouth Congregation, who also officiated as teaching elder in the absence of the pastor, John Robinson, who remained in Leyden. He is said to have studied at Cambridge University, and was in the service of William Davison, Ambassador to the Low Countries.

[3] "God sifted a whole nation," said Stoughton, "that he might send a choice grain over into this wilderness."—Sermon on Election (1668).

Naked down to the waist, and grim and ferocious in aspect;
While on the table before them was lying unopened a Bible,[1] 110
Ponderous, bound in leather, brass-studded, printed in Holland,
And beside it outstretched the skin of a rattlesnake glittered,
Filled, like a quiver, with arrows: a signal and challenge of warfare,[2]
Brought by the Indian, and speaking with arrowy tongues of defiance.
This Miles Standish beheld, as he entered, and heard them debating 115
What were an answer befitting the hostile message and menace,
Talking of this and of that, contriving, suggesting, objecting;
One voice only for peace, and that the voice of the Elder,
Judging it wise and well that some at least were converted,[3]
Rather than any were slain, for this was but Christian behavior! 120
Then out spake Miles Standish, the stalwart Captain of Plymouth,
Muttering deep in his throat, for his voice was husky with anger,
"What! do you mean to make war with milk and the water of roses?
Is it to shoot red squirrels you have your howitzer planted

[1] The favorite version of the Scriptures used by the Puritans was the Geneva Bible (1557), which was made in Switzerland on account of persecution by Queen Mary. It is also known as the Breeches Bible, the word *breeches* being used instead of *aprons* in Genesis iii., 7. It was published at least once at Amsterdam.

[2] In January, 1622, Canonicus, a Narragansett chief, actually sent a rattlesnake skin filled with arrows as a challenge to Governor Bradford, who returned the skin filled with powder and ball by the messenger, Tisquantum.

[3] After the Pilgrims' first fight with the savages, John Robinson, the pastor, exclaimed: "Oh, how happy a thing had it been, if you had converted some before you had killed any!"

There on the roof of the church, or is it to shoot red devils? 125
Truly the only tongue that is understood by a savage
Must be the tongue of fire that speaks from the mouth of the cannon!"
Thereupon answered and said the excellent Elder of Plymouth,
Somewhat amazed and alarmed at this irreverent language:
"Not so thought Saint Paul, nor yet the other Apostles; 130
Not from the cannon's mouth were the tongues of fire[1] they spake with!"
But unheeded fell this mild rebuke on the Captain,
Who had advanced to the table, and thus continued discoursing:
"Leave this matter to me, for to me by right it pertaineth.
War is a terrible trade; but in the cause that is righteous, 135
Sweet is the smell of powder; and thus I answer the challenge!"

Then from the rattlesnake's skin, with a sudden, contemptuous gesture,
Jerking the Indian arrows, he filled it with powder and bullets
Full to the very jaws, and handed it back to the savage,
Saying, in thundering tones: "Here, take it! this is your answer!" 140
Silently out of the room then glided the glistening savage,
Bearing the serpent's skin, and seeming himself like a serpent,
Winding his sinuous way in the dark to the depths of the forest.

V.

THE SAILING OF THE "MAYFLOWER."

Just in the gray of the dawn, as the mists uprose from the meadows,
There was a stir and a sound in the slumbering village of Plymouth;

[1] Acts of the Apostles, ii. 3, and Romans, xii. 18.

Clanging and clicking of arms, and the order imperative,
"Forward!"
Given in tone suppressed, a tramp of feet, and then silence.
Figures ten, in the mist, marched slowly out of the village. 5
Standish the stalwart it was, with eight of his valorous army,
Led by their Indian guide, by Hobomok, friend of the white
men,
Northward marching to quell the sudden revolt of the savage.
Giants they seemed in the mist, or the mighty men of King
David;[1]
Giants in heart they were, who believed in God and the
Bible,— 10
Ay, who believed in the smiting of Midianites[2] and Philis-
tines.[3]
Over them gleamed far off the crimson banners of morning;
Under them loud on the sands, the serried billows, advancing,
Fired along the line, and in regular order retreated.

Many a mile had they marched, when at length the village
of Plymouth 15
Woke from its sleep, and arose, intent on its manifold labors.
Sweet was the air and soft; and slowly the smoke from the
chimneys
Rose over roofs of thatch, and pointed steadily eastward;
Men came forth from the doors, and paused and talked of the
weather,
Said that the wind had changed, and was blowing fair for the
"Mayflower"; 20

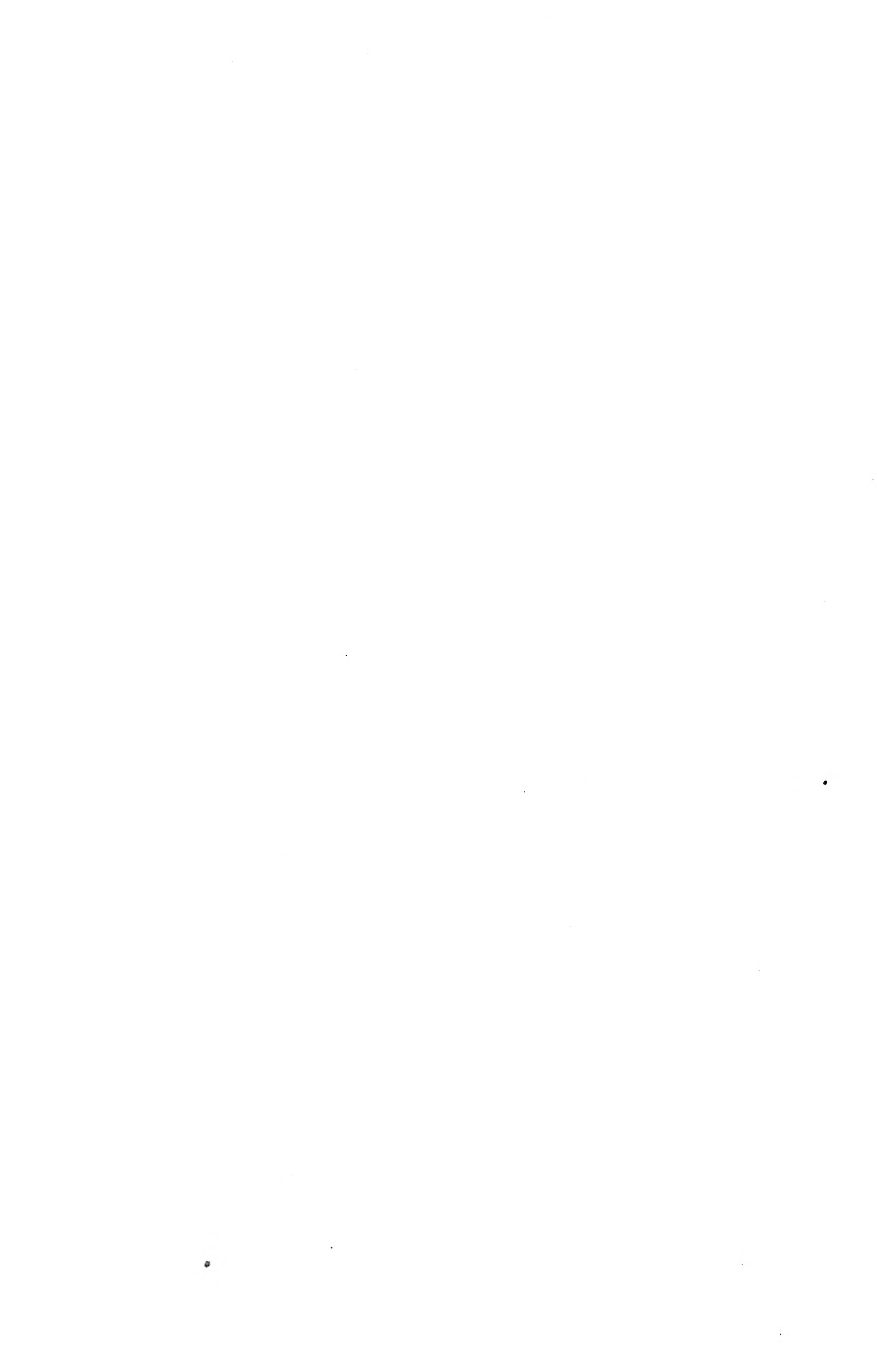
[1] II. Samuel, xxiii.

[2] An Arabian tribe settled in the northern part of the Syro-Arabian desert. They were descendants of Abraham and Keturah. Moses destroyed their cities, and Gideon defeated them when they crossed the Jordan to ravage the country. Later they disappeared almost entirely from history.

[3] A nation supposed to be of Semitic origin. Professor Sayce thinks they were established by Egyptian kings as a garrison on the southern border of Palestine. They were frequently at war with the Hebrews in the reigns of Saul and David.

Painting by G. H. Boughton.

"Standish the stalwart it was, with eight of his valorous army,
Led by their Indian guide, by Hobomok, friend of the white men."



Talked of their Captain's departure, and all the dangers that menaced,
He being gone, the town, and what should be done in his absence.
Merrily sang the birds, and the tender voices of women
Consecrated with hymns the common cares of the household.
Out of the sea rose the sun, and the billows rejoiced at his coming; 25
Beautiful were his feet on the purple tops of the mountains;
Beautiful on the sails of the "Mayflower" riding at anchor,
Battered and blackened and worn by all the storms of the winter.
Loosely against her masts was hanging and flapping her canvas,
Rent by so many gales, and patched by the hands of the sailors, 30
Suddenly from her side, as the sun rose over the ocean,
Darted a puff of smoke, and floated seaward; anon rang
Loud over field and forest the cannon's roar, and the echoes
Heard and repeated the sound, the signal-gun of departure!
Ah! but with louder echoes replied the hearts of the people! 35
Meekly, in voices subdued, the chapter was read from the Bible,
Meekly the prayer was begun, but ended in fervent entreaty!
Then from their houses in haste came forth the Pilgrims of Plymouth,
Men and women and children, all hurrying down to the seashore,
Eager, with tearful eyes, to say farewell to the "Mayflower," 40
Homeward bound o'er the sea, and leaving them here in the desert.

Foremost among them was Alden. All night he had lain without slumber,
Turning and tossing about in the heat and unrest of his fever.
He had beheld Miles Standish, who came back late from the council,
Stalking into the room, and heard him mutter and murmur, 45
Sometimes it seemed a prayer, and sometimes it sounded like swearing.
Once he had come to the bed, and stood there a moment in silence;
Then he had turned away, and said: "I will not awake him;
Let him sleep on, it is best; for what is the use of more talking!"
Then he extinguished the light, and threw himself down on his pallet, 50
Dressed as he was, and ready to start at the break of the morning,—
Covered himself with the cloak he had worn in his campaigns in Flanders,—
Slept as a soldier sleeps in his bivouac,[1] ready for action.
But with the dawn he arose; in the twilight Alden beheld him
Put on his corselet of steel, and all the rest of his armor, 55
Buckle about his waist his trusty blade of Damascus,
Take from the corner his musket, and so stride out of the chamber.
Often the heart of the youth had burned and yearned to embrace him,
Often his lips had essayed to speak, imploring for pardon;

[1] Pronounced bĭv′-wăk: the night-watch of an army when in danger of surprise, or an encampment for the night without tents or shelter. Cf. O'Hara's beautiful use of the word in his poem in memory of the Kentuckians who fell at Buena Vista:

"On Fame's eternal camping-ground,
Their silent tents are spread,
And Glory guards, with solemn round,
The bivouac of the dead."

All the old friendship came back with its tender and grateful
emotions; 60
But his pride overmastered the nobler nature within him,—
Pride, and the sense of his wrong, and the burning fire of the
insult.
So he beheld his friend departing in anger, but spake not,
Saw him go forth to danger, perhaps to death, and he spake not!
Then he arose from his bed, and heard what the people were
saying, 65
Joined in the talk at the door, with Stephen and Richard and
Gilbert,[1]
Joined in the morning prayer, and in the reading of Scripture,
And, with the others, in haste went hurrying down to the
seashore,
Down to the Plymouth Rock, that had been to their feet as
a doorstep
Into a world unknown,—the corner-stone of a nation! 70

There with his boat was the Master,[2] already a little impatient
Lest he should lose the tide, or the wind might shift to the
eastward,
Square-built, hearty, and strong, with an odor of ocean about
him,
Speaking with this one and that, and cramming letters and
parcels
Into his pockets capacious, and messages mingled together 75
Into his narrow brain, till at last he was wholly bewildered.
Nearer the boat stood Alden, with one foot placed on the gunwale,

[1] The actual names of three of the "Mayflower" passengers surviving in 1621: Stephen Hopkins, Richard Warren, and Gilbert Winslow.

[2] The title, in the seventeenth century, of the commander of a merchant vessel. Cf. Tempest, I. i.

One still firm on the rock, and talking at times with the sailors,
Seated erect on the thwarts, all ready and eager for starting.
He too was eager to go, and thus put an end to his anguish, 80
Thinking to fly from despair, that swifter than keel is or canvas,
Thinking to drown in the sea the ghost that would rise and pursue him.
But as he gazed on the crowd, he beheld the form of Priscilla
Standing dejected among them, unconscious of all that was passing.
Fixed were her eyes upon his, as if she divined his intention, 85
Fixed with a look so sad, so reproachful, imploring, and patient,
That with a sudden revulsion his heart recoiled from its purpose,
As from the verge of a crag, where one step more is destruction.
Strange is the heart of man, with its quick, mysterious instincts!
Strange is the life of man, and fatal or fated are moments, 90
Whereupon turn, as on hinges, the gates of the wall adamantine!
"Here I remain!" he exclaimed, as he looked at the heavens above him,
Thanking the Lord whose breath had scattered the mist and the madness,
Wherein, blind and lost, to death he was staggering headlong.
"Yonder snow-white cloud, that floats in the ether above me, 95
Seems like a hand that is pointing and beckoning over the ocean.

There is another hand, that is not so spectral and ghost-like,
Holding me, drawing me back, and clasping mine for protection.
Float, O hand of cloud, and vanish away in the ether!
Roll thyself up like a fist, to threaten and daunt me; I heed not 100
Either your warning or menace, or any omen of evil!
There is no land so sacred, no air so pure and so wholesome,
As is the air she breathes, and the soil that is pressed by her footsteps.
Here for her sake will I stay, and like an invisible presence
Hover around her forever, protecting, supporting her weakness; 105
Yes! as my foot was the first that stepped on this rock at the landing,
So, with the blessing of God, shall it be the last at the leaving!"

Meanwhile the Master alert, but with dignified air and important,
Scanning with watchful eye the tide and the wind and the weather,
Walked about on the sands, and the people crowded around him 110
Saying a few last words, and enforcing his careful remembrance.
Then, taking each by the hand, as if he were grasping a tiller,
Into the boat he sprang, and in haste shoved off to his vessel,
Glad in his heart to get rid of all this worry and flurry,
Glad to be gone from a land of sand and sickness and sorrow, 115
Short allowance of victual, and plenty of nothing but Gospel!
Lost in the sound of the oars was the last farewell of the Pilgrims.

O strong hearts and true! not one went back in the "Mayflower"!
No, not one looked back, who had set his hand to this ploughing!

Soon were heard on board the shouts and songs of the sailors 120
Heaving the windlass round, and hoisting the ponderous anchor.
Then the yards were braced, and all sails set to the west wind,
Blowing steady and strong; and the "Mayflower" sailed from the harbor,
Rounded the point of the Gurnet,[1] and leaving far to the southward
Island and cape of sand, and the Field of the First Encounter,[2] 125
Took the wind on her quarter, and stood for the open Atlantic,
Borne on the send of the sea, and the swelling hearts of the Pilgrims.

Long in silence they watched the receding sail of the vessel,
Much endeared to them all, as something living and human;
Then, as if filled with the spirit, and wrapt in a vision prophetic, 130
Baring his hoary head, the excellent Elder of Plymouth
Said, "Let us pray!" and they prayed, and thanked the Lord and took courage.[3]
Mournfully sobbed the waves at the base of the rock, and above them

[1] The headland at the entrance to Plymouth Harbor, seven miles from Marshfield.

[2] Before the Pilgrims all landed, a party was sent ashore in a shallop to explore the country, and here they first encountered a body of Indians on Dec. 8, 1620. See Young's *Chronicles*, p. 159.

[3] Acts of the Apostles, xxviii. 15.

Painting by G. H. Boughton.

Departure of the Mayflower.

Bowed and whispered the wheat on the hill of death, and their kindred
Seemed to awake in their graves, and to join in the prayer that they uttered. 135
Sun-illumined and white, on the eastern verge of the ocean
Gleamed the departing sail, like a marble slab in a graveyard;
Buried beneath it lay forever all hope of escaping.
Lo! as they turned to depart, they saw the form of an Indian,
Watching them from the hill; but while they spake with each other, 140
Pointing with outstretched hands, and saying, "Look!" he had vanished.
So they returned to their homes; but Alden lingered a little,
Musing alone on the shore, and watching the wash of the billows
Round the base of the rock, and the sparkle and flash of the sunshine,
Like the spirit of God, moving visibly over the waters.[1] 145

VI.

PRISCILLA.

Thus for a while he stood, and mused by the shore of the ocean,
Thinking of many things, and most of all of Priscilla;
And as if thought had the power to draw to itself, like the loadstone,
Whatsoever it touches, by subtle laws of its nature,
Lo! as he turned to depart, Priscilla was standing beside him. 5

"Are you so much offended, you will not speak to me?" said she.

[1] Genesis, i. 2.

"Am I so much to blame, that yesterday, when you were pleading
Warmly the cause of another, my heart, impulsive and wayward,
Pleaded your own, and spake out, forgetful perhaps of decorum?
Certainly you can forgive me for speaking so frankly, for saying 10
What I ought not to have said, yet now I can never unsay it;
For there are moments in life, when the heart is so full of emotion,
That if by chance it be shaken, or into its depths like a pebble
Drops some careless word, it overflows, and its secret,
Spilt on the ground like water, can never be gathered together. 15
Yesterday I was shocked, when I heard you speak of Miles Standish,
Praising his virtues, transforming his very defects into virtues,
Praising his courage and strength, and even his fighting in Flanders,
As if by fighting alone you could win the heart of a woman,
Quite overlooking yourself and the rest, in exalting your hero. 20
Therefore I spake as I did, by an irresistible impulse.
You will forgive me, I hope, for the sake of the friendship between us,
Which is too true and too sacred to be so easily broken!"
Thereupon answered John Alden, the scholar, the friend of Miles Standish:
"I was not angry with you, with myself alone I was angry, 25
Seeing how badly I managed the matter I had in my keeping."
"No!" interrupted the maiden, with answer prompt and decisive;

"No; you were angry with me, for speaking so frankly and freely.
It was wrong, I acknowledge; for it is the fate of a woman
Long to be patient and silent, to wait like a ghost that is speechless, 30
Till some questioning voice dissolves the spell of its silence.
Hence is the inner life of so many suffering women
Sunless and silent and deep, like subterranean rivers[1]
Running through caverns of darkness, unheard, unseen, and unfruitful,
Chafing their channels of stone, with endless and profitless murmurs." 35
Thereupon answered John Alden, the young man, the lover of women:
"Heaven forbid it, Priscilla; and truly they seem to me always
More like the beautiful rivers[2] that watered the garden of Eden,
More like the river Euphrates, through deserts of Havilah flowing,
Filling the land with delight, and memories sweet of the garden!" 40
"Ah, by these words, I can see," again interrupted the maiden,
"How very little you prize me, or care for what I am saying.
When from the depths of my heart, in pain and with secret misgiving,
Frankly I speak to you, asking for sympathy only and kindness,
Straightway you take up my words, that are plain and direct and in earnest, 45

[1] Longfellow may have had in mind the classic Alpheus, a river in the Peloponnesus, which flowed for some distance underground. The story of the pursuit of the nymph Arethusa by the river-god is told in Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, v. 10, and in Shelley's *Arethusa*. Cf. also Coleridge's *Vision of Kubla Khan*.

[2] The Pison, "which compasseth the whole land of Havilah," the Gihon, the Hiddekel, and the Euphrates. Genesis, ii. 11-13.

Turn them away from their meaning, and answer with flattering phrases.
This is not right, is not just, is not true to the best that is in you;
For I know and esteem you, and feel that your nature is noble,
Lifting mine up to a higher, a more ethereal level.
Therefore I value your friendship, and feel it perhaps the more keenly 50
If you say aught that implies I am only as one among many,
If you make use of those common and complimentary phrases
Most men think so fine, in dealing and speaking with women,
But which women reject as insipid, if not as insulting."

Mute and amazed was Alden; and listened and looked at Priscilla, 55
Thinking he never had seen her more fair, more divine in her beauty.
He who but yesterday pleaded so glibly the cause of another,
Stood there embarrassed and silent, and seeking in vain for an answer.
So the maiden went on, and little divined or imagined
What was at work in his heart, that made him so awkward and speechless. 60
"Let us, then, be what we are, and speak what we think, and in all things
Keep ourselves loyal to truth, and the sacred professions of friendship.
It is no secret I tell you, nor am I ashamed to declare it:
I have liked to be with you, to see you, to speak with you always.
So I was hurt at your words, and a little affronted to hear you 65
Urge me to marry your friend, though he were the Captain Miles Standish.
For I must tell you the truth: much more to me is your friendship

Than all the love he could give, were he twice the hero you think him."
Then she extended her hand, and Alden, who eagerly grasped it,
Felt all the wounds in his heart, that were aching and bleeding so sorely, 70
Healed by the touch of that hand, and he said, with a voice full of feeling:
"Yes, we must ever be friends; and of all who offer you friendship
Let me be ever the first, the truest, the nearest and dearest!"

Casting a farewell look at the glimmering sail of the "Mayflower"
Distant, but still in sight, and sinking below the horizon, 75
Homeward together they walked, with a strange, indefinite feeling,
That all the rest had departed and left them alone in the desert.
But, as they went through the fields in the blessing and smile of the sunshine,
Lighter grew their hearts, and Priscilla said very archly:
"Now that our terrible Captain has gone in pursuit of the Indians, 80
Where he is happier far than he would be commanding a household,
You may speak boldly, and tell me of all that happened between you,
When you returned last night, and said how ungrateful you found me."
Thereupon answered John Alden, and told her the whole of the story,—
Told her his own despair, and the direful wrath[1] of Miles Standish. 85

[1] An echo from the opening lines of the *Iliad*, where Homer "sings the direful wrath of Pelides."

Whereat the maiden smiled, and said between laughing and earnest,
"He is a little chimney, and heated hot in a moment!"
But as he gently rebuked her, and told her how he had suffered,—
How he had even determined to sail that day in the "Mayflower,"
And had remained for her sake, on hearing the dangers that threatened,— 90
All her manner was changed, and she said with a faltering accent,
"Truly I thank you for this: how good you have been to me always!"

Thus, as a pilgrim devout, who toward Jerusalem journeys,
Taking three steps in advance, and one reluctantly backward,
Urged by importunate zeal, and withheld by pangs of contrition; 95
Slowly but steadily onward, receding yet ever advancing,
Journeyed this Puritan youth to the Holy Land of his longings,[1]
Urged by the fervor of love, and withheld by remorseful misgivings.

VII.

THE MARCH OF MILES STANDISH.

Meanwhile the stalwart Miles Standish was marching steadily northward,
Winding through forest and swamp, and along the trend of the seashore,

[1] Pilgrimages from western Europe to Jerusalem and other sacred spots were especially common during the middle ages. The pilgrim went at his own charges and under a vow of ascetic observances; the palmer, however, remained wilfully poor, had no home, and visited all shrines. The abuses which grew out of the custom are vividly portrayed in Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*.

All day long, with hardly a halt, the fire of his anger
Burning and crackling within, and the sulphurous odor of powder
Seeming more sweet to his nostrils than all the scents of the forest. 5
Silent and moody he went, and much he revolved his discomfort;
He who was used to success, and to easy victories always,
Thus to be flouted, rejected, and laughed to scorn by a maiden,
Thus to be mocked and betrayed by the friend whom most he had trusted!
Ah! 'twas too much to be borne, and he fretted and chafed in his armor! 10

"I alone am to blame," he muttered, "for mine was the folly.
What has a rough old soldier, grown grim and gray in the harness,
Used to the camp and its ways, to do with the wooing of maidens?
'Twas but a dream,—let it pass,—let it vanish like so many others!
What I thought was a flower, is only a weed, and is worthless; 15
Out of my heart will I pluck it, and throw it away, and henceforward
Be but a fighter of battles, a lover and wooer of dangers."
Thus he revolved in his mind his sorry defeat and discomfort,
While he was marching by day or lying at night in the forest,
Looking up at the trees and the constellations beyond them. 20

After a three days' march [1] he came to an Indian encampment

[1] The original of this part of Longfellow's narrative is found in Winslow's *Relation of Standish's Expedition against the Indians of Weymouth, and the breaking up of Weston's Colony at that place, in March, 1623.*

Pitched on the edge of a meadow, between the sea and the forest;
Women at work by the tents, and warriors, horrid with war-paint,
Seated about a fire, and smoking and talking together;
Who, when they saw from afar the sudden approach of the white men, 25
Saw the flash of the sun on breastplate and sabre and musket,
Straightway leaped to their feet, and two, from among them advancing,
Came to parley with Standish, and offer him furs as a present;
Friendship was in their looks, but in their hearts there was hatred.
Braves of the tribe were these, and brothers, gigantic in stature, 30
Huge as Goliath of Gath,[1] or the terrible Og, king of Bashan;[2]
One was Pecksuot named, and the other was called Wattawamat.
Round their necks were suspended their knives in scabbards of wampum,[3]
Two-edged, trenchant knives, with points as sharp as a needle.
Other arms had they none, for they were cunning and crafty. 35
"Welcome, English!" they said,—these words they had learned from the traders
Touching at times on the coast, to barter and chaffer for peltries.
Then in their native tongue they began to parley with Standish,

[1] 1 Samuel, xvii. 4-7.

[2] Deuteronomy, iii. 11.

[3] Strips of leather embroidered with shell-beads, used as money, and worn for ornaments in strings, belts, scabbards, etc., by the Indians.

Through his guide and interpreter, Hobomok, friend of the white man,
Begging for blankets and knives, but mostly for muskets and powder, 40
Kept by the white man, they said, concealed, with the plague, in his cellars,
Ready to be let loose, and destroy his brother the red man!
But when Standish refused, and said he would give them the Bible,
Suddenly changing their tone, they began to boast and to bluster.
Then Wattawamat advanced with a stride in front of the other, 45
And, with a lofty demeanor, thus vauntingly spake to the Captain:
"Now Wattawamat can see, by the fiery eyes of the Captain,
Angry is he in his heart; but the heart of the brave Wattawamat
Is not afraid at the sight. He was not born of a woman,
But on a mountain, at night, from an oak-tree riven by lightning, 50
Forth he sprang at a bound, with all his weapons about him,
Shouting, 'Who is there here to fight with the brave Wattawamat?'"
Then he unsheathed his knife, and, whetting the blade on his left hand,
Held it aloft and displayed a woman's face on the handle,
Saying, with bitter expression and look of sinister meaning: 55
"I have another at home, with the face of a man on the handle;
By and by they shall marry; and there will be plenty of children!"[1]

[1] "Among the rest," says Winslow, "Wituwamat bragged of the excellency of his knife. On the end of the handle there was pictured a woman's face; 'but,' said he, 'I have another at home wherewith I have killed both French and English, and that hath a

Then stood Pecksuot forth, self-vaunting, insulting Miles Standish;
While with his fingers he patted the knife that hung at his bosom,
Drawing it half from its sheath, and plunging it back, as he muttered, 60
"By and by it shall see; it shall eat; ah, ha! but shall speak not!
This is the mighty Captain the white men have sent to destroy us!
He is a little man; let him go and work with the women!"

Meanwhile Standish had noted the faces and figures of Indians
Peeping and creeping about from bush to tree in the forest, 65
Feigning to look for game, with arrows set on their bowstrings,
Drawing about him still closer and closer the net of their ambush.
But undaunted he stood, and dissembled and treated them smoothly;
So the old chronicles say, that were writ in the days of the fathers.
But when he heard their defiance, the boast, the taunt and the insult, 70
All the hot blood of his race, of Sir Hugh and of Thurston de Standish,
Boiled and beat in his heart, and swelled in the veins of his temples.
Headlong he leaped on the boaster, and, snatching his knife from its scabbard,

man's face on it, and by and by these two must marry.' Further, he said of that knife he there had, *Hinnaim namen, hinnaim michen, matta cuts*; that is to say, By and by it should see, and by and by it should eat, but not speak. Also Pecksuot, being a man of greater stature than the captain, told him, though he were a great captain, yet he was but a little man; and, said he, though I be no sachem, yet I am a man of great strength and courage." Winslow's *Relation of Standish's Expedition.*

Plunged it into his heart, and, reeling backward, the savage
Fell with his face to the sky, and a fiendlike fierceness upon
it. 75
Straight there arose from the forest the awful sound of the
war-whoop,
And, like a flurry of snow on the whistling wind of December,
Swift and sudden and keen came a flight of feathery arrows.
Then came a cloud of smoke, and out of the cloud came the
lightning,
Out of the lightning thunder; and death unseen ran before
it. 80
Frightened the savages fled for shelter in swamp and in
thicket,
Hotly pursued and beset; but their sachem, the brave Wat-
tawamat,
Fled not; he was dead. Unswerving and swift had a bullet
Passed through his brain, and he fell with both hands clutch-
ing the greensward,
Seeming in death to hold back from his foe the land of his
fathers. 85

There on the flowers of the meadow the warriors lay, and
above them
Silent, with folded arms, stood Hobomok, friend of the white
man.
Smiling at length he exclaimed to the stalwart Captain of
Plymouth:
"Pecksuot bragged very loud, of his courage, his strength
and his stature,—
Mocked the great Captain, and called him a little man; but I
see now 90
Big enough have you been to lay him speechless before you!"[1]

[1] "Hobbamock stood by all this time as a spectator," says Winslow, "and meddled not, observing how our men demeaned themselves in this action. All being here ended, smiling, he brake forth into these speeches to the Captain: 'Yesterday Pecksuot,

Thus the first battle was fought and won by the stalwart Miles Standish.
When the tidings thereof were brought to the village of Plymouth,
And as a trophy of war the head of the brave Wattawamat[1]
Scowled from the roof of the fort, which at once was a church and a fortress, 95
All who beheld it rejoiced, and praised the Lord, and took courage.
Only Priscilla averted her face from this spectre of terror,
Thanking God in her heart that she had not married Miles Standish;
Shrinking, fearing almost, lest, coming home from his battles,
He should lay claim to her hand, as the prize and reward of his valor. 100

VIII.

THE SPINNING WHEEL.

Month after month passed away, and in autumn the ships of the merchants[2]
Came with kindred and friends, with cattle and corn for the Pilgrims.
All in the village was peace; the men were intent on their labors,
Busy with hewing and building, with garden-plot and with merestead,[3]

bragging of his own strength and stature, said, though you were a great captain, yet you were but a little man; but to-day I see you are big enough to lay him on the ground.' "

[1] "Now was the Captain returned," says Winslow, "and received with joy, the head being brought to the fort, and there set up." The Pilgrims were observing a ghastly custom which they had been familiar with in England, of exposing in conspicuous places, such as London Bridge and Temple Bar, the heads of traitors, highwaymen, etc., as a warning to other criminals.

[2] The "Anne" and the "Little James," which arrived in August, 1623.

[3] A homestead or bounded portion of land; O. E., *mere*, boundary; *stead*, place.

Busy with breaking the glebe, and mowing the grass in the meadows. 5
Searching the sea for its fish, and hunting the deer in the forest.
All in the village was peace; but at times the rumor of warfare
Filled the air with alarm, and the apprehension of danger.
Bravely the stalwart Standish was scouring the land with his forces,
Waxing valiant in fight and defeating the alien armies,[1] 10
Till his name had become a sound of fear to the nations.
Anger was still in his heart, but at times the remorse and contrition
Which in all noble natures succeed the passionate outbreak,
Came like a rising tide, that encounters the rush of a river,
Staying its current a while, but making it bitter and brackish. 15

Meanwhile Alden at home had built him a new habitation,[2]
Solid, substantial, of timber rough-hewn from the firs of the forest.
Wooden-barred was the door, and the roof was covered with rushes;
Latticed the windows were, and the window-panes were of paper,
Oiled to admit the light, while wind and rain were excluded. 20
There too he dug a well, and around it planted an orchard:
Still may be seen to this day some trace of the well and the orchard.
Close to the house was the stall, where, safe and secure from annoyance,

[1] Hebrews, xi. 34.

[2] On the present site of Duxbury, situated on the coast about thirty miles southeast of Boston. The homestead is still owned by descendants of Alden.

Raghorn, the snow-white bull, that had fallen to Alden's allotment
In the division of cattle, might ruminate in the night-time 25
Over the pastures he cropped, made fragrant by sweet pennyroyal.

Oft when his labor was finished, with eager feet would the dreamer
Follow the pathway that ran through the woods to the house of Priscilla,
Led by illusions romantic and subtle deceptions of fancy,
Pleasure disguised as duty, and love in the semblance of friendship. 30
Ever of her he thought, when he fashioned the walls of his dwelling;
Ever of her he thought, when he delved in the soil of his garden;
Ever of her he thought, when he read in his Bible on Sunday
Praise of the virtuous woman, as she is described in the Proverbs,[1]—
How the heart of her husband doth safely trust in her always, 35
How all the days of her life she will do him good, and not evil,
How she seeketh the wool and the flax and worketh with gladness,
How she layeth her hand to the spindle and holdeth the distaff,
How she is not afraid of the snow for herself or her household,
Knowing her household are clothed with the scarlet cloth of her weaving! 40

So as she sat at her wheel one afternoon in the Autumn,
Alden, who opposite sat, and was watching her dexterous fingers,

[1] Proverbs, xxxi 10–31.

As if the thread she was spinning were that of his life and his fortune,
After a pause in their talk, thus spake to the sound of the spindle.
"Truly, Priscilla," he said, "when I see you spinning and spinning, 45
Never idle a moment, but thrifty and thoughtful of others,
Suddenly you are transformed, are visibly changed in a moment;
You are no longer Priscilla, but Bertha the Beautiful Spinner."[1]
Here the light foot on the treadle grew swifter and swifter; the spindle
Uttered an angry snarl, and the thread snapped short in her fingers; 50
While the impetuous speaker, not heeding the mischief, continued:
"You are the beautiful Bertha, the spinner, the queen of Helvetia;[2]
She whose story I read at a stall in the streets of Southampton,
Who, as she rode on her palfrey, o'er valley and meadow and mountain,
Ever was spinning her thread from a distaff fixed to her saddle. 55
She was so thrifty and good, that her name passed into a proverb.
So shall it be with your own, when the spinning-wheel shall no longer
Hum in the house of the farmer, and fill its chambers with music.
Then shall the mothers, reproving, relate how it was in their childhood,

[1] Karl Joseph Simrock's monograph, *Bertha die Spinnerin* (Frankfort, 1853), contains the legend of Bertha.

[2] The ancient name of Switzerland.

Praising the good old times, and the days of Priscilla the spinner!" 60
Straight uprose from her wheel the beautiful Puritan maiden,
Pleased with the praise of her thrift from him whose praise was the sweetest,
Drew from the reel on the table a snowy skein of her spinning,
Thus making answer, meanwhile, to the flattering phrases of Alden:
"Come, you must not be idle; if I am a pattern for housewives, 65
Show yourself equally worthy of being the model of husbands.
Hold this skein on your hands, while I wind it, ready for knitting;
Then who knows but hereafter, when fashions have changed and the manners,
Fathers may talk to their sons of the good old times of John Alden!"
Thus, with a jest and a laugh, the skein on his hands she adjusted, 70
He sitting awkwardly there, with his arms extended before him,
She standing graceful, erect, and winding the thread from his fingers,
Sometimes chiding a little his clumsy manner of holding,
Sometimes touching his hands, as she disentangled expertly
Twist or knot in the yarn, unawares—for how could she help it?— 75
Sending electrical thrills through every nerve in his body.

—Lo! in the midst of this scene, a breathless messenger entered,
Bringing in hurry and heat the terrible news from the village.
Yes; Miles Standish was dead!—an Indian had brought them the tidings,—

Slain by a poisoned arrow, shot down in the front of the battle, 80
Into an ambush beguiled, cut off with the whole of his forces;
All the town would be burned, and all the people be murdered!
Such were the tidings of evil that burst on the hearts of the hearers.
Silent and statue-like stood Priscilla, her face looking backward
Still at the face of the speaker, her arms uplifted in horror; 85
But John Alden, upstarting, as if the barb of the arrow
Piercing the heart of his friend had struck his own, and had sundered
Once and forever the bonds that held him bound as a captive,
Wild with excess of sensation, the awful delight of his freedom,
Mingled with pain and regret, unconscious of what he was doing, 90
Clasped, almost with a groan, the motionless form of Priscilla,
Pressing her close to his heart, as forever his own, and exclaiming:
"Those whom the Lord hath united, let no man put them asunder!"

Even as rivulets twain, from distant and separate sources,
Seeing each other afar, as they leap from the rocks, and pursuing 95
Each one its devious path, but drawing nearer and nearer,
Rush together at last, at their trysting-place in the forest;
So these lives that had run thus far in separate channels,
Coming in sight of each other, then swerving and flowing asunder,
Parted by barriers strong, but drawing nearer and nearer, 100
Rushed together at last, and one was lost in the other.

IX.

THE WEDDING-DAY.

FORTH from the curtain of clouds, from the tent of purple and scarlet,
Issued the sun, the great High-Priest, in his garments resplendent,
Holiness unto the Lord, in letters of light, on his forehead,
Round the hem of his robe the golden bells and pomegranates.[1]
Blessing the world he came, and the bars of vapor beneath him 5
Gleamed like a grate of brass, and the sea at his feet was a laver!

This was the wedding morn of Priscilla the Puritan maiden.
Friends were assembled together; the Elder and Magistrate also
Graced the scene with their presence, and stood like the Law and the Gospel,
One with the sanction of earth and one with the blessing of heaven. 10
Simple and brief was the wedding, as that of Ruth and of Boaz.[2]
Softly the youth and the maiden repeated the words of betrothal,
Taking each other for husband and wife in the Magistrate's presence,
After the Puritan way, and the laudable custom of Holland.[3]

[1] Exodus, xxviii.

[2] Ruth, iv. 11, 12.

[3] "May 12 was the first marriage in this place," says Bradford, "which, according to the laudable custome of the Low-Cuntries, in which they had lived, was thought most requisite to be performed by the magistrate, as being a civil thing, upon which many questions abonte inheritances doe depende, with other things most proper to their cog-

Fervently then and devoutly, the excellent Elder of Plymouth 15
Prayed for the hearth and the home, that were founded that day in affection,
Speaking of life and of death, and imploring Divine benedictions.

Lo! when the service was ended, a form appeared on the threshold,
Clad in armor of steel, a sombre and sorrowful figure!
Why does the bridegroom start and stare at the strange apparition? 20
Why does the bride turn pale, and hide her face on his shoulder?
Is it a phantom of air,—a bodiless, spectral illusion?
Is it a ghost from the grave, that has come to forbid the betrothal?
Long had it stood there unseen, a guest uninvited, unwelcomed;
Over its clouded eyes there had passed at times an expression 25
Softening the gloom and revealing the warm heart hidden beneath them,
As when across the sky the driving rack of the rain cloud
Grows for a moment thin, and betrays the sun by its brightness.
Once it had lifted its hand, and moved its lips, but was silent,
As if an iron will had mastered the fleeting intention. 30
But when were ended the troth and the prayer and the last benediction,
Into the room it strode, and the people beheld with amazement

nizans, and most consonante to the scripturs, Ruth 4, and no wher found in the gospell to be layed on the ministers as a part of their office."—*History of Plymouth Plantation*, p. 101.

Bodily there in his armor Miles Standish, the Captain of Plymouth!
Grasping the bridegroom's hand, he said with emotion, "Forgive me!
I have been angry and hurt,—too long have I cherished the feeling; 35
I have been cruel and hard, but now, thank God! it is ended.
Mine is the same hot blood that leaped in the veins of Hugh Standish,
Sensitive, swift to resent, but as swift in atoning for error.
Never so much as now was Miles Standish the friend of John Alden."
Thereupon answered the bridegroom: "Let all be forgotten between us,— 40
All save the dear old friendship, and that shall grow older and dearer!"
Then the Captain advanced, and, bowing, saluted Priscilla,
Gravely, and after the manner of old-fashioned gentry in England,
Something of camp and of court, of town and of country, commingled,
Wishing her joy of her wedding, and loudly lauding her husband. 45
Then he said with a smile: "I should have remembered the adage,—
If you would be well served, you must serve yourself; and moreover,
No man can gather cherries in Kent[1] at the season of Christmas!"

Great was the people's amazement, and greater yet their rejoicing,

[1] An old English proverb. Kent is a county in the south of England.

Thus to behold once more the sunburnt face of their Captain, 50
Whom they had mourned as dead; and they gathered and crowded about him,
Eager to see him and hear him, forgetful of bride and of bridegroom,
Questioning, answering, laughing, and each interrupting the other,
Till the good Captain declared, being quite overpowered and bewildered,
He had rather by far break into an Indian encampment, 55
Than come again to a wedding to which he had not been invited.

Meanwhile the bridegroom went forth and stood with the bride at the doorway,
Breathing the perfumed air of that warm and beautiful morning.
Touched with autumnal tints, but lonely and sad in the sunshine,
Lay extended before them the land of toil and privation; 60
There were the graves of the dead, and the barren waste of the seashore,
There the familiar fields, the groves of pine, and the meadows;
But to their eyes transfigured, it seemed as the Garden of Eden,
Filled with the presence of God, whose voice was the sound of the ocean.

Soon was their vision disturbed by the noise and stir of departure, 65
Friends coming forth from the house, and impatient of longer delaying,
Each with his plan for the day, and the work that was left uncompleted.

Then from a stall near at hand, amid exclamations of wonder,
Alden the thoughtful, the careful, so happy, so proud of Priscilla,
Brought out his snow-white bull, obeying the hand of its master, 70
Led by a cord that was tied to an iron ring in its nostrils,
Covered with crimson cloth, and a cushion placed for a saddle.
She should not walk, he said, through the dust and heat of the noonday;
Nay, she should ride like a queen, not plod along like a peasant.
Somewhat alarmed at first, but reassured by the others, 75
Placing her hand on the cushion, her foot in the hand of her husband,
Gayly, with joyous laugh, Priscilla mounted her palfrey.
"Nothing is wanting now," he said with a smile, "but the distaff;
Then you would be in truth my queen, my beautiful Bertha!"

Onward the bridal procession now moved to their new habitation, 80
Happy husband and wife, and friends conversing together.
Pleasantly murmured the brook, as they crossed the ford in the forest,
Pleased with the image that passed, like a dream of love through its bosom,
Tremulous, floating in air, o'er the depths of the azure abysses.
Down through the golden leaves the sun was pouring his splendors, 85
Gleaming on purple grapes, that, from branches above them suspended,
Mingled their odorous breath with the balm of the pine and the fir-tree.

Wild and sweet as the clusters that grew in the valley of
Eshcol.[1]
Like a picture it seemed of the primitive, pastoral ages,
Fresh with the youth of the world, and recalling Rebecca and
Isaac,[2] 90
Old and yet ever new, and simple and beautiful always,
Love immortal and young in the endless succession of lovers,
So through the Plymouth woods passed onward the bridal
procession.

[1] Near Hebron, in Palestine. From there the spies sent by Moses to search out the land brought back large clusters of grapes. Numbers, xiii. 23.

[2] Genesis, xxiv. 61-67.

MISCELLANEOUS POEMS.

A PSALM OF LIFE.

WHAT THE HEART OF THE YOUNG MAN SAID TO THE PSALMIST.

TELL me not, in mournful numbers,
"Life is but an empty dream!"
For the soul is dead that slumbers,
And things are not what they seem.

Life is real! Life is earnest!
And the grave is not its goal;
"Dust thou art, to dust returnest,"
Was not spoken of the soul.

Not enjoyment, and not sorrow,
Is our destined end or way;
But to act, that each to-morrow
Finds us farther than to-day.

Art is long, and Time is fleeting,
And our hearts, though stout and brave,
Still, like muffled drums, are beating
Funeral marches to the grave.

In the world's broad field of battle,
In the bivouac of Life,
Be not like dumb, driven cattle!
Be a hero in the strife!

Trust no Future, howe'er pleasant!
Let the dead Past bury its dead!
Act,—act in the living Present!
Heart within, and God o'erhead!

Lives of great men all remind us
We can make our lives sublime,
And, departing, leave behind us
Footprints on the sands of time;

Footprints, that perhaps another,
Sailing o'er life's solemn main,
A forlorn and shipwrecked brother,
Seeing, shall take heart again.

Let us, then, be up and doing,
With a heart for any fate;
Still achieving, still pursuing,
Learn to labor and to wait.

THE REAPER AND THE FLOWERS.

There is a Reaper, whose name is Death,
And, with his sickle keen,
He reaps the bearded grain at a breath,
And the flowers that grow between.

"Shall I have nought that is fair?" saith he.
"Have nought but the bearded grain?
Though the breath of these flowers is sweet to me,
I will give them all back again."

He gazed at the flowers with tearful eyes,
He kissed their drooping leaves;

It was for the Lord of Paradise
He bound them in his sheaves.

"My Lord has need of these flowerets gay,"
The Reaper said, and smiled;
"Dear tokens of the earth are they,
Where He was once a child.

"They shall all bloom in fields of light,
Transplanted by my care,
And saints, upon their garments white,
These sacred blossoms wear."

And the mother gave, in tears and pain,
The flowers she most did love;
She knew she should find them all again
In the fields of light above.

O, not in cruelty, not in wrath,
The Reaper came that day;
'Twas an angel visited the green earth,
And took the flowers away.

FOOTSTEPS OF ANGELS.

When the hours of Day are numbered,
And the voices of the Night
Wake the better soul, that slumbered,
To a holy, calm delight;

Ere the evening lamps are lighted,
And, like phantoms grim and tall,
Shadows from the fitful fire-light
Dance upon the parlor wall;

Then the forms of the departed
Enter at the open door;
The beloved, the true-hearted,
Come to visit me once more;

He, the young and strong, who cherished
Noble longings for the strife,
By the roadside fell and perished,
Weary with the march of life!

They, the holy ones and weakly,
Who the cross of suffering bore,
Folded their pale hands so meekly,
Spake with us on earth no more!

And with them the Being Beauteous,
Who unto my youth was given,
More than all things else to love me,
And is now a saint in heaven.

With a slow and noiseless footstep
Comes that messenger divine,
Takes the vacant chair beside me,
Lays her gentle hand in mine.

And she sits and gazes at me
With those deep and tender eyes,
Like the stars, so still and saint-like,
Looking downward from the skies.

Uttered not, yet comprehended,
Is the spirit's voiceless prayer,
Soft rebukes, in blessings ended,
Breathing from her lips of air.

O, though oft depressed and lonely,
All my fears are laid aside,
If I but remember only
Such as these have lived and died!

THE BELEAGUERED CITY.

I HAVE read, in some old marvellous tale,
Some legend strange and vague,
That a midnight host of spectres pale
Beleaguered the walls of Prague.

Beside the Moldau's rushing stream,
With the wan moon overhead,
There stood, as in an awful dream,
The army of the dead.

White as a sea-fog, landward bound,
The spectral camp was seen,
And, with a sorrowful, deep sound,
The river flowed between.

No other voice nor sound was there,
No drum, nor sentry's pace;
The mist-like banners clasped the air,
As clouds with clouds embrace.

But, when the old cathedral bell
Proclaimed the morning prayer,
The white pavilions rose and fell
On the alarmèd air.

Down the broad valley fast and far
The troubled army fled;
Up rose the glorious morning star,
The ghastly host was dead.

I have read, in the marvellous heart of man,
That strange and mystic scroll,
That an army of phantoms vast and wan
Beleaguer the human soul.

Encamped beside Life's rushing stream,
In Fancy's misty light,
Gigantic shapes and shadows gleam
Portentous through the night.

Upon its midnight battle-ground
The spectral camp is seen,
And, with a sorrowful, deep sound,
Flows the River of Life between.

No other voice nor sound is there,
In the army of the grave;
No other challenge breaks the air,
But the rushing of Life's wave.

And, when the solemn and deep church-bell
Entreats the soul to pray,
The midnight phantoms feel the spell,
The shadows sweep away.

Down the broad Vale of Tears afar
The spectral camp is fled;
Faith shineth as a morning star,
Our ghastly fears are dead.

HYMN OF THE MORAVIAN NUNS OF BETHLEHEM.

AT THE CONSECRATION OF PULASKI'S BANNER.

When the dying flame of day
Through the chancel shot its ray,
Far from the glimmering tapers shed
Faint light on the cowlèd head;
And the censer burning swung,
Where, before the altar, hung
The blood-red banner, that with prayer
Had been consecrated there.
And the nuns' sweet hymn was heard the while,
Sung low in the dim, mysterious aisle.

"Take thy banner! May it wave
Proudly o'er the good and brave;
When the battle's distant wail
Breaks the Sabbath of our vale,
When the clarion's music thrills
To the hearts of these lone hills,
When the spear in conflict shakes,
And the strong lance shivering breaks.

"Take thy banner! and, beneath
The battle-cloud's encircling wreath,
Guard it!—till our homes are free!
Guard it!—God will prosper thee!
In the dark and trying hour,
In the breaking forth of power,
In the rush of steeds and men,
His right hand will shield thee then.

"Take thy banner! But, when night
Closes round the ghastly fight,
If the vanquished warrior bow,
Spare him!—By our holy vow,
By our prayers and many tears,
By the mercy that endears,
Spare him!—he our love hath shared!
Spare him!—as thou wouldst be spared!

"Take thy banner!—and if e'er
Thou shouldst press the soldier's bier,
And the muffled drum should beat
To the tread of mournful feet,
Then this crimson flag shall be
Martial cloak and shroud for thee."

The warrior took that banner proud,
And it was his martial cloak and shroud!

BURIAL OF THE MINNISINK.

On sunny slope and beechen swell,
The shadowed light of evening fell;
And, where the maple's leaf was brown,
With soft and silent lapse came down
The glory, that the wood receives,
At sunset, in its brazen leaves.

Far upward in the mellow light
Rose the blue hills. One cloud of white,
Around a far uplifted cone,
In the warm blush of evening shone;
An image of the silver lakes,
By which the Indian's soul awakes.

But soon a funeral hymn was heard
Where the soft breath of evening stirred
The tall, gray forest; and a band
Of stern in heart, and strong in hand,
Came winding down beside the wave,
To lay the red chief in his grave.

They sang, that by his native bowers
He stood, in the last moon of flowers,
And thirty snows had not yet shed
Their glory on the warrior's head;
But, as the summer fruit decays,
So died he in those naked days.

A dark cloak of the roebuck's skin
Covered the warrior, and within
Its heavy folds the weapons, made
For the hard toils of war, were laid;
The cuirass, woven of plaited reeds,
And the broad belt of shells and beads.

Before, a dark-haired virgin train
Chanted the death dirge of the slain;
Behind, the long procession came
Of hoary men and chiefs of fame,
With heavy hearts, and eyes of grief,
Leading the war-horse of their chief.

Stripped of his proud and martial dress,
Uncurbed, unreined, and riderless,
With darting eye, and nostril spread,
And heavy and impatient tread,
He came; and oft that eye so proud
Asked for his rider in the crowd.

They buried the dark chief, they freed
Beside the grave his battle steed;
And swift an arrow cleaved its way
To his stern heart! One piercing neigh
Arose—and, on the dead man's plain,
The rider grasps his steed again.

THE SKELETON IN ARMOR.

"SPEAK! speak! thou fearful guest!
Who, with thy hollow breast
Still in rude armor drest,
Comest to daunt me!
Wrapt not in Eastern balms,
But with thy fleshless palms
Stretched, as if asking alms,
Why dost thou haunt me?"

Then, from those cavernous eyes
Pale flashes seemed to rise,
As when the Northern skies
Gleam in December;
And, like the water's flow
Under December's snow,
Came a dull voice of woe
From the heart's chamber.

"I was a Viking old!
My deeds, though manifold,
No Skald in song has told,
No Saga taught thee!
Take heed, that in thy verse
Thou dost the tale rehearse,
Else dread a dead man's curse;
For this I sought thee.

"Far in the Northern Land,
By the wild Baltic's strand,
I, with my childish hand,
Tamed the gerfalcon;
And, with my skates fast-bound,
Skimmed the half-frozen Sound,
That the poor whimpering hound
Trembled to walk on.

"Oft to his frozen lair
Tracked I the grisly bear,
While from my path the hare
Fled like a shadow;
Oft through the forest dark
Followed the were-wolf's bark,
Until the soaring lark
Sang from the meadow.

"But when I older grew,
Joining a corsair's crew,
O'er the dark sea I flew
With the marauders.
Wild was the life we led;
Many the souls that sped,
Many the hearts that bled,
By our stern orders.

"Many a wassail-bout
Wore the long Winter out;
Often our midnight shout
Set the cocks crowing,
As we the Berserk's tale
Measured in cups of ale,
Draining the oaken pail,
Filled to o'erflowing.

"Once as I told in glee
Tales of the stormy sea,
Soft eyes did gaze on me,
Burning yet tender;
And as the white stars shine
On the dark Norway pine,
On that dark heart of mine
Fell their soft splendor.

"I wooed the blue-eyed maid,
Yielding, yet half afraid,
And in the forest's shade
Our vows were plighted.
Under its loosened vest
Fluttered her little breast,
Like birds within their nest
By the hawk frighted.

"Bright in her father's hall
Shields gleamed upon the wall
Loud sang the minstrels all,
Chaunting his glory;
When of old Hildebrand
I asked his daughter's hand,
Mute did the minstrels stand
To hear my story.

"While the brown ale he quaffed,
Loud then the champion laughed.
And as the wind-gusts waft
The sea-foam brightly,
So the loud laugh of scorn,
Out of those lips unshorn,
From the deep drinking-horn
Blew the foam lightly.

"She was a Prince's child,
I but a Viking wild,
And though she blushed and smiled,
    I was discarded!
Should not the dove so white
Follow the sea-mew's flight,
Why did they leave that night
    Her nest unguarded?

"Scarce had I put to sea,
Bearing the maid with me,—
Fairest of all was she
    Among the Norsemen!—
When on the white sea-strand,
Waving his armèd hand,
Saw we old Hildebrand,
    With twenty horsemen.

"Then launched they to the blast,
Bent like a reed each mast,
Yet we were gaining fast,
    When the wind failed us;
And with a sudden flaw
Came round the gusty Skaw,
So that our foe we saw
    Laugh as he hailed us.

"And as to catch the gale
Round veered the flapping sail,
Death! was the helmsman's hail,
    Death without quarter!
Mid-ships with iron keel
Struck we her ribs of steel;
Down her black hulk did reel
    Through the black water!

"As with his wings aslant,
Sails the fierce cormorant,
Seeking some rocky haunt,
With his prey laden,
So toward the open main,
Beating to sea again,
Through the wild hurricane
Bore I the maiden.

"Three weeks we westward bore,
And when the storm was o'er,
Cloud-like we saw the shore
Stretching to lee-ward;
There for my lady's bower
Built I the lofty tower,
Which, to this very hour,
Stands looking seaward.

"There lived we many years;
Time dried the maiden's tears;
She had forgot her fears,
She was a mother;
Death closed her mild blue eyes,
Under that tower she lies;
Ne'er shall the sun arise
On such another!

"Still grew my bosom then,
Still as a stagnant fen!
Hateful to me were men,
The sunlight hateful!
In the vast forest here,
Clad in my warlike gear,
Fell I upon my spear,
O, death was grateful!

"Thus, seamed with many scars
Bursting these prison bars,
Up to its native stars
    My soul ascended!
There from the flowing bowl
Deep drinks the warrior's soul,
Skoal! to the Northland! *skoal!*"
    —Thus the tale ended.

THE WRECK OF THE HESPERUS.

It was the schooner Hesperus,
    That sailed the wintry sea;
And the skipper had taken his little daughter,
    To bear him company.

Blue were her eyes as the fairy-flax,
    Her cheeks like the dawn of day,
And her bosom white as the hawthorn buds,
    That ope in the month of May.

The skipper he stood beside the helm,
    His pipe was in his mouth,
And he watched how the veering flaw did blow
    The smoke now West, now South.

Then up and spake an old sailòr,
    Had sailed the Spanish Main,
"I pray thee, put into yonder port,
    For I fear a hurricane.

"Last night the moon had a golden ring,
    And to-night no moon we see!"
The skipper he blew a whiff from his pipe,
    And a scornful laugh laughed he.

Colder and colder blew the wind,
A gale from the North-east;
The snow fell hissing in the brine,
And the billows frothed like yeast.

Down came the storm, and smote amain
The vessel in its strength;
She shuddered and paused, like a frighted steed,
Then leaped her cable's length.

"Come hither! come hither! my little daughtèr,
And do not tremble so;
For I can ride the roughest gale,
That ever wind did blow."

He wrapped her warm in his seaman's coat
Against the stinging blast;
He cut a rope from a broken spar,
And bound her to the mast.

"O father! I hear the church-bells ring,
O say, what may it be?"
"'Tis a fog-bell on a rock-bound coast!"—
And he steered for the open sea.

"O father! I hear the sound of guns,
O say, what may it be?"
"Some ship in distress, that cannot live
In such an angry sea!"

"O father! I see a gleaming light,
O say, what may it be?"
But the father answered never a word,
A frozen corpse was he.

Lashed to the helm, all stiff and stark,
With his face turned to the skies,
The lantern gleamed through the gleaming snow
On his fixed and glassy eyes.

Then the maiden clasped her hands and prayed
That savèd she might be;
And she thought of Christ who stilled the wave,
On the Lake of Galilee.

And fast through the midnight dark and drear,
Through the whistling sleet and snow,
Like a sheeted ghost, the vessel swept
Towards the reef of Norman's Woe.

And ever the fitful gusts between
A sound came from the land;
It was the sound of the trampling surf,
On the rocks and the hard sea-sand.

The breakers were right beneath her bows,
She drifted a dreary wreck,
And a whooping billow swept the crew
Like icicles from her deck.

She struck where the white and fleecy waves
Looked soft as carded wool,
But the cruel rocks, they gored her side
Like the horns of an angry bull.

Her rattling shrouds, all sheathed in ice,
With the masts went by the board;
Like a vessel of glass, she stove and sank,
Ho! ho! the breakers roared!

At daybreak, on the bleak sea-beach,
A fisherman stood aghast,
To see the form of a maiden fair,
Lashed close to a drifting mast.

The salt sea was frozen on her breast,
The salt tears in her eyes;
And he saw her hair, like the brown sea-weed,
On the billows fall and rise.

Such was the wreck of the Hesperus,
In the midnight and the snow!
Christ save us all from a death like this,
On the reef of Norman's Woe!

THE VILLAGE BLACKSMITH.

Under a spreading chestnut tree
The village smithy stands;
The smith, a mighty man is he,
With large and sinewy hands;
And the muscles of his brawny arms
Are strong as iron bands.

His hair is crisp, and black, and long,
His face is like the tan;
His brow is wet with honest sweat,
He earns whate'er he can,
And looks the whole world in the face,
For he owes not any man.

Week in, week out, from morn till night,
You can hear his bellows blow;

You can hear him swing his heavy sledge
With measured beat and slow,
Like a sexton ringing the village bell,
When the evening sun is low.

And children coming home from school
Look in at the open door;
They love to see the flaming forge,
And hear the bellows roar,
And catch the burning sparks that fly
Like chaff from a threshing floor.

He goes on Sunday to the church,
And sits among his boys;
He hears the parson pray and preach,
He hears his daughter's voice,
Singing in the village choir,
And it makes his heart rejoice.

It sounds to him like her mother's voice,
Singing in Paradise!
He needs must think of her once more,
How in the grave she lies;
And with his hard, rough hand he wipes
A tear out of his eyes.

Toiling,—rejoicing,—sorrowing,
Onward through life he goes;
Each morning sees some task begin,
Each evening sees it close;
Something attempted, something done,
Has earned a night's repose.

Thanks, thanks to thee, my worthy friend,
For the lesson thou hast taught!

Thus at the flaming forge of life
Our fortunes must be wrought;
Thus on the sounding anvil shaped
Each burning deed and thought!

EXCELSIOR.

The shades of night were falling fast,
As through an Alpine village passed
A youth, who bore, 'mid snow and ice,
A banner, with the strange device,
Excelsior!

His brow was sad; his eye beneath,
Flashed like a falchion from its sheath,
And like a silver clarion rung
The accents of that unknown tongue,
Excelsior!

In happy homes he saw the light
Of household fires gleam warm and bright;
Above, the spectral glaciers shone,
And from his lips escaped a groan,
Excelsior!

"Try not the Pass!" the old man said;
"Dark lowers the tempest overhead,
The roaring torrent is deep and wide!"
And loud that clarion voice replied,
Excelsior!

"O stay," the maiden said, "and rest
Thy weary head upon this breast!"
A tear stood in his bright blue eye,
But still he answered, with a sigh,
Excelsior!

"Beware the pine-tree's withered branch!
Beware the awful avalanche!"
This was the peasant's last Good-night,
A voice replied, far up the height,
Excelsior!

At break of day, as heavenward
The pious monks of St. Bernard
Uttered the oft-repeated prayer,
A voice cried through the startled air,
Excelsior!

A traveller, by the faithful hound,
Half-buried in the snow was found,
Still grasping in his hand of ice
That banner with the strange device,
Excelsior!

There in the twilight cold and gray,
Lifeless, but beautiful, he lay,
And from the sky, serene and far,
A voice fell, like a falling star,
Excelsior!

THE BELFRY OF BRUGES.

In the market-place of Bruges stands the belfry old and brown;
Thrice consumed and thrice rebuilded, still it watches o'er the town.

As the summer morn was breaking, on that lofty tower I stood,
And the world threw off the darkness, like the weeds of widowhood.

Thick with towns and hamlets studded, and with streams and vapors gray,
Like a shield embossed with silver, round and vast the landscape lay.

At my feet the city slumbered. From its chimneys, here and there,
Wreaths of snow-white smoke, ascending, vanished, ghost-like, into air.

Not a sound rose from the city at that early morning hour,
But I heard a heart of iron beating in the ancient tower.

From their nests beneath the rafters sang the swallows wild and high;
And the world, beneath me sleeping, seemed more distant than the sky.

Then most musical and solemn, bringing back the olden times,
With their strange, unearthly changes rang the melancholy chimes,

Like the psalms from some old cloister, when the nuns sing in the choir;
And the great bell tolled among them, like the chanting of a friar.

Visions of the days departed, shadowy phantoms filled my brain;
They who live in history only seemed to walk the earth again;

All the Foresters of Flanders,—mighty Baldwin Bras de Fer,
Lyderick du Bucq and Cressy, Philip, Guy de Dampierre.

I beheld the pageants splendid, that adorned those days of old;
Stately dames, like queens attended, knights who bore the
Fleece of Gold;

Lombard and Venetian merchants with deep-laden argosies;
Ministers from twenty nations; more than royal pomp and
ease.

I beheld proud Maximilian, kneeling humbly on the
ground;
I beheld the gentle Mary, hunting with her hawk and hound;

And the lighted bridal-chamber, where a duke slept with the
queen,
And the armèd guard around them, and the sword unsheathed
between.

I beheld the Flemish weavers, with Namur and Juliers bold,
Marching homeward from the bloody battle of the Spurs of
Gold;

Saw the fight at Minnewater, saw the White Hoods moving
west,
Saw great Artevelde victorious scale the Golden Dragon's
nest.

And again the whiskered Spaniard all the land with terror
smote;
And again the wild alarum sounded from the tocsin's throat;

Till the bell of Ghent responded o'er lagoon and dike of
sand,
"I am Roland! I am Roland! there is victory in the land!"

Then the sound of drums aroused me. The awakened city's roar
Chased the phantoms I had summoned back into their graves once more.

Hours had passed away like minutes; and, before I was aware,
Lo! the shadow of the belfry crossed the sun-illumined square.

THE ARSENAL AT SPRINGFIELD.

THIS is the Arsenal. From floor to ceiling,
Like a huge organ, rise the burnished arms;
But from their silent pipes no anthem pealing
Startles the villages with strange alarms.

Ah! what a sound will rise, how wild and dreary,
When the death-angel touches those swift keys!
What loud lament and dismal Miserere
Will mingle with their awful symphonies!

I hear even now the infinite fierce chorus,
The cries of agony, the endless groan,
Which, through the ages that have gone before us,
In long reverberations reach our own.

On helm and harness rings the Saxon hammer,
Through Cimbric forest roars the Norseman's song,
And loud, amid the universal clamor,
O'er distant deserts sounds the Tartar gong.

I hear the Florentine, who from his palace
Wheels out his battle-bell with dreadful din,
And Aztec priests upon their teocallis
Beat the wild war-drums made of serpent's skin;

The tumult of each sacked and burning village;
  The shout that every prayer for mercy drowns;
The soldiers' revels in the midst of pillage;
  The wail of famine in beleaguered towns;

The bursting shell, the gateway wrenched asunder,
  The rattling musketry, the clashing blade;
And ever and anon, in tones of thunder,
  The diapason of the cannonade.

Is it, O man, with such discordant noises,
  With such accursèd instruments as these,
Thou drownest Nature's sweet and kindly voices,
  And jarrest the celestial harmonies?

Were half the power, that fills the world with terror,
  Were half the wealth, bestowed on camps and courts,
Given to redeem the human mind from error,
  There were no need of arsenals nor forts:

The warrior's name would be a name abhorrèd!
  And every nation, that should lift again
Its hand against a brother, on its forehead
  Would wear for evermore the curse of Cain!

Down the dark future, through long generations,
  The echoing sounds grow fainter and then cease;
And like a bell, with solemn, sweet vibrations,
  I hear once more the voice of Christ say, "Peace!"

Peace! and no longer from its brazen portals
  The blast of War's great organ shakes the skies!
But beautiful as songs of the immortals,
  The holy melodies of love arise.

NUREMBERG.

In the valley of the Pegnitz, where across broad meadow-
lands
Rise the blue Franconian mountains, Nuremberg, the ancient,
stands,

Quaint old town of toil and traffic, quaint old town of art
and song,
Memories haunt thy pointed gables, like the rooks that round
them throng:

Memories of the Middle Ages, when the emperors, rough and
bold,
Had their dwelling in thy castle, time-defying, centuries old;

And thy brave and thrifty burghers boasted, in their uncouth
rhyme,
That their great imperial city stretched its hand through
every clime.

In the court-yard of the castle, bound with many an iron band,
Stands the mighty linden planted by Queen Cunigunde's
hand;

On the square the oriel window, where in old heroic days,
Sat the poet Melchior singing Kaiser Maximilian's praise.

Everywhere I see around me rise the wondrous world of Art:
Fountains wrought with richest sculpture standing in the
common mart;

And above cathedral doorways saints and bishops carved in
stone,
By a former age commissioned as apostles to our own.

In the church of sainted Sebald sleeps enshrined his holy dust,
And in bronze the Twelve Apostles guard from age to age their trust;

In the church of sainted Lawrence stands a pix of sculpture rare,
Like the foamy sheaf of fountains, rising through the painted air.

Here, when Art was still religion, with a simple, reverent heart,
Lived and labored Albrecht Dürer, the Evangelist of Art;

Hence in silence and in sorrow, toiling still with busy hand,
Like an emigrant he wandered, seeking for the Better Land.

Emigravit is the inscription on the tombstone where he lies;
Dead he is not,—but departed,—for the artist never dies.

Fairer seems the ancient city, and the sunshine seems more fair,
That he once has trod its pavement, that he once has breathed its air!

Through these streets so broad and stately, these obscure and dismal lanes,
Walked of yore the Mastersingers, chanting rude poetic strains.

From remote and sunless suburbs, came they to the friendly guild,
Building nests in Fame's great temple, as in spouts the swallows build.

As the weaver plied the shuttle, wove he too the mystic rhyme,
And the smith his iron measures hammered to the anvil's chime;

Thanking God, whose boundless wisdom makes the flowers of poesy bloom
In the forge's dust and cinders, in the tissues of the loom.

Here Hans Sachs, the cobbler-poet, laureate of the gentle craft,
Wisest of the Twelve Wise Masters, in huge folios sang and laughed.

But his house is now an ale-house, with a nicely sanded floor,
And a garland in the window, and his face above the door;

Painted by some humble artist, as in Adam Puschman's song,
As the old man gray and dove-like, with his great beard white and long.

And at night the swart mechanic comes to drown his cark and care,
Quaffing ale from pewter tankards, in the master's antique chair.

Vanished is the ancient splendor, and before my dreamy eye
Wave these mingling shapes and figures, like a faded tapestry.

Not thy Councils, not thy Kaisers, win for thee the world's regard;
But thy painter, Albrecht Dürer, and Hans Sachs, thy cobbler-bard.

Thus, O Nuremberg, a wanderer from a region far away,
As he paced thy streets and court-yards, sang in thought his careless lay:

Gathering from the pavement's crevice, as a floweret of the soil,
The nobility of labor,—the long pedigree of toil.

THE NORMAN BARON.

In his chamber, weak and dying,
Was the Norman baron lying;
Loud, without, the tempest thundered,
And the castle turret shook.

In this fight was Death the gainer,
Spite of vassal and retainer,
And the lands his sires had plundered,
Written in the Doomsday Book.

By his bed a monk was seated,
Who in humble voice repeated
Many a prayer and pater-noster,
From the missal on his knee;

And, amid the tempest pealing,
Sounds of bells came faintly stealing,
Bells, that, from the neighboring kloster,
Rang for the Nativity.

In the hall, the serf and vassal
Held, that night, their Christmas wassail;
Many a carol, old and saintly,
Sang the minstrels and the waits.

And so loud these Saxon gleemen
Sang to slaves the songs of freemen,
That the storm was heard but faintly,
  Knocking at the castle-gates.

Till at length the lays they chaunted
Reached the chamber terror-haunted,
Where the monk, with accents holy,
    Whispered at the baron's ear.

Tears upon his eyelids glistened,
As he paused awhile and listened,
And the dying baron slowly
    Turned his weary head to hear.

"Wassail for the kingly stranger
Born and cradled in a manger!
King, like David, priest, like Aaron,
    Christ is born to set us free!"

And the lightning showed the sainted
Figures on the casement painted,
And exclaimed the shuddering baron,
    "Miserere, Domine!"

In that hour of deep contrition,
He beheld, with clearer vision,
Through all outward show and fashion,
    Justice, the Avenger, rise.

All the pomp of earth had vanished,
Falsehood and deceit were banished,
Reason spake more loud than passion,
    And the truth wore no disguise.

Every vassal of his banner,
Every serf born to their manor,
All those wronged and wretched creatures,
By his hand were freed again.

And, as on the sacred missal
He recorded their dismissal,
Death relaxed his iron features,
And the monk replied, "Amen!"

Many centuries have been numbered
Since in death the baron slumbered
By the convent's sculptured portal,
Mingling with the common dust:

But the good deed, through the ages
Living in historic pages,
Brighter grows and gleams immortal,
Unconsumed by moth or rust.

RAIN IN SUMMER.

How beautiful is the rain!
After the dust and heat,
In the broad and fiery street,
In the narrow lane,
How beautiful is the rain!

How it clatters along the roofs,
Like the tramp of hoofs!
How it gushes and struggles out
From the throat of the overflowing spout!
Across the window pane

It pours and pours;
And swift and wide,
With a muddy tide,
Like a river down the gutter roars
The rain, the welcome rain!

The sick man from his chamber looks
At the twisted brooks;
He can feel the cool
Breath of each little pool;
His fevered brain
Grows calm again,
And he breathes a blessing on the rain.

From the neighboring school
Come the boys,
With more than their wonted noise
And commotion;
And down the wet streets
Sail their mimic fleets,
Till the treacherous pool
Engulfs them in its whirling
And turbulent ocean.

In the country, on every side,
Where far and wide,
Like a leopard's tawny and spotted hide,
Stretches the plain,
To the dry grass and the drier grain
How welcome is the rain!

In the furrowed land
The toilsome and patient oxen stand;
Lifting the yoke-encumbered head,
With their dilated nostrils spread,

They silently inhale
The clover-scented gale,
And the vapors that arise
From the well-watered and smoking soil;
For this rest in the furrow after toil
Their large and lustrous eyes
Seem to thank the Lord,
More than man's spoken word.

Near at hand,
From under the sheltering trees,
The farmer sees
His pastures, and his fields of grain,
As they bend their tops
To the numberless beating drops
Of the incessant rain.
He counts it as no sin
That he sees therein
Only his own thrift and gain.

These, and far more than these,
The Poet sees!
He can behold
Aquarius old
Walking the fenceless fields of air;
And from each ample fold
Of the clouds about him rolled
Scattering everywhere
The showery rain,
As the farmer scatters his grain.

He can behold
Things manifold
That have not yet been wholly told,

Have not been wholly sung nor said.
For his thought, that never stops,
Follows the water-drops
Down to the graves of the dead,
Down through chasms and gulfs profound,
To the dreary fountain-head
Of lakes and rivers under ground;
And sees them, when the rain is done,
On the bridge of colors seven
Climbing up once more to heaven,
Opposite the setting sun.

Thus the Seer,
With vision clear,
Sees forms appear and disappear,
In the perpetual round of strange,
Mysterious change
From birth to death, from death to birth,
From earth to heaven, from heaven to earth;
Till glimpses more sublime
Of things, unseen before,
Unto his wondering eyes reveal
The Universe, as an immeasurable wheel
Turning for evermore
In the rapid and rushing river of Time.

THE BRIDGE.

I STOOD on the bridge at midnight,
As the clocks were striking the hour,
And the moon rose o'er the city,
Behind the dark church-tower.

I saw her bright reflection
  In the waters under me,
Like a golden goblet falling
  And sinking into the sea.

And far in the hazy distance
  Of that lovely night in June,
The blaze of the flaming furnace
  Gleamed redder than the moon.

Among the long, black rafters
  The wavering shadows lay,
And the current that came from the ocean
  Seemed to lift and bear them away;

As, sweeping and eddying through them,
  Rose the belated tide,
And, streaming into the moonlight,
  The seaweed floated wide.

And like those waters rushing
  Among the wooden piers,
A flood of thoughts came o'er me
  That filled my eyes with tears.

How often, O, how often,
  In the days that had gone by,
I had stood on that bridge at midnight,
  And gazed on that wave and sky!

How often, O, how often,
  I had wished that the ebbing tide
Would bear me away on its bosom
  O'er the ocean wild and wide!

For my heart was hot and restless,
And my life was full of care,
And the burden laid upon me
Seemed greater than I could bear.

But now it has fallen from me,
It is buried in the sea;
And only the sorrow of others
Throws its shadow over me.

Yet whenever I cross the river
On its bridge with wooden piers,
Like the odor of brine from the ocean
Comes the thought of other years.

And I think how many thousands
Of care-encumbered men,
Each bearing his burden of sorrow,
Have crossed the bridge since then.

I see the long procession
Still passing to and fro,
The young heart hot and restless,
And the old subdued and slow!

And forever and forever,
As long as the river flows,
As long as the heart has passions,
As long as life has woes;

The moon and its broken reflection
And its shadows shall appear,
As the symbol of love in heaven,
And its wavering image here.

SEAWEED.

When descends on the Atlantic
    The gigantic
Storm-wind of the equinox,
Landward in his wrath he scourges
    The toiling surges,
Laden with seaweed from the rocks:

From Bermuda's reefs; from edges
    Of sunken ledges,
In some far-off, bright Azore;
From Bahama, and the dashing,
    Silver-flashing
Surges of San Salvador;

From the tumbling surf, that buries
    The Orkneyan skerries,
Answering the hoarse Hebrides;
And from wrecks of ships, and drifting
    Spars, uplifting
On the desolate, rainy seas;—

Ever drifting, drifting, drifting
    On the shifting
Currents of the restless main;
Till in sheltered coves, and reaches
    Of sandy beaches,
All have found repose again.

So when storms of wild emotion
    Strike the ocean
Of the poet's soul, ere long

From each cave and rocky fastness,
In its vastness,
Floats some fragment of a song:

From the far-off isles enchanted,
Heaven has planted
With the golden fruit of Truth;
From the flashing surf, whose vision
Gleams Elysian
In the tropic clime of Youth;

From the strong Will, and the Endeavor
That forever
Wrestles with the tides of Fate;
From the wreck of Hopes far-scattered,
Tempest-shattered,
Floating waste and desolate;—

Ever drifting, drifting, drifting
On the shifting
Currents of the restless heart;
Till at length in books recorded,
They, like hoarded
Household words, no more depart.

THE DAY IS DONE.

The day is done, and the darkness
Falls from the wings of Night,
As a feather is wafted downward
From an eagle in his flight.

I see the lights of the village
Gleam through the rain and the mist,
And a feeling of sadness comes o'er me,
That my soul cannot resist:

A feeling of sadness and longing,
  That is not akin to pain,
And resembles sorrow only
  As the mist resembles the rain.

Come, read to me some poem,
  Some simple and heartfelt lay,
That shall soothe this restless feeling,
  And banish the thoughts of day.

Not from the grand old masters,
  Not from the bards sublime,
Whose distant footsteps echo
  Through the corridors of Time.

For, like strains of martial music,
  Their mighty thoughts suggest
Life's endless toil and endeavor;
  And to-night I long for rest.

Read from some humbler poet,
  Whose songs gushed from his heart,
As showers from the clouds of summer,
  Or tears from the eyelids start;

Who, through long days of labor,
  And nights devoid of ease,
Still heard in his soul the music
  Of wonderful melodies.

Such songs have power to quiet
  The restless pulse of care,
And come like the benediction
  That follows after prayer.

Then read from the treasured volume
The poem of thy choice,
And lend to the rhyme of the poet
The beauty of thy voice.

And the night shall be filled with music,
And the cares that infest the day,
Shall fold their tents, like the Arabs,
And as silently, steal away.

THE ARROW AND THE SONG.

I SHOT an arrow into the air,
It fell to earth, I knew not where;
For, so swiftly it flew, the sight
Could not follow it in its flight.

I breathed a song into the air,
It fell to earth, I knew not where;
For who has sight so keen and strong,
That it can follow the flight of song?

Long, long afterward, in an oak
I found the arrow, still unbroke;
And the song, from beginning to end,
I found again in the heart of a friend.

THE OLD CLOCK ON THE STAIRS.

SOMEWHAT back from the village street
Stands the old-fashioned country-seat.
Across its antique portico
Tall poplar-trees their shadows throw.

And from its station in the hall
An ancient timepiece says to all,—
"Forever—never!
Never—forever!"

Halfway up the stairs it stands,
And points and beckons with its hands
From its case of massive oak,
Like a monk, who, under his cloak,
Crosses himself, and sighs, alas!
With sorrowful voice to all who pass,—
"Forever—never!
Never—forever!"

By day its voice is low and light;
But in the silent dead of night,
Distinct as a passing footstep's fall,
It echoes along the vacant hall,
Along the ceiling, along the floor,
And seems to say, at each chamber-door,—
"Forever—never!
Never—forever!"

Through days of sorrow and of mirth,
Through days of death and days of birth,
Through every swift viscissitude
Of changeful time, unchanged it has stood,
And as if, like God, it all things saw,
It calmly repeats those words of awe,—
"Forever—never!
Never—forever!"

In that mansion used to be
Free-hearted Hospitality;
His great fires up the chimney roared;
The stranger feasted at his board;

But, like the skeleton at the feast,
That warning timepiece never ceased,—
"Forever—never!
Never—forever!"

There groups of merry children played,
There youths and maidens dreaming strayed;
O precious hours! O golden prime,
And affluence of love and time!
Even as a miser counts his gold,
Those hours the ancient timepiece told,—
"Forever—never!
Never—forever!"

From that chamber, clothed in white,
The bride came forth on her wedding night;
There, in that silent room below,
The dead lay in his shroud of snow;
And in the hush that followed the prayer,
Was heard the old clock on the stair,—
"Forever—never!
Never—forever!"

All are scattered now and fled,
Some are married, some are dead;
And when I ask, with throbs of pain,
"Ah! when shall they all meet again?"
As in the days long since gone by,
The ancient timepiece makes reply,—
"Forever—never!
Never—forever!"

Never here, forever there,
Where all parting, pain, and care,
And death, and time shall disappear,—
Forever there, but never here!

The horologe of Eternity
Sayeth this incessantly,—
"Forever—never!
Never—forever!"

THE BUILDING OF THE SHIP.

"BUILD me straight, O worthy Master!
Staunch and strong, a goodly vessel,
That shall laugh at all disaster,
And with wave and whirlwind wrestle!"

The merchant's word
Delighted the Master heard;
For his heart was in his work, and the heart
Giveth grace unto every Art.
A quiet smile played round his lips,
As the eddies and dimples of the tide
Play round the bows of ships,
That steadily at anchor ride.
And with a voice that was full of glee,
He answered, "Ere long we will launch
A vessel as goodly, and strong, and staunch,
As ever weathered a wintry sea!"

And first with nicest skill and art,
Perfect and finished in every part,
A little model the Master wrought,
Which should be to the larger plan
What the child is to the man,
Its counterpart in miniature;
That with a hand more swift and sure
The greater labor might be brought
To answer to his inward thought.

And as he labored, his mind ran o'er
The various ships that were built of yore,
And above them all, and strangest of all
Towered the Great Harry, crank and tall,
Whose picture was hanging on the wall,
With bows and stern raised high in air,
And balconies hanging here and there,
And signal lanterns and flags afloat,
And eight round towers, like those that frown
From some old castle, looking down
Upon the drawbridge and the moat.
And he said with a smile, "Our ship, I wis,
Shall be of another form than this!"

It was of another form, indeed;
Built for freight, and yet for speed,
A beautiful and gallant craft;
Broad in the beam, that the stress of the blast
Pressing down upon sail and mast,
Might not the sharp bows overwhelm;
Broad in the beam, but sloping aft
With graceful curve and slow degrees,
That she might be docile to the helm,
And that the currents of parted seas,
Closing behind, with mighty force,
Might aid and not impede her course.

In the shipyard stood the Master,
With the model of the vessel,
That should laugh at all disaster,
And with wave and whirlwind wrestle!

Covering many a rood of ground,
Lay the timber piled around;
Timber of chestnut, and elm, and oak,

And scattered here and there, with these,
The knarred and crooked cedar knees;
Brought from regions far away,
From Pascagoula's sunny bay,
And the banks of the roaring Roanoke!
Ah! what a wondrous thing it is
To note how many wheels of toil
One thought, one word, can set in motion!
There's not a ship that sails the ocean,
But every climate, every soil,
Must bring its tribute, great or small,
And help to build the wooden wall!

The sun was rising o'er the sea,
And long the level shadows lay,
As if they, too, the beams would be
Of some great, airy argosy,
Framed and launched in a single day.
That silent architect, the sun,
Had hewn and laid them every one,
Ere the work of man was yet begun.
Beside the Master, when he spoke,
A youth, against an anchor leaning,
Listened, to catch his slightest meaning.
Only the long waves, as they broke
In ripples on the pebbly beach,
Interrupted the old man's speech.

Beautiful they were, in sooth,
The old man and the fiery youth!
The old man, in whose busy brain
Many a ship that sailed the main
Was modelled o'er and o'er again;—
The fiery youth, who was to be

The heir of his dexterity,
The heir of his house, and his daughter's hand,
When he had built and launched from land
What the elder head had planned.

"Thus," said he, "will we build this ship!
Lay square the blocks upon the slip,
And follow well this plan of mine.
Choose the timbers with greatest care;
Of all that is unsound beware;
For only what is sound and strong
To this vessel shall belong.
Cedar of Maine and Georgia pine
Here together shall combine.
A goodly frame, and a goodly fame,
And the UNION be her name!
For the day that gives her to the sea
Shall give my daughter unto thee!"

The Master's word
Enraptured the young man heard;
And as he turned his face aside,
With a look of joy and a thrill of pride
Standing before
Her father's door,
He saw the form of his promised bride.
The sun shone on her golden hair,
And her cheek was glowing fresh and fair,
With the breath of morn and the soft sea air.
Like a beauteous barge was she,
Still at rest on the sandy beach,
Just beyond the billow's reach;
But he
Was the restless, seething, stormy sea!

Ah, how skilful grows the hand
That obeyeth Love's command!
It is the heart, and not the brain,
That to the highest doth attain,
And he who followeth Love's behest
Far exceedeth all the rest!

Thus with the rising of the sun
Was the noble task begun,
And soon throughout the shipyard's bounds
Were heard the intermingled sounds
Of axes and of mallets, plied
With vigorous arms on every side;
Plied so deftly and so well,
That, ere the shadows of evening fell,
The keel of oak for a noble ship,
Scarfed and bolted, straight and strong,
Was lying ready, and stretched along
The blocks, well placed upon the slip.
Happy, thrice happy, every one
Who sees his labor well begun,
And not perplexed and multiplied,
By idly waiting for time and tide!

And when the hot, long day was o'er,
The young man at the Master's door
Sat with the maiden calm and still.
And within the porch, a little more
Removed beyond the evening chill,
The father sat, and told them tales
Of wrecks in the great September gales,
Of pirates upon the Spanish Main,
And ships that never came back again,
The chance and change of a sailor's life,
Want and plenty, rest and strife,

His roving fancy, like the wind,
That nothing can stay and nothing can bind,
And the magic charm of foreign lands,
With shadows of palms, and shining sands,
Where the tumbling surf,
O'er the coral reefs of Madagascar,
Washes the feet of the swarthy Lascar,
As he lies alone and asleep on the turf.
And the trembling maiden held her breath
At the tales of that awful, pitiless sea,
With all its terror and mystery,
The dim, dark sea, so like unto Death,
That divides and yet unites mankind!
And whenever the old man paused, a gleam
From the bowl of his pipe would awhile illume
The silent group in the twilight gloom,
And thoughtful faces, as in a dream;
And for a moment one might mark
What had been hidden by the dark,
That the head of the maiden lay at rest,
Tenderly, on the young man's breast!

Day by day the vessel grew,
With timbers fashioned strong and true,
Stemson and keelson and sternson-knee,
Till, framed with perfect symmetry,
A skeleton ship rose up to view!
And around the bows and along the side
The heavy hammers and mallets plied,
Till, after many a week, at length,
Wonderful for form and strength,
Sublime in its enormous bulk,
Loomed aloft the shadowy hulk!
And around it columns of smoke, upwreathing,

Rose from the boiling, bubbling, seething
Caldron, that glowed,
And overflowed
With the black tar, heated for the sheathing.
And amid the clamors
Of clattering hammers,
He who listened heard now and then
The song of the Master and his men:—

"Build me straight, O worthy Master,
  Staunch and strong, a goodly vessel,
That shall laugh at all disaster,
  And with wave and whirlwind wrestle!"

With oaken brace and copper band,
Lay the rudder on the sand,
That, like a thought, should have control
Over the movement of the whole;
And near it the anchor, whose giant hand
Would reach down and grapple with the land,
And immovable and fast
Hold the great ship against the bellowing blast!
And at the bows an image stood,
By a cunning artist carved in wood,
With robes of white, that far behind
Seemed to be fluttering in the wind.
It was not shaped in a classic mould,
Not like a Nymph or Goddess of old,
Or Naiad rising from the water,
But modelled from the Master's daughter!
On many a dreary and misty night,
'Twill be seen by the rays of the signal light,
Speeding along through the rain and the dark,
Like a ghost in its snow-white sark,

The pilot of some phantom bark,
Guiding the vessel, in its flight,
By a path none other knows aright!
Behold, at last,
Each tall and tapering mast
Is swung into its place;
Shrouds and stays
Holding it firm and fast!

Long ago,
In the deer-haunted forests of Maine,
When upon mountain and plain
Lay the snow,
They fell,—those lordly pines!
Those grand, majestic pines!
Mid shouts and cheers
The jaded steers,
Panting beneath the goad,
Dragged down the weary, winding road
Those captive kings so straight and tall,
To be shorn of their streaming hair,
And, naked and bare,
To feel the stress and the strain
Of the wind and the reeling main,
Whose roar
Would remind them for evermore
Of their native forests they should not see again.

And everywhere
The slender, graceful spars
Poise aloft in the air,
And at the mast head,
White, blue, and red,
A flag unrolls the stripes and stars.

Ah, when the wanderer, lonely, friendless,
In foreign harbors shall behold
That flag unrolled,
'Twill be as a friendly hand
Stretched out from his native land,
Filling his heart with memories sweet and endless!

All is finished! and at length
Has come the bridal day
Of beauty and of strength.
To-day the vessel shall be launched!
With fleecy clouds the sky is blanched,
And o'er the bay,
Slowly, in all his splendors dight,
The great sun rises to behold the sight.

The ocean old,
Centuries old,
Strong as youth, and as uncontrolled,
Paces restless to and fro,
Up and down the sands of gold.
His beating heart is not at rest;
And far and wide,
With ceaseless flow,
His beard of snow
Heaves with the heaving of his breast.
He waits impatient for his bride.
There she stands,
With her foot upon the sands,
Decked with flags and streamers gay,
In honor of her marriage day,
Her snow-white signals fluttering, blending,
Round her like a veil descending,
Ready to be
The bride of the gray, old sea.

On the deck another bride
Is standing by her lover's side.
Shadows from the flags and shrouds,
Like the shadows cast by clouds,
Broken by many a sunny fleck,
Fall around them on the deck.

The prayer is said,
The service read,
The joyous bridegroom bows his head.
And in tears the good old Master
Shakes the brown hand of his son,
Kisses his daughter's glowing cheek
In silence, for he cannot speak,
And ever faster
Down his own the tears begin to run.
The worthy pastor—
The shepherd of that wandering flock,
That has the ocean for its wold,
That has the vessel for its fold,
Leaping ever from rock to rock—
Spake, with accents mild and clear,
Words of warning, words of cheer,
But tedious to the bridegroom's ear.
He knew the chart
Of the sailor's heart,
All its pleasures and its griefs,
All its shallows and rocky reefs,
All those secret currents, that flow
With such resistless undertow,
And lift and drift, with terrible force,
The will from its moorings and its course.
Therefore he spake, and thus said he:—

"Like unto ships far off at sea,
Outward or homeward bound, are we.
Before, behind, and all around,
Floats and swings the horizon's bound,
Seems at its distant rim to rise
And climb the crystal wall of the skies,
And then again to turn and sink,
As if we could slide from its outer brink.
Ah! it is not the sea,
It is not the sea that sinks and shelves,
But ourselves
That rock and rise
With endless and uneasy motion,
Now touching the very skies,
Now sinking into the depths of ocean.
Ah! if our souls but poise and swing
Like the compass in its brazen ring,
Ever level and ever true
To the toil and the task we have to do,
We shall sail securely, and safely reach
The Fortunate Isles, on whose shining beach
The sights we see, and the sounds we hear,
Will be those of joy and not of fear!"

Then the Master,
With a gesture of command,
Waved his hand;
And at the word,
Loud and sudden there was heard,
All around them and below,
The sound of hammers, blow on blow,
Knocking away the shores and spurs.
And see! she stirs!
She starts,—she moves,—she seems to feel

The thrill of life along her keel,
And, spurning with her foot the ground,
With one exulting, joyous bound,
She leaps into the ocean's arms!

And lo! from the assembled crowd
There rose a shout, prolonged and loud,
That to the ocean seemed to say,—
"Take her, O bridegroom, old and gray,
Take her to thy protecting arms,
With all her youth and all her charms!"

How beautiful she is! How fair
She lies within those arms, that press
Her form with many a soft caress
Of tenderness and watchful care!
Sail forth into the sea, O ship!
Through wind and wave, right onward steer!
The moistened eye, the trembling lip,
Are not the signs of doubt or fear.

Sail forth into the sea of life,
O gentle, loving, trusting wife,
And safe from all adversity
Upon the bosom of that sea
Thy comings and thy goings be!
For gentleness and love and trust
Prevail o'er angry wave and gust;
And in the wreck of noble lives
Something immortal still survives!

Thou, too, sail on, O Ship of State!
Sail on, O UNION, strong and great!
Humanity with all its fears,
With all the hopes of future years,
Is hanging breathless on thy fate!

We know what Master laid thy keel,
What Workmen wrought thy ribs of steel,
Who made each mast, and sail, and rope,
What anvils rang, what hammers beat,
In what a forge and what a heat
Were shaped the anchors of thy hope!
Fear not each sudden sound and shock,
'Tis of the wave and not the rock;
'Tis but the flapping of the sail,
And not a rent made by the gale!
In spite of rock and tempest's roar,
In spite of false lights on the shore,
Sail on, nor fear to breast the sea!
Our hearts, our hopes, are all with thee,
Our hearts, our hopes, our prayers, our tears,
Our faith triumphant o'er our fears,
Are all with thee,—are all with thee!

SIR HUMPHREY GILBERT.

Southward with fleet of ice
 Sailed the corsair Death;
Wild and fast blew the blast,
 And the east-wind was his breath.

His lordly ships of ice
 Glistened in the sun;
On each side, like pennons wide,
 Flashing crystal streamlets run.

His sails of white sea-mist
 Dripped with silver rain;
But when he passed there were cast
 Leaden shadows o'er the main.

Eastward from Campobello
  Sir Humphrey Gilbert sailed;
Three days or more seaward he bore,
  Then, alas! the land-wind failed.

Alas! the land-wind failed,
  And ice-cold grew the night;
And never more, on sea or shore,
  Should Sir Humphrey see the light.

He sat upon the deck,
  The Book was in his hand;
"Do not fear! Heaven is as near,"
  He said, "by water as by land!"

In the first watch of the night,
  Without a signal's sound,
Out of the sea, mysteriously,
  The fleet of Death rose all around.

The moon and the evening star
  Were hanging in the shrouds;
Every mast, as it passed,
  Seemed to rake the passing clouds.

They grappled with their prize,
  At midnight black and cold!
As of a rock was the shock;
  Heavily the ground-swell rolled.

Southward through day and dark,
  They drift in close embrace,
With mist and rain to the Spanish Main;
  Yet there seems no change of place.

Southward, forever southward,
They drift through dark and day;
And like a dream, in the Gulf-Stream
Sinking, vanish all away.

THE FIRE OF DRIFT-WOOD.

We sat within the farmhouse old,
Whose windows, looking o'er the bay,
Gave to the sea-breeze, damp and cold,
An easy entrance, night and day.

Not far away we saw the port,—
The strange, old-fashioned, silent town,—
The lighthouse,—the dismantled fort,—
The wooden houses, quaint and brown.

We sat and talked until the night,
Descending, filled the little room;
Our faces faded from the sight,
Our voices only broke the gloom.

We spake of many a vanished scene,
Of what we once had thought and said,
Of what had been, and might have been,
And who was changed, and who was dead;

And all that fills the hearts of friends,
When first they feel, with secret pain,
Their lives thenceforth have separate ends,
And never can be one again;

The first slight swerving of the heart,
  That words are powerless to express,
And leave it still unsaid in part,
  Or say it in too great excess.

The very tones in which we spake
  Had something strange, I could but mark;
The leaves of memory seemed to make
  A mournful rustling in the dark.

Oft died the words upon our lips,
  As suddenly, from out the fire
Built of the wreck of stranded ships,
  The flames would leap and then expire.

And, as their splendor flashed and failed,
  We thought of wrecks upon the main,—
Of ships dismasted, that were hailed
  And sent no answer back again.

The windows, rattling in their frames,—
  The ocean, roaring up the beach,—
The gusty blast,—the bickering flames,—
  All mingled vaguely in our speech;

Until they made themselves a part
  Of fancies floating through the brain,—
The long-lost ventures of the heart,
  That send no answers back again.

O flames that glowed—O hearts that yearned!
  They were indeed too much akin,
The drift-wood fire without that burned,
  The thoughts that burned and glowed within.

RESIGNATION.

THERE is no flock, however watched and tended,
But one dead lamb is there!
There is no fireside, howsoe'er defended,
But has one vacant chair!

The air is full of farewells to the dying,
And mournings for the dead;
The heart of Rachel, for her children crying,
Will not be comforted!

Let us be patient! These severe afflictions
Not from the ground arise,
But oftentimes celestial benedictions
Assume this dark disguise.

We see but dimly through the mists and vapors
Amid these earthly damps;
What seems to us but sad, funereal tapers
May be heaven's distant lamps.

There is no Death! What seems so is transition.
This life of mortal breath
Is but a suburb of the life elysian,
Whose portal we call Death.

She is not dead,—the child of our affection,—
But gone unto that school
Where she no longer needs our poor protection,
And Christ himself doth rule.

In that great cloister's stillness and seclusion,
  By guardian angels led,
Safe from temptation, safe from sin's pollution,
  She lives, whom we call dead.

Day after day we think what she is doing
  In those bright realms of air;
Year after year, her tender steps pursuing,
  Behold her grown more fair.

Thus do we walk with her, and keep unbroken
  The bond which nature gives,
Thinking that our remembrance, though unspoken,
  May reach her where she lives.

Not as a child shall we again behold her;
  For when with raptures wild
In our embraces we again enfold her,
  She will not be a child;

But a fair maiden, in her Father's mansion,
  Clothed with celestial grace;
And beautiful with all the soul's expansion
  Shall we behold her face.

And though at times impetuous with emotion
  And anguish long suppressed,
The swelling heart heaves moaning like the ocean,
  That cannot be at rest,—

We will be patient, and assuage the feeling
  We may not wholly stay;
By silence sanctifying, not concealing,
  The grief that must have way.

THE LADDER OF ST. AUGUSTINE.

Saint Augustine! well hast thou said,
That of our vices we can frame
A ladder, if we will but tread
Beneath our feet each deed of shame!

All common things, each day's events,
That with the hour begin and end,
Our pleasures and our discontents,
Are rounds by which we may ascend.

The low desire, the base design,
That makes another's virtues less;
The revel of the ruddy wine,
And all occasions of excess;

The longing for ignoble things;
The strife for triumph more than truth;
The hardening of the heart, that brings
Irreverence for the dreams of youth;

All thoughts of ill; all evil deeds,
That have their root in thoughts of ill;
Whatever hinders or impedes
The action of the nobler will;—

All these must first be trampled down
Beneath our feet, if we would gain
In the bright fields of fair renown
The right of eminent domain.

We have not wings, we cannot soar;
But we have feet to scale and climb
By slow degrees, by more and more,
The cloudy summits of our time.

The mighty pyramids of stone
That wedge-like cleave the desert airs,
When nearer seen, and better known,
Are but gigantic flights of stairs.

The distant mountains, that uprear
Their solid bastions to the skies,
Are crossed by pathways, that appear
As we to higher levels rise.

The heights by great men reached and kept
Were not attained by sudden flight,
But they, while their companions slept,
Were toiling upward in the night.

Standing on what too long we bore
With shoulders bent and downcast eyes,
We may discern—unseen before—
A path to higher destinies.

Nor deem the irrevocable Past,
As wholly wasted, wholly vain,
If, rising on its wrecks, at last
To something nobler we attain.

THE WARDEN OF THE CINQUE PORTS.

A MIST was driving down the British Channel,
The day was just begun,
And through the window-panes, on floor and panel,
Streamed the red autumn sun.

It glanced on flowing flag and rippling pennon,
And the white sails of ships;
And from the frowning rampart, the black cannon
Hailed it with feverish lips.

Sandwich and Romney, Hastings, Hithe, and Dover
Were all alert that day,
To see the French war-steamers speeding over,
When the fog cleared away.

Sullen and silent, and like couchant lions,
Their cannon, through the night,
Holding their breath, had watched, in grim defiance,
The sea-coast opposite.

And now they roared at drum-beat from their stations
On every citadel;
Each answering each, with morning salutations,
That all was well.

And down the coast, all taking up the burden,
Replied the distant forts,
As if to summon from his sleep the Warden
And Lord of the Cinque Ports.

Him shall no sunshine from the fields of azure,
No drum-beat from the wall,
No morning gun from the black fort's embrasure,
Awaken with its call!

No more, surveying with an eye impartial
The long line of the coast,
Shall the gaunt figure of the old Field Marshal
Be seen upon his post!

For in the night, unseen, a single warrior,
In sombre harness mailed,
Dreaded of man, and surnamed the Destroyer,
The rampart wall had scaled.

He passed into the chamber of the sleeper,
The dark and silent room,
And as he entered, darker grew, and deeper,
The silence and the gloom.

He did not pause to parley or dissemble,
But smote the Warden hoar;
Ah! what a blow! that made all England tremble
And groan from shore to shore.

Meanwhile, without, the surly cannon waited,
The sun rose bright o'erhead;
Nothing in Nature's aspect intimated
That a great man was dead.

THE EMPEROR'S BIRD'S-NEST.

Once the Emperor Charles of Spain,
With his swarthy, grave commanders,
I forget in what campaign,
Long besieged, in mud and rain,
Some old frontier town of Flanders.

Up and down the dreary camp,
In great boots of Spanish leather,
Striding with a measured tramp,
These Hidalgos, dull and damp,
Cursed the Frenchmen, cursed the weather.

Thus as to and fro they went,
Over upland and through hollow,
Giving their impatience vent,
Perched upon the Emperor's tent,
In her nest, they spied a swallow.

Yes, it was a swallow's nest,
  Built of clay and hair of horses,
Mane, or tail, or dragoon's crest,
Found on hedge-rows east and west,
  After skirmish of the forces.

Then an old Hidalgo said,
  As he twirled his gray mustachio,
"Sure this swallow overhead
Thinks the Emperor's tent a shed,
  And the Emperor but a Macho!"

Hearing his imperial name
  Coupled with those words of malice,
Half in anger, half in shame,
Forth the great campaigner came
  Slowly from his canvas palace.

"Let no hand the bird molest,"
  Said he solemnly, "nor hurt her!"
Adding then, by way of jest,
"Golondrina is my guest,
  'Tis the wife of some deserter!"

Swift as bowstring speeds a shaft,
  Through the camp was spread the rumor,
And the soldiers, as they quaffed
Flemish beer at dinner, laughed
  At the Emperor's pleasant humor.

So unharmed and unafraid
  Sat the swallow still and brooded,
Till the constant cannonade
Through the walls a breach had made,
  And the siege was thus concluded.

Then the army, elsewhere bent,
  Struck its tents as if disbanding,
Only not the Emperor's tent,
For he ordered, ere he went,
  Very curtly, "Leave it standing!"

So it stood there all alone,
  Loosely flapping, torn and tattered,
Till the brood was fledged and flown,
Singing o'er those walls of stone
  Which the cannon-shot had shattered.

THE TWO ANGELS.

Two angels, one of Life and one of Death,
  Passed o'er our village as the morning broke;
The dawn was on their faces, and beneath,
  The sombre houses hearsed with plumes of smoke.

Their attitude and aspect were the same,
  Alike their features and their robes of white;
But one was crowned with amaranth, as with flame,
  And one with asphodels, like flakes of light.

I saw them pause on their celestial way;
  Then said I, with deep fear and doubt oppressed,
"Beat not so loud, my heart, lest thou betray
  The place where thy belovèd are at rest!"

And he who wore the crown of asphodels,
  Descending, at my door began to knock,
And my soul sank within me, as in wells
  The waters sink before an earthquake's shock.

I recognized the nameless agony,
  The terror and the tremor and the pain,
That oft before had filled or haunted me,
  And now returned with threefold strength again.

The door I opened to my heavenly guest,
  And listened, for I thought I heard God's voice;
And, knowing whatso'er he sent was best,
  Dared neither to lament nor to rejoice.

Then with a smile, that filled the house with light,
  "My errand is not Death, but Life," he said;
And ere I answered, passing out of sight,
  On his celestial embassy he sped.

'Twas at thy door, O friend! and not at mine,
  The angel with the amaranthine wreath,
Pausing, descended, and with voice divine,
  Whispered a word that had a sound like Death.

Then fell upon the house a sudden gloom,
  A shadow on those features fair and thin;
And softly, from that hushed and darkened room,
  Two angels issued, where but one went in.

All is of God! If he but wave his hand,
  The mists collect, the rain falls thick and loud,
Till, with a smile of light on sea and land,
  Lo! he looks back from the departing cloud.

Angels of Life and Death alike are his;
  Without his leave they pass no threshold o'er;
Who, then, would wish or dare, believing this,
  Against his messengers to shut the door?

OLIVER BASSELIN.

In the Valley of the Vire
Still is seen an ancient mill,
With its gables quaint and queer,
And beneath the window-sill,
On the stone,
These words alone:
"Oliver Basselin lived here."

Far above it, on the steep,
Ruined stands the old Château;
Nothing but the donjon-keep
Left for shelter or for show.
Its vacant eyes
Stare at the skies,
Stare at the valley green and deep.

Once a convent, old and brown,
Looked, but ah! it looks no more,
From the neighboring hillside down
On the rushing and the roar
Of the stream
Whose sunny gleam
Cheers the little Norman town.

In that darksome mill of stone,
To the water's dash and din,
Careless, humble, and unknown,
Sang the poet Basselin
Songs that fill
That ancient mill
With a splendor of its own.

Never feeling of unrest
Broke the pleasant dream he dreamed;
Only made to be his nest,
All the lovely valley seemed;
No desire
Of soaring higher
Stirred or fluttered in his breast.

True, his songs were not divine;
Were not songs of that high art,
Which, as winds do in the pine,
Find an answer in each heart;
But the mirth
Of this green earth
Laughed and revelled in his line.

From the alehouse and the inn,
Opening on the narrow street,
Came the loud, convivial din,
Singing and applause of feet,
The laughing lays
That in those days
Sang the poet Basselin.

In the castle, cased in steel,
Knights, who fought at Agincourt,
Watched and waited, spur on heel;
But the poet sang for sport
Songs that rang
Another clang,
Songs that lowlier hearts could feel.

In the convent, clad in gray,
Sat the monks in lonely cells,

Paced the cloisters, knelt to pray,
And the poet heard their bells;
But his rhymes
Found other chimes,
Nearer to the earth than they.

Gone are all the barons bold,
Gone are all the knights and squires,
Gone the abbot stern and cold,
And the brotherhood of friars;
Not a name
Remains to fame,
From those mouldering days of old!

But the poet's memory here
Of the landscape makes a part;
Like the river, swift and clear,
Flows his song through many a heart;
Haunting still
That ancient mill,
In the Valley of the Vire.

MY LOST YOUTH.

Often I think of the beautiful town
That is seated by the sea;
Often in thought go up and down
The pleasant streets of that dear old town,
And my youth comes back to me.
And a verse of a Lapland song
Is haunting my memory still:
"A boy's will is the wind's will,
And the thoughts of youth are long, long thoughts."

I can see the shadowy lines of its trees,
And catch, in sudden gleams,
The sheen of the far-surrounding seas,
And islands that were the Hesperides
Of all my boyish dreams.
And the burden of that old song,
It murmurs and whispers still:
"A boy's will is the wind's will,
And the thoughts of youth are long, long thoughts."

I remember the black wharves and the slips
And the sea-tiles tossing free;
And Spanish sailors with bearded lips,
And the beauty and mystery of the ships,
And the magic of the sea.
And the voice of that wayward song
Is singing and saying still:
"A boy's will is the wind's will,
And the thoughts of youth are long, long thoughts."

I remember the bulwarks by the shore,
And the fort upon the hill;
The sun-rise gun, with its hollow roar,
The drum-beat repeated o'er and o'er,
And the bugle wild and shrill.
And the music of that old song
Throbs in my memory still:
"A boy's will is the wind's will,
And the thoughts of youth are long, long thoughts."

I remember the sea-fight far away,
How it thundered o'er the tide!
And the dead captains as they lay
In their graves, o'erlooking the tranquil bay,
Where they in battle died.

And the sound of that mournful song
Goes through me with a thrill:
" A boy's will is the wind's will,
And the thoughts of youth are long, long thoughts."

I can see the breezy dome of groves,
The shadows of Deering's Woods;
And the friendships old and the early loves
Come back with a sabbath sound, as of doves
In quiet neighborhoods.
And the verse of that sweet old song,
It flutters and murmurs still:
" A boy's will is the wind's will,
And the thoughts of youth are long, long thoughts."

I remember the gleams and glooms that dart
Across the schoolboy's brain;
The song and the silence in the heart,
That in part are prophecies, and in part
Are longings wild and vain.
And the voice of that fitful song
Sings on, and is never still:
" A boy's will is the wind's will,
And the thoughts of youth are long, long thoughts."

There are things of which I may not speak;
There are dreams that cannot die;
There are thoughts that make the strong heart weak,
And bring a pallor into the cheek,
And a mist before the eye.
And the words of that fatal song
Come over me like a chill:
" A boy's will is the wind's will,
And the thoughts of youth are long, long thoughts."

Strange to me now are the forms I meet
When I visit the dear old town;
But the native air is pure and sweet,
And the trees that o'ershadow each well-known street,
As they balance up and down,
Are singing the beautiful song,
Are sighing and whispering still:
"A boy's will is the wind's will,
And the thoughts of youth are long, long thoughts."

And Deering's Woods are fresh and fair,
And with joy that is almost pain
My heart goes back to wander there,
And among the dreams of the days that were,
I find my lost youth again.
And the strange and beautiful song,
The groves are repeating it still:
"A boy's will is the wind's will,
And the thoughts of youth are long, long thoughts."

THE GOLDEN MILE-STONE.

Leafless are the trees; their purple branches
Spread themselves abroad, like reefs of coral,
Rising silent
In the Red Sea of the Winter sunset.

From the hundred chimneys of the village,
Like the Afreet in the Arabian story,
Smoky columns
Tower aloft into the air of amber.

At the window winks the flickering fire-light;
Here and there the lamps of evening glimmer,
Social watch-fires
Answering one another through the darkness.

On the hearth the lighted logs are glowing,
And like Ariel in the cloven pine-tree
For its freedom
Groans and sighs the air imprisoned in them.

By the fireside there are old men seated,
Seeing ruined cities in the ashes,
Asking sadly
Of the Past what it can ne'er restore them.

By the fireside there are youthful dreamers,
Building castles fair, with stately stairways,
Asking blindly
Of the Future what it cannot give them.

By the fireside tragedies are acted
In whose scenes appear two actors only,
Wife and husband,
And above them God the sole spectator.

By the fireside there are peace and comfort,
Wives and children, with fair, thoughtful faces,
Waiting, watching
For a well-known footstep in the passage.

Each man's chimney is his Golden Mile-stone,
Is the central point, from which he measures
Every distance
Through the gateways of the world around him.

In his farthest wanderings still he sees it;
Hears the talking flame, the answering night-wind,
As he heard them
When he sat with those who were, but are not.

Happy he whom neither wealth nor fashion,
Nor the march of the encroaching city,
Drives an exile
From the hearth of his ancestral homestead.

We may build more splendid habitations,
Fill our rooms with paintings and with sculptures,
But we cannot
Buy with gold the old associations!

SANDALPHON.

Have you read in the Talmud of old,
In the Legends the Rabbins have told
Of the limitless realms of the air,—
Have you read it,—the marvellous story
Of Sandalphon, the Angel of Glory,
Sandalphon, the Angel of Prayer?

How, erect, at the outermost gates
Of the City Celestial he waits,
With his feet on the ladder of light,
That, crowded with angels unnumbered,
By Jacob was seen, as he slumbered
Alone in the desert at night?

The Angels of Wind and of Fire
Chaunt only one hymn, and expire
With the song's irresistible stress;
Expire in their rapture and wonder,
As harp-strings are broken asunder
By music they throb to express.

But serene in the rapturous throng,
Unmoved by the rush of the song,
With eyes unimpassioned and slow,
Among the dead angels, the deathless
Sandalphon stands listening breathless
To sounds that ascend from below;—

From the spirits on earth that adore,
From the souls that entreat and implore
In the fervor and passion of prayer;
From the hearts that are broken with losses,
And weary with dragging the crosses
Too heavy for mortals to bear.

And he gathers the prayers as he stands,
And they change into flowers in his hands,
Into garlands of purple and red;
And beneath the great arch of the portal,
Through the streets of the City Immortal
Is wafted the fragrance they shed.

It is but a legend, I know,—
A fable, a phantom, a show,
Of the ancient Rabbinical lore;
Yet the old mediæval tradition,
The beautiful, strange superstition,
But haunts me and holds me the more.

When I look from my window at night,
And the welkin above is all white,
All throbbing and panting with stars,
Among them majestic is standing
Sandalphon the angel, expanding
His pinions in nebulous bars.

And the legend, I feel, is a part
Of the hunger and thirst of the heart,
  The frenzy and fire of the brain,
That grasps at the fruitage forbidden,
The golden pomegranates of Eden,
  To quiet its fever and pain.

NOTES.

Page 82. *All the Foresters of Flanders.*

The title of Foresters was given to the early governors of Flanders, appointed by the kings of France. Lyderick du Bucq, in the days of Clotaire the Second, was the first of them; and Beaudoin Bras-de-Fer, who stole away the fair Judith, daughter of Charles the Bald, from the French court, and married her in Bruges, was the last. After him, the title of Forester was changed to that of Count. Philippe d'Alsace, Guy de Dampierre, and Louis de Crécy, coming later in the order of time, were therefore rather Counts than Foresters. Philippe went twice to the Holy Land as a Crusader, and died of the plague at St. Jean-d'Acre, shortly after the capture of the city by the Christians. Guy de Dampierre died in the prison of Compiègne. Louis de Crécy was son and successor of Robert de Béthune, who strangled his wife, Yolande de Bourgogne, with the bridle of his horse, for having poisoned, at the age of eleven years, Charles, his son by his first wife, Blanche d'Anjou.

Page 83. *Stately dames, like queens attended.*

When Philippe-le-Bel, king of France, visited Flanders with his queen, she was so astonished at the magnificence of the dames of Bruges, that she exclaimed, "Je croyais être seule reine ici, mais il paraît que ceux de Flandre qui se trouvent dans nos prisons sont tous des princes, car leurs femmes sont habillées comme des princesses et des reines."

When the burgomasters of Ghent, Bruges, and Ypres went to Paris to pay homage to King John, in 1351, they were received with great pomp and distinction; but, being invited to a festival, they observed that their seats at table were not furnished with cushions; whereupon, to make known their displeasure at this want of regard to their dignity, they folded their richly embroidered cloaks and seated themselves upon them. On rising from table, they left their cloaks behind them, and, being informed of their apparent forgetfulness, Simon van Eertrycke, burgomaster of Bruges, replied, "We Flemings are not in the habit of carrying away our cushions after dinner."

Page 83. *Knights who bore the Fleece of Gold.*

Philippe de Bourgogne, surnamed Le Bon, espoused Isabella of Portugal, on the 10th of January, 1430, and on the same day instituted the famous order of the Fleece of Gold.

Page 83. *I beheld the gentle Mary.*

Marie de Valois, Duchess of Burgundy, was left by the death of her father, Charles-le-Téméraire, at the age of twenty, the richest heiress of Europe. She came to Bruges, as Countess of Flanders, in 1477, and in the same year was married by proxy to the

Archduke Maximilian. According to the custom of the time, the Duke of Bavaria, Maximilian's substitute, slept with the princess. They were both in complete dress, separated by a naked sword, and attended by four armed guards. Marie was adored by her subjects for her gentleness and her many other virtues.

Maximilian was son of the Emperor Frederick the Third, and is the same person mentioned afterwards in the poem of *Nuremberg* as the Kaiser Maximilian, and the hero of Pfinzing's poem of *Teuerdank*. Having been imprisoned by the revolted burghers of Bruges, they refused to release him, till he consented to kneel in the public square, and to swear on the Holy Evangelists and the body of Saint Donatus that he would not take vengeance upon them for their rebellion.

Page 83. *The bloody battle of the Spurs of Gold.*

This battle, the most memorable in Flemish history, was fought under the walls of Courtray, on the 11th of July, 1302, between the French and the Flemings, the former commanded by Robert, Comte d'Artois, and the latter by Guillaume de Juliers, and Jean, Comte de Namur. The French army was completely routed, with a loss of twenty thousand infantry and seven thousand cavalry; among whom were sixty-three princes, dukes, and counts, seven hundred lords-banneret, and eleven hundred noblemen. The flower of the French nobility perished on that day, to which history has given the name of the *Journée des Éperons d'Or*, from the great number of golden spurs found on the field of battle. Seven hundred of them were hung up as a trophy in the church of Notre Dame de Courtray; and, as the cavaliers of that day wore but a single spur each, these vouched to God for the violent and bloody death of seven hundred of his creatures.

Page 83. *Saw the fight at Minnewater.*

When the inhabitants of Bruges were digging a canal at Minnewater, to bring the waters of the Lys from Deynze to their city, they were attacked and routed by the citizens of Ghent, whose commerce would have been much injured by the canal. They were led by Jean Lyons, captain of a military company at Ghent, called the *Chaperons Blancs*. He had great sway over the turbulent populace, who, in those prosperous times of the city, gained an easy livelihood by laboring two or three days in the week, and had the remaining four or five to devote to public affairs. The fight at Minnewater was followed by open rebellion against Louis de Maele, the Count of Flanders and Protector of Bruges. His superb château of Wondelghem was pillaged and burnt; and the insurgents forced the gates of Bruges, and entered in triumph, with Lyons mounted at their head. A few days afterwards he died suddenly, perhaps by poison.

Meanwhile the insurgents received a check at the village of Nevèle; and two hundred of them perished in the church, which was burned by the Count's orders. One of the chiefs, Jean de Lannoy, took refuge in the belfry. From the summit of the tower he held forth his purse filled with gold, and begged for deliverance. It was in vain. His enemies cried to him from below to save himself as best he might; and, half suffocated with smoke and flame, he threw himself from the tower and perished at their feet. Peace was soon afterwards established, and the Count retired to faithful Bruges.

Page 86. *That their great imperial city stretched its hand through every clime.*

An old popular proverb of the town runs thus :—

> " *Nürnberg's Hand*
> *Geht durch alle Land.*"
>
> Nuremberg's hand
> Goes through every land.

Page 86. *Sat the poet Melchior singing Kaiser Maximilian's praise.*

Melchior Pfinzing was one of the most celebrated German poets of the sixteenth century. The hero of his *Teuerdank* was the reigning emperor, Maximilian ; and the poem was to the Germans of that day what the *Orlando Furioso* was to the Italians. Maximilian is mentioned before, in the *Belfry of Bruges*. See page 83.

Page 87. *In the church of sainted Sebald sleeps enshrined his holy dust.*

The tomb of Saint Sebald, in the church which bears his name, is one of the richest works of art in Nuremberg. It is of bronze, and was cast by Peter Vischer and his sons, who labored upon it thirteen years. It is adorned with nearly one hundred figures, among which those of the Twelve Apostles are conspicuous for size and beauty.

Page 87. *In the church of sainted Lawrence stands a pix of sculpture rare.*

This pix, or tabernacle for the vessels of the sacrament, is by the hand of Adam Kraft. It is an exquisite piece of sculpture in white stone, and rises to the height of sixty-four feet. It stands in the choir, whose richly painted windows cover it with varied colors.

Page 88. *Wisest of the Twelve Wise Masters.*

The Twelve Wise Masters was the title of the original corporation of the Mastersingers. Hans Sachs, the cobbler of Nuremberg, though not one of the original Twelve, was the most renowned of the Mastersingers, as well as the most voluminous. He flourished in the sixteenth century ; and left behind him thirty-four folio volumes of manuscript, containing two hundred and eight plays, one thousand and seven hundred comic tales, and between four and five thousand lyric poems.

Page 88. *As in Adam Puschman's song.*

Adam Puschman, in his poem on the death of Hans Sachs, describes him as he appeared in a vision : —

> " An old man,
> Gray and white and dove-like,
> Who had, in sooth, a great beard,
> And read in a fair, great book,
> Beautiful, with golden clasps."

Page 115. *Sir Humphrey Gilbert.*

"When the wind abated and the vessels were near enough, the Admiral was seen constantly sitting in the stern, with a book in his hand. On the 9th of September he

was seen for the last time, and was heard by the people of the Hind to say, 'We are as near heaven by sea as by land.' In the following night, the lights of the ship suddenly disappeared. The people in the other vessel kept a good lookout for him during the remainder of the voyage. On the 22d of September they arrived, through much tempest and peril, at Falmouth. But nothing more was seen or heard of the Admiral."—*Belknap's American Biography*, I. 203.

Page 121. *That of our vices we can frame a ladder.*

The words of St. Augustine are: "De vitiis nostris scalam nobis facimus, si vitia ipsa calcamus."—Sermon III., *De Ascensione.*

Page 125. *And the Emperor but a Macho.*

Macho, in Spanish, signifies a mule. *Golondrina* is the feminine form of *Golondrino*, a swallow, and also a cant name for a deserter.

Page 128. *Oliver Basselin.*

Oliver Basselin, the *Père joyeux du Vaudeville*, flourished in the fifteenth century, and gave to his convivial songs the name of his native valleys, in which he sang them, Vaux-de-Vire. This name was afterward corrupted into the modern *Vaudeville.*

Page 131. *I remember the sea-fight far away.*

This was the engagement between the "Enterprise" and "Boxer," off the harbor of Portland, in which both captains were slain. They were buried side by side in the cemetery on Mountjoy.

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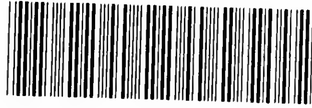

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