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# BELGIUM AND HER KING

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**B**ELGIUM, thou land of tragic memories,  
Who bearest the scars of centuries of strife,  
Once more thy dream of peace is broken through  
By foes that seek to crush thy very life.

Once more upon thy meadows monstrous war  
Has shaken costly fruit from life's fair tree,  
And purple juices dye the trampled fields,  
And redden rivers rolling to the sea.

O little Belgium, thou who might'st have bought—  
With broken faith for price, an easy peace;  
And watched thy harvests ripen, and thy fields  
Yield up to thee the kindly year's increase,

Thou couldst not trail thine honor in the dust,  
Though Belgium became one yawning grave,  
But thou couldst face a strong and cruel foe,  
And, saving others, thyself couldst not save.

Out of the prison tomb thy liberty  
Shall spring new-born, in radiance and power,  
And time, with gentle ministrings erase  
The dreadful scars of this, thy crucial hour.

And thy brave king, words can not paint his worth,  
And yet through coming ages while men scan  
The pages of earth's history, he will loom  
A noble shape, true patriot, and true man.

His kingship was but accident of birth,  
His brave soul is his own, and weary men  
In trench and leaguered town look on his face  
And feel a dauntless spirit theirs again.

For him, for thee, the laurel and the palm,  
When from his palsied fingers Thor lets fall  
His blood-stained hammer, and the dawn of Peace,  
From Right's white shield reflected, shines o'er all.