

A BALLAD OF VICTORY

Upon the fold that veiled her bosom's motion
A drop-like stain was glowing ruby-red.
"I caught the naughty child beside the ocean ;
'Tis but a scratch he gave," the lady said.
Like rush-flower in the wind she tossed her head.

Within her house she hung Love's bow and
quiver—

A sign of triumph all the neighbours say—
And, like the murmur of a passing river,
Sighs of new lovers greet her day by day.
The lady sits and smiles the years away.

But I, that love as though her hound should love
her,

Can tell a tale that no one else may know ;
Although the sea-gulls know it, and the plover
That, circling, watched the Love-god sob and go
For ever from her, still suspect her woe ;

Although the field-flowers, laughing with the
zephyrs,

Nod archly when they hear of Love's defeat ;
Although the sheep that marvel, and the heifers
List to the tale the winds and flowers repeat,
And ponder on the lady's fond conceit.