

At last, when care had banished sleep,
He saw one morning—dreaming—doating,
An empty hogshead from the deep
Come shoreward floating ;

He hid it in a cave, and wrought 25
The livelong day laborious ; lurking
Until he launched a tiny boat
By mighty working.

Heaven help us ! 'twas a thing beyond
Description, wretched ; such a wherry 30
Perhaps ne'er ventured on a pond,
Or crossed a ferry.

For ploughing in the salt-sea field,
It would have made the boldest shudder ;
Untarred, uncompassed, and unkeeled, 35
No sail — no rudder.

From neighb'ring woods he interlaced
His sorry skiff with wattled willows :
And thus equipped he would have passed
The foaming billows — 40

But Frenchmen caught him on the beach,
His little Argo¹ sorely jeering ;
Till tidings of him chanced to reach
Napoleon's hearing.

1. The famous ship in which Jason sailed to find the Golden Fleece.