

## THE OLD OAK TREE.

The old oak tree ! the old oak tree !  
Five hundred years ago  
Its first weak shoot sprang out of earth—  
It first began to grow.

What a change has been since that proud tree  
Then looked upon the sun,  
So gnarled and hoar—those arms are links  
I' th' fated path we've won.

Back ! back ! they bear the spirit back,  
Until in fear we tread,  
So thick, their gaze strows in our track,  
Th' innumerable dead.

The iron men of *Runnimeade*,  
Once stood beneath that tree,  
And it rocked before their gladsome shout  
Of *Chartered Liberty*.

And gentler tones, too, those rude boughs  
Have heard, from time to time,  
The whispered words, that young hearts love  
The Sabbath's holy chime.

The hunter's shout, the courtier's song,  
Have found an echo there ;  
And there the wearied have sunk to rest,  
And stirred its leaves in prayer.

Now down before the biting axe  
It falls with a fearful crash,  
But soon away o'er the sounding sea  
That lordly oak shall dash.

In sunny days, through storm and fire,  
Our gallant flag to bear,—  
It was our pride when it graced the glade—  
Our pride it shall be there.

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