

A LEGEND OF MARATHON

Χαίρετε νικῶμεν.

CITY of Gods ! Upon thy storied brow,
Day's last magnificence is streaming now ;
O'er earth and sea thy sunset glories weave
Their arch of splendour round the dying eve—
A violet flush upon Hymettus' steep,
A lingering crimson on Ægina's deep,
Thron'd in thy place of pride, the sunset's kiss
Fires thy white crest, shrine-crown'd Acropolis.—
The East grows dim, but round thy marbled height,
Yet floats the filmy crown of violet light.
The sunset charm—the air-born splendour given
To make thy lucid sky fit mask for heaven.

Faultless and pure, each shafted temple's crest
Sleeps on the violet air's pellucid breast—
Vision of beauty—born in poet's heart,
Shaped into life by old enchantment's art !
High above all in splendour soft and warm,
Looms the tall semblance of a martial form,
A warrior Phantom Queen-like and alone,
The champion Goddess on her Attic throne ;
The dying sun yet leaves one burning glance,
To flame upon her zenith-pointing lance
As in her grasp a lightning flash it glow'd—
So watched Athenæ o'er her loved abode !

The rose flush fades—on eastern hill and stream
The earliest stars through twilight mantle gleam,
And the full summer moon hangs fair and still
On the far outline of Pentelic hill—