

The Rockwood Review.

Out in the land-locked harbor, in the gray of the morning stole,
The ships of the Spanish line, under the frowning guns
Of the batteries aloft, and still as a bodiless soul,
For the enemy's war-dogs slept with an eye and an ear awake,
While the folds of the yellow flag on Morro Castle shake,
And the cannon mouths peer over the rock-crowned barbizons.

One by one the armoured ships came gliding out in line,
There were no bright-hued pennons—no blaze of metal and steel,
But the gunners stood by the guns, silently waiting the sign
From the grim and ghostly warders that watched the harbor gate,
And gloomed along the blue sea wave as pitiless as fate—
While the stately ships swept on with swift and noiseless keel.

Aye, to be free of the broad deep sea, and the ocean tides that roll
Salt and sweet from the old home land—out of this prisoning bay,—
To fight in the open ocean—or to find the sailor's goal
And a grave in the deep at last, --but hush! the foe is awake,—
The throats of a hundred cannon the stillness of morning break,
And now it is fight for life—not flight for the wings are clipt away.

Each side of the sunken Merrimac through the jaws of the channel sped
The ships of the Spanish Squadron and the Almirante led,—
And her great guns answered the Yankee guns with thundering roar for roar,
And the smoke went up from the batteries along the embattled shore,
Till the armoured hulls were pierced and torn and riven from stem to stern,
Till the shattered masts were shorn at last, and the tangled rigging fell,
And the decks were hot with the raking shot and the rain of deadly shell,—
Where the gunners stood in a sea of blood, and answered them right well.

Ah woe to the ships that cannot fly, and fight in grim despair;—
The smoke and flames wreath the gallant frames and fill the golden air,
And the wrecks are strewn for miles along the rocky Cuban coast
Where the bones of the stately galleons lie shrivelled and stark and bare—
And another Spanish Armada is overwhelmed and lost.

K. S. McL.