

BURIAL OF THE CHIEFTAIN. *

See on his mat, as if of yore,
How lifelike sits he here.
With the same aspect that he wore.
When life to him was dear.
But where the right arm's strength, and where
The breath he used to breathe
To the Great Spirit aloft in air,
The peace pipe's lusty wreath?
And where the hawk-like eye, alas!
That wont the deer pursue
Along the waves of rippling grass,
Or fields that shone with dew?
Are these the limber, bounding feet
That swept the winter snows?
What startled deer was half so fleet,
Their speed outstripped the roe's.
These hands that once the sturdy bow
Could supplé from its pride,
How stark and helpless hang they now
Adown the stiffened side!
Yet weal to him! at peace he strays
Where never fall the snows,
Where o'er the meadow springs the maize
That mortal never sows;
Where birds are blithe in every brake,
Where forests teem with deer,
Where glide the fish through every lake,
One chase from year to year!
With spirits now he feasts above;
All left us, to revere
The deeds we cherish with our love,
The rest we bury here.
Here bring the last gifts; loud and shrill
Wail death dirge of the brave!
What pleased him most in life may still
Give pleasure in the grave.
We lay the axe beneath his head
He swung when strength was strong,
To bear on which his hunger fed—
The way from earth is long!
And here, new sharpened, place the knife
Which served from the clay,
From which the axe had spoiled the life,
The conquered scalp away.