

For the Pearl

SONNETS ON BLOMDDON

When the creator with Almighty hand Formed this fair world—a sample of His power To draw fresh Halleluia from the band Of shouting Seraphim, who on that hour Thronged the celestial battlements, to view The infant orb dance thro' the ether blue.

'Twas then thy form, on stately strength arose, Proud and majestic, o'er the sleeping sea; Like some suspicious centinel who knows The muttered curse—the threat of mutiny, And growing jealous of his country's good Erects himself in warrior's attitude.

Alone on Majesty long hast thou stood, While king and Empire's mouldered fast away, Even o'er the desolation of a Flood Thy brow arose fresh from a world's decay Embodying as it were, for human eye The Eternity of truth and man's high destiny.

Why standest thou in silence, whilst the change Of Planets and of ages round thee pass? So memory's revolting scenes estrange Thy fancy, sickening with the horrid mass Of human crime and mortal misery That thickens o'er our bloodstained history.

I've passed thee when the fission of the storm Couch'd on thy crest and gathered in the blast, While listlessly the wearied sailor's form Stretched on the deck beneath the kofty mast, Unheeding that the fiend leaves little room Between the awful warning and the doom.

Then with a din and sudden vengeance throws The fatal squall, swift on the astonished bark, Turning the sailor's dream of sweet repose To the last shriek of death, while dangers dark Surround the groaning vessel's parting side, And whelm her deep, beneath the rushing tide.

Still on thy savage visage is a charm That lulls the troubled bosom into rest, Yea, on thy brink I'd meet the last alarm, That calls the spirit from this anxious breast, To soar with easy bold her upward flight By angels guided from thy topmost height.

I know not why th' oppressive sigh should rise To dim the sunshine of this parting hour; I know not why affection's holy ties Have bound my heart to love thy rugged power: Full well I know no pang thy bosom ead Yet to thee, turns my soul as to a friend.

Is it because thy features never change Sincere in all thy harshness,—still the same? Not like the friend whose fairest smile will range, A changing to the fancy's wandering flame, Perhaps it is that once in early days A parent spotted near thy shady base.

I turn from thee, perhaps no more to greet Thy face rejoicing o'er a happy land Yet on thy height shall memory rear a seat Round which shall all life's brightest visions stand, And gazing o'er each scene in ecstasy Recall a joy in every hill and tree.

C. F. H.

AN INDIAN BATTLE

Near the village was a large plain. It had on one side a lofty and dense forest—on the other, two lakes; the one about a league in circumference, clear of trees, but so deep that three or four feet from the bank no footing could be found. The second, which was at a greater distance from the village, was more than half a league in width, and appeared like a vast river, extending as far as the eye could reach. Between the forest and these two lakes, the Indians formed their squadrons, having the lakes on their

right flank; and the forest, on the left. Their bows and arrows were concealed in the grass in order that they might appear to be totally unarmed. Their force might be about ten thousand chosen warriors, decorated with lofty plumes, which increased their apparent height; and being drawn out with somewhat of military order, they made a beautiful display.

The cacique and Herbaud de Soto came forth, on foot, each accompanied by twelve of his people, and each burning with the same spirit and determination against the other. The Spanish troops were to the right of the governor; the infantry drawn up near to the forest, and the cavalry advanced into the plain.

It was between nine and ten of the morning, when De Soto and Vinchaco arrived at the spot which the latter had fixed upon for the seizure of the governor. Before the cacique, however, could make his preconcerted signal, a Spanish trumpet gave a warning blast. In an instant, the twelve Spaniards rushed upon the cacique. His attendant Indians threw themselves before him, and endeavoured to repel the assailants, but in vain. He was borne off captive.

At the same time, De Soto leaped upon his favourite steed Acaytuno, and spurred him upon the thickest of the enemy, with that headlong valour which always distinguished him in battle. The Indians had already seized their weapons. Their first ranks were thrown into confusion by the impetuous charge of De Soto; but as he pressed forward, a shower of arrows came whistling about him. They were principally aimed at his horse, the Indians always seeking most to kill these animals, knowing their importance in battle. Four of the arrows wounded the generous animal in the knees, four pierced him in the breast, and he fell to the earth dead, as if shot by a piece of artillery.

In the meantime, the Spanish troops, at the trumpet signal, had assailed the Indian squadrons, and now came pressing up at this critical moment, to the aid of their general. One of his pages named Viota, a youth of noble birth, sprang from his horse and aided De Soto to mount him. The governor, once more on horseback put himself at the head of his cavalry, and spurred among the Indians. The latter had no lances to defend themselves; and being assailed by three hundred horse, broke and fled in every direction. A great number of those who were in the rear, took refuge among the entangled thickets of the forests; others threw themselves into the large lake and escaped, while others scattered themselves over the plain, where more than three hundred were killed, and a few taken.

The worse fate attended the vanguard, composed of the bravest warriors, who are always doomed to fare the worst in battle. After receiving the first impetuous charge of the cavalry, they fled; but being unable to reach either the forest or the large lake, more than nine hundred threw themselves into the smaller one. Here they were surrounded by the Spaniards, who endeavoured by threats and promises, and occasional shots from their cross-bows and arquebusses, to induce them to surrender. The Indians replied only by flights of arrows. As the lake was too deep to give them footing, three or four would cling together, and support each other by swimming, while one would mount upon their backs, and ply his bow and arrows. In this way, an incessant skirmishing was kept up all day long; numbers of the Indians were slain; all their arms were exhausted, yet no one gave signs of surrendering.

When night came, the Spaniards posted themselves round the lake, the horse by two and two, the foot in parties of six, near to each other, lest the Indians should escape in the dark. Some of the latter, endeavoured to save themselves by covering their heads with the leaves of water-lilies, and swimming noiselessly to the shore; but the watchful troopers perceiving the turmoil and bubbling in the water, would spur their horses to the bank, and drive the Indians again into the channel, in hopes of tiring them out and thus forcing them to capitulate; for while the Spaniards threatened them with death if they did not yield, they offered them peace and friendship if they would surrender.

So obstinate were they, however, that midnight arrived before one of them had submitted, although they had passed fourteen hours in the water. At length, however, the intercessions of Juan Ortiz, and the four Indian interpreters, began to have effect. The most weary would render themselves one and two at a time, but so slowly, that by the dawn of day, not more than fifty had surrendered. The residue, seeing that these were kindly treated, and being admonished by them, now gave themselves up in greater numbers, but still slowly and reluctantly. Some, when near the bank, would return to the middle of the lake, until the love of life compelled them to yield. At length, at ten o'clock, two hundred came to the shore at the same time, and surrendered themselves, after having been swimming four and twenty hours. They were in a wretched condition; swollen with the water they had swallowed, and overcome with fatigue, hunger, and the want of sleep. There still remained seven Indians in the lake—men of such unconquerable spirit, that neither the prayers of the interpreters, the promises of the governor, nor the example of their comrades, who had surrendered, had any effect upon them. They treated all promises with scorn, and defied both menaces and death. In this way they remained until three in the afternoon, and would have remained there until they died. The governor, however, was struck with admiration of their courage and magnanimity, and thought it would be inhuman to allow such brave men to perish. He ordered twelve Spaniards, therefore, expert swimmers, to go into the lake with their swords in their mouths, and draw these warriors forth. The Indians were too much exhausted to resist. The Spaniards seized them by the legs, the arms, and hair, drew them to land, and threw them upon the bank, where they lay extended upon the sand, more dead than alive; having, according to the Spanish narrator, been for thirty hours in the water, apparently without putting foot to the ground, or receiving any other relief; an exploit, adds the Inca historian, almost incredible, and which I would not dare to write, if it were not for the authority of so many cavaliers and nobles, who in the Indies and in Spain, assured me of the truth of it, besides the authority of him who related this history to me, and who, in all things, is worthy of belief.

The heroic obstinacy of the seven Indians had extorted the admiration of the Spaniards. Moved to compassion by their present deplorable state, they bore them to the encampment, and used such assiduous means, that they were restored to animation in the course of the night. The next morning the governor summoned them before him, and pretending to be angry, demanded the reason of their desperate resistance, and why they had not surrendered themselves as their companions had done.

Four of them, who were in the prime of manhood, replied that they were leaders, or captains, chosen as such by their cacique, from his confidence in their courage and constancy. Their actions were to justify his choice. They were bound to set an example to their children, to their brother warriors, and above all, to such as should thereafter be appointed as leaders. They felt as if being alive, they had failed in fulfilling their duty and vindicating their honour; and while they acknowledged the kindness of the governor, regretted only that he had not let them to perish in the lake. "If you want to add to your favours," said they, "take our lives. After surviving the defeat and capture of our chieftain, we are not worthy to appear before him, or to live in the world."

The governor listened with admiration to the heroic words of these savage warriors, and when they had finished, he turned to their three companions, who had remained silent. These were young men not more than eighteen years of age, sons and heirs to caciques of the adjacent provinces. The governor demanded of them their reason for persisting so desperately in their defence, as they were not leaders, nor bound by the same obligations as their companions.

They replied with a proud and lofty air, that they had been initiated to hostility, not through a desire for gain, or through any impetuous spirit against the Spaniards, but merely from a thirst for glory. That although they were not chiefs, yet as the sons of caciques, and destined to