

And as nations of old held some augur more holy,
And his oracles prized, as exceeding in worth,
So, it seemed, we had one, that we credited solely :
He frowned, all was sadness—he smiled, all was mirth.
His temple, retired, in a solitude rose ;
Before stretched a plain, and beneath rolled the flood ;
Few sounds ever broke the eternal repose,
Save the moan of the sea in its angrier mood.
No gifts of rare gems ornamented the shrine,
No statues of ivory, nor robes stiff with gold ;
But homelier gifts, from earth, forest and mine,
The generous faith of its votaries told :
There were manganese lumps, by an alderman brought,
Who inquired how the balance of justice should turn,
And rich sealskins, given by one who has sought
The fate of an Arctic-bound vessel to learn.
A great “Globe” prospectus blazed bright on the wall,
The agent had asked where the flames next should rage ;
While, over the door, spread a deer’s antlers tall,
From a hunter, who sought for advice of the sage.
A column of coal, a gift most baronial,
In a high niche, the place of a statue supplied ;
The donor had speered, if the Intercolonial
Would pass lands that he owned on the Cumberland side.
So I stood in my dream, at the tine-adorned portal,
And gazed, not unmoved, on so solemn a scene,
When a voice from within, cried, “Why comest thou,
mortal,
To lift from the future, the God-woven screen ?
Wouldst thou know what the end of a journey may be,
If the stream of thy life shall flow calmly along ;