

COLUMBUS.

In Italy, beside the Tyrrhene Sea,
Where break its waves upon the northern lea,
A city rose, far-famed and wondrous great,
Most like a queen of cities, fair she sate ;
Strange foreign barks within her harbor swung,
Her quays re-echoed many an outland tongue,
Her warerooms groaned beneath the priceless store
Of riches heaped upon her happy shore.

Within her streets rose many a marble pile
Whose snowy front across the waves did smile
On far-forwandered ships returning home
Over the sunny azure fields of foam,
And princely towers rose graceful to the sky
From scented groves that round their feet did sigh,
And cast their flow'ry odors to the breeze
As still it freshened from the murm'ring seas.

Nor yet for commerce and for wealth alone
Was this fair city to the nations known ;
The tide of luxury had not warped their might—
Powerful in peace as powerful too in fight ;
What stauncher champions of the Holy Cross
Than Genoe's knights ? By whom was greater loss
Wrought to the infidel than by Genoa's band,
Triumphant everywhere by sea and land.
Long mourned the Turk, those all-victorious swords
That made fell havoc of his Pagan hordes.

So rose it, mighty, proud, renowned and free,
Terrace o'er terrace by the storied sea.
Now to this city came from time to time
Strange ships that hailed from many a stranger clime
And in them curious-vested foreign folk,
That strange, uncouth, barbaric jargon spoke,
That no man knew : yet were their goods most
rare—

Spices and gems and woven fabrics fair—
And all men wondered whence these rovers came
And what their country and their race's name ;
The Genoan sailors too, returning home,
Told wondrous tales of glorious lands unknown,
Of happy islands towards the rising sun,
Where all by nature, naught by man, was done—
So that whoever eager was to learn
Of other lands, had needed but to turn
His steps and wander by the quay-lined shore,
There much to hear of undiscovered lore.

Such man there was—a daring, ardent soul,
Through whose deep mind a mighty flood did roll
Of expectations and convictions deep,
And strange conclusions that would still forth leap
The more he coned ; and so at last it grew
The object of his life to prove for true
What things he felt within his inmost heart
Were so ; thenceforth a noble, great unrest
Urged him, and he pondered day and night,
And on his soul still brighter dawned the light,
And through the weary hours he sat and read
Forgotten treasures by learned dead—
Of this our earth, her shape, her various lands,
Her barren seas, her shifting wastes of sands,
And all that wisdom in that elder time
Had e'er recorded of each then-known clime.
Among these mould'ring legends he discerned

Some hints at which his expectation burned ;
Not all in vain could be those tales of rest,
Of dear delight that gathered round the west,
Where ancients said the happiest climes were found,
Where summer reigned the joyous year around,
And dwelt the blest in islands that were laved
By halcyon seas, that sweetly mourned and raved
In tinkling accents on the flow'ry lea,
Fair old-time legends of the silv'ry sea.

And often when the moon in mellow show'r
Poured down her rays upon each marble tower,
And the great city 'neath her kindly beam
Grew pearly dim like some enchanting dream,
Then pacing by the moon-lit bay below,
Restless, ambitious, would Columbus go,
Enquiring eagerly of each he met
Of that on which his soul's desire was set ;
But most men deemed him mad and laughed and
said :

'Much clerkly learning hath quite turned his head,'
And e'en his friends besought him to forgo
Such wild-wrought schemes as in his brain did flow ;
But neither taunts nor friends' mistaken love
His mighty soul could from its purpose move ;
And finding still that holiest saying true,
That prophets seek in vain for honor due
Only in their own cities, forth he went
Seeking for some to further his intent.

Now so it happened that at this very time
Was Spain's great glory in its golden prime,
And men adventurous, who aught would dare
For glory's sake, found ready welcome there.
He hither speeds and straight before the throne
Of old Castile, makes his great project known,
It boots not say with what a glowing tongue,
He paints his sure success ; let that be done ;
And see we now a fitting fleet arrayed,
And just appointment, for the voyage made ;
And now adown unto the surf-beat shore,
In order quaint a fair procession pour,
And kneeling down upon the Old World's sands
Receive a blessing from the Church's hands.

And then they sailed, and vesper-ward did fare,
Where not before did keel of mortal dare ;
Day after day the sun clomb heaven's dome,
Where all the cloud-robed daughters of the west
Spread their fair arms to welcome in the guest.
Again and yet again the primrose eve
Rose brooding, dovelike at the day's reprieve ;
Night after night the Angel of the stars
Lighted with scatheless fire those gleaming cars,
That still forever roll the cycles round
In the full choir of only heaven-heard sound.
And thus days grew to weeks ; weeks months
became,
Nor changed the prospect, ever still the same--
The billows surging till beyond the view,
They melting, mingled into heaven's blue.

Still hourly did they scan with anxious eye
The broad horizon, hoping there to spy
Some trace of land ; but when long time they yearned
In vain, their hearts grew sad, and sadness turned
To hatred 'gainst the man who led them here,
And mutinous murmurs rose, and horrid fear