

THE PLOUGH

No edge of steel tore up the virgin sod ;
No church its shining finger turned to God ;
No tradesman laboured over bench and tool ;
No children chattered on their way to school.

But all the land lay desolate and bare,
Its wealth of plain, its forest riches rare
Ungessed by those who saw it through their tears,
And Nature—miser of a thousand years—
Was adding still to her immense reserve
That shall supply the world with brawn and nerve :
But all lay silent, useless, and unused,
And useless 'twas because it was unused.

You came. Straightway the silent plain
Grew mellow with the glow of golden grain ;
The axes in the solitary wood
Rang out where stately oak and maple stood ;
The land became alive with busy din,
And as the many settled, more came in ;
The world looked on in wonder and dismay—
The building of a nation in a day !

By lake and river, rock and barren waste,
A peaceful army toiled in eager haste ;
Ten thousand workers sweating in the sun
Pressed on the task so recently begun ;
Their outworks every day were forced ahead—
And every day they gave their toll of dead—
Until at length the double lines of steel
Received the steaming steed and whirling wheel !