

Alas! there was no returning,
The tide turned rapidly ;
And soon on the ice-flakes parting,
They drifted out to sea.

'There were eyes, that marked a peril
Which palsied hearts with fear ;
Voices, that shrieked directions
Never to reach the ear:—

And woman's tones imploring,
Each on a bended knee,
That the God of all earth's mercies,
Would help right speedily.

One, only thought of succour,
And sought for comrade aid ;
The task seemed too terrific,
And all shrank back afraid :

So he nerved his manly spirit ;
He shouldered a plank alone ;
And e'er they could chide his daring,
His stalwart form was gone.

He bridged each fragment calmly :
He leaped o'er crack and space ;
And when his strength seemed failing,
He summoned heart of grace.

At last, o'er the heaving bosom
Of the mass on the crowded bay,
He reached where one fainting victim,
On his icy island lay.

Back, back, on the path of peril
He urged the weak one on ;
'Till life, and hope for coming time,
With earth's firm hold, were won.

Then again on his loving errand
He sprang in his vigor yet ;
But by power unseen, to mercy's will,
Is inscrutable limit set.

That spirit bereft was facing
Immensity in awe ;
While Eternal Truths came bursting,
Voicing the breakers' roar ;

And the shrinking soul was gazing
With struggling, choking breath,
From the frozen raft that bore him,
To the colder gates of Death.

Oh ! ye that hold that heroes
Must spring of chivalric line,—
That glory crowns her children
Alone where lances shine :

Believe that the mighty actions
Performed by the nameless brave,
Though unsung by earthly praises,
Find annals beyond the grave.