

With mast and halliard straining taut
Before the Northern breeze.

With bows afoam on sun-bright sea,
With white spray-beaten sail,
Like sea-birds in their following flight
Borne down with quickening gale.

At morn their spars were silvered white
With midnight's frozen dew ;
Flushed with a thousand kisses bright
Of daybreak's wondrous hues.

As 'gainst the brooding fog-bank dim,
With fluttered sails half-furled,
They stood like arks of refuge reared
Above a deluged world.

At eve the long beams lingered last
On mast and sheet and spar,
Till, from the rosy curtain, peered,
The love-lorn Evening Star.

And gliding through the measures soft
Of soundless music's sweep,
With star to star responding far
From sky to ocean deep.

Far wrapt in nether glory's flood,
From human coasts far blown,
Like human things they wander forth
Upon the sea alone.

Where are the ships we builded once—
The crews we gave them then ;
The sinewy timbers of our woods ;
The brawny Island men ?

Some in the lone, white Northern waste,
The hair seal's wide domain,