

SHAKSPEARE.

When earth was young and life was full and strong;
When mystery lurked in every grove and stream,
And truth was what the poet saw in dream,
Blind Homer sang for youth a wondrous song.
When, 'neath a heavy burden of false fears,
Men staggered in the gloom, a fierce dark soul
Uprose, and Dante built into life's whole
His Hell of woe and bitterness and tears.

Then lest the world should sink to dull despair,
Like the great sun, burst Shakspeare's glowing mind,
Piercing the murky vapors that confined
Man's vision to the things of lower air.
Homer sings youth; Dante the soul's fierce strife;
But Shakespeare chants the choral hymn of life.