

tide, and their floating far out upon the Basin, facing a terrific death with human homes and human beings in sight. And they told how gazing at their danger, he could bear it no longer, but dared in his strong might alone to rescue them,—how he had seized a plank and making it the bridge from one drifting fragment to another, after hours of unceasing toil he at last had the happiness to restore one hapless victim to be again for a while, a sojourner in the “place of hope.” He endeavoured to reach the other, but a mightier Will had decreed his doom; and the wretched being had drifted beyond all succour, and was fast nearing, on his speeding ice-raft, the madly curling breakers, to meet face to face amid their angry whirl and commotion the eye of that Almighty Being, he had so recently defied.

The river that rose in the mountain,  
Thence flowing a feeble rill,  
Till it swept in a fierce broad current—  
Lay frozen, staunch, and still:

On the bridge of its icy spanning,  
Might passengers fearless tread:  
Tho’ tides rushed deep beneath it,  
As rest of Ocean’s dead.

But over the angry eddies  
That frigid mask it threw,  
Bright in the Sun’s warm glances,  
Flushed with its parting hue.

The scowling night storms crushed it,  
With groans, and shrieks and roars:  
With fissures and chasms rent it  
From the arms of protecting shores.

Yet when daylight again beheld it,  
No trace of the havoc made  
Announced that in treacherous seeming  
Its glancing brilliance laid:—

There came two reckless beings  
To the lonely landing spot;  
Fiercely they swore that ice to dare,  
Cautioned or cautioned not.

They were spirits of sense benighted,  
Mad with excess of wine;  
No voice had weight, in their frenzied mood,  
Nor human, nor yet divine.

Each sprang on the fatal crossing,  
With laughter at fears so vain,—  
With blasphemous lips, and reeling step,  
And wild excited brain.

They sped on their onward travel,  
With jest and ribald song,—  
And in triumph waved their arms aloft,  
As they press’d the path along:—

But e’er they reached the centre,  
Their courage began to fail;  
The glances they gave each other,  
Shewed both were deadly pale.