

A half-drowned man on a stranger shore,  
A winter night, a storm gone mad,  
Alone, adrift, hemmed fiercely round,  
Gods, pity the chance that the skipper had.

Yet he struggled on in the blinding sweep  
Up the howling waste of the grave-clad land.  
'To the weary feet no strength was given,  
Reached out through the dark no guiding hand.

"Better down like a dog than a death like this,  
Though the struggle be fierce yet the sleep is warm."  
Still on he fought for his wife and his child,  
Still eddied round him the pitiless storm.

"Have I fetched so far but to freeze in my tracks,  
Why didn't they tell me, for surely they knew?"  
Fierce sought he for answer, half-wheeled in despair—  
There, a loving light burned the snow-squall through.

A wicket set in death's close pall  
Slipped through the smile of home and life;  
Hot leaped the blood in the cold-drawn heart,  
Rekindled the face blown out with the strife.

Yes, but the ways of God are not our ways,  
Scarce a stone's throw before lay shelter asleep,  
When the light thrust through its painted tongue  
With a lie as black as hell's deep.

Did no angel stoop down the winter night  
To warn the soul that had fought so well?  
No, toward the light pushed hard the eager feet,  
"Oh, God be thanked," from the glad lips fell.

In a hollow deep, where the cold was still,  
And the light snow sifted tired down,  
The light gone out, he knows not where,  
As his soul will go when the light is done,

Out-worn at last with the bootless strife  
The skipper grapples and gropes with the gloom,  
Despair's fell kiss on the knotted brow  
For the way-worn feet on earth no room;

Beats to and fro his few sands out,  
Oh, the bitter drops of Adam's sin!  
The eyes strained blind to catch the light,  
The light that had promised to take him in.

A shivering sob breaks the straitened lips,  
The one hard cry from the man's strong soul,  
The strange mists gather and darken and chill,  
The death-wine chokes from the black-lipped bowl.

But the loathsome draught grows strangely sweet,  
The pain dies away in a warm-armed dream.  
The drowsy shadows murmur and soothe.  
Soft-pillow the head mid their glimmer and gleam.

He's home again in the fire's bright glow,  
With a shout the "little one" clambers his knee,  
Eager points him the stockings plainly hung,—  
"When Santa Claus comes he surely must see."

Somehow he grows tired, spite the prattle and laugh,  
And the wife's glad eyes with his home-coming  
bright,—

"I guess I'll turn in, go to mother now,  
Be a good 'little one,' kiss Dad good-night."

Still the storm raged on, though its work was done,  
Lay the dead face still in the deepening snow,—  
"His Christmas-tide" on the Fanny's shore  
Not many winters ago.

ACADIA.

#### BURKE'S WARREN HASTINGS AS AN ORATION.

WIND and tongue, as Carlyle wittily calls oratory, are perhaps, but too frequently, the chief constituents of that art at the present day. Not that we mean to infer at all from this that the world is retrograding, but it is a fact, that Demosthenes and Cicero, in the year eighteen hundred and eighty-nine, would be great oddities. Of course there are men living that are real orators, but there is more sham and mere twaddle in the world than ever before. Mere youths fill the debating clubs, eager to discuss questions which the greatest minds of the time cannot decide. Grasping politicians stump the country on mutual exposures, or any cry that may perchance catch the ears of the people.

This is not oratory. The true orator is he who, by his voice alone, overcomes opposition, ignorance or superstition—who enters the multitude's very souls with his own fervent spirit, till a thousand hearts beat as one, feel but one impulse, and know but one desire. Such a man was Edmund Burke, the greatest orator and philosopher of his day, whose greatest rhetorical effort, the impeachment of Warren Hastings, we shall now discuss.

That this oration was the masterpiece of that time that it rivals anything of its kind in the English language, are facts everywhere admitted. But an oration that continued off and on for seven years, and embraced hours at a time, is far too great for us to criticise in detail. We can only glance at the general features of the production; and by considering the author's genius in every department of oratorical art,