

The rapid pacers come and go
 Like phantoms o'er the beaten snow,
 And where the summer shallops ride,
 Swiftly the painted carioles glide.
 Not Hector o'er the Trojan field
 By his illustrious coursers wheeled,
 In his mad circuit whirling round,
 Thus saw his steeds devour the ground;
 Nor Pindar, yielding loud acclaims
 To the great victor of the games,
 E'er saw upon the Olympian plain
 Such poules of heroic strain.
 And should they meet at break of day,
 Fresh baited with ambrosial hay,
 The sun's team climbing up the cope,
 They'd beat him half way down the slope.
 But oh, my colts, too swift ye pace,
 You've borne me past my stopping place;
 Backward return in slower mood,
 And while you whinny o'er your food,
 Again upon the bank I'll stray,
 And if he has not flown away,
 Hear what the old bird has to say.

High on the stump the old woodpecker sat,
 Twisting his neck this way and that,
 And soon as he found an ear to listen,
 He bristled his crest, and his keen eyes glisten,
 On his breast feathers he wiped his beak,
 Opened his mouth and began to speak.
 Hearken, stranger, while I tell
 Wondrous things that once befel
 The people of this drowsy land.
 Here on this pulpit where I stand
 Preaching my sermon to only one,
 Long ago I sat in the sun,
 And saw a sight that shook with fear
 The hunter fierce, and the trembling deer.
 The bright warm rays of an August noon
 Hushed each sound but the locust's tune;
 But a gentle wind blew from the west,
 Dimpling with ripples the water's breast,
 And catching the swans' wings where they float,
 Drove each one on like a well-trimmed boat,—
 A stately boat, with canvas white
 As a sheet of snow in a starry night.
 Now here, now there, the great fish rise
 To snap at the gaudy dragon flies;
 The loon like a porpoise rolls and dives,
 Screaming as if for a hundred lives,
 And solemn bitterns stand and think,
 Each on a leg, by the rushy brink.
 Just as the sun in his path on high
 Stayed his course in the middle sky,
 Speeding along with a foaming wake
 A great ship sailed upon the lake;
 And the loon dove down, and the white swans flew,
 Scared at the sight of the wonder new;
 For never had vessel along this shore
 Cleft these quiet waves before.
 No better craft was ever seen
 Than brave LaSalle's stout brigantine:
 Out from the prow a griffin springs,
 With scales of bronze and fiery wings,
 And the ship that earned so wide a fame
 Bore on its scroll the Griffin's name.