

Plaintive at first the song began, and slow ;
 It breathed of sadness, and of pain and woe ;
 Then, gathering all his notes, abroad he flung
 The multitudinous music from his tongue, —
 As, after showers, a sudden gust again
 Upon the leaves shakes down the rattling rain."

The effect is conventional.

878. The *BACCHANTES* were priestesses and worshippers of the god Bacchus, who, in Greek mythology, presided over the vine and its fruits. They worked themselves into a state of frenzy, and indulged in all manner of excess.

884. The student will recall the "prairies of fair Opelousas," l. 750.

885-7. A peaceful and lovely picture is contained in these lines. The whole succeeding passage — good as it is — has not more of the elements of poetic beauty.

III.

889. *SPANISH MOSS* is a plant "with long thread-like, flexuous stems and leaves hanging from the trees in dark-gray tufts and festoons."

The mistletoe is called *MYSTIC* because of its connection with the sacred rites of the Druids.

890. *YULE-TIDE* corresponded to our Christmas. It was the great religious festival of the Druids, and, indeed, of all the tribes of Northern Europe until Christianity was fully established.

908-10. A picturesque and well-wrought simile. In the earlier editions of the poem, l. 910 reads: —

"Stood a cluster of cotton-trees, with cordage of grapevines."

911. *FLOWERY SURE*. Cf. "sea of flowers," in l. 907.

912. The *SPANISH SADDLE* is "the range or stock saddle still in use in the Western United States and Mexico. It is much more elaborate than an ordinary saddle." The *stirrups* are made of wood instead of metal, and have a guard or hood to protect the feet in riding through the bush.

913. *DOUBLET*. "A close-fitting outer body-garment with sleeves, and sometimes with short skirts, and belted at the waist, that came into use about the end of the fifteenth century, and was worn by men, usually with hose, till the middle of the seventeenth century."

952. *ADAYES* was a small Louisiana town of Spanish origin on the Red River. Darby says in his book that a considerable trade was carried on with the Spanish provinces by the route of Natchitoches. Merchandise was exchanged for wool and mules.

953. The *OZARK MOUNTAINS* lie between the Missouri and Arkansas rivers. "Gabriel and his pursuers would naturally follow the course of the Red River from Adayes to the base of the Ozark Mountains in the Indian Territory and then proceed northwest to the prairies."

957. The dew reflecting the red rays of the morning sun.

960. See l. 408.

961. *OLYMPUS*, in early Greek mythology, was the home of the Gods. It was a mountain in Thessaly.