

R E Q U I T A L .

A TRAVELLER in the desert wild
Dropped a seedling in the ground,
And digged a well and walled it round,
That to the wandering desert child
Might be an oasis green
In that desert land, I ween.

The seedling burst its rugged rind,
And, struggling to the sunlight sheen
Gleamed two leaves of glossy green,
Trembling in the gentle wind ;
And evermore the treelet grew,
And ever as the breezes blew,
Its tender branches swayed and bent,
And ever deeper down it sent
Its rootlets in that desert land
To the founts of nourishment
Deep down in the cool moist sand.

And now beneath a copper sky
Waves a tall and stately tree,
Its lordly head uplifting high,
Its gay plumes tossing wild and free,
Its leafy arms extending wide
So that far on every side,
A tender, light-obscuring shade
By its branching arms is made.

In after years a traveller grey
Worn and weary with the way
Rested 'neath the cool green shade
By the friendly palm-tree made
And drank from the refreshing spring,
Dug, years before, by his own hand,
Which such gladness round did fling
In that dreary, desert land.

Thus amid life's desert land,
Every deed of kindness wrought,
Every pure and holy thought,
Every gentle smile of love,
Every friendly grasp of hand,
Bringeth blessing from above ;
In our time of sorest need,
Of lasting joys the certain seed.

— *W. H. Withrow, M.A.*