

THE FORLORN HOPE

I

In yonder vale,
Where late the meditative shepherd watched
The timid flock and playful lambs in peace,
An army rests, renewing life to breathe,
Before the forces scale the fortified hill.
Among them stand prepared, all resolute,
An armed company of silent men :
The veteran that oft had fought with Death,
Compelled to hold the balanced view,
Betrays the bridled storm by rigid lip ;
The raw recruit, of battle knowing nought,
Forgetting fear in visioned hope and fame,
Hath countenance aglow with ardent fire ;
Yet one united troop they stand.

Their grisled chief of lion look,
Alert and proud, in front walks to and fro,
Inspiring them that eager gaze and list,
With measured words of fiery strength to dare
The distant battlemented heights that frown