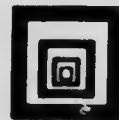


**CIHM
Microfiche
Series
(Monographs)**

**ICMH
Collection de
microfiches
(monographies)**



Canadian Institute for Historical Microreproductions / Institut canadien de microreproductions historiques

© 1996

Technical and Bibliographic Notes / Notes technique et bibliographiques

The Institute has attempted to obtain the best original copy available for filming. Features of this copy which may be bibliographically unique, which may alter any of the images in the reproduction, or which may significantly change the usual method of filming are checked below.

- Coloured covers / Couverture de couleur
- Covers damaged / Couverture endommagée
- Covers restored and/or laminated / Couverture restaurée et/ou pelliculée
- Cover title missing / Le titre de couverture manque
- Coloured maps / Cartes géographiques en couleur
- Coloured ink (i.e. other than blue or black) / Encre de couleur (i.e. autre que bleue ou noire)
- Coloured plates and/or illustrations / Planches et/ou illustrations en couleur
- Bound with other material / Relié avec d'autres documents
- Only edition available / Seule édition disponible
- Tight binding may cause shadows or distortion along interior margin / La reliure serrée peut causer de l'ombre ou de la distorsion le long de la marge intérieure.
- Blank leaves added during restorations may appear within the text. Whenever possible, these have been omitted from filming / Il se peut que certaines pages blanches ajoutées lors d'une restauration apparaissent dans le texte, mais, lorsque cela était possible, ces pages n'ont pas été filmées.
- Additional comments / Commentaires supplémentaires:

L'Institut a microfilmé le meilleur exemplaire qu'il lui a été possible de se procurer. Les détails de cet exemplaire qui sont peut-être uniques du point de vue bibliographique, qui peuvent modifier une image reproduite, ou qui peuvent exiger une modifications dans la méthode normale de filmage sont indiqués ci-dessous.

- Coloured pages / Pages de couleur
- Pages damaged / Pages endommagées
- Pages restored and/or laminated / Pages restaurées et/ou pelliculées
- Pages discoloured, stained or foxed / Pages décolorées, tachetées ou piquées
- Pages detached / Pages détachées
- Showthrough / Transparence
- Quality of print varies / Qualité inégale de l'impression
- Includes supplementary material / Comprend du matériel supplémentaire
- Pages wholly or partially obscured by errata slips, tissues, etc., have been refilmed to ensure the best possible image / Les pages totalement ou partiellement obscurcies par un feuillet d'errata, une pelure, etc., ont été filmées à nouveau de façon à obtenir la meilleure image possible.
- Opposing pages with varying colouration or discolourations are filmed twice to ensure the best possible image / Les pages s'opposant ayant des colorations variables ou des décolorations sont filmées deux fois afin d'obtenir la meilleur image possible.

This item is filmed at the reduction ratio checked below /
Ce document est filmé au taux de réduction indiqué ci-dessous.

10x	14x	18x	22x	26x	30x										
			✓												
12x	16x	20x	24x	28x	32x										

The copy filmed here has been reproduced thanks to the generosity of:

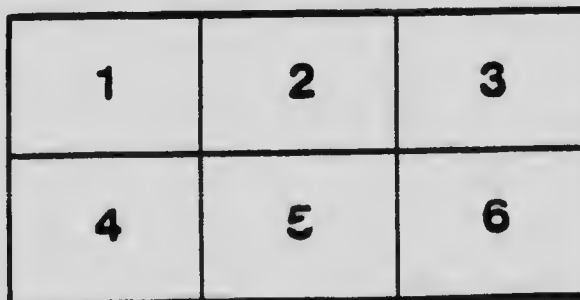
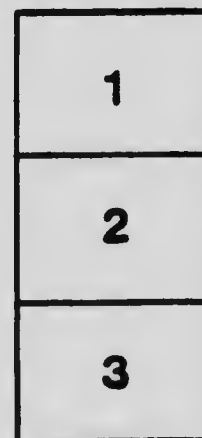
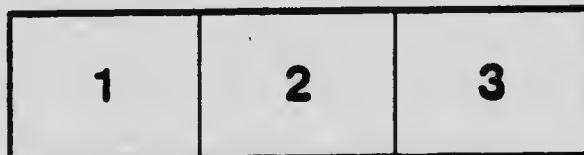
National Library of Canada

The images appearing here are the best quality possible considering the condition and legibility of the original copy and in keeping with the filming contract specifications.

Original copies in printed paper covers are filmed beginning with the front cover and ending on the last page with a printed or illustrated impression, or the back cover when appropriate. All other original copies are filmed beginning on the first page with a printed or illustrated impression, and ending on the last page with a printed or illustrated impression.

The last recorded frame on each microfiche shall contain the symbol \rightarrow (meaning "CONTINUED"), or the symbol ∇ (meaning "END"), whichever applies.

Maps, plates, charts, etc., may be filmed at different reduction ratios. Those too large to be entirely included in one exposure are filmed beginning in the upper left hand corner, left to right and top to bottom, as many frames as required. The following diagrams illustrate the method:



L'exemplaire filmé fut reproduit grâce à la générosité de:

Bibliothèque nationale du Canada

Les images suivantes ont été reproduites avec le plus grand soin, compte tenu de la condition et de la netteté de l'exemplaire filmé, et en conformité avec les conditions du contrat de filmage.

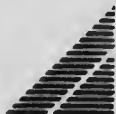
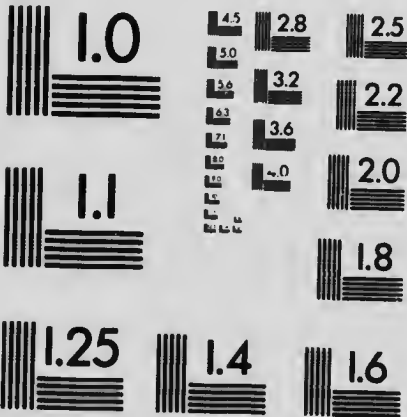
Les exemplaires originaux dont la couverture en papier est imprimée sont filmés en commençant par le premier plat et en terminant soit par la dernière page qui comporte une empreinte d'impression ou d'illustration, soit par le second plat, selon le cas. Tous les autres exemplaires originaux sont filmés en commençant par la première page qui comporte une empreinte d'impression ou d'illustration et en terminant par la dernière page qui comporte une telle empreinte.

Un des symboles suivants apparaîtra sur la dernière image de chaque microfiche, selon le cas: le symbole \rightarrow signifie "A SUIVRE", le symbole ∇ signifie "FIN".

Les cartes, planches, tableaux, etc., peuvent être filmés à des taux de réduction différents. Lorsque le document est trop grand pour être reproduit en un seul cliché, il est filmé à partir de l'angle supérieur gauche, de gauche à droite, et de haut en bas, en prenant le nombre d'images nécessaire. Les diagrammes suivants illustrent la méthode.

MICROCOPY RESOLUTION TEST CHART

(ANSI and ISO TEST CHART No. 2)

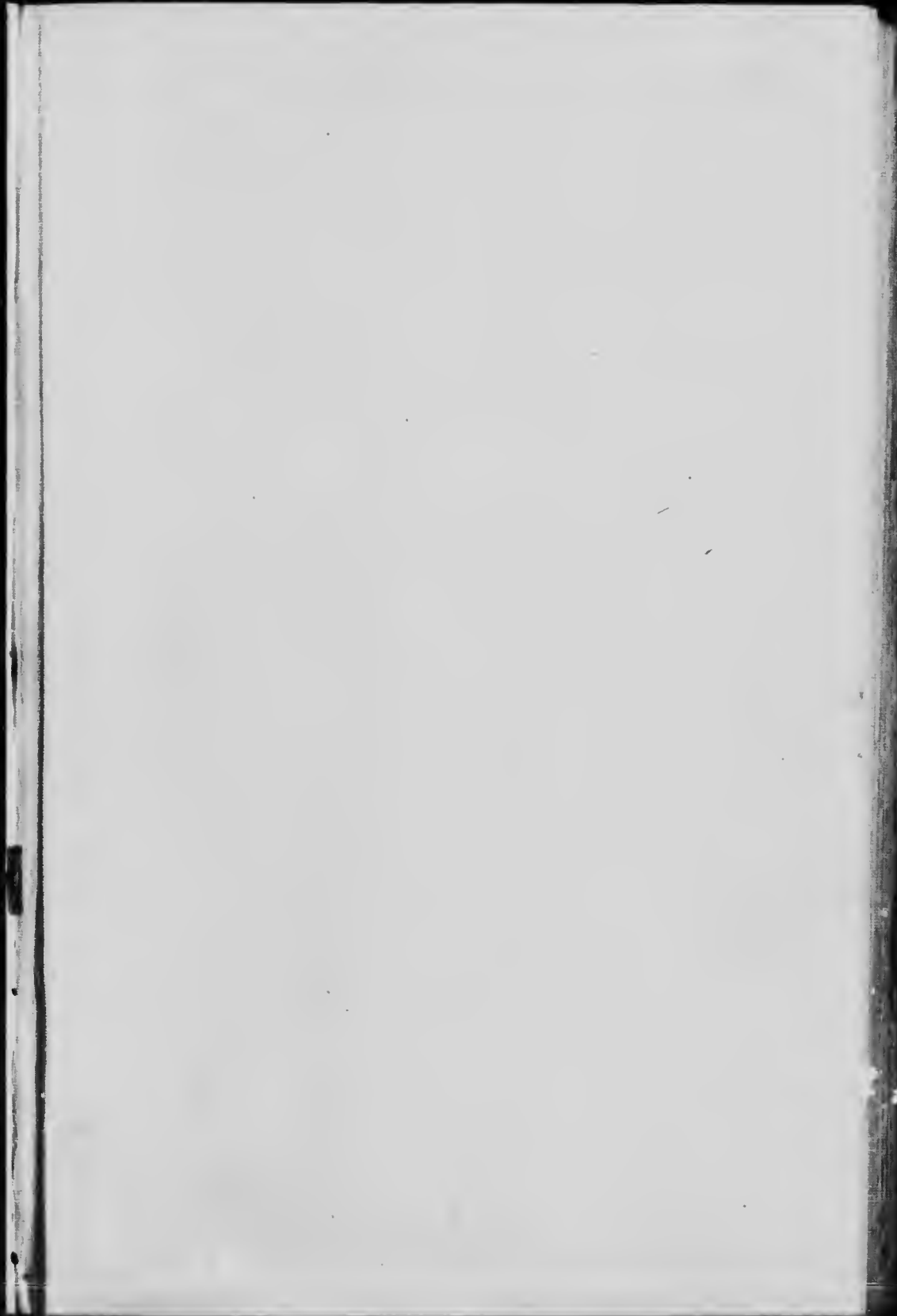


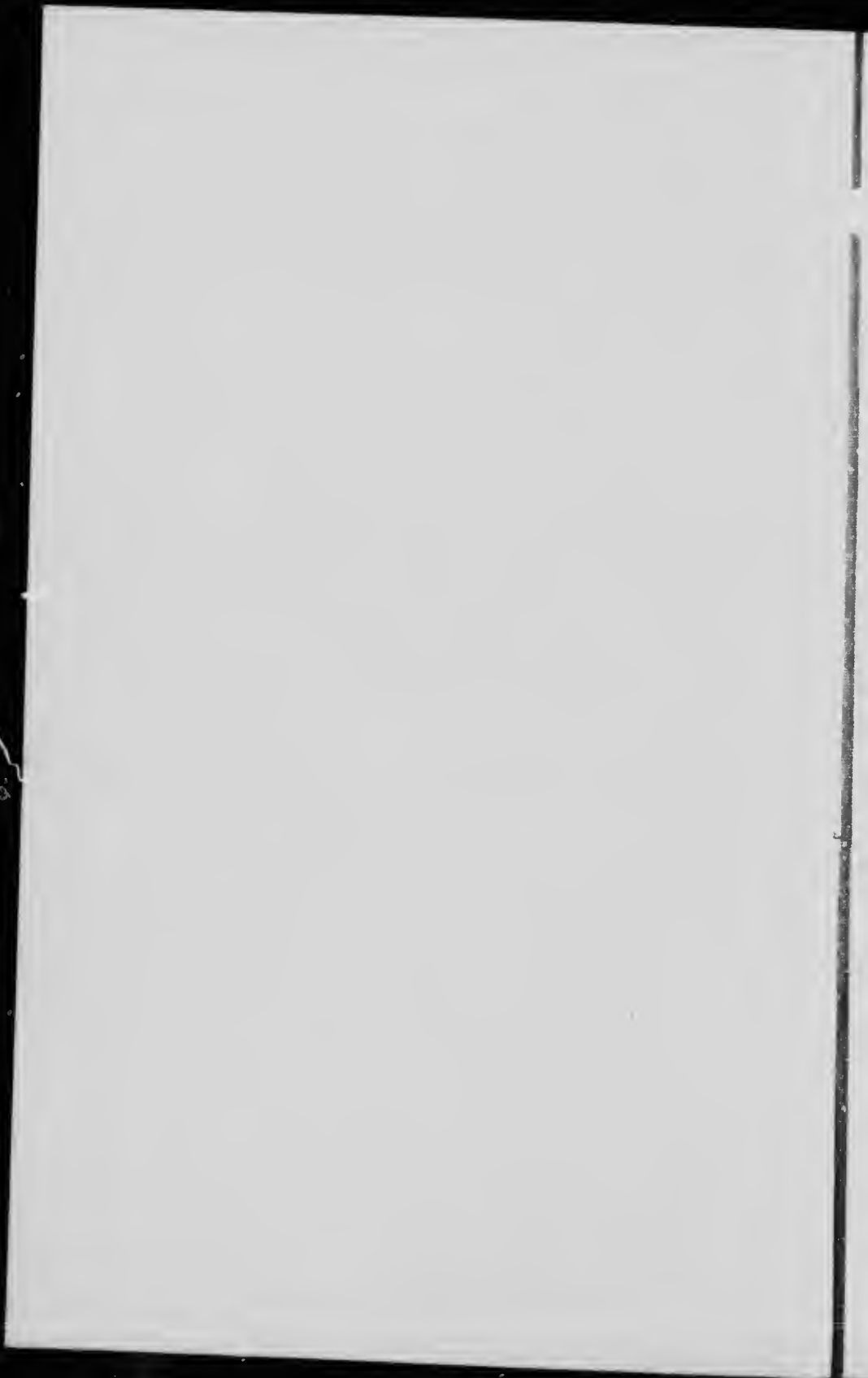
APPLIED IMAGE Inc

1653 East Main Street
Rochester, New York 14609 USA
(716) 482 - 0300 - Phone
(716) 288 - 5989 - Fax

• THE RICH FISHERMAN

ERIC DUNCAN





THE RICH FISHERMAN
AND OTHER TALES

A Word to all who are interested in Boys

It matters very much what a boy reads. If his eager and impressionable mind be filled with deleterious trash which, masquerading as literature for boys, throws a glamour over crime and criminals, harm must be done to him.

His moral sense becomes blunted; the bad atmosphere which pervades the trashy books he reads asserts its influence over him and he drifts into evil ways. "His head has been turned by bad books" is one of the most frequent pleas made on behalf of lads brought before the magistrates for petty crime. And the plea is usually accepted, as the magistrates know from experience that it is right.

Recognising how widespread is the mischief done by undesirable boys' literature, ought not everyone interested in work amongst boys to try their utmost to kill this pernicious thing? Is it not a moral obligation amongst clergymen, Sunday school superintendents, and parents, that they should give hearty co-operation to those who are trying to prevent the spread of the baleful and mischievous influence?

General Sir Robert Baden-Powell, who has already done so much for our boys, recognises that the only way effectually to deal with the evil of unwholesome literature is to put good books in place of bad. He is therefore editing, under the title of **B-P.'s Books for Boys**, the finest series of cheap boys' books ever published. In it will be included the works of first-class authors only.

The First Six Volumes are—

JACK ARCHER. By G. A. HENTY.

CORMORANT CRAG. By G. MANVILLE FENN.

SNOW SHOES AND CANOES. By W. H. G. KINGSTON.

THE MATABELE CAMPAIGN. By Gen. Sir R. BADEN-POWELL.

A SON OF THE SEA. By FRANK BULLEN.

ROB THE RANGER. By HERBERT STRANG.

B-P.'s. Books for Boys are sold at 4d. net per copy and are volumes that have hitherto not been obtainable under from 2/6 to 6/-. They can be purchased at all booksellers or newsagents.

BENNETT & Co., 8 HENRIETTA STREET, LONDON, W.C.

THE RICH FISHERMAN

And Other Tales

BY

ERIC DUNCAN



LONDON

THE CENTURY PRESS

(BENNETT & CO.)

8 HENRIETTA STREET, COVENT GARDEN, W.C.

[All Rights Reserved]

PS8507
U4684
R35
1910
P***

First Published in 1910

09411476

CONTENTS

	PAGE
THE RICH FISHERMAN	7
THE SHEEP-THIEF	49
THE LIFE-LINE	68
THE MAN WITH THE HOE—CANADA	71
RUSTIC RHYMES—	
A MOSQUITO SONG	73
AN OX SONG	76
A COW SONG	79
A BULL SONG	84
A HOG SONG	89
DROUGHT	94
THE OLD RESIDENT	95
YET OH, STRANGE HEART	97
AN ELEGY	98

1875

THE RICH FISHERMAN

A LEGEND OF LOFODEN

PART I

THAT fell turmoil, long surging on,
Which shook and jarred the bigot Throne
Whose banner desperate Rome unfurled
To crush soul freedom from the world,—
That weary storm which thirty years
Drenched German soil with blood and tears,
And scorched it with harmattan blast,—
Had worn its fury out at last.

What time exhaustion's peace prevailed,
From Hamburg town a vessel sailed,
Bound for the Baltic's eastern coasts
With plunder of defeated hosts ;
And Finnish veterans of the wars
Returning home to Helsingfors.
The wind was fair, the ship was strong,
She flew the Jutland sands along,
But, rounding up the Skager rack,
The gale grew fierce, the heavens grew black,
Far north by Norway's lofty shore
A hurricane its captive bore,

In bleak Lofoden, to the West,—
That archipelago
By genial sunshine seldom blest,
Where toss the seas in vague unrest
And winds know how to blow—
Dwelt Sigurd Kand of Osterbann,
A great herculean fisherman,
His the most daring boat that ran
To sea from East Vagoe.
He was both resolute and bold,
But bore toward his fellowmen
A heart that was as hard and cold
As is the top of Swartisen.¹
A true though late descendant he
Of the grim race which swept the sea
In history's dim morn ;
And thus he gained, in fateful hour,
Gold, still of earthly might the tower,—
Though oft the shades around it lour
Of misery forlorn.

Dark was the dawn, though late in Spring,
Two men had sought the sheltering
Of a great rock, which on the shore
Deadened the tempest's rising roar.
"Einar, I cannot understand
How ship could strike so close to land,
And all attempts for safety fail,—
Why, man ! a leap might well avail.
It is an awkward place, I own,

¹ Swartisen, a huge glacier-capped mountain in Nordland.

Sheer rock save this small nook alone ;
But here in heaps the men are thrown
Though every spark of life is gone.

Brains ooze through bloody tangled locks
As dashed by surge against the rocks,
Slight was the storm, but yet suppose
The most did thus their voyage close
Strange, I repeat, that not a man
Alive should land in Osterbann.

Soldiers by garb these strangers are,
Most likely Swedish, from the war
Which lasts so long beyond the sea
And pays the fighters royally.
Some gold or silver sure they bore
Secured around them, to the shore,
But naught of that, well knowest thou
Is on a single body now."

" Well, Olaf, what hast thou in view ?
What leads this lengthy preface to ? "

" Red Einar, this,—that Sigurd knows
More of this business than he shows.
No sluggard he when tempests rave
And plunder loads the midnight wave,
And small the chance of wreckage thrown
So near his house to him unknown.
When we aroused him, by the bed
I marked his boots were splashed with red,
His sealing club—Ha ! did I hear
A human voice in tones of fear ? "

" It was imagination." " No !
Again it comes, a cry of woe."

By clefts affording scanty room
The rock precipitous they clomb,
And at its back, 'mid wave and blast,
Bound strongly to a broken mast
Whose end had wedged into the cliff—
They saw a lad. His fingers stiff
And numbed with cold, had vainly tried
To loose the cords about him tied,
And life for him had soon been spent
Had not keen Olaf caught his plaint.

They bore the waif to Olaf's home,
Where, when his strength again did come,
He told them, in the Swedish tongue,
A tale of woe and cruel wrong.

He came, he said, from old Abo,
But left his childhood's home to go
O'er sea, a drummer boy to be
For Swedish Count in Germany.
Peace came. The Pomeranian foam
Was lined with troops for transport home,
And few the ships. In evil day
The Count, impatient of delay,
Embarked at Hamburg. Storms in strength
Withstood and vanquished them at length,
Into the outer ocean fast
The sport of elements they passed ;
Then came a lull, but as away
They squared, full sail, for Bergen Bay,
Sudden a squall terrific blew
And sails and spars before it flew.

“ Heaven help us now, for speedily
We drift into the icy sea ! ”
The sailors cried ; and panic-stung
Straight overboard the boats they swung
Soon as the fiercest blasts were hushed,—
And crew and soldiers to them rushed.

Though winds and waves were still at war,
And Norway's fjelds were blue afar,
And frantic officers implored,
Yet down the vessel's side they poured.

The overloaded boats at last
Cut loose, away to windward passed
A little space, but crest on crest
Of breaking billows on them pressed,
And topped with ease their gunwales low,
Quick swamping, down the whole did go.

Thus was the ship of crew bereft,
Captain and mate alone were left,
That Swedish lord, in sore annoy,
With twenty soldiers and the boy.
And north five days and nights they drove,—
Dark mountains then before them hove
In sight, like castles bastioned round,
Guarding the world's remotest bound.

By this, the captain and the mate
With dexterous pains and patience great,
The tattered foresail had repaired
And slung a temporary yard.
Again the ship her helm did mind
But not to fight against the wind

In bootless strife,—she ran before,
And night fell as she neared the shore.

Now, could she stop,—the hope is vain,—
She drags her anchor—snaps her chain ;
Yet courage :—rockward though she speeds,
Clear 'twixt the heights a channel leads.
Perforce she enters it, when lo !
A point divides the sound in two.
“ Starboard ! straight on ! ” the captain cries,
Forth flashed a light before his eyes,
Up the left strait a torch was waved ;—
“ Saved ! ” cried the storm-tossed wanderers,
“ saved !

It shines to point our course aright
To sheltered port,—the gladsome light ! ”

Thus joyful, they to larboard veered,
The beacon quickly disappeared,
Rocks hide it, thought they, confident,
Forward their hapless course they bent
Into the jaws of dark despair—
For treachery had led them there.

Abrupt ahead, each eager eye
Straining their guiding star to spy
Saw, grandly looming through the night
Athwart their bows, a giant height.
No power on earth could ward the shock,—
Crash went the ship against the rock,
And at the dire concussion, prone
The last tall spars came thundering down
In murderous ruin. Back recoils

The wreck, the black sea round her boils
In rushing. To their feet they bound,
The doomed who live,—they see around
Naught but one gloomy wall whose crest
Pale moonrise tips, save to the west,
Where yawns a rift which rends the steep
Clear through and through, down to the deep.

They knew themselves to death betrayed
By the false light which seemed to aid,
They deemed that wretches, murder-skilled
Lay in that hollow skord concealed,
Yet small their choice—all choice is past.
The battered hulk is settling fast.

Just then the moon, whose struggling light
Was rack-veiled oft, now dim now bright,
On the fjeld-top her face did show
And startled darkness fled the "gio."¹
They saw its sides were smooth and bare
No hold which hand or foot could dare,
Nor landing-place, save only where
That wedge-like skord clove downward, there
A beach-nook lay, in size so small
Each wave-break seemed to sweep it all.

Now rolls the ship, her hour is come,
She struggles like a creature dumb
In its last throes. The boy with care
Is fastened to a broken spar
And to the deep consigned. The rest
Good swimmers all, the billows breast

¹ "Gio," a cliff-bounded cove.

Straight for the landing. Soon they passed
With its light weight the floating mast,
Which, swerving ever from the mark
Tossed aimless on the waters dark.
Though buffeted and sorely tried,
Well for the boy it wandered wide,
For sudden landward on his ear
Burst cries of agony and fear,
And, lo ! as on a wave he rose,
A sight which life's warm current froze.

The moon was shrouded, but again
That beacon shone along the main,
And right before its baleful blaze,
Which bathed the beach in bloody haze,
Stalked a huge form. A club it bore,
And held the passage of the shore.
Staying its course it seemed anon
To smite the waves, a dying groan
Followed each blow,—this dreadful scene
Was oft repeated, hemmed between
The ocean and the murderer
To the last man they perished there.

Next did the trembling watcher note
Pushed from the beach a little boat,
And deeper horror at the view
Seized his sad soul—death seeks him too ;
No ! to the wreck the boat is turned,
Now 'mid the ebbing tide discerned
Intent on plunder. Unobserved
He floated on,—a faint hope nerved

His heart again ; now could he reach,
Before the skiff returned, the beach,
He yet might live. Full desperately
He paddled through the heaving sea,
But made slow progress, and at last
When near the goal a backwave cast
The spar behind a rock and drove
Its end into a cleft,—he strove
All unsuccessfully to urge
It backward, each succeeding surge
Half drowned him ; thrice the boat did pass
Deep laden, heedless ;—he, alas !
He durst not call, and thus he lay
Till help arrived with dawning day.

“ Loki ¹ for neighbour we have got,”
Cried Olaf Nord in anger hot :
“ He thus, apart upon the hill
Unhampered works his evil will,
Such cold forethoughted butchery
Staggers, disgusts and sickens me !
Men clubbed like fish which youngster drives
Through rock-pools—swimming for their lives.
That ship, if let alone, had found
Her way into Rafte’s landlocked sound,
So still, so sheltered is the place
She had not wrecked, though anchorless.
Off to the devil’s lodge I speed
To tax him with his devilish deed.”
And rash and inconsiderate, he
Sought Osterback immediately.

¹ Loki, the evil power in Scandinavian mythology.

Upon that hill, whose sudden dip
Formed the huge cove which trapped the ship,
Stood Kand, and scanned with wary eye
Impetuous Nord as he drew nigh.

“ Why hastest thou, good Olaf, so ?
Another wreck in Ostergio ?
Nay, scarce would mother Ocean send
Two gifts like that at once, my friend.”

“ Friend,” panted Nord, “ ah, who would have
Friendship for thee, thou bloody knave ?
Ay, stare and shake, and stare again,
Betrayed base of trustful men.”

Kand looked at him, nor moved a pace,
All imperturbable his face,
And calm his voice :—“ Neighbour beware,
In spite of my restraining care
My hand may come across thy path ”—
“ Bah ! ” Nord exclaimed with boiling wrath,
“ I brand thee—free from doubt or fear,—
A mean and skulking murderer.”

Like flash Kand's palm of massive growth
Shot out and smote him on the mouth ;
“ Take thou that small return from me,
Thou arrogant nonentity.”
Instant like Polar bears they clinched,—
Nord never for a moment flinched,
(Though desperate was the chance he ran,
To cope with that gigantic man.
Vain the attempt,—with snarling scoff

And sidelong heave, Kand shook him off,
At arm's length him disdainful held,
Then upward his sure rise compelled ;
Powerless as infant to oppose
The dread ascent, up, up he rose,
Till high o'erhead Kand spun him round
And dashed him grovelling on the ground.

Breathless, half-stunned, awhile he lay,
Then lamely rose, and limped away,
Muttering, " Though victor in the fight,
By might thou winnest, not by right."
" So but I win, I hold it light
Whether it be by right or might,
But this," said Kand, " is now the meed
Of meddler warned, who would not heed."

Ask did Olaf pass in pain
Ere he could walk abroad again,
Red Finar singly would not stir
Nor speak against the murderer.
And Kand, now well upon his guard
His booty hid, unseen, unheard,
So carefully was it concealed
That nought a later search revealed
Inculpating ;—yet from that time
Men held him fit for any crime.

And now his temper, always rough
So overbearing grew,
That bodily, one day, walked off
In ire, his hardy crew.
Yet little he appeared to care.

But sold the smack and all her gear,
And in a wherry forth did fare
Alone, the world to view.

Some Islesmen saw him at Bodoë,
But southward soon he passed,
Lingered a little while at Moe,
Thence to Old Trondhjem he did go
And, restless wandering to and fro
To Bergen came at last.

Contented there a year he stayed ;
The new and fast increasing trade
In fish, his mind engrossed.
For now the merchants first essay
To foreign lands to ship away
The wondrous wealth from fjord and bay
Of Norway's fissured coast.

And Kand resolved to have the sole
Possession, and complete control
Of all the fishing fleet
That sought the sea from East Vagoë ;—
Thus he the pride of power would know,
And envious friend and open foe
Alike be at his feet.

So to a large establishment
In Bergen he did represent
The richness of the sea
On East Vagoë's great fishing ground :
The cod, the ling, the herring found
Of size unequalled all around
Unmatched in quality.

He made arrangements sure and sound

Then in a "jacht"¹ Lofoden-bound
He took his passage home,
Where such grand views did he unfold
Of sure employment and of gold,
That half the boats to him were sold
Ere fishing time had come.

Meanwhile the rescued stranger lad
With Olaf Nord his dwelling had ;
And made himself so useful there
That oft the goodwife would declare
Small gratitude to them he owed
For anything on him bestowed.
Toys for the children fashioned he,
They screamed for him in ecstasy ;
For weeks might Nord from home abide,
He kept the house with food supplied ;
With confidence could she depend
On him and his amphibious friend.

This, a young seal which Nord had caught
And given him, he had tamed, and taught
His sign or whistle to obey,
Though swimming in the fjord away.
Summer and winter both were one
To this intrepid fisherman,
In calm or storm the sea he sought
And fish to his young master brought

¹ Hence modern yacht, but the two crafts have little in common. The jacht was a heavy, slow-going vessel with a huge square sail, and towering bows so that the steersman could shape his course in spite of high piled cargo between:

Then patiently would linger near
Till he received the head, his share.

One evening rambling far away,—
In the glad time of endless day,

 Along the rugged shore ;
The boy on land, the seal on sea
Running a race right merrily,
They reached a fjord all radiantly
 Extending on before.

Black jagged heights this fjord enwall,
But northward, back the mountains fall

 And through the gap, in view
Like lamp in great Walhalla swung,
Its weird night glow far streaming flung,
The giant luminary hung
 Low in the purpling blue.

The sombre cliffs like copper shone,

 The sea in glory rolled
Up to their base, with rhythmic moan ;
While right along the golden zone
 A skiff its course did hold.

As rested boy and seal upon
A great declivity of stone,

 That skiff its wing did close ;
Light grounding on the long incline
Which sloped beneath the waterline,
And, man of build and bearing fine—
 Its occupant—arose,
And stretched himself, and leapt ashore,
A bludgeon in his hand he bore—
 Up the slant rock he sprung,

Caught hold of the unwitting seal
And raised his club, but ere it fell,
The boy, in agonized appeal,

Gripped hard his wrist, and clung.
"Nay, spare my seal, good master, spare
The poor kind brute of wisdom rare
Which every day and everywhere
Is my companion true."

Quoth he, "I only want his cloak,
Be off, or thou wilt catch the stroke ;
Boy, didst thou hear? Indeed I spoke,
I am impatient, too."

Flour-tering face downward down the stone,
The seal was in a twinkling thrown
Headlong into the bay,
While on the seal's defenceless head
One sure-aimed blow descending, sped
The useful life away.

Then slowly, from his shallow bath,
With gleaming eyes of hate and wrath,
Uprose the youthful Finn,
Dabbled in blood his dripping hair
And his torn face,—in mute despair
He saw his favourite slain.
A space he stood in silent woe,
Then spoke, in voice so old and low,
It awed the ruthless man,
Who busy flaying, scorned to rise
Or look, yet could not quite despise
The deeply muttered ban.

“ Thou art the man, who, void of faith,
Lured on my comrades to their death
And robbed them, on the strand ;
Unfortunate survivor, I
Still feel thy bitter enmity,
Now, by the Powers that rule on high,
I curse thee, Sigurd Kand.
By land, by sea to go with thee
Thy evil genius I will be,
And vainly thou shalt strive to see
The hand that does thee wrong ;
Thy days shall pass in secret fear,
And when thy latter end is near,
Horror shall seize thee, wild and drear,
Nor will the time be long.”

“ Ah ! ” moaned the scourge, in mock affright,
“ What hideous vision blasts my sight !
'Tis said a Finn at pleasure can
Assume the shape of seal or man,
Now, is it man or is it seal
That whelms me in the surge of hell ? ”
Then (looking up) ; “ Thou vicious elf !
Take thou good heed unto thyself,
If e'er again thy face I see,
Oh woe for thee ! oh, woe for thee ! ”

And with the words his bludgeon flew
Full at the boy, who dodged, and threw
Himself into the bay again,
And vanished from the ken of men.
Kand rose, and with expression blank,

Stared dubiously at where he sank,
Then with his skin he homeward hied
Crestfallen, like cur by rat defied.

Three days passed ere the Finnish lad
Was missed by Olaf Nord,
For oft his lonely wanderings had
Lain far by sound and skord.
At length alarmed, his boat he took
And every fjord and peak and nook
Accessible, explored
In East Vagoe and islets round,
And neither boy nor seal he found,
But rumour did afford
A clue,—where Gimsoe's currents roar,
A corpse, whose dress a semblance bore
To the lost boy's, was cast ashore,
And to its earth restored.
And sadly Olaf's children wept,
And Sigurd Kand his counsel kept.

PART II

WOE to the man whom Conscience leaves !
A derelict on summer waves
With chance-poised yards and steady gale
Right regally awhile may sail ;
But sure as darkness swallows day,
Shall ruin gulf the castaway.

Time flew along—Kand's riches grew ;
Him all the coasts of Nordland knew ;
He gained, by gold or cunning low
The last sea-smack of East Vagoe ;
Built a new lodge upon the shore
And dwelt on Osterback no more.
Now, walk in fear and trembling ye

Who, or on sea or land,
In days gone by unluckily
Have angered Sigurd Kand.
From minds like his, by fortune raised,
Deem not that grudges are effaced.

Bold Nord the change did quickly feel,—
Could Olaf Nord to Sigurd kneel ?
Nay, Hindoe Isle to eastward lay,
To Hindoe soon he passed away,
Where, poor although the bank he found
Compared with former fishing-ground

The galling yoke was yet unknown
Of equal to superior grown.

Unused to start at beck or whim
His neighbours quickly followed him ;
And fast as they to Hindoe went
To Nordland Kand for others sent—
Who, less expert and daring, still
Were more submissive to his will.

Yet the old dwellers left behind
Their families, for they designed
In the old place to make their home
When toil was done, and winter come.¹
Kand was incensed,—he had been fain
In empty huts to lodge his men ;
No plan to empty them he wots,
His were the boats, but not the cots.
So lodges he was forced to build,
And with revenge and malice filled,
He vowed that neither wife nor child
Of his old comrades, self-exiled,
By him employed should ever be
In curing fish, as formerly.

And mainland strangers took their place,
Leaving them all in idleness ;
And Kand the strictest orders gave

¹ At the present day, with better boats and appliances
the fishing is carried on all the year round. In fact
from January to April is considered the most profitable
season.

That fish from him they should not have ;
Not even the refuse head or tail,
Dogfish or skate unsaleable.
Still worse, the little two-oared skiffs—
In which boys caught, along the cliffs
The red rock-cod in bounteous store,
And half-grown coalfish by the score,—
Left on the beach one quiet night
Had vanished clean at dawn of light.

To question Kand was little use,
He answered only with abuse ;
And soon the families, in want,
On shellfish made a living scant,
Yea, some the pangs of hunger mock
With tangle from the tidal rock.
Hard fares the land where such as Kand
Can livelihood of all command,
By awe of Heaven as much controlled
As winter wolf on Russian wold.

Yet strange to say Nord's family
Had aye of food sufficiency,—
Each morning lay beside their door
A cod, a ling, or else a score
Of herrings bright, without a trace
Whereby the giver they might guess.

At length the mother heard, one night,
Close to the house a footfall light ;
And rising, through a chink did peep,
When, shuffling down the shingly steep,

Sousing, the starlight did reveal
What looked like an enormous seal.

“ He tries to hide himself in vain,”
She said ; “ the mystery now is plain
The friend of that poor lad, the Finn ”
(Anon for him her tears begin),
“ But why returned he not before ?
Why comes he not by day on shore ?
How knew he that we fared so ill ?
To me it all is mystery still.”

The Nordland men small love did feel
For Kand, or interest in his weal ;
For why ? As mere machines to bring
Gold to his grasp, aye tightening,
He held them, nor would even deign
Goodwill by courtesy to gain.
One Bodoë man alone, whose care
Kept boats and gearing in repair,
Though gray and worn with age and storm,
His work did heartily perform.
Old Lars they called him. All the while
The others mocked his thankless toil,
For Kand remarked his patient zeal
And drove him everywhere at will.

Yet when the winter's restful blast
Returned, and home his fellows passed,
Then him did Kand invite with care
Solicitous, his lodge to share,
With work and wages, but I deem

Companionship was Sigurd's aim,
For wild and strange had grown his look,
And oft, as ague-struck, he shook.

All through that summer lucklessness
Had shadowed every move of his ;
On the far banks, and on the coast
Long lines and nets and gear were lost ;
Two smacks with heavy hauls on board,
Had sunk at anchor in the fjord ;
Nor did it tend to mend his cheer
A ghostly whisper aye to hear,
Tracking misfortune doggedly—
" Thy evil genius I will be."

No more with muscle-strength, ashore
He brought the sh, as' wont of yore,
His business kept his vigorous hand
And brain well occupied on land ;
But now he sailed again, resolved
To solve the riddle deep involved
In all these misadventures strange
And on their author take revenge.

With weather fair his largest smack
Steered by himself, marked out the track
To the far bank for all the fleet,
Which ranged to work in order meet.
On Sigurd's boat two of the crew
Kept watch with him the whole night through ;
He said his eyes ne'er failed to scan

The "swing"¹ which o'er the gunwale ran,
Scarce did he once his posture shift,
And yet he found the smack adrift ;
Loosely inboard the hawser slacks,
Cut clean and sheer, as with an axe.

At dawn to catch a buoy he wore,
His men all bending at the oar,—
When forward sharp a cry arose,—
" A plank has started, down she goes ! "
Around they looked in blank surprise,
Above their knees the waters rise,
Pell mell they jumped, and none too fast,
The smack abyssward plunged and passed.
Well nigh her sinking suction drew
Behind her, that astounded crew.

With utmost strength they struggled clear,
Outstriking for a consort near,
Which wondering sore, their plight had seen,
And half way met and dragged them in.
As Sigurd from the brine was hauled,
A voice hissed in his ears appalled,
That voice too well remembered he ;
" *By land, by sea, I follow thee.*"

He scrutinized the faces o'er
Of all who with him left the shore ;
Not one the least resemblance bore
To that uncanny face of yore.

¹ "Swing," the heavy rope by which the boat is fastened to, and "swings" at the nets.

Yet he demanded, grim and black,
"What knave among you sank the smack?"

They gazed, all speechless and amazed,
They deemed him of a sudden crazed;—
At last spake Lars, his only friend,—
Who with the rest bare life had gained,—
"Why, master, even if our waste
Of time were welcome, till replaced
Are smack and nets, yet thou must own
That scarcely we ourselves would drown!
Ill fortune sure attends us now,
But it may change, meanwhile do thou
Hearten thy men, lest they begone,
And leave thee with thy boats alone."

Kand could not scout the common sense
Of these remarks. No evidence
In reason, could be brought to show
Guilt in these dripping men of woe.
And knowing now one angering word
Might send them all to Saltenfjord,
Some curt apology he made
Nor more upon the subject said.
No further loss his temper tried
The power malignant, satisfied
With showing its resistless will,
Forbore a space its work of ill.

And so the months revolving, brought
The time when each far home was sought,
But first, high drawn upon the beach,

The boats were ranged, beyond the reach
Of billows which with hungry roar
Rush ravening up the winter shore.

Yields and retreats the failing light,
Presses it hard the conquering night,
And hours are lost and won,
Till the grim overshadowing frown
Of dawnless darkness settles down
Upon that Boreal zone.
Aloft, the Southern range defies
Triumphantly, the Sun to rise
Above its summits riven,
With Day behind them glowing grand,
Those sheer and awful mountains stand
Like battlements of Heaven.

PART III

THE winter wends. The lord of light
With strength renewed, renews the fight,
And as of yore, marauding bands
Whose swift attack enthralled the lands,
When mailed ranks flashed along the plain,
Betook them to their hills again ;
So powers of Night and frost retire
Confounded, at his glance of fire
And safe asylum haste to seek
Far up in cloud-enveloped peak.

Now woke the Isles, and work began,
Kand as before the foremost man ;
Long ere his neighbours Hindoe sought
For him a jacht enormous brought
Of sea-supplies a cargo great ;—
And, all his fleet to renovate
Of tar and timber stores galore,
And Bergen boat-wrights half a score.

Where, side by side upon the strand,
The great black smacks close marshalled stand,
For eighteen days, through wet and dry,
The craftsmen's tools rang steadily.
Accomplished then the owner's plans,

Departed jacht and artisans,
But eight and twenty days were gone,
And Lars and Sigurd laboured on.
Not yet the Nordland men had come,
And forty smacks (the total sum)
To coat with pitch, right well they knew
Was not a trifling job for two.
But Kand was strong—laborious day
Ne'er daunted his associate gray,
And casks of tar were ranged along
Conveniently the fleet among.
Beside each boat, as on they toiled,
Unceasingly their caldron boiled,
Old Lars the seething buckets brought,
And Kand like tireless engine wrought.
Thus, sides and bottom, all were tarred,
And finished five, to farthest yard,
When dire destruction rose in night,
And leaped upon them, in the night.

A radiant night. The moonless sky
Was littered with the brilliancy
Of lavish stars,—the Arctic bright
With quivering bars of flame. A night
Stainless of cloud, resplendent, grand,—
The shark-tooth warders of the land
Stood sharper, bolder, than by day,
And heaven seemed very far away.
A death-still night. No moan of wave
Sleep-life unto the silence gave,
Along the fjord no breezes sung,—
A silver mist above it hung.

Light as the spider's weightless ware
Yet motionless upon the air ;
A night when ghosts might venture forth
Nor dread the rugged blasts of earth.

And saw ye not a figure white,
Or was it but a gleam of light
Amidst the dark fleet on the shore,
A furlong from the owner's door ?

Now turn we to the rich man's home—
No mansion, no luxurious dome,
Bred roughly, rough his couch and fare,
Such trifles were beneath his care.
Two rooms, with nets and lines enmazed,
Windows with seal intestines glazed,
A porch with driftwood fuel piled,
All driftwood built, with driftwood tiled,
Such had his shore-home ever been,
And there he lies in sleep serene.

While pityingly above him weeps
A Being undefiled,—
He sleeps—the man of murder sleeps—
As calmly as a child ;
For he had made deliberate choice,
Bidding all good farewell ;—
But ears which heed not angel's voice
Must hear the fiends of hell.

The doorward corner of the room
Was full of shadows and of gloom ;

With eyes that flashed and glowed like flame
A shadow from the shadows came.
Stretched by the couch a sail was seen,
It passed behind the canvas screen,
But, as it passed, low bending near,
It whispered in the sleeper's ear.

He started up with fearful stare
And faintly muttered cry,
"Those dreams will drive me to despair":
"*Th? Beach! The Beach!*" "What shrieks
are there?"

What is this strange and flaunting flare
Which browns the starry sky?"

A shout—the tramp of hurrying feet,
A bang—the door from hinges beat,
And—"Kand, arise," his ears did greet,
"Enjoy the glorious blast"
Half naked dashed he through door,
Fjord, mount, and sky were red as gore,
But oh! the sight upon the shore
That riveted his gaze—
A roaring forge his fleet entire,—
Aloft like pines the flames aspire
Merging in one huge grove of fire
As broader hold they gain.
The pitchy planks like tinder burn,
The casks of tar to lava turn
And momentarily destructive spurn
Red showers of scathing rain.
Small with colossal to compare,

It seemed a picture of the glare
In that dark land of deserts bare,
Where, bellowing o'er the foam,
Great Skaptarjokul's matchless war
Shoots heavenward many a blazing star,
Sweeps the wild shattered night afar,
And lights the whaler home.

Sigurd ! thy power is fleeting now,
In retribution's grasp art thou !
Scarce for themselves the people there
Those jets of blazing pitch would dare,
Much less for thee. Ah, should'st thou chafe
Or wheedle, they would only laugh,—
Ne'er in thy moods by pity checked,
How can'st thou help or cheer expect ?—
Full hardily he faced it through
As red-winged off his riches flew ;
Each countenance appeal forbade,
And far was he from asking aid.

By chance at wider distance set
One smack outlasts the ruin yet,—
But now on board, by fire-woke blast,
Cinders and pitch fall thick and fast.
She smokes, she burns, all hope is gone,
The rising sun will shine upon
Nothing but smouldering ashes,—lo !
Who comes so fast ? 'Tis old Bodce.

" Men, men ! can I believe my eyes ?
Are ye Lofoden men ? " he cries,

“ Boat after boat meets fiery fate,
And aidless does their owner wait ?
He would not lift a hand for you ?—
No time to argue, grant it true—
Yet help ye me this boat to save,
Better revenge ye thus shall have.”

Then like a youth sprang Lars Bodoe
Through smoke and fire, and gained the bow
Of the new-kindled. Stung by shame
Full thirty men behind him came ;
Ranged on each side in order due
Gasping and choking, up they drew,
Their backs against her bulge they bore,
Down fell the props upon the shore,
Hard grates her keel, resistlessly
She drove, ablaze, into the sea.
Then, all their weight to starboard thrown,
They overset and swung her down,
Hissing, the waters inward rolled
And the incipient flames controlled ;—
Last of the fleet, that boat alone
Remained when Day resumed her throne.

Contemptuous as was Kand's regard
For the old man who drudged so hard,
His soul chagrined some comfort drew
From having one staunch friend in view.
He thanked him. Then away he went
Against the rest to lay complaint,
As malefactors fell and gross
Who wrought his unexampled loss.

The Lawmen came, but naught he gained,
His charges all were unsustained,—
Stoutly the men, with wrathful pride,
The imputation foul denied.
Such work as that, they said, might fit
The hands of him who owned the fleet,
For it had been his constant aim
For years, to plague and injure them,
To him their loss was always sport,
But they disdained such mean retort.

At last a leading lawman gave
Deliverance thus,—“ No proof we have
Of wilful wrong. Say ye to me
For this bad hap what theory
So plausible could be assigned
As this,—a sudden squall of wind
Aroused and tossed the embers far
Of the last fire which boiled the tar ? ”

Then out spake Einar Bjorn the red,
The first alarmer ;—From his bed
Dog-howls, he said, had routed rest,
He rose with vengeance in his breast ;
But Tyke escaped him, for a glance
Showed thirty boats aflame at once,—
And, as he stared, 'mazed at the sight,
Flashed from their midst a figure light,
It flung away a blazing torch
And disappeared in Sigurd's porch.

White as a ghost grew Sigurd then,
Rang in his ears the words again
Which woke him as that midnight noon
Portentous through his window shone.
" Pass we it now," with effort spoke
His ashen lips—" these brazen folk
Will yet aver that I for peif
Did burn my own good fleet myself !
One smack remains to me as yet,
Quickly to Trondhjem I must get,
Three men I want to cross the sea,—
Now who, for gold, will sail with me ? "

But yet though gold he did not spare,
Beforehand proffered, then and there,
And jacht-fare free, returning home,
All hanging back, declined to come ;—
Old Lars the only volunteer—
" Ah well ! the doting fool can steer,"
Mused Kand, " and I the sailing gear
With ease can handle anywhere.
Short sleep with only two on board,
But short the run to Trondhjem fjord,
Three days at most, if wind be fair,
And Trondhjem gained, adieu to care,
I sell the smack, I board a ship,
And give old wageless Lars the slip."

He spoke aloud—" My trusty friend,
We two, it seems, alone must wend,
Thou at the helm, I by the sails ;—
Old Odin send us favouring gales !

Soon as we land in Trondhjem town
A summer's hire I pay thee down ;—
Now go, examine well the boat
As in the fjord she lies afloat,
Some of these wretches on us may
Attempt some scurvy trick to play.”
“ Already, master,” Lars replied,
“ Each inch-space have I spied and tried,
All sound—on her thou can'st depend
To take thee to thy journey's end.
And now on board I mean to dwell
Until I bid this place farewell,
For some fire blackened ropes and spars
Methinks will need the hand of Lars,
But these repairs may all be done
In time to sail to-morrow noon.”

“ To-morrow then, at noon, we start,
The outward tide will do its part
From the long fjord to waft us forth—
And see, a brightly opening north !
Not vainly I on Odin call,
He hears me from his ancient hall,
Stark as of old, ere Southern God
Sent Tryggvason from Novgorod.—
Sure comes the north wind, sure and strong,
Before it we shall spin along
And Trondhjem town will see our mast
Ere two full days and nights are past.—
Thine be it now the smack to tend,
Much shore concerns on me depend.”

Unmooring when the noon was high
Without a soul to say good-bye,
Down the long fjord the lone ones glide,
Borne on by favouring breeze and tide,
Till shelving shores retreating far
Stood sea-bounds perpendicular.

Then turning west, they left behind
The aid of one ally, the wind,
For Langoe's massive mountains rise
Mural along the northern skies.
Yet constant still, while hours went by,
The current helped them gallantly.
As Vangikella's summit, peaked
In glittering ice, with granite streaked,
Flamed in the sunset's fiery glow,
Kand looked his last on East Vagoë.

A maze of headlands next they twine,
Whence torrents bound into the brine,
And, black with skords, with mountains red,
Rude West Vagoë before them spread—
That Isle whose savage cliffs engage,
And still outbrave, the wildest rage
Of charging seas, unchecked before
Since penned in hot Caribbean shore.

All turbulence was now asleep,
Breathed long and low the resting Deep,
The tide had failed at length, and left
The boat of speed and life bereft,

Flapped idly every useless sail,
For Langoe still debarred the gale.
"Out oars," said Kand, and out they went,
But to the heavy smack they lent
Small help or hasting. All around,
The sky, the sea, the rocks resound
With clang of sea-fowl, myriads there,
A whirling clamour everywhere.

Attended thus they turned with toil
The farthest shoulder of the Isle,
The heights of Langoe too were past,
Down came the wished-for wind at last,—
South boundless spread the heaving plain,
And southward then they stretched amain.
The northern breeze grows stiff and strong
As dusk of evening draws along,
White capped the rising waters roll
Beneath a cloud-drift from the Pole ;
Birds to the vanished land have fled,
Closes the storm-rack overhead
Till day's last lingering tint of grey
In starless gloom has died away.
Talk not to me of lonesome plight
Amid the desert's glaring light,
He who has sailed such sea of night
He knows of loneliness the might.

And Sigurd felt it. O'er his soul
A weight of ill impending stole.
Lars felt it too, naught might he say
To Kand's remarks but yea and nay ;

Scarce could a word from him be won
And all his wonted cheer was gone.
Kand left him on the helm intent
And to the half-deck forward went,
There prone—with head on hand upraised,
He long into the darkness gazed.
What saw he?—a distressful wreck,
Corpses and spars bestrew its deck,
Men dive into the gulf beneath
And landward toil, to meet their death ;
Chuckling he laughed, and mocked their pain,
Remorseless laughed—and looked again.

Once more that winding waterway,
The Sound of Rafté, before him lay,
The midnight sunbeam's splendours rest
In glory on its glassy breast ;
And lightly from his skiff he lands
Just where a boyish figure stands.
Ah ! no sound of laughter came,
A shudder shook his stalwart frame,
“ Fool,” muttered he, with anguished frown,
“ Fool, had thy club but struck him down !
And yet—'tis only fantasy,
Alive or dead, what power has he ?
Old women's tales have turned my brain,
High time to be a man again.
Gold have I still enough, I trow,
Far from these haunted Isles I go
To lands where corn and forests grow,
And peace and rest I yet shall know.”

Here Lars's shout to shorten sail
Before the fast increasing gale,
Ended soliloquy for him,—
And when the smack was snug and trim,
He went beneath the deck to sleep,
And Lars still steered and watch did keep.

How passed the dark hours, who shall tell?
If ever demons rode the swell
Of Ocean, under man-made boom,
'Twas on that night of gale and gloom.

On dragged the hours, the boat flew on,
When will the laggard night be gone?
Breaks the strong wind to gusts and squalls,
As warded off by mountain walls.

What is this noise which stirs around,
Air shaking, deeper than the sound
Of tumbling torrents as they toss
Adown the heights of Ringdalfoss?¹
'Tis not the sea—the sea is dead;
'Tis not the wind—the wind is gone,—
Although with undiminished speed
The boat is gliding smoothly on.

And now a glimmer faint is shed
Across the ebon overhead;
Through the dense curtain drawn between,
Pale morning oozes on the scene.

¹ Ringdalfoss, or Skjeggdalfoss, the greatest of Norwegian waterfalls:

How can I such a scene unfold ?
O for the magic pen which told
Of Satan's flight from Hell !
For this black chasm had well exprest
The outlet of that world unblest ;
Nor less that hollow swell
Afar long echoing, had supplied
The thunder of the formless void
Where Night and Chaos dwell.

Gray gleaming walls on either hand
Like Titan architecture stand,
Their jagged battlements upflung
Above the clouds, which, stooping, hung
Jammed in the gulf, and closely clung,
A sable roof, like stone ;
And through this hall of solemn gloom,—
No rippling rush—no rise of foam,—
Silent, like spirit to its doom
The boat was speeding on.

And quicker now her motion grows,
Stronger that sullen moan arose
As round a bend she passed ;
Still on the left tremendous rise
Funereal ramparts to the skies ;
But wide to right a prospect lies,
A prospect vague and vast.
So weird, so wan that prospect seemed
The sad beholder might have deemed
Himself transported far

From this bright earth to Neptune's shore,—
The outmost of our system hoar,
Where day is twilight evermore,
And the great Sun a star.

Low, rounded wave-worn isles were there,
Unspeakably forlorn and bare,
An oily, glassy, hurrying sea,
Streaming with still rapidity
Eastward, where murky blackness bounds
The view, and deep and cloud confounds.

No sound or sight of sentient thing,—
Abhorred of fin and foot and wing
This swift gray sea, that granite wall,
And shades eternal over all.
Nor speck of blue nor spot of green
In all the drear expanse is seen,
A life-forsaken shore and main
Where ghastliness and horror reign.

Swiftly, yet softly, speeds the boat,
Receding heights her progress note,
And slightly to the left she veers
Cliffward. In vain the pilot steers
Against the current strong ;
Not long he strove—he let her go,
And, bounding down the mighty flow,
As skims the deer-sledge o'er the snow,
She swayed and swept along.

Alert and firm old Lars appears,
Unconscious of his weight of years,
With steadfast gaze the east he viewed,
Erect and motionless he stood.
And the long sheer sky-piercing fjeld
Now sank and sloped, and he beheld
That from its base far seaward sprang
A low long-stretching reef or "taing."¹
Out, out monotonous it lay,
And seemed to bar their farther way ;
Beyond it boomed that hollow moan,
All other sounds were lost and gone.

On flew the smack with swifter flight,
She swung to left, she swung to right,
Maugre each bend, her general trend
Would land her on that taing's low end,
But, almost there, her reckless course
Was changed by some controlling force
Which turned, and drove her parallel
With those bare ledges fringed with swell.

Uprose the hatch, and Sigurd's eyes
Scanned his surroundings with surprise,—
"What is this deafening noise I hear ?
What yon black taing that stretches near ?"
He cried. The other did not speak,—
He turned in wrath, but with a shriek—
A shriek which tamed the awful din—
He knew the features of the Finn.

¹ "Taing," a rocky point rising just clear of high water.

*“ At length our parting-time has come,
Now haste thee to thy destined doom ;
Go, find at last peace, rest and home
In Moskoestrom—in Moskoestrom.”*

Instant along the gunwale passed,—
Like frightened whale careering fast,
The point extreme of solid shore,—
They might have reached it with an oar.
And lo, the Finn, the while he spoke,
With flying bound bestrides the rock ;—
Quick shot the boat away ;
Kand would have leaped, but ere he gained
His wonted mind, by horror chained,
A cable's measure intervened—
The chance was gone for aye.

Each cry or execration drowned
In the dread whirl's devouring sound,
He hied into the gloom profound
Which veiled the eastern skies ;
Dusk wraiths sweep forth to claim their own,
Huge swathing folds are round him thrown,
Helpless and hopeless, all alone,
He passed from mortal eyes.

THE SHEEP-THIEF
A LEGEND OF SHETLAND
PART I

AWAY beneath the northern sky
The rugged Isles of Shetland lie ;
Land of the Vikings, who of yore
Ravaged each neighbouring sea and shore.
And oft, in battle fierce, defied
The Danish and the Saxon pride.
Their day is gone, their power is vain,
Yet cliffs and caves their names retain,
And still, as in that age afar,
The ocean's everlasting war
Rages around their bulwarked home
With futile wrath and frantic foam.

There rises, on the western coast,
Where beat Atlantic storms the most,
A giant cliff—a dizzy height—
Ascending far beyond the might
Of wildest waves. Thorsfjeld its name,
From the strong God of hammer fame.
It seems a mountain cleft in twain,
The landward slopes alone remain,
Sheer from the summit to the sea

It stoops, in gray immensity.
Full thirty yards adown the steep,
Behind a ledge where ravens sleep,
Still may the sailor mark,
Rent in the rock an aperture
Low-browed and wide, a fitting door
To cavern rude and dark.

The cragsman's eye has never seen
The secrets of that cavern deep,
The cragman's foot has never been
Upon that ledge where ravens sleep.
Swung in mid-air, he eyes in vain

That door and shelf of rock ;
O'erhanging crags their guard maintain,
Seawards he springs, a hold to gain ;
The rocks his inward sway restrain
And all his efforts mock.¹

Here dwelt, the old traditions say,
What time the Isles owned Norway's sway,

A Being strange and strong,
With deep-set eyes of lurid cast,
Of stature low, with shoulders vast,
The disproportioned creature passed
All noiselessly along,

Frightening the carle at closing eve,
Who in his heart did well believe

¹ Often a birdnester, hanging by a rope, will see a nest safe from his reach under a jutting crag. Sometimes when the cliff has only a moderate projection he overcomes the difficulty by bracing his feet against the face of the cliff and bounding outward. Being instantly let down from above, his inward sway carries him under the crag to his object.

He saw a Trow of nether earth,
And not a man of mortal birth.
His clothing was the skins of sheep
Which wandered near his stronghold steep,
A stout crook-headed iron rod,
Rounded and pointed like a goad,
For weapon in his hand he bore ;
And so was called, the country o'er,
From Fitful Head to Nordenhaff,
The Sheep-Thief with the iron staff.

Now, how he did' contrive to climb,
Or how descend, that height sublime,
Without a rope, companionless,
Men oft would speculate and guess.
His long arms for the crags seemed made,
And probably his staff did aid.
Indeed, a certain Hakon Gyar
Some awe and wonder did inspire
By telling how, when in his skiff,
One calm dark night below the cliff,
He saw a smoky brightness start
Forth from the cave, and upward dart,
Which, as the mountain top it struck,
The form of horse and rider took.
And this, he said, did clearly show
That Tangie ¹ bore him to and fro.
But Gyar was of romancing vein,
And credence small his tale did gain ;

¹ "Tangie" was an evil spirit in the form of a black horse. If anyone mounted him, he would immediately go over the nearest cliff in a blue flame. He differed from ordinary ponies in having cloven hoofs:

And to the Dwarf, 'twas thought, alone
Some subterranean way was known,
Opening on Thorsfjeld's eastern combe,
Through which he brought his plunder home.

Sad havoc in the flocks he made
Which through the Thorsfjeld country strayed.
His nightly frolics were, to creep
In their own garments, to the sheep,
Then suddenly upon them rise
And break their legs, or pierce their eyes
With his staff point. It was his joy
To torture, mangle, and destroy.
As fast as any dog he ran,
Outstripping far the swiftest man ;
Ay, even men began to fear
Singly to range the region there,
For one,—a Thorsfjeld shepherd he,—
Had lately vanished utterly.

In all Dunrossness there was not
A man like Ola Brand,
And Sumburgh's stoutest son was but
A stripling in his hand ;
A giant he, in height and build,
The huge war-axe which he did wield
Was known on many a bloody field
Within the southern land.
And he could take a galley's chain
And snap it with a jerk in twain,
Like straw-rope, easily,
Barehanded he a bull had foiled ;

Amazed, the charging brute recoiled,
To find himself of horns despoiled,
As Brand walked coolly by.
Brown moorland, hill, and sheltered glen
From Thorsfjeld east to Levenden,
And north from Quendal's sandy bay
To the great hill of Halaleigh,
St Ringan's Isle and Westerskord,
All owned him for their Udal lord.

Hundreds of light-brown sheep had he,
Which pastured on the grassy lea
Of Thorsfjeld, and his tenants all
Had sheep in heathery Westerdahl ;
And every year they lost their best
By this wild plunderer of the West ;
But now the bounds of sufferance tame
Were past, when o'er the hills there came
To Ola, on a summer noon,
The tidings of his shepherd gone.

No word he spake of bad or good,
But straight to Thorsfjeld took his road,
Hills, moory wastes, before him lay ;
He reached the height ere close of day.
Upon a rock he took his seat,
And waited there the Thief to meet,
While soft the evening fell,
And limitless to the north-west
The placid ocean heaved its breast
With slow majestic swell ;

That weird old sea, that solemn sea
Which wraps the Pole of mystery,
And over which, in that far day,
Still sailed his countrymen away,
West bound for Greenland's barren shore
Or dreary coasts of Labrador—
(Future as yet the Genoese
With all his grand discoveries).

The sun was passing to his bed
Through amber halls with curtains red,
 Beyond the northern haze ;
And lo ! behind, a shining bridge
Spanned each long undulating ridge
Of swell, connecting with the ledge
 Northward from Thorsfjeld's base,
Like causeway leading from its edge
 To endless Polar days.
And every smooth-backed skerry-rock,
Each cape that braves the tempest shock,
And each fantastic pillared block
 Glowed in the sea of fire ;
One vast and isolated stone
Rose like a king of ages gone,
Around his head a golden zone
 And purple his attire ;
While, breaking o'er his feet and throne,
The wavelets sparkled, danced and shone
 Like rubies and sapphire.

What is that hollow sound so deep ?
The tides which through the Dorholm sweep

With melancholy wail ;
That ocean door through which a ship
Might run with swelling sail ;
While overhead the mighty arc
Of rough gray stone, like skin of shark,
And underneath the surges dark
Echo the shrieking gale.

Myriads of gulls upon the rocks,
Puffins, and guillemots, and auks,
And " skarfs " upon the sea,
Huge eagles circling in the blue,
And the Norse birds of sombre hue,
Intent their various aims pursue,
And scream incessantly.

Black to the north old Rona rose
Across the intervening voes,
His granite shoulders scarred with " gylls,"
The highest peak in all the Isles ;
Far to the west, where sea and sky
Meet, merge and mingle mistily,
Like pale blue clouds arising, stand
The mural heights of Foula-land.

Then sank the lingering sun to rest,
Flew every sea-bird to its nest,
And the grey " dimm " from ocean's breast
Rose silently aloft ;
Enwrapping crag and columned stone,
It filled with ghosts the region lone,
Their shrouds and draperies all its own

Waved by the night breeze soft.
Yet still on Rona's giant head
The day's departing beam was shed ;
That peak reflects a glimmering light
Through all the short-lived summer night.

So changed the scene, with dying day,
Its glorious hues for sober gray ;
Deep silence settled all around,
Save for the Dorholm's slumbrous sound.
But on that rampart of the land
Still sat and waited Ola Brand.

Hark, was not that a stealthy tread ?
The watcher quickly turned his head,
When, swift from out the spectral " dimm " "
A shapeless thing advanced to him.
Like lightning from his seat he bounds ;
The smitten boulder loud resounds
The clangour of the iron staff ;—
" Aha ! " cried Brand, with scornful laugh ;
And ere the dwarf regained his sway
He seized and wrenched the bar away ;
Out through the dark it whizzed and spun
Like fiery meteor, and was gone.

Then Brand (his lordly form upreared
To its full height) vain-~~g~~ rious jeered
His little enemy :
" Although I cannot strike a blow
With such as thou, yet deign to know
Thy staff is gone where thou wilt go

To bear it company."
Sudden he ceased, for with a bound
The dwarf was at him, and around
His body quick had cast
His long lithe arms, like steely bands,
And pinioned to his sides his hands,
And held him tight and fast.

As northern hunter, in the grasp
Of bear, on icy field,
Strains every nerve, with choking gasp,
While slowly 'neath the mighty clasp
His ribs begin to yield ;
So Ola, in the stern embrace
Of that weird Being, for a space,
Did struggle fruitlessly.
And landward now their stress they urge,
Now to the mountain's utmost verge
Above the quiet sea.
As to the precipice they swung,
With desperate strength, all torn and wrung,
One hand did Ola free ;
And by the neck he clutched the dwarf
As cragsman grasps the " sentry skarf,"¹
A fearful hold took he.
Like as a sponge, in flood that swims,
When squeezed, spouts forth its copious streams,

¹ Each flock of " skarfs," or cormorants, has a sentinel or night watchman, stationed a little apart from the rest, and if he can be secured without noise, the rest are an easy prey:

So, forced by that tremendous grip
Flew the black blood from nose and lip
Of the fell Thief, who slacked his hold,
And, hurled upon the greensward, rolled
Insensate. His rash foe, as well,
Spent, breathless, almost fainting, fell.

Powerless for ill, they lay a space,
When all at once a thundering pace
Startled the stillness of the place
And, ringing in their ears,
Roused e'en the Thief ! Far down the side
Where Thorsfjeld melts in moorland wide
Clearing a road at every stride,
A wondrous horse appears.
As black as coal that horse did seem
Straight as an arrow-flight he came,
His eyes and nostrils flashing flame
Which flared above his head ;
He mounts the mountain at a breath
As springs blue lightning over heath ;
Up blazed the grass beside his path
And fell in ashes dead !
He scales the crest, a moment halts ;
Then terror first Brand's soul assaults ;
But lo ! the Thief upon him vaults
And o'er the cliff they flew.
" No liar, then, was Hakon Gyar,"
Said Brand, betwixt dismay and ire,
" The wretch is leagued with demons dire,
And what can mortal do ? "

As, baffled, now he seeks his home,
Behold ! a lessening of the gloom.
Sudden the glimmer which had crept
All night along the North Sea, leapt
Aloft into the gray, and sprays
Of green and gold, and purple rays
Blended with rose-hues, following fast
O'er the dim waves a radiance cast.
Rona's majestic summit flamed,
And many a lesser ward-hill beamed.
At Ola's feet on Thorsfjeld crest
Up springs a laverock from its nest,
To raise on high the morning song
Which fellow-choristers prolong.
The bright north-east still brighter glows,
Each night-born shadow fainter grows,
Till in full blaze of summer light,
The glorious sun bursts on the sight.

PART II

THE days pass on. The summer dies ;
On wings the Shetland Autumn flies ;
Low in the south the sun's pale ball
Contends with clouds, which conquer all.
Bleak winds across the moorlands roar,
Thunder the waves along the shore.
On Rona's peak and Hallaleigh
The early snows lie, scant and gray.
A six hours' day ! Winter has come ;
Now is the sky a leaden dome,
While tossed and fanned by Boreas old
The cloud-chaff sweeps o'er hill and wold.

One dark December morn, when wind
And drifting snow their might combined,
And over naked land and sea
Ruled with unbridled tyranny,
Within the house of Ola Brand
His servants all assembled stand.
They meet to search the wilds for sheep
Beneath the snowdrifts buried deep,
In glens and dahls and skords and gylls,¹
Upon the lee-sides of the hills.

¹ Skords and gylls, gorges and ravines:

"Do ye," said Ola to the men,
"Hold northward over Levenden,
The slopes of Halaleigh ascend,
And westward thence your course must tend
Across the wastes to Westerdahl,
Scouring the glens and passes all.
To Thorsfjeld I will take my course—
Ye fear the Thief and Demon-horse ;
But ne'er must it be said that I
From man or fiend did flinch or fly."

Then speedily the peasants shared
The digging implements prepared,
And forth upon their quest they fared
 Into the blinding gray.
And soon the stoutest of the throng
Of Ola's ponies, staunch and strong,¹
Hair black and shaggy, thick and long,
 His master bore away.
Along the stormy ridges, swept
Clean bare, the watchful Northman kept,
Though oft perforce the pony leapt
 O'er hollows full of snow ;
Fierce growled the blast, with growing wrath,
In eddying gusts around their path ;
They held the course with labouring breath,
 They scarce could see to go.

¹ "Ponies staunch and strong." It is a well-known fact that a real old-fashioned Shetland pony will trot away easily and sure-footedly under a man as heavy as himself. He is also remarkably intelligent:

So passed they on, o'er moor and bog,
Till, dimly through the rushing fog
The bulk of Thorsfjeld loomed ;
And high above the windy jar
Rose the deep tones of ocean's war,
As through the Dorholm arch afar
The billows rolled and boomed.
The Thorsfjeld glens traversing round,
With care did Ola search and sound,
And many a buried flock he found,
Some dead, but most alive ;
For those small sheep are brave and stout,
The wintry storms they weather out ;
Roaming the treeless wilds about,
On heather shoots they thrive ;
And Shetland snows are quickly gone,
By furious sea-gales overblown.

The mountain slopes he thus explored
Northward, to where the surges roared,
When, rounding a projecting rock,
The pony swerved, with sudden shock,
And there the Thief before them stood,
His right hand grasped his iron rod
(The self-same bar by Ola sent
Far through the summer firmament).
A struggling sheep was in his left,
Whose skull a recent blow had cleft.

Dropping his prey, with blackest scowl,
He raised his bolt—and with a howl

At Ola sprang, whose iron hand
Received the blow, but took command
Of the grim weapon. Whirled on high,
The Dwarf still clung tenaciously.
Till, dashed to earth, the horse's feet
Made his discomfiture complete.
Not thus might that dark life be sped ;
Instant he writhed him free and fled
Staffless. He seemed to fly as fast
As if with wings, before the blast,
Heading where winds and waters rave
Around the cliff that guards his cave.

Fast in pursuit did Ola come,
Urging his pony through the gloom,
Though scarce the sturdy beast had need
Of hand or voice to quicken speed ;
And many a rough ravine they crossed,
But soon the fleeing shape was lost—
Enveloped in the murky white
Away it passed beyond their sight.

They reached a " gy. " both wide and deep ;
Endless its length, its sides were steep,
And drifted soft below ;
The pony rose in headlong leap,
He touched, but footing could not keep,
And man and horse, all in a heap,
Rolled back into the snow.
Quickly arising, Brand espied
A horse upon the farther side

And, in the gully broad
Deep sunk, he left his own to wait
Till he returned, or extricate
His wallowing bulk alone, and straight
The Stranger he bestrode.

With arrowy speed the Stranger flew
Away, away ; the path he knew
Up Thorsfjeld's mighty breast ;
And hot his body seemed to grow
To Ola's touch, and flakes of snow
Fizzed on his hide, and made no show ;
And ever on he pressed,
Till, as he reached the topmost height,
Beneath his feet the frosty white
Did blacken, melt, and hiss,
Fire from his eyes and nostrils sprung,
And back to earth the Northman flung
Himself, as out the Demon swung

Into ~~in~~ the wild abyss !

Then, as he crouched upon the verge,
Shriek upon shriek rose o'er the surge—
Dreadful unearthly cries.—
The shuddering giant feebly crawled
Close to the brink, and shrank appalled ;
Far down the precipice,
Dim, as the spray-clouds swept aside
A space, the Outlaw he descried
Clinging, with aspect horrified,
Above his cavern door ;
While close beside, on sable wing,

The Demon-horse was hovering,
Not timely succour now to bring ;
 No, furiously he tore
The shrieking wretch, whose gripe in vain
Strove, long and hooked, to clutch his mane,
Eluding each dire stretch and strain,
The taunting fiend, with hellish pain
 His whilom master wore.
And now the spray-mists intervene
A welcome veil across the scene ;
And now they break. The cliff is clean ;
 That sight was seen no more.

And thus the region had relief ;
Thus vanished from the wilds the Thief ;
Never again, on Thorsfjeld crest
Did he appear, or sheep molest.
His staff, preserved by Ola Brand
Was long the wonder of the land.
No human blacksmith forged the bar ;
'Twas wrought beneath the earth afar.
If anyone save Brand alone
(Whose mastery now it seemed to own)
Did handle it, as men are prone,
It burned his fingers to the bone.
But greatest marvels pall at last,
And this strange relic of the past,
Of trows or elves the workmanship,
Was destined by ill chance to slip
From place of honour dismally ;
For Ola fashioned it to be

A thing a menial place to fill—
The spindle of a watermill !¹
And thus it wore itself away
With groans and shrieks from day to day,
Sparks flew from underneath the mill ;
In truth it served the purpose ill.

At length one night when winds were high,
And densest clouds obscured the sky ;
When, swoln with melting snow and rain,
The burn of Brato rose amain,
Forth to the mill, through slush and mire,
With corn to grind, went Hakon Gyar.
Quick as the quern began to spin
Did ear-astounding screams begin ;
Around the mill, above, below,
Wild yells of more than human woe.
Louder and louder waxed the cries ;
The peasant's hair began to rise.
Now Hakon Gyar, though he did try
His own exploits to magnify,
Was not faint-hearted, but to hear
That din, was more than man could bear.

¹ The Shetland grain mills consist merely of the two millstones and a horizontal wheel under the floor beneath them. This wheel and the upper stone are firmly connected by an iron rod called a spindle, which passes through a hole in the nether millstone, consequently the wheel and the mill revolve at exactly the same rate of speed. Of course such machinery requires a very strong force of water, and thus the mills are useless except when the streams are high. In fact, heavy rains are known in Shetland as "mill-waters." There are no millers, but each villager grinds his own corn:

And so he was about to turn
The stream, and stop the uncanny quern,
When suddenly with thunderous roar
The mill-roof bodily upthrew
From off the walls, and fled away ;
And Gyar in utter darkness lay
Crouched in a corner, stunned with fright,
Staring upon a fearsome sight.

For lo ! the Sheep-Thief's awful form,
Bright, 'mid the blackness of the storm,
Upon the flying millstone stood
And pointed to his ancient rod.

The flying millstone rent in two,
Into his hand the spindle flew,
Then through the floor, in dark turmoil,
The waters break, and round them boil.
Wildly the shattered building sways,
It trembles, totters, to its base ;
The walls bend inward. With a bound
Gyar cleared the door, and, well nigh drowned,
He struggled to a knoll, which stood
An island in the raging flood.
Down went the mill, in ruin down,
Above it foamed the waters brown,
And on the knoll, in mortal fear,
The peasant kept his vigil drear,
Till broke the gloomy morn at last,
And through the shallowing tide he passed,
And reached his home ; but from that night
His form was bent, his hair was white.

THE LIFE-LINE

OLD nights before me come,
Old tempests rage and roar,
Old ocean swings with thunder boom
Against an iron shore.
I see, upon the bar,
Like fleeting ghosts, the spray,—
I see afar a tossing star
Adown the darksome bay.
I hear the dismal gun
Of dire extremity ;
I hear the shouts of men, who run
Gale-breasting, to the sea.

Behold, a mountain heaves
A ship from out the deep ;
Spiked on the reef, her bottom cleaves,
Her decks the billows sweep.
Yet in the rigging high,
And on each splintered mast
Still wage the crew courageously
Life's battle, to the last.

“ No hope,” the surges groan,
“ No hope ! ” with shuddering shock
The wreck replies. Death rules alone
That maze of surf and rock.

High shoots the icy spray
Over each clinging form,
Each brine-drenched eye sees but the gray
And murky wraiths of storm.

But ah ! a landward crash,
A blaze just seen and gone,
Athwart the night with meteor flash,
The rocket-line has flown.
Two sharp eyes mark its flight
Two brawny hands catch hold,
And swift as thought the cord so slight
Around the mast is rolled.

“ Too late for hawser here !
Over the whip we come.”
Now who would ride such thread of fear
Quick vanishing in foam ?
A grim-voiced laugh ascends—
The last of that stout band—
Just as the hulk asunder rends—
Stands firm on solid land.

O, oft our sunshine fades
Before the mists of doubt,
And guilt and fear, in sombre shades,
Shut all the daylight out ;
And Hope's foundation shakes,
And storms infernal rise,
Evil within, without, awakes,
All joy, all comfort, flies.

Dim from our sight has gone
The Land so near and fair,
Gloom-blinded on we verge upon
The breakers of Despair.

Then look we back, and see
Past helps at need that came,—
This gloom is our infirmity,
Thou, Christ, art still the same.
Though earth to doom be tossed
No change Thy words attend,—
Thou savest to the uttermost
All who on Thee depend.
Reft of all else, we hang
Upon that word Divine,
Fearless, as those whose laughter rang
Along the slender line.

THE MAN WITH THE HOE —CANADA

A REPLY TO MR MARKHAM

Lo, here I stand, the independent man.
The first of men, who won, when Time was young,
By strength of arm, from Nature's niggard grasp
All needful things for those who looked to me.

And down the lagging ages subtle brains
Have multiplied inventions numberless
Evil and good, but none to supersede
My trusty hoe. While thrones have risen and gone
To darkness, it shines brighter than when forged
Of yore by Tubal-Cain.

Ye bookworms pale,
Why point at my slant brow and rugged hands,
Why wonder at my shoulders bent and wry ?
Full well ye know that I support the world
Whereon ye feebly crawl. Great Atlas I,
Kings, nobles, millionaires, all hang on me ;
I, self-sufficient, have no need of them,
They, should I leave them, soon would starve and
die.

Ye pinched and pent in cities, look at me,
I breathe the dewy freshness of the earth

In open fields resounding with the song
And jubilation of bird and beast, while ye
Jostle each other in the smoke and grime
For leave to labour at the beck of gold.
Ye herding fools, come out where there is room,
Come out, and fill the earth's waste places up,
Make howling deserts laugh with running brooks,
Turn sombre woods to green rejoicing fields,
Dot the vast lonesome plains with cheerful homes,
Work for yourselves,—live healthily content
On products of your own. If ye do thus,
The last curst Anarchist will quit the globe.

RUSTIC RHYMES

A MOSQUITO SONG

"At that time, if I had seen a bottle of whiskey lying on the track five yards in front of a flying express, I'd have made a dash for it." JOSHUA POOLE:

COW-HUNTING in the woods one day,
I listened for the bell,
Holding my breath—when on my ear
This song melodious fell :

"I am a bold mosquito,
And through the woods I fly ;
So get I but a drink of blood,
I care not if I die.

Creatures a thousand times as big
Do bring my food to me ;
I, singing, light astride on them,
And grub it out in glee !

Yet though these creatures bring my food,
Unwillingly they give,
And oft I find it hard to get
The wherewithal to live.

Great hairy brutes in companies
Will sluggishly draw near ;
Their hides are all so thick and tough
They well-nigh break my spear.

And when I get a drop of blood,
It is not worth the pains—
Coarse, salt, and indigestible,
It on my chest remains.

But there is one, a monster dire,
Who sometimes passes by
(Oh, had I but my fill of blood,
I satisfied would die !)

To light upon this monster dire
Is risk of life and limb ;
But I would risk a hundred lives
To get a sip from him !

His hide is thin, his blood is sweet,—
Sweeter than milk to me ;
But ah, his ways are full of guile,
And treacherous is he !

At times he like a stump will stand,
And you would think him dead,
Then suddenly he wakes, and flails
Go thrashing round his head.

Oh, I have seen—have seen—have seen——”
(He hovered as he sang)
“Five comrades flattened at my side
Beneath one frightful bang!

But I, a bold mosquito,
Still through the forest fly,
And I will have a drink of blood,
I care not though I die.”

Here ceased the song, for, with a slap,
The singer bold I slew :—
See, ye whose love for liquor grows,
What it may do for you.

AN OX SONG

"Taffy was a thief."—*Old Rhyme:*

I have an ox,—a good-work ox—
Steady to plow or draw ;
Not vicious he, his only fault
Is Kleptomania.

He has a long and lanky frame,
His belly nought can fill,
Yea, should he gulp a bale of hay
He would be lanky still.

Beside his elephantine height
An eight-rail fence is low ;
He hugs the fence, he reaches down
Where high the oats do grow.

A taste—a bite—he lifts his head ;
Now run !—and yell—and run !—
Too late ! His ponderous bulk upheaves,
And crash ! the job is done.

One dawn I found him trampling through
My heaviest field of grain ;
All night he had been toiling there
To fill himself—in vain.

I tied him to the broken fence,
A crab-tree switch I tore
(For I was mad), and thrashed him as
He ne'er was thrashed before.

He took it all full patiently,
He knew it was his due,
But yet at me, when loosing him,
A look of spite he threw—

A look which said, as plain as speech,
“ My hide is disarranged,
Oh-h-h ! but I will remember this,
And I will be revenged.”

Next night, when I in peaceful bunk
Did comfortably snore,
Shocked by a hurricane of bells
I sprang upon the floor.

“ Much good one sinner doth destroy,”
Said the wise king of old ;
The words came forcibly as I
A blanket round me rolled.

No time for socks, I quickly plunged
Barefoot into my boots.
And, lighted by the round-faced moon,
Sped fast through brush and roots.

Oho ! they fill the turnip field,
Cows gobbling all they can ;
But see the huge ungainly form
That lumbers in their van !

The moon, the calm indifferent moon
My frenzied fury mocks,
As round and round the field I tear
After that dreadful ox.

I cleared the place, but not before
The crop was half destroyed ;—
Now many a night alarm have I,
And many an hour employed

In mending gaps, for though no more
That ox will wander free,
The cows, through his example, are
Almost as bad as he.

But I have seen the foolishness
Of trifling with a thief,
And so this good but erring ox
Will very soon be beef.

A COW SONG

"The cow jumped over the Moon"

SUMMER finds the Comox farmer
Work enough to do ;
Labour-bent, he ceaseless trudges,
Like the mythic Jew.

Does he slacken ? Weeds in turnips,
Fern among the grain,
Outspread hay, and dark clouds gathering,
Spur him on again.

Crafty pigs and steers and horses,
Shrewd fence-breakers all,
Send him over heights of madness
Nigh beyond recall.

But the last big straw which fractures
His devoted back,
Is the brute that gives the bucket
Its despatching whack.

Ah, what grins distend her nostrils !
Ah, what eyes of mirth !
As the white flood leaps, and mingles
With the thirsty earth !

Listen while I tell the story
As it haunts me now,
Of a farmer's sad adventure
With a kicking cow.

Starting up, before the sunrise
Flushed the brow of morn,
He had brushed the soaking dew-drops
From the fern and thorn,

Gathering in his cows, to milk them
Ere resistless beams
Pierced through cool green shades, and wakened
Gadflies from their dreams.

Twos and threes he found, and turned them
On the homeward road,
Till at length, amid the roughland,
Only one abode.

She, of all the herd the leader,
Ever wandered far,
Far into the darkest forest
Where the cedars are.

So he left her, and she came not
Till meridian rays
Filled with breathless heat the valley
And a shimmering haze.

Oh, the sun was fiercely burning ;
Thick the air, and still ;
Not a bird note—every raven
Gasp'd, with gaping bill.

In the pond the swine were rolling ;
Rover panting lay ;
But above and all around them
Gadflies boomed away.

Through the sultry lanes of woodland
Rings the wanderer's song,
As in lonesome haste she hurries
Desperately along.

Swooped upon by flying squadrons,
Furiously she bounds,
Lashing vengeful tail, and bleeding
From a hundred wounds.

Right into the shed she darted
Through the open door,
And a weary smile of welcome
Her tired owner wore.

Tight he closed the door, and screened her
From the scorching day,
Yet a stealthy native entered
With his assegai.

On his one-legged stool, so busy
As the farmer sat,
Suddenly, like ball at cricket
Spinning from a bat.

From between his knees the bucket
Banged against the wall,
And what little milk was in it
Showered around the stall.

Then he took a piece of hay-rope,
And, with many a turn,
To the stall and to a wallpost
Moored her, stem and stern.

" Now," said he, " My lady Fidget,
Do the worst you can " ;
And again, with steady cadence,
Fast the white streams ran.

Patiently she stood, in silent
Meditation wrapt,
Till the heavy pail was brimming,
Then—the sisal snapt.

Rampant overhead, her dewlaps
On his shoulders come ;
Prone he falls, and grovelling, wallows
In the seething foam !

And she grimly smiled—and vanished
From his wildered view,
Squarely through the door so slender
Like a bomb she flew.

A BULL SONG

" Ah, well the gallant brute I knew."—*Lady of the Lake.*

I

JUST here the river bounds
The cultivated ground ;
Far stretches, on the other shore,
The wilderness profound.

Where Tsolum rolls his waves
Through woods of spruce and pine,
And mighty cottonwoods their boughs
With maples intertwine ;

Where giant trunks of eld,
In mossy ridges flung,
Wallow in white thorn, dogwood, crab,
With brambles overstrung ;

Where far-extending sloughs,
And paths without an end,
Run through the tangling undergrowth
With many a wildering bend ;

In this enchanting land,
This country of the coon,
Free cattle multitudinous
Spend every circling June.

Right opposite there dwelt
In thrall and discontent,
A sturdy bull, who longed to break
From his enforced restraint.

Still daily as he came
Returning thirst to slake,
Free rovers, on the other side,
Would jeer him from the brake.

At last an ancient foe
One evening vaunting spoke,
And ring and chain were all in vain—
Across the surge he broke.

And now, from bondage free,
Exultingly he sang ;
The live-long night his trumpet tones
Through the dark forest rang.

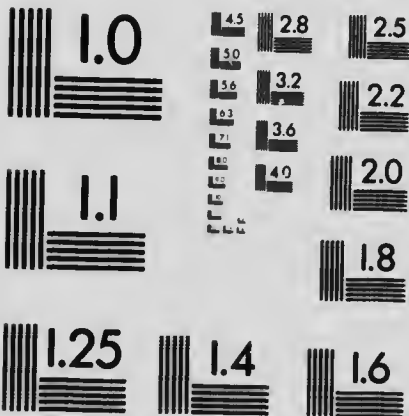
II

O, MUSIC rode the breeze
That night through Comox groves,
As bull-frog, owl, and bull combined
To serenade their loves !



MICROCOPY RESOLUTION TEST CHART

(ANSI and ISO TEST CHART No. 2)



APPLIED IMAGE Inc

1653 East Main Street
Rochester, New York 14609 USA
(716) 482 - 0300 - Phone
(716) 288 - 5989 - Fax

O, tenor sang the frog,
And bass the night bird lone,
But high above them swelled and rolled
The bull's grand baritone.

Vain exultation his ;
The Sun's first rising beam
Next morning, saw a rancher bold
Breasting the bridgeless stream.

Through many a tortuous trail,
Through many a slough forlorn,
He tracked him to a scrubby height
By fire of timber shorn.

Whizz through the thickets, flew
The wild herd o'er the hill ;
Less fleet, less scared, the bull remains ;
High peals his warnote shrill.

Heedless of hostile show
The rancher heads him home ;
Sullen and slow he walks till to
The river's bank they come ;

Then blazed his ire, to view
Afar his den of woe ;
With flaming eyes he turned, and drove
Headlong against the foe.

The rancher stept aside
From swift destruction's path ;
A club upon the flying death
He splintered, in his wrath.

Back through the serpent track,
Back with green slime bedight,
Back with a rush that ne'er did slack,
Back o'er the bushy height.

Joins the wild herd again,
The rancher close behind,
Lashed by rebounding twigs, and slashed
By thorns with briers twined ;

Yet with endurance strong
He rounds them up once more,
Singles the bull, and riverward
Again they madly tore.

Dash through the scrubby pines,
Splash through the sweltering slough,
Crash over logs with brambles bound,
And dead snags jutting through ;

On through the opening brakes,
On to the Tsolum's bound.
Each thundering footfall jars and shakes
The root-cemented ground.

Fagged the stout brute at last ;
Foam-streaked his heaving sides ;
He reached the bank, he rolled into
The cool refreshing tides.

Cowed and disheartened, he
Submitted like a lamb ;
Upon his back his captor leapt
And o'er the flood he swam.

Thus the poor bovine king
For freedom fought in vain,
And with the shades of night returned
To his detested chain.

A HOG SONG

"With din obstreperous."—Pope's *Odyssey*:

IN the days that are departed
Lived the subject of my song,
When these limbs, now old and feeble,
Were with youthful vigour strong.

Long ere Vernon, foe to grunTERS,
Rose to curb their liberty,
'Midst the ferns and swamps of Comox
Mighty swine dwelt joyously.

From the marking-time and onward
To the dreadful slaughter day,
Through the woods, and o'er the prairies,
At their pleasure wandered they.

Grim old boars, with tusks ferocious,
Drove the skulking panther back ;
In a bristling ring they marshalled,
And defied the wolves' attack.

Ah, those days, forever vanished !
Ah, those years, so wild and free !

Ere great Vernon,¹ foe to grunTERS,
Robbed them of their liberty.

One bright morning in November
Often through my mind doth run,
When the brown fern, white with hoarfrost,
Shone like silver in the sun.

Done the digging of potatoes
And the turnip-pulling too ;
I was standing in my doorway
Thinking what I next should do ;

When from out the leafy margin
Of the woodland, stalked along,
To the heavy rough-hewn log-hut
Where he used to sleep when young,

An old hog, of vast proportions,
Lost to sight for many a day,
Dark and fierce as night and tempest
With his bristles turning gray.

As it chanced, the door was fastened,
But he lingered, and a whim—
Reasonless, possessed me, singly
To attempt to capture him.

¹ Vernon was the author of the Provincial Act prohibiting swine from running at large:

Soon he passed behind the cabin,
Where some berry bushes grew,
Hiding me and every movement
Altogether from his view.

Straight a train of turnip slices
Laid I, stretching far afield
From the sty's now open doorway ;
Quickly then myself concealed.

Muttering to himself, and grumbling,
Now the hog again appeared ;
When he saw the line of turnips
Ears and bristles both upreared.

Plainly he a trick suspected,
For he sniffed but would not taste,
And towards the sheltering forest
Turned, as to retreat in haste.

But a stray slice came before him,
And he snatched it. Ah, the lack
In his stomach overcame him ;
All his youth came rushing back.

Back he turned, and swallowed, smacking,
And he raised his head no more
Till the open sty received him,
And I slammed the heavy door.

With a beam I barred it, mortised
Into logs on either side,
And I heaped great stones against it ;
“ Now I have you safe ! ” I cried.

To a hole high in the gable
Mounting, I looked down within,
And the captive, glancing upward,
Greeted me with savage grin.

Then he gashed his teeth in fury,
And his eyes gleamed luridly,
As he spoke in grim defiance—
“ Guff ! guff ! ugh ! ” he snarled at me.

Undismayed I dropt beside him,
Seized him firmly by the tail.
To describe the instant struggle
Words all miserably fail.

With ear-splitting yells he circled
Round and round at dizzying pace,
While each vain attempt to check him
Only spurred him in his race.

Round my arm a rope-coil fastened
Loosened, tripped me, and anon
Flat as flounder on the sty-floor
I was thro' n, yet hung I on.

Plunging, kicking, twisting, shrieking,
Fast and thick he gasped at last ;—
Then, in one grand break for freedom
His remaining strength he cast.

As a battering ram of old time,
Forward dashed, with shattering blow,
Broke beleaguered gates, and hurled them
Down in awful overthrow.

So, with bound of desperation,
He his headlong passage tore,
Crashing, through the solid planking
Of the barricaded door.

Bars and barriers flew before him—
Rocks in vain obstruct the way—
Tattered, bruised, yet hanging to him,
Out upon the field I lay.

Then he turned upon me, shaking,
Breathless, streaked with foam he was ;
But he only ripped my boot-leg
Ere he loosed his quivering jaws ;

For a dreadful kick I planted
Right above his fiery eyes,
Stars by thousands danced before him,
And he fell, no more to rise.

Well may you believe that
Hues of scarlet dyed the ground,
As the savage blood in torrents
Issued from a deadly wound.

Ah ! but he is long departed ;
Of his race the few that be,—
Rugged-backed and chicken-hearted—
Wail their vanished liberty.

DROUGHT

AUGUST returns, but not with plenty crowned,
Thin, dwarfed, and light of head is all the
grain,
The meagre hay was, ere its 'blossom, browned,
The root-crops withered, all for want of rain.
The cows for after-grass do seek in vain,
And through the boundless woods afar they
roam ;
They anger me ; but when driven home again
Their sad eyes plead for hay and I am dumb,
For I have none to spare, I think of months to
come.

THE OLD RESIDENT

A DARK entangling wood—a shadowed stream,
A tree stupendous, dwarfing all around,
Whose head like morning mountain-top would
gleam
Long ere the slanting sun-shafts struck the
ground ;
Whose fadeless boughs, by Autumn never
browned,
Sheltered the prowling panther and its young ;
Ar t in and out the Indian deftly wound
From camp to camp along the current strong,
Bound for Arcadian meres, where fearless fowl
did throng.

Crashed on primeva' calm the stormy clang
Of hard-swung steel, which down in thunder
bore
The giant's comrades all. Anon they sprang
On wings of flame, and vanished evermore.
And Nature's face another aspect wore,
And herds and flocks usurped the panther's
range,
Homes opulent replaced the camps of yore,

And the dusk rover now finds all things
strange,—
All strange and new save thee, thou enemy of
change !

Green be thy boughs, and sound thy mighty
heart,
Steadfast thy roots, deep anchored in the
clay,
Withered the arm whose sacrilegious part
Would be to hew thy girdle of decay,
O thou to whom man's age is but a day !
Oldest of living things,—secure from harm
By transient dwellers here be thou for aye ;
Be the sole hazards to thine august form
The earthquake's dizzying roll, the lightning and
the storm.

YET OH, STRANGE HEART

HERE, hemmed by mighty mountains and by
trees,
A winding valley opens far along ;—
Here the height-sweeping storm becomes a
breeze,
The cascade's distant plunge a drowsy song.
Here flocks and herds wax frolicsome and
strong
On Nature's wild profusion, broadly sown,
The cows which up the river-pathway throng
Their cumbrous udders feelingly bemoan ;—
A land of rural bliss, to poverty unknown.

Yet oh, swift river, could thy course be mine !
Yet oh strange heart, still yearning wist-
fully ;—
Oh restless eyes, that range the rugged line
Of peaks majestic, longing for the sea.—
That low dull stretch of uniformity
Which laps the solemn strand where I was
born,—
Grey Shetland ! thy grim spell takes hold of
me,
Here dwell I, right by Amathe¹a's horn,
Grandeur and joy around, yet inwardly forlorn.

AN ELEGY

HE whom the Day in slumber never found,
Who ever rose as dawn began to trace
Its first faint lines athwart Night's sombre
ground.—

The broad Sun smiles upon his sleeping face.
He who through lengthened years had held
his place

Unequaled, foremost of the brawny throng
Whose keen blades swept the fields,—ah,
evil case!

By mightier scythe at last, by arm more strong
O'ertaken, on his own wide swath he lies along.

No more the sleek expectant herds will know
His kindly pat, his briskly cheerful call;
“No more! no more!” the widow's wail of
woe,

With lonely son who now must shoulder all;
Prone by the restful form behold her fall;—
Yet cheer thee, cheer thee, oh, thou heart
forlorn!

Still lives his God and thine, who ever shall
Be stay and shield, as says your Book well-
worn;—

And all is well with him, afar in radiant Morn.

Gone as he would have chosen. Not for him
Of helpless idleness the weary doom,
The slowly weakening hand, the shrivelling
limb,
The watcher's stealthy tread in darkened
room,
And whispering voices, sibilant in gloom ;—
Such had his active soul to frenzy driven ;—
Far better thus, in manhood's prime and
bloom,
Right sturdily to pass,—quick transport given—
From June's exultant songs to jubilation of
Heaven.

THE RIVERSIDE PRESS LIMITED, EDINBURGH.

THE LOVE OF THE AGES TO COME

By Eric Duncan



Midnight and silence. From the dark blue sky
The glorious stars that on these fields look
dawn

Have seen the flight of ages winging by
And mighty changes that have with them flown;
And when the crumbling pyramids are blown
In clouds of dust along the desert plain
The dwellers then in each terrestrial zone
May still—with wider view than we obtain—
Behold that radiant host, an undiminished train.

O ye unnumbered worlds, with which I tread
The march predestined, stretching out of sight,
A last eclipse may a'er your faces spread;
To me—to conscious me—there comes no night;
What matters it to him whose pathway bright
Lies upward on to the immortal dead
That scant and straggling locks are turning
white

Or one more year of earthly life has fled?
He trusts his Captain's ward, his everliving Head.

Fleet years, if ye but teach me still to take
My cross with humble courage and content,
To act or reason wisely for his sake
Who is my life, then speed your vanishment!
And what of wife beloved from heartstrings
rent?

Of only son cut off by war's fell blow?
Nay, murmur not; these blest ones merely went
To his great home to whom thou didst them owe,
And pain and woes of age that home can never
know.

The joys combined in mother's comforting,
In father's strength, renewed forevermore,
In woman's truth, in child's gay welcoming,
All, all await thee on that august shore;
The love that passeth knowledge to explore
Shall be thy tireless occupation then,
That love—which all things shall at last
restore—

Be hymned by voices now beyond our ken
And circling spheres of space, world without end.
Amen.

