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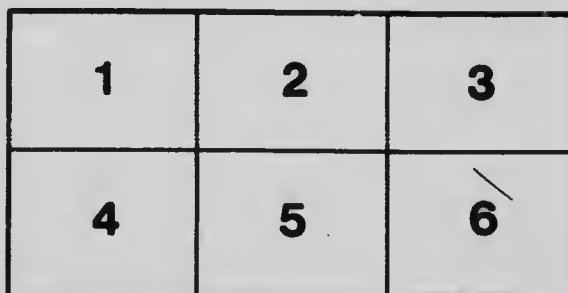
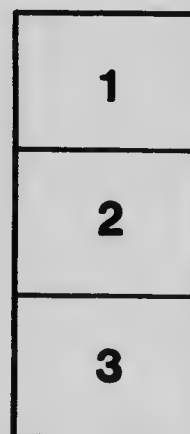
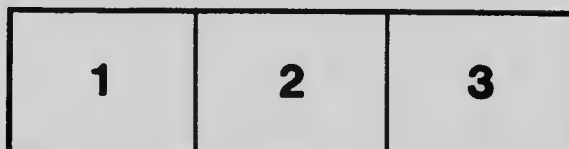
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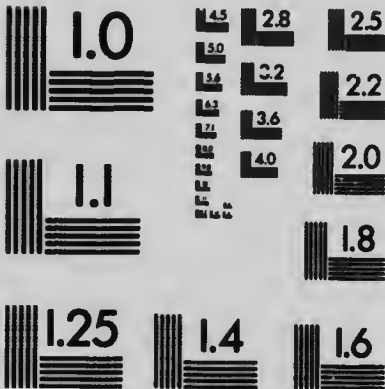
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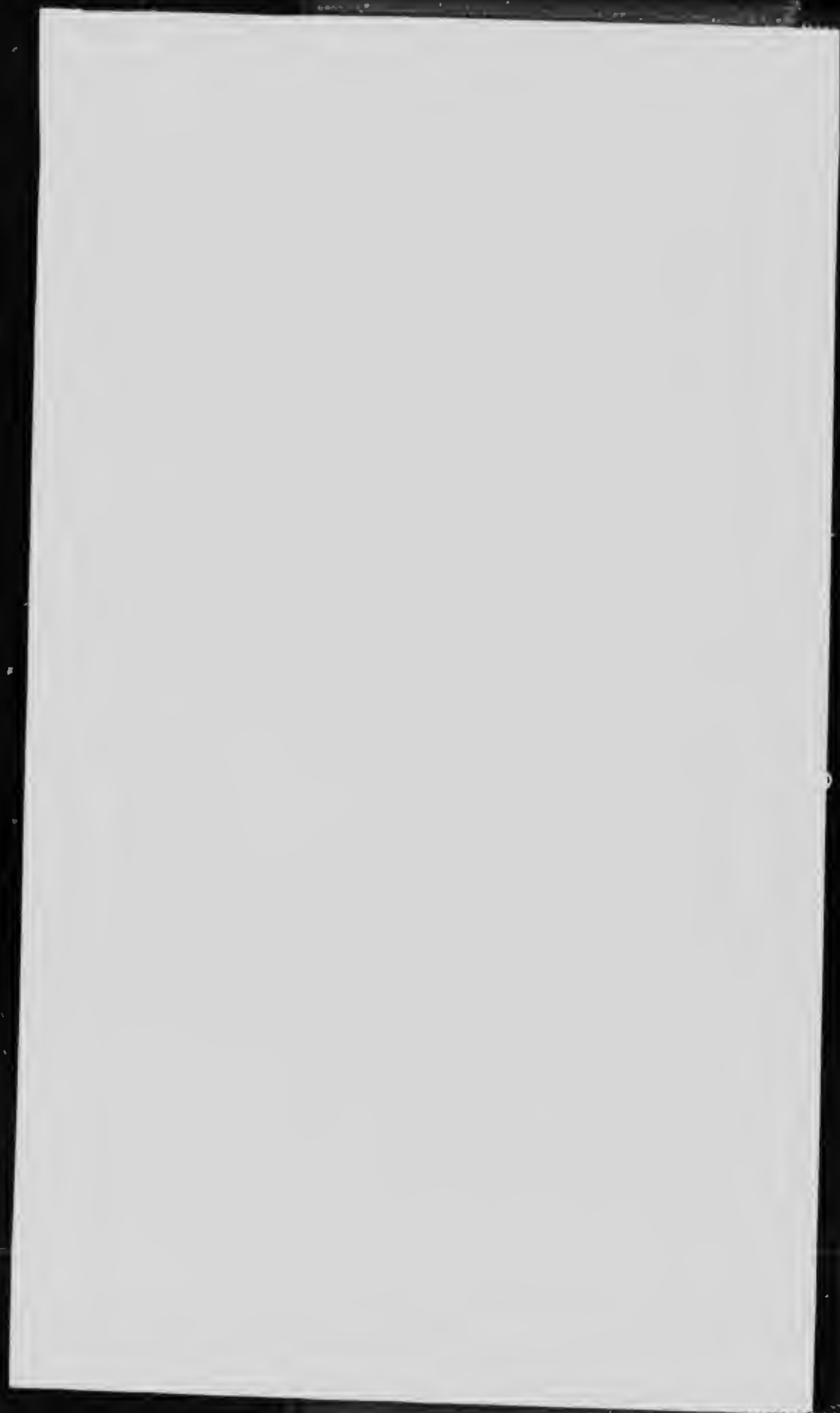
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AN UNCONSECRATED GRAVE.

Beside that fountain, 'neath the summer sky,
He yearned—impatient for the strife to be—
To see, to know, to mount, the world defy,
And drink the mirage of futurity !

And fame were his to-day and fair content,
If tangled skein by daring could be freed
Or Alpine height be won by sheer ascent
Or Fate be vanquished by a dazzling deed.

But by that fount was hid, one dismal day,
A shattered harp beneath a sombre pall ;
And, in its humble case of unblest clay,
That harp, all tuneless, waits the Tuner's call.

THE SOLACE OF THE STARS.

The purple fades, and now the dewy gloom
Is deepening in the vales ; the weary flowers
Drink in fresh fragrance, and the heavens assume
The saddened splendor of the starry hours.

And magic Night exhales her anodynes
And soothes the throbbing pulse in its unrest,
Revives the drooping herbs and intertwines
Hope with the sadness of thy widowed breast.

Then thou, that, giving all thy thoughts to one,
Dost in his loss consign thee to despair,
Gaze on that sky forsaken by the sun
And read the consolation written there.

A thousand planets bring not back the day,
Yet shut not thou thine eyes on those that burn ;
Singly, not all at once, they fade away,
And the last linger till the sun's return.

PLAINT OF THE NURSE IN THE "MEDEA."

Choriambics.

Vain, ah! vain was your art, vainer your toil, maladroït bards of yore,
Who wove lyrics to please, pæans to thrill, hearts
that were glad before ;
Who found strains that could charm men in their
mirth—musical fantasies
That could heighten our joys, gladden our feasts,
brighten our revelries.

But no tones of the harp, notes of the pipe, never a
tuneful lay,
Not a song of your songs, maladroït bards, ever
availed to stay
The sad footsteps of Care, urged by the Gods, turning
the light to gloom,
Bringing chill to the soul, withering hope, pregnant
with Dread and Doom.

Yet if Music would lull Sorrow to sleep, this were a
boon to all,
Kinder far than to weave measures to grace revel or
banquet hall.
Fast beat hearts in the full flush of the feast, fragrant
with wine and flowers,
Wanting never a sweet chord on the lute swifter to
speed the hours.

HORACE'S ODE TO POSTUMUS.

Done into English Alcaics.

Fast fleet the seasons, Postumus, Postumus,
Nor can affection's tender anxiety
Unfold sad age's wrinkles, charming
Death the unwearied to stay his footsteps.

'Twere vain to hope by numberless hecatombs,
Fond friend, to soothe grim Dis the Unsoothable,
Whose stream tremendous shades emprisons—
Tityus and Geryon miscreated.

Ah ! dismal wave, and once to be sailed upon
By every mortal nursed by the fostering
Earth-mother, be he lord or prince, or
Peasant who ploughs but a dozen acres !

We vainly shun the sword of the enemy,
And far-resounding breakers of Adria ;
We vainly shrink, through sickly autumn,
From the malarious breath of Auster.

The slow and darksome River of Murmuring,
And the despairing daughters of Danaus,
We all shall look on, and the pains of
Sisyphus destined to toil forever.

Hearth, home and love, with all of its witchery,
Shall stay behind ; and all of your nurseries
Shall only yield their lord the sombre
Boughs of a cypress to deck his ashes.

A younger heir more suited for revelry
Shall careless quaff your ripest of Cæcuban,
And stain the floor with rich libations
Fitter for feasts of the Gods or pontiffs.

MORGANA MIA.

There is a fruit that shineth
With rich hues o'er and o'er,
And the hungry man repineth
To find an ashen core !

There is a tone that thrilleth
The longing listener's ear
And his heart with gladness filleth—
As if it were sincere.

There is a blush that playeth
From dimpled cheek to chin,
And nothing that betrayeth
The cruel art therein.

There is a gleam that stealeth
From soft'ning eyes and bright—
Too late the mocked heart feeleth
How false that fairy light !

And there is one who mourneth
A joy that may not be,
Whose hopelessness returneth
At every thought of thee.

THE FRATRICIDAL PRINCES.

A Scene from the "Phœnissæ."

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

Eteocles, regent of Thebes, who agreed with his brother to keep their afflicted father in confinement and to reign alternately, but who declined to vacate the throne at the expiration of his term.

Polynices, his brother, who, to enforce his rights, has led a foreign army against his native city.

Jocasta, their mother, who had arranged the conference now ending ineffectually.

- Eteocles.* Mother, a truce to words; they merely waste
The time for deeds, and all thy zeal is vain.
For we shall sign no treaty that denies
My claim to keep the sceptre of this Thebes.
So, waiving admonitions, let me be;
And thou, fare forth beyond the walls, or die.
- Polynices.* Pray, at whose hands? Who is so proof
to steel
That shall draw blade to slay me without
scath?
- Eteocles.* He is not far; see'st not this good right
hand?
- Polynices.* But craven wealth loves life too well to
dare.
- Eteocles.* Why all these legions 'gainst a dastard
foe?
- Polynices.* A prudent leader ranks above a rash.
- Eteocles.* Immune thou boastest, sheltered by the
truce.
- Polynices.* Once more I claim the sceptre in my turn.
- Eteocles.* Thy claim I grant not; I shall hold mine
own.
- Polynices.* More than thine own.
- Eteocles.* I grant it; and now go.
- Polynices.* O altars of my fathers' gods,
Eteocles Which thou hast come to sack.

Polynices. O hear—
Eteocles. The yearnings of his country's foe !
Polynices. Fane of the white-horsed gods !
Eteocles. Who hate thy name.
Polynices. Forced from my native land—
Eteocles. Which thou would'st spoil.
Polynices. Foully, ye gods—
Eteocles. Invoke Mycenæ's gods.
Polynices. Impious,
Eteocles. But not a traitor such as thou.
Polynices. To cast me out despoiled !
Eteocles. And soon to slay !
Polynices. My wrongs thou hearest, father ?
Eteocles. And thy deeds.
Polynices. And mother ?
Eteocles. Why, thy lips profane the name.
Polynices. O Thebes !
Eteocles. At Argos Lerne's fount adjure.
Polynices. I go. But thee, mother, I bless.
Eteocles. Haste forth.
Polynices. Anon, but let me see my sire.
Eteocles. Denied.
Polynices. At least my virgin sisters.
Eteocles. Nevermore.
Polynices. Oh sisters !
Eteocles. Hear the fondness of their foe !
Polynices. Farewell, my mother.
Jocasta. Well fare I forsooth !
Polynices. No more thy son,
Jocasta. To anguish was I born !
Polynices. Through his rude violence—
Eteocles. Well matched by thine.
Polynices. Where is thy post outside the forts ?
Eteocles. Why ask ?
Polynices. I would confront thee.
Eteocles. Thy desire is mine.
Jocasta. Ah, sons, what horror mean you ?

Polynices.

Time will tell.*

Jocasta

The curse broods o'er the house.

Eteocles.

Then let it fall !

Polynices.

(defiantly) No more my sword, now blood-
less in its sheath,

Shall idle. But my country and her gods

I call to witness how he drives me forth

Wronged and dishonored ; as a very slave

And not begotten of the self-same sire.

And Thebes, if aught befall thee, blame
not me

Who came unwilling and unwilling go.

Farewell, comrades and homes of Thebes,
and thou

Phoebus, her highways' guardian, and
ye shrines

Of the great gods, laden with offerings.

Good-bye, for I may never see you more !

Not that my hope is drooping by God's aid

To slay the usurper and to rule the land.

*Soon afterwards the brothers fall in single combat.

THE CRY OF CAIN.

Even, O God, from me, the wanderer,
Even from me stained with a brother's blood,
Even from me who sought to flee Thy curse,
At last from me accept an offering !
Even from me whose fruit Thou didst disdain,
From me who thought acceptance was my due,
From me who met divine rebuke with hate,
From me, a rebel, ruthless, impotent ;
From me who through these weary, barren years
Have borne Thy brand upon my wasted brow,
Yet fiercely kept my impious head unbent,
Defiant of the lightning and the gloom ;
Despising all the pity of my kind,
And hopeless of the mercy of my God ;
Rearing a doomed and godless progeny
Far off from Eden in this land of Ind.

But now a dream, that tortures with new pain
My spirit in its cold trance of despair,
Shows me the endless chain of woe which hangs
From that first link forged by this cruel hand.
Into Thy world who brought the taint of blood,
Into Thy world bring I the scourge of WAR !
I see the legions mustering for the strife,
And hear the battle-cries in unknown tongues.
I hear the call of glory and of greed,
Ambition's pleadings thrilling patriots' hearts ;
The summons of religion to destroy
Rings from the brazen throat of Lucifer !
I hear the wailing of the fatherless,
And desolate curses upon me, the sire
Of carnage, and the moan of maids who weep
For death of lovers and undying love !
I see the flames of temples flare and fade,
And in the waning light the expectant eyes
Of Pest and Hunger glisten ; and hard by
Vultures and wolves on writhing valor prey.

I see dark iron thundering flame and death ;
The poisoner's phial and the assassin's knife ;
The rack, the wheel, the cross—the spear that wounds
At every thrust the shrinking side of God !

My punishment is more than I can bear :—
Ever the sounds of slaughter in my ears,
Yet no man's hand may touch my charmed life ;
And my own hands are nerveless, for I fear
To meet my brother's pale and pleading face
More than all things that haunt me, save one dream,—
A dream of anguish of a dying God !
O murdered God! can there be hope for me?

Even from me, Maker, wilt Thou accept
The primal offering of a humbled heart
That owns Thy rod a father's, while it smites,
And sees long vengeance lightening into love.

THE FROWN OF THE LORD.

"The waters saw thee, O God; the waters saw thee and were afraid; the depths also were troubled." Psalms, lxxvii, 16.

The frown of the Lord on the slumbering main;
And a ripple has ruffled its marble plain,
And it heavily heaves its laboring breast,
And visions of evil have troubled its rest.

The frown of the Lord on the shuddering sea;
And the breezes, sighing disconsolately,
With the moan of the swelling surges form
An ominous prelude to herald the storm.

Still the frown of the Lord, and, from the cloud
That is veiling the sun with a lurid shroud,
Threading the gloom from South to North,
The glorious arrow of God flames forth!

Still the frown of the Lord; and the tempest has burst
And it howls in its wrath like a spirit accurst,
And the rack fleets shivering through the air,
And the ocean is foaming in despair.

Falls the frown on the pennoned ships that sail
On a merciless errand, cased in mail,
On the cunning that fashioned their engines of war,
On Oppression o'erleaping * God's watery bar!

Falls the frown on a traffic with treachery fraught,
Falls the frown on the cargoes by misery bought,
On a commerce too blindly by nations adored
And on Mammon usurping the crown of the Lord!

Still the frown of the Lord. To the pitiless tide
A crippled vessel is turning her side,
And up through the strife to the Listening Ear
Rise the muttered curse and the murmured prayer;

* Nequicquam Deus abscedit
Prudens Oceano dissociabili
Terras, si tamen impie
Non tangenda rates transiliunt vada.

For the fall of a tear is as loud as the roar
Of the storm waves that burst on the echoing shore
To the ear of our God ; and the dark and the light
Are equally clear to His infinite sight.

Still the frown of the Lord : and high o'er the rest
Of the surges lifting its awful crest,
And with many a toss of its angry head,
Sweeps a wandering wave on its mission dread.

Still the frown of the Lord ; and the towering crown
Of the wave on the riven deck foams down.
A tumult of waters, a crash, a spasm—
And the ship disappears in a closing chasm !

Still the frown ; but not on the mother pale
Whose eyes by faith have pierced the veil,
And who, clasping her babe as they both go down,
Sees the face of a Father beneath the frown.

She had heard not His voice in the whirlwind's roar,
She had heard not His voice in the elements' war,
She had heard not His voice in the thunder's boom ;
But His voice is a whisper that welcomes her home.

.

A smile of the Lord ; and the sea is at rest,
And a babe floats asleep on a woman's breast,
And a rainbow is lighting their pathway above,
For the Father he loveth a mother's love.

BATTLE CALL OF ANTICHRIST.

"But one of the soldiers with a spear pierced his side, and forthwith came thereout blood and water." St. John, XIX, 34.

A forethought of the fated reign of peace
Fell on the soul of Antichrist, I dreamed ;
And his brow darkened, and his hate-lit eyes
Aloft glared lurid through the mist of space.
Then vast and shadowy rose the Lord of War
And shook his right hand at a far White Throne,
Brooding unutterable blasphemies.
Anon he gazed upon our shuddering world,
'The while, with voice that fires or freezes souls,
He spake his message to the circling winds,
And roused to battle all his myrmidons :

"Up, despot, trembling for a blood-bought crown !
The smoldering flame that threatens thine own house
Hurl at another's ; lead thy people on
By glory's flaring torches to their doom.

(Ever the spear
Pierces the spirit of the Prince of Peace !)

"Yoke Victory to thy chariot and ride on,
Trampling the pride of nations, Conqueror !
Let thy maimed warriors writhe alone ; for thou
Art scorn of God for His vile images,

(And scorn of mine
For Him who pleads for them at God's right hand.)

"Pause not to reck the ruin thou hast made :
Is not the comet's course foredoomed, and thine ?
A deathless name outweighs a million deaths,
And orphans' sighs are mute 'mid the acclaim
Of multitudes.

(What is the grief of Jesus unto thee ?)

"Oh, pygmy pomp and blazon of man's war !
When Michael strove with Satan 'mid the stars,
These were seraphic deeds and agonies,
And not this earthly death ! Nathless I crave
Unnumbered slain—
The sin of His own slayers tortured Him !

" Hail to thy memory, war of wars, that jarred
Awhile the calm of heaven, when Pride and Hate
Stung by the still rebuke of love supreme,
Rose, fought and fell ! And to thy memory hail,
Symbolic spear
That wounded the dead Christ on Calvary !

" Dear is the murderer's dagger, dear the rack
That strains the frame of one who testifies
With his last breath to Christ ; dearest the spear
That stabbed Him on the Cross and stabs Him still,
Each thrust a balm
To soothe my sleepless memory in Hell !

NOTE.—There being so many diverse opinions as to the personality of the Antichrist, it appeared a warrantable license to conceive him to be the Spirit of War, the exact antithesis and contrast to the Prince of Peace.

The allusion in the second and third stanzas is, of course, to the first Napoleon, who is made to style himself "the scorn of God" in one of Alfieri's poems:

"Son lo sdegno di Dio: non un mi tocchi!"



