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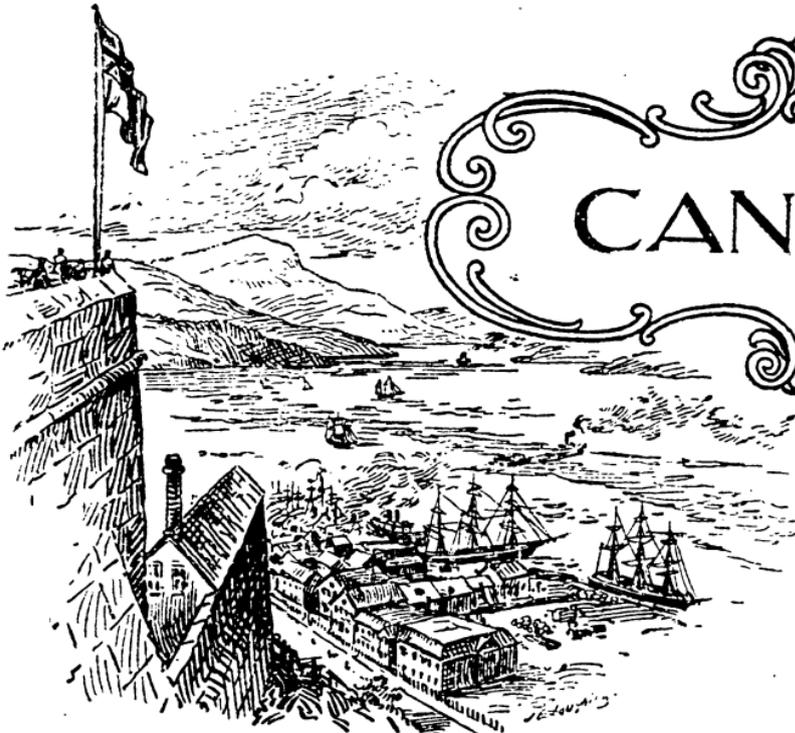
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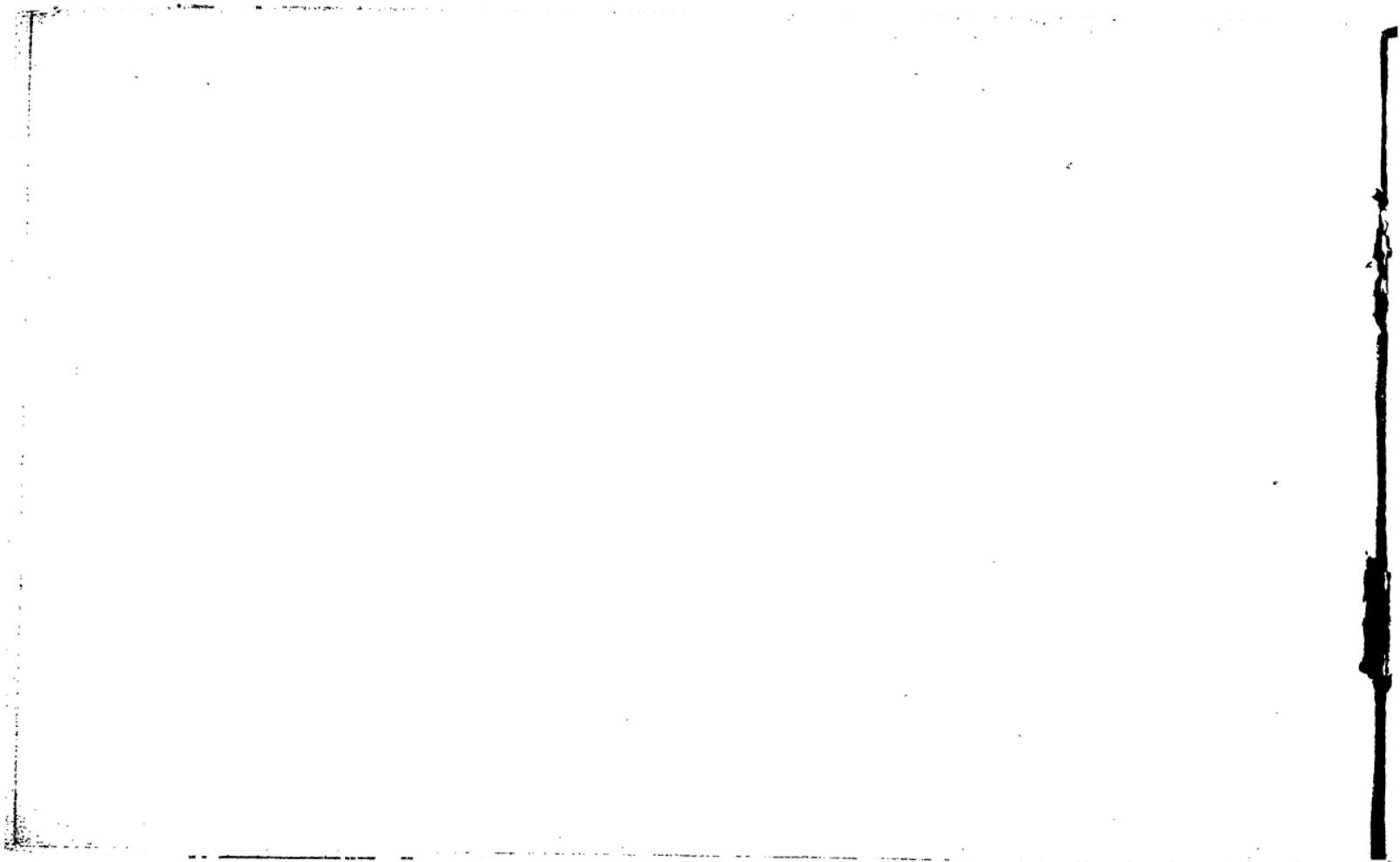
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CANADA

A
METRICAL
STORY.

C. CAMPBELL.



RT

CANADA:

A METRICAL STORY.

BY

CHARLES CAMPBELL,

Author of the New Brunswick Prize Ode on the Queen's Diamond Jubilee, etc.

TORONTO:

WILLIAM BRIGGS.

29-33 RICHMOND ST. WEST.

ENTERED according to Act of the
Parliament of Canada, in the year
one thousand eight hundred and
ninety-seven, by WILLIAM BRIGGS,
at the Department of Agriculture.

DEDICATED

TO THE

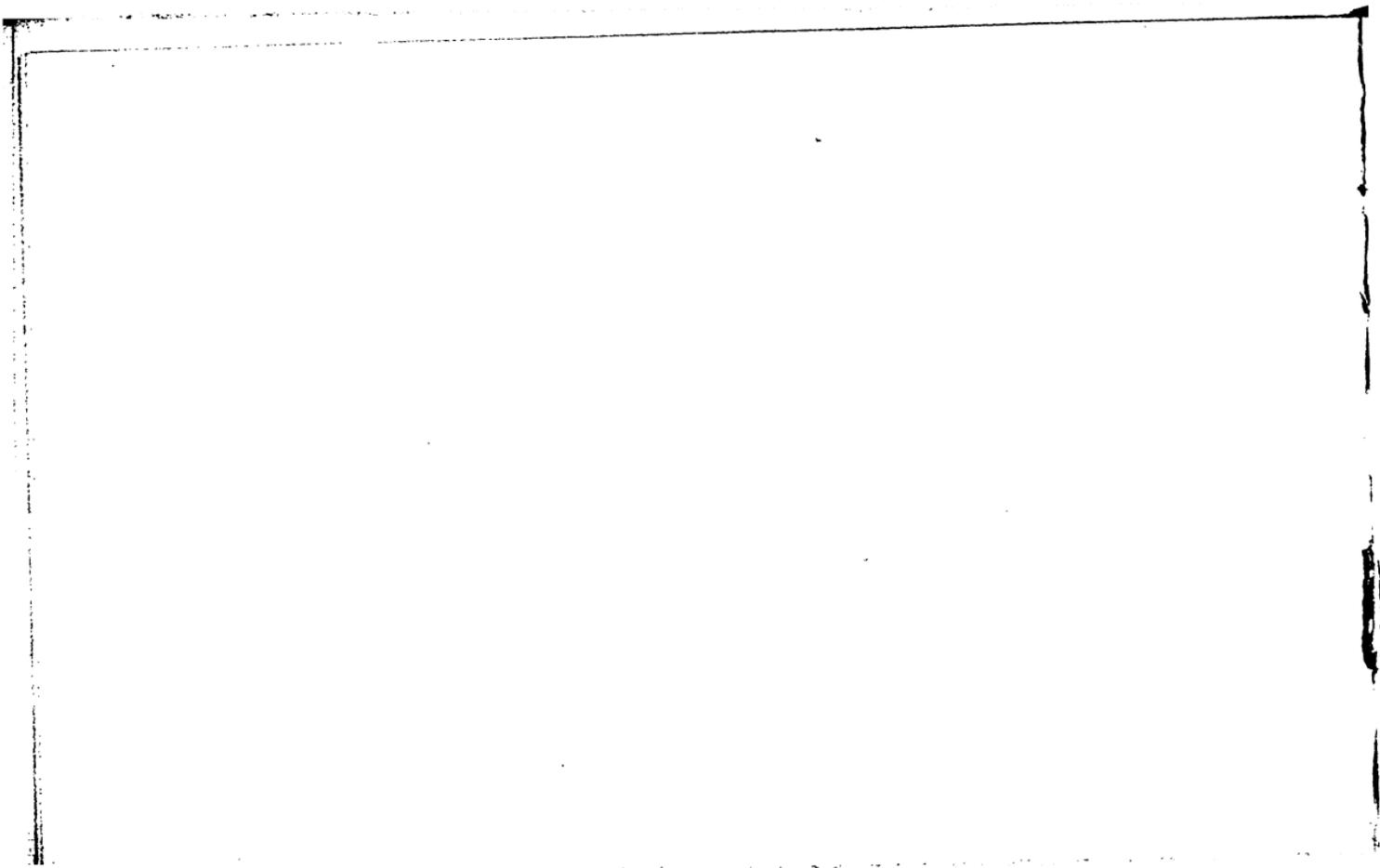
Right Honorable Sir Wilfrid Laurier, G.C.M.G.,

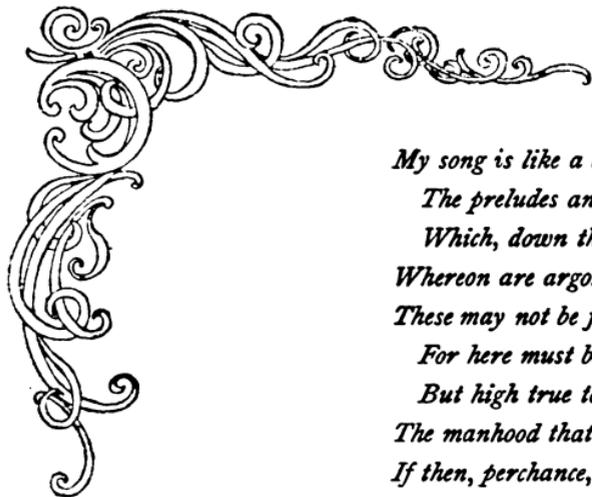
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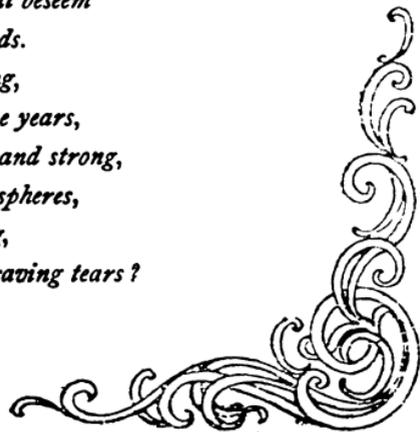
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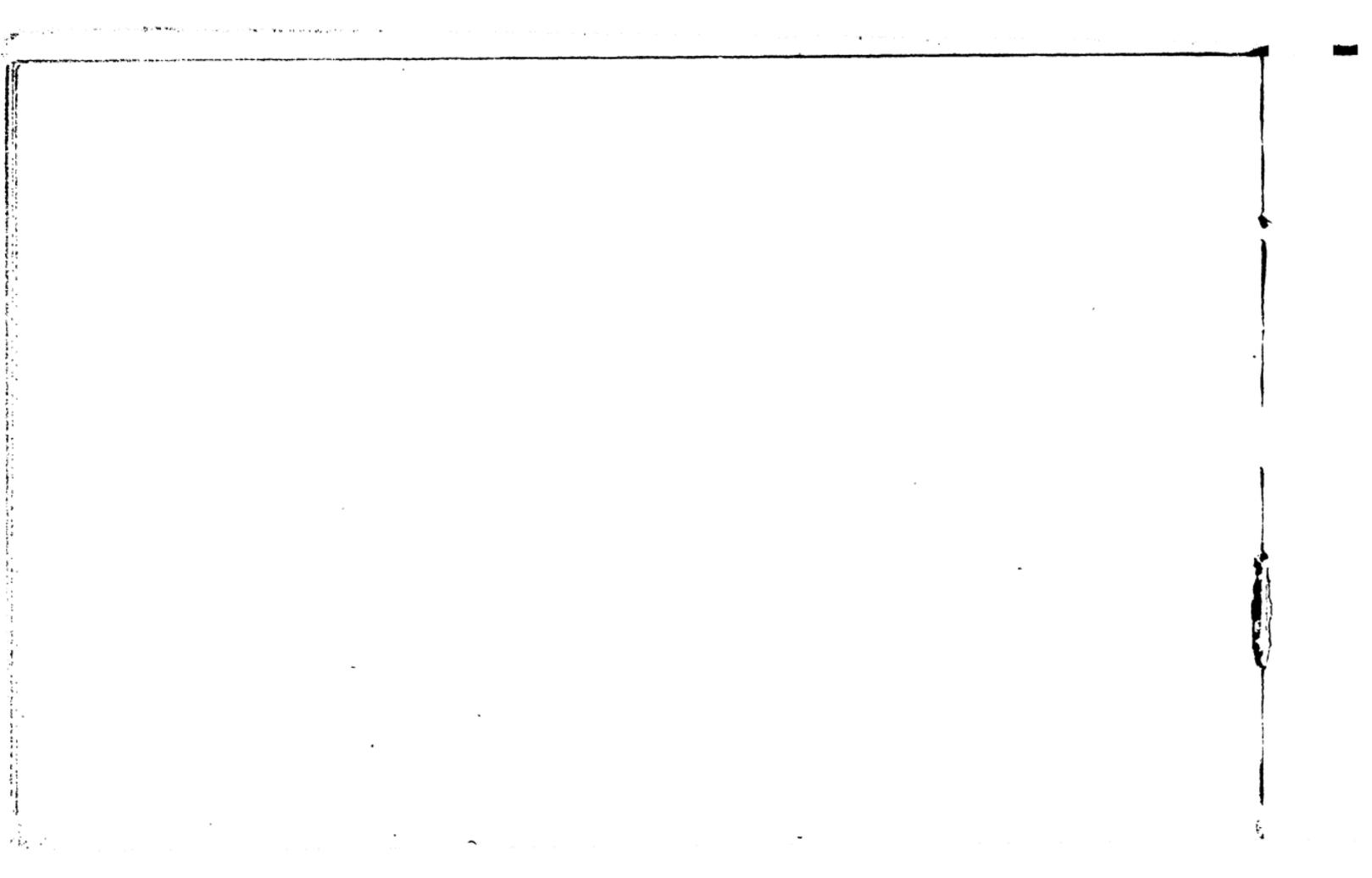
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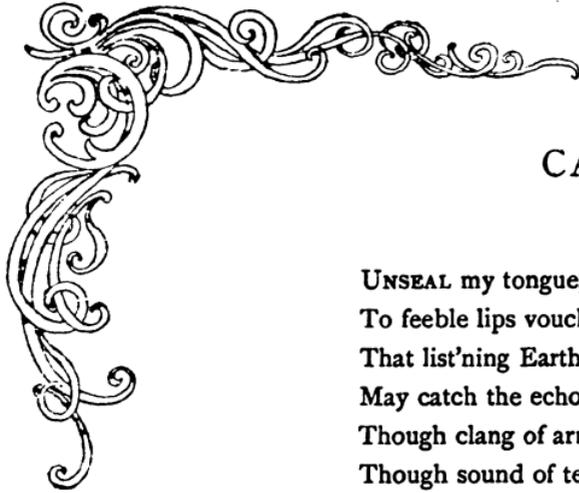




*My song is like a brooklet's broken chords,
The preludes and first lispings of a theme
Which, down the ages, shall be mighty stream
Whereon are argosies and glint of swords.
These may not be foretold in idle words,
For here must be no fabric of a dream,
But high true tales of splendor that beseem
The manhood that our ancestry affords.
If then, perchance, the echo of my song,
Far off across the wave-crests of the years,
May wake some master-singer, clear and strong,
To swell the story to the list'ning spheres,
What ask I more of all the ages long,
What ask I more, with humble, craving tears ?*



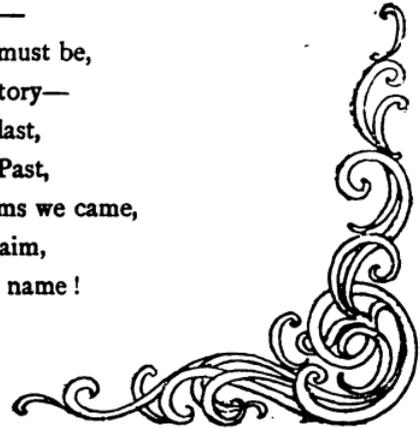


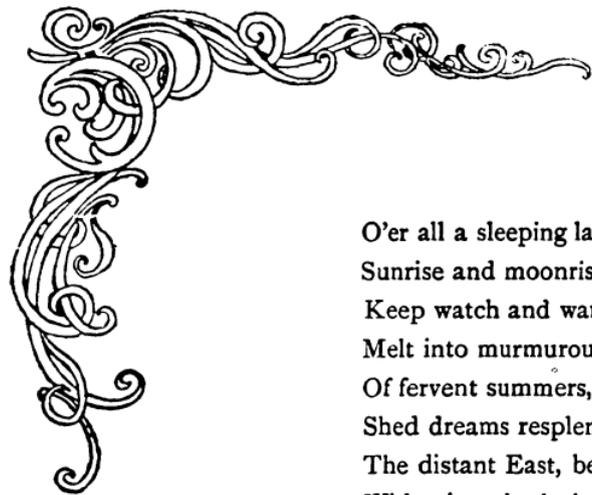


CANADA.

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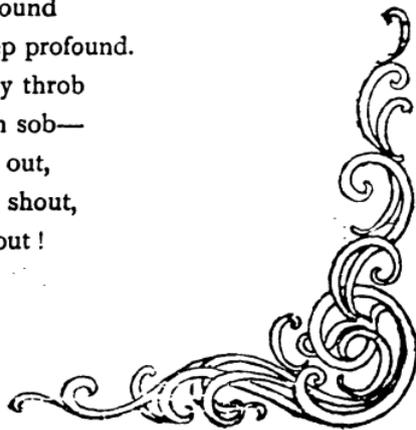
UNSEAL my tongue, oh, Muse! my soul inspire,
To feeble lips vouchsafe thy sacred fire,
That list'ning Earth and Sea and years unrolled
May catch the echoes of the story told—
Though clang of arms and sigh of toil must be,
Though sound of tears must follow victory—
Yet shall the strain be glorious to the last,
The Future flowering from the mighty Past,
Till she, the Mother, through whose arms we came,
Shall greet our glory with her high acclaim,
Well-proved, and worthy of her ancient name!

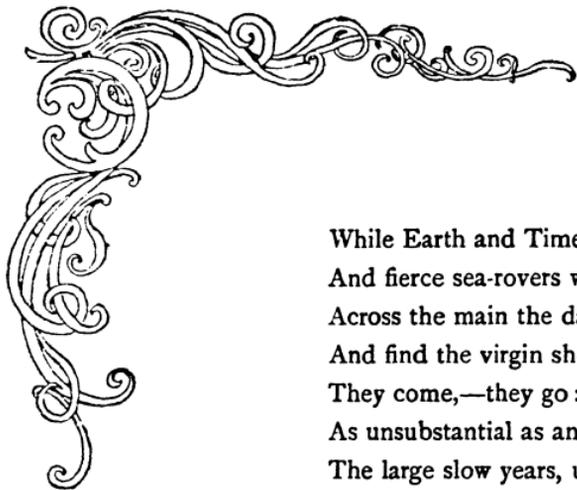




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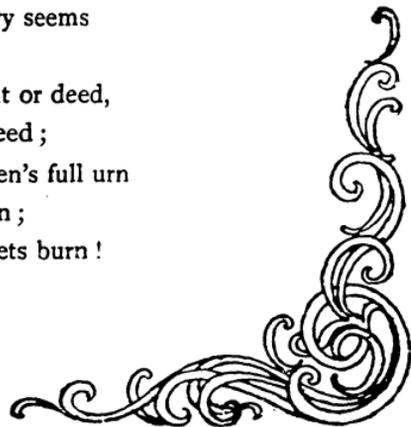
O'er all a sleeping land, in cradle green,
Sunrise and moonrise, with the stars between,
Keep watch and ward. The virgin winter snows
Melt into murmurous music 'neath the glows
Of fervent summers, and the Seasons round
Shed dreams resplendent o'er that sleep profound.
The distant East, beyond the seas, may throb
With triumph glorious, or heart-broken sob—
The curtains of the Dawn close gently out,
Alike, the victim's cry, the conqueror's shout,
Or busy hum of peace, or clamorous rout !

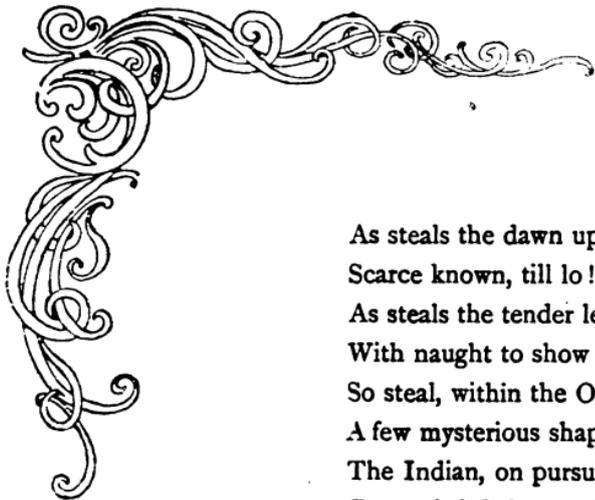




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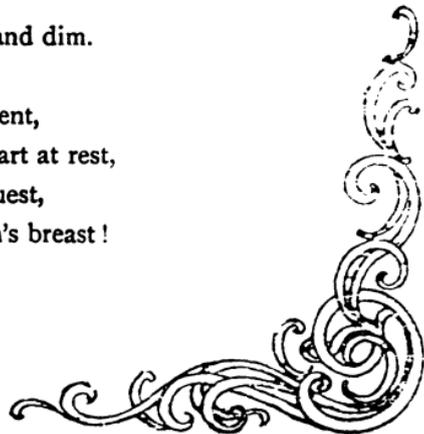
While Earth and Time are young, so runs the tale,
And fierce sea-rovers woo each favoring gale,
Across the main the dauntless Vikings sweep,
And find the virgin shores they do not keep.
They come,—they go : their shadowy story seems
As unsubstantial as an infant's dreams.
The large slow years, unfilled with thought or deed,
Float silent by with Time's mysterious speed ;
Still sleeps the land, while yet from Heaven's full urn
More than a thousand seasons flow in turn ;
Moons wax and wane, and countless sunsets burn !

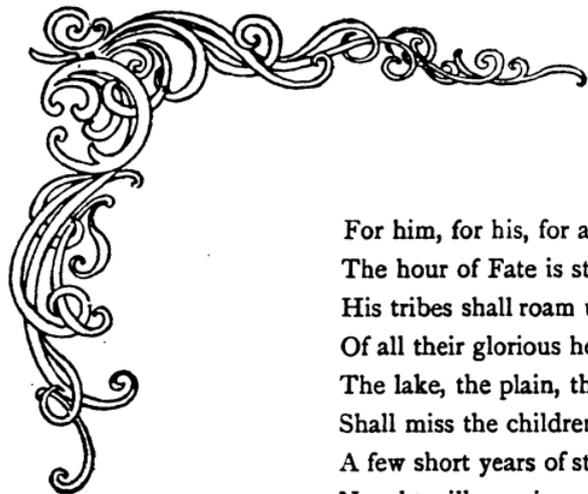




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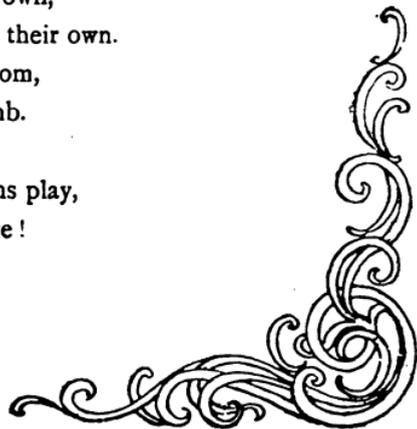
As steals the dawn upon the sluggish night,
Scarce known, till lo! a world is brought to light ;
As steals the tender leaflet through the earth,
With naught to show a forest king hath birth ;
So steal, within the Ocean's hollow rim,
A few mysterious shapes, white-winged and dim.
The Indian, on pursuit of quarry bent,
Casts a brief glance of passing wonderment,
Then speeds, with noiseless foot and heart at rest,
Through forest shadows, on his eager quest,
Nor dreams of coming Doom on Ocean's breast !

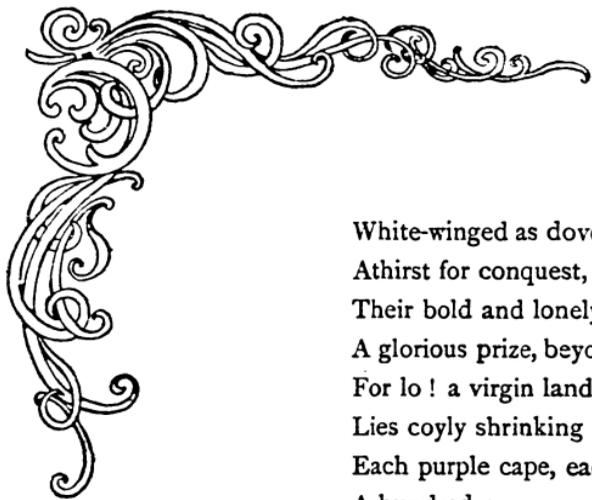




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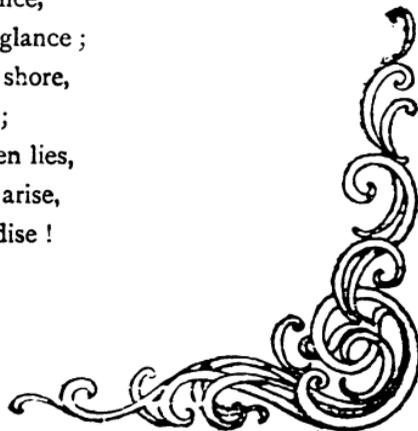
For him, for his, for all his people's lore
The hour of Fate is striking—soon, no more
His tribes shall roam unchallenged, lords by birth
Of all their glorious heritage of earth.
The lake, the plain, the forest, sombre grown,
Shall miss the children born and marked their own.
A few short years of strife, of grief, of gloom,
Naught will remain, not e'en a lonely tomb.
Passed like a mist before the rising day,
Melted like snow where summer sunbeams play,
Unsought and unremembered here for aye !

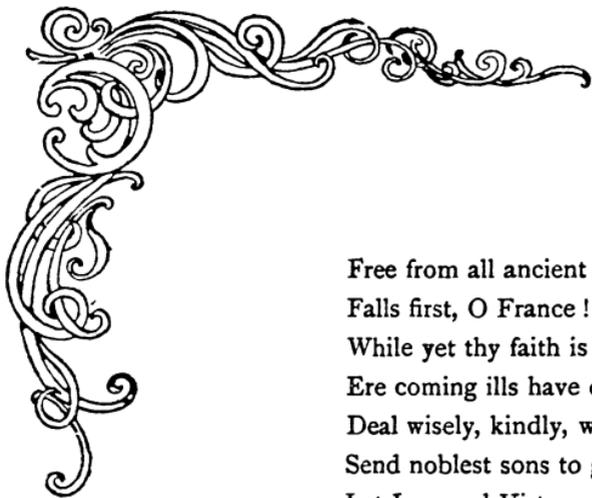




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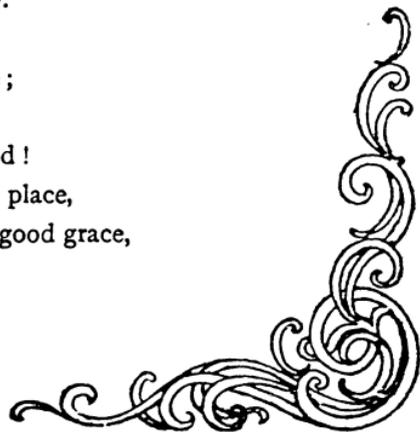
White-winged as doves, no doves but eagles they,
Athirst for conquest, hungry for the prey ;
Their bold and lonely flight brings guerdon rare,
A glorious prize, beyond their utmost prayer.
For lo ! a virgin land, a new-found France,
Lies coyly shrinking from their ardent glance ;
Each purple cape, each curving line of shore,
A hundred eager eyes with joy explore ;
Storm-tossed and weary, here their haven lies,
O'er this new land their Standard shall arise,
This younger France, this earthly Paradise !

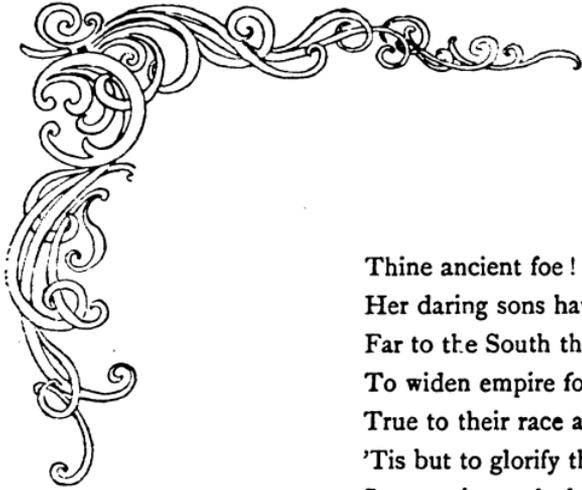




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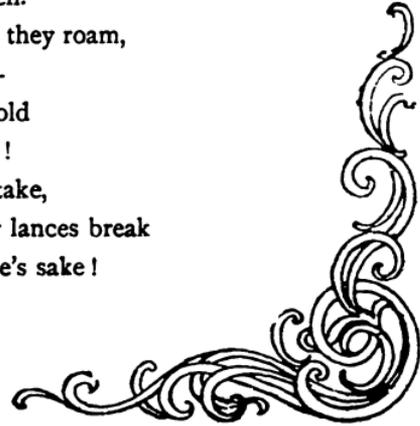
Free from all ancient wrongs this unstained land
Falls first, O France ! into thy fostering hand,
While yet thy faith is pure, thy courage high,
Ere coming ills have dwarfed thy destiny.
Deal wisely, kindly, with thy fair estate ;
Send noblest sons to guide its infant fate ;
Let Law and Virtue rule thy spirits bold,
And sink not Justice in the greed for gold !
So, when thine ancient foe shall take thy place,
Thine olden blood may blend, by God's good grace,
With hers, to glorify the future race !

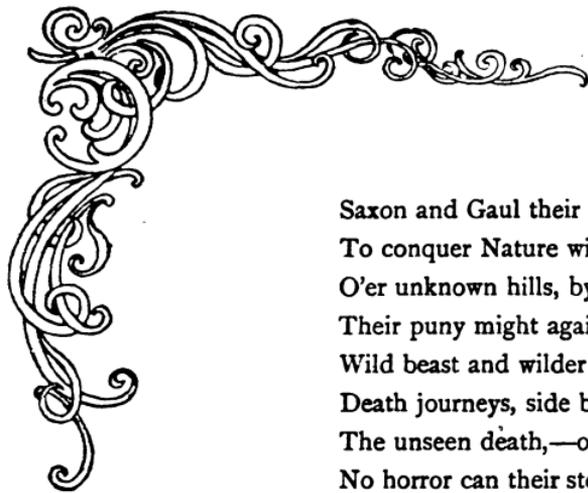




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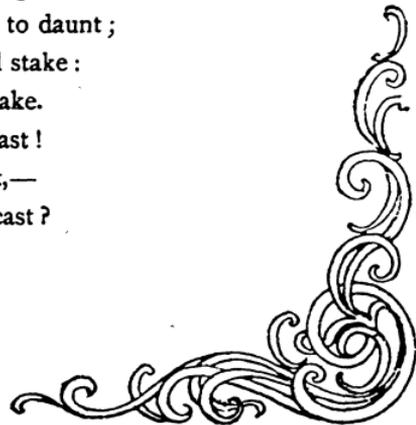
Thine ancient foe ! Already in that West
Her daring sons have sought and found a rest ;
Far to the South they strive, with ardor keen,
To widen empire for their virgin Queen.
True to their race and faith, although they roam,
'Tis but to glorify their island home—
So now, beneath the setting sun, behold
The lists set out, as if for tourney old !
Fair field indeed, and mighty is the stake,
When two such champions must their lances break
In conflict, stern and long, for Empire's sake !

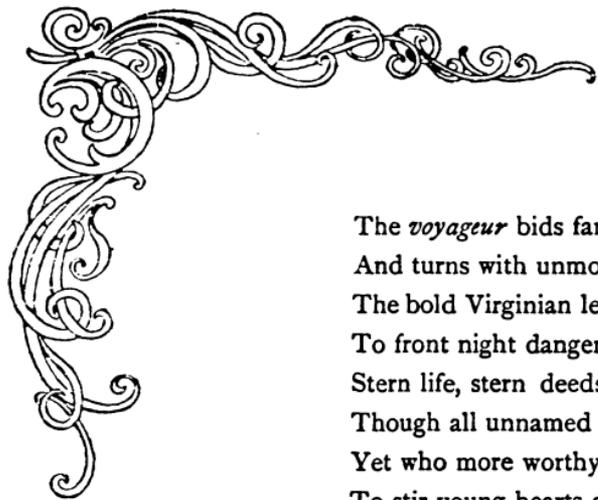




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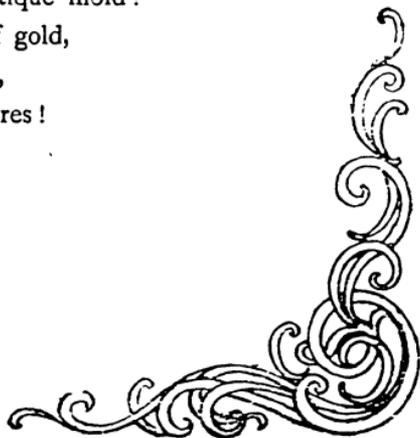
Saxon and Gaul their mighty task pursue,
To conquer Nature with a chosen few ;
O'er unknown hills, by unknown streams to press
Their puny might against the wilderness !
Wild beast and wilder man their wand'rings haunt ;
Death journeys, side by side, their souls to daunt ;
The unseen death,—or else the dreadful stake :
No horror can their steadfast courage shake.
Unknown and unnamed heroes of the past !
What guerdon did ye look for at the last,—
What hope induced so stern a venture cast ?

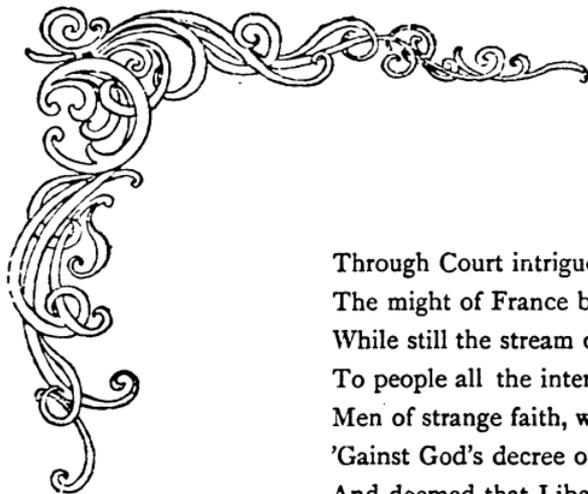




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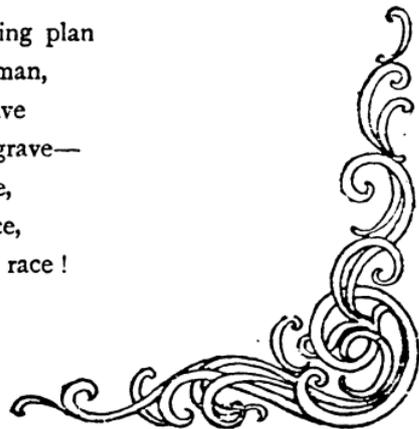
The *voyageur* bids farewell to his wife,
And turns with unmoved heart to deadly strife ;
The bold Virginian leaves his sleeping child
To front night dangers from the desert wild !
Stern life, stern deeds, stern men of antique mold !
Though all unnamed in Honor's scroll of gold,
Yet who more worthy, as a people's sires,
To stir young hearts and kindle patriot fires !
Loyal alike to faith and king were ye,
So must your children true and loyal be,
Your honor shrinèd in their fealty !

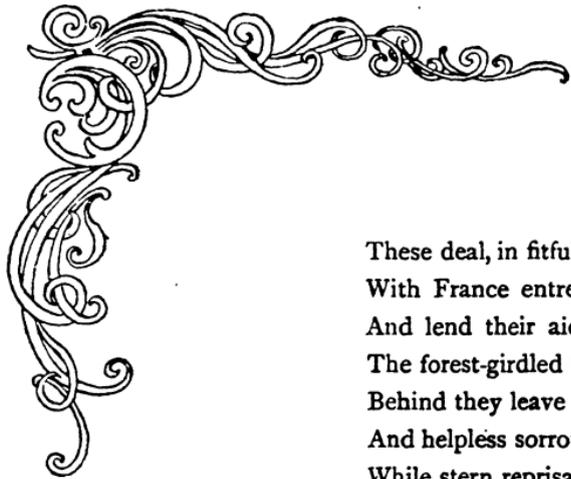




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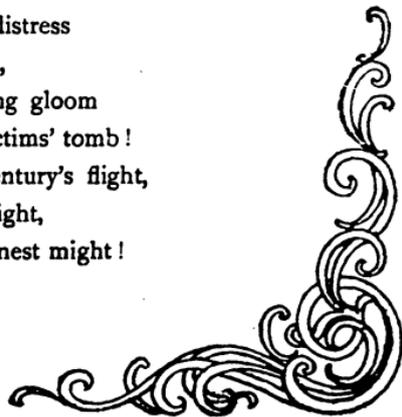
Through Court intrigue, where idle pleasure blends,
The might of France but scant assistance lends ;
While still the stream of England's offspring pours
To people all the intervening shores—
Men of strange faith, who fixed their daring plan
'Gainst God's decree of brotherhood for man,
And deemed that Liberty alone which gave
All differing thought to torture and the grave—
Though lost are charity and patient grace,
Yet still there dwells allegiance for a space,
Till stronger grown to break the bond of race !

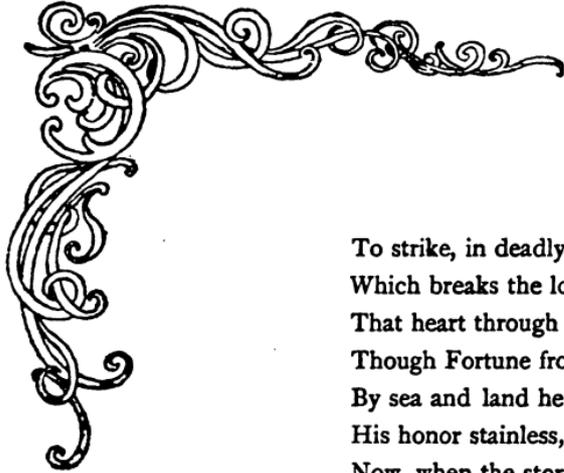




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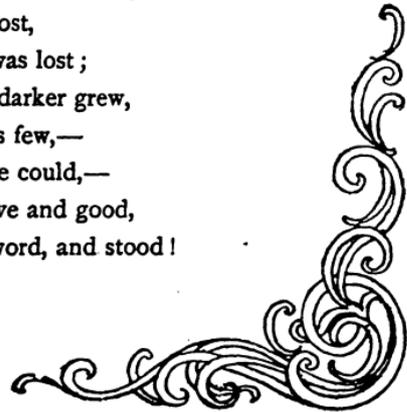
These deal, in fitful blow and swift retreat,
With France entrenched within her northern seat ;
And lend their aid with sword and torch to scar
The forest-girdled hamlets, near and far.
Behind they leave the widow's deep distress
And helpless sorrows of the fatherless,
While stern reprisal gilds the gathering gloom
And lights with triumph e'en their victims' tomb !
So ebbs and flows, through full a century's flight,
The bloody current of the doubtful fight,
Till England wakes to prove her sternest might !

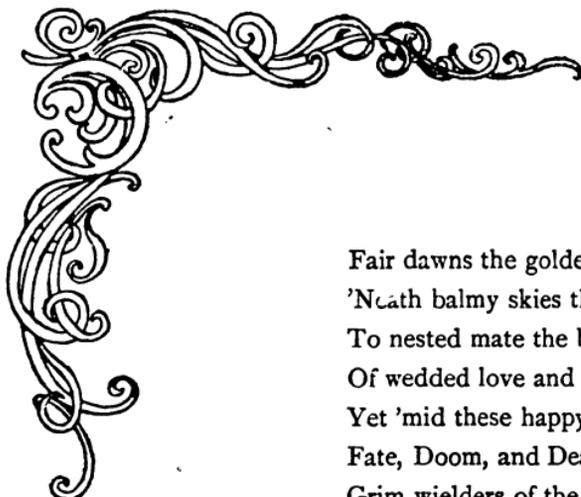




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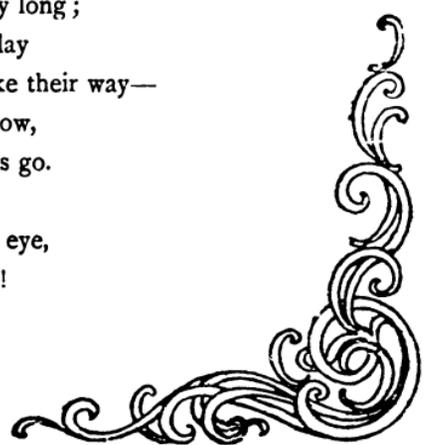
To strike, in deadly close, the mighty blow
Which breaks the lofty heart that leads her foe—
That heart through ceaseless strife had faltered not,
Though Fortune frowned and friends his need forgot ;
By sea and land he counted not the cost,
His honor stainless, though his hope was lost ;
Now, when the storm-cloud dark and darker grew,
'Mid foes increasing and with numbers few,—
His soul at rest, and all things done he could,—
In rock-bound keep he placed his brave and good,
And held his breath, and bared his sword, and stood !

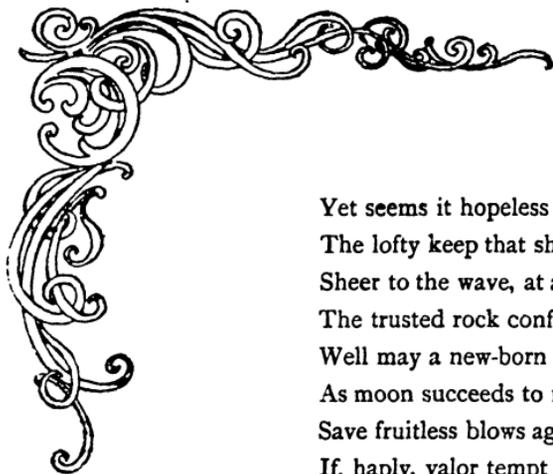




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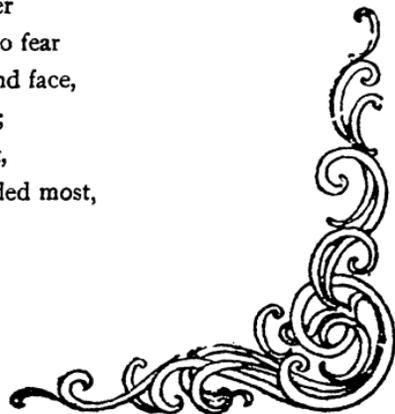
Fair dawns the golden summer o'er the land,
'Neath balmy skies the smiling flowers expand,
To nested mate the bird sings festal song
Of wedded love and hope, the whole day long ;
Yet 'mid these happy hours of shining day
Fate, Doom, and Death, unpausing, make their way—
Grim wielders of the gathering hosts below,
Where, past the cliffs, the dancing waters go.
O lonely heart ! upon thy rampart high
'Tis thine to scan with calm, unsleeping eye,
The set approach of changeless Destiny !

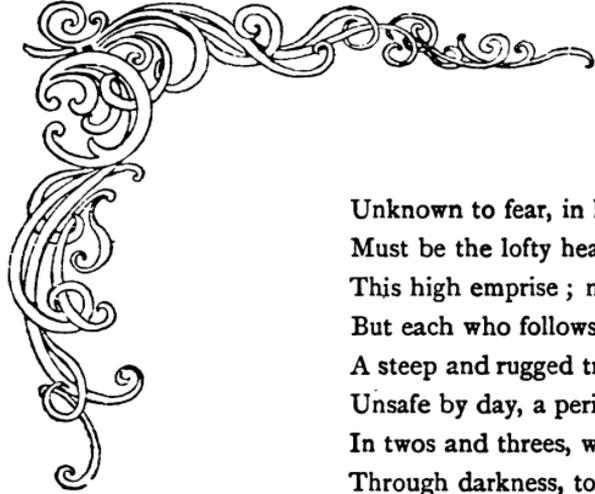




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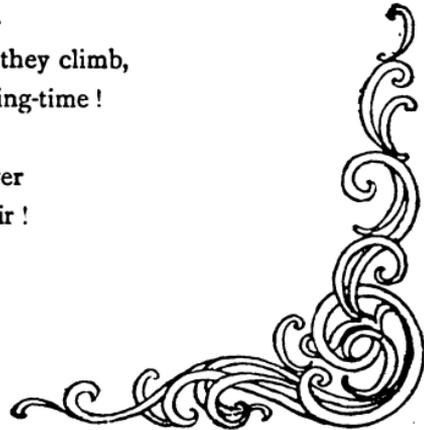
Yet seems it hopeless mortal might can win
The lofty keep that shuts thy bravest in ;
Sheer to the wave, at awful depth below,
The trusted rock confronts the dreaded foe !
Well may a new-born hope thy spirit cheer
As moon succeeds to moon with nought to fear
Save fruitless blows against that rock-bound face,
If, haply, valor tempt thee from thy base ;
While he, great leader of that baffled host,
Whose dauntless soul is known and dreaded most,
With body frail, stands dying at his post !

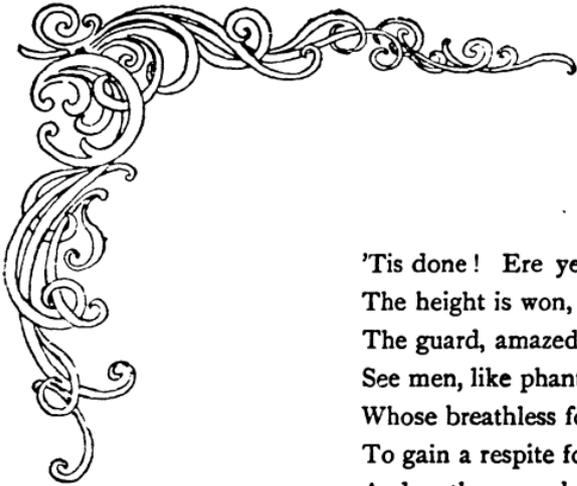




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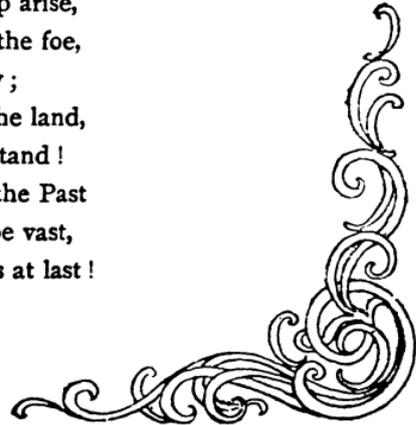
Unknown to fear, in love with loveless Death,
Must be the lofty heart that ventureth
This high emprise ; nor he who leads alone,
But each who follows where the first hath gone.
A steep and rugged track winds up the height,
Unsafe by day, a peril dread by night—
In twos and threes, with hand and foot they climb,
Through darkness, to their bloody trysting-time !
Hear not, ye warders of the upper air !
O God ! but grant a dying soldier's prayer
To plant his foot within the foeman's lair !

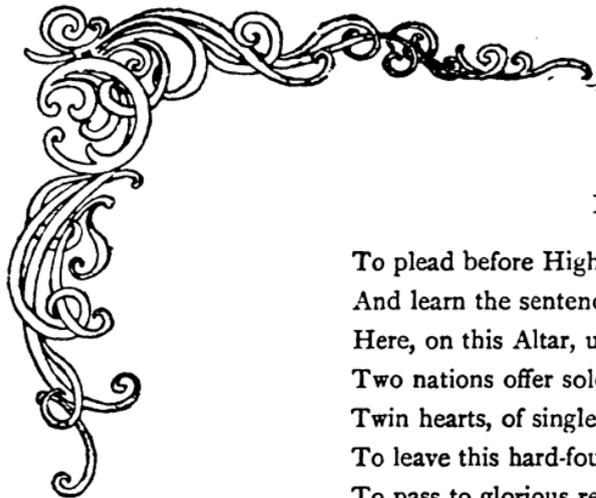




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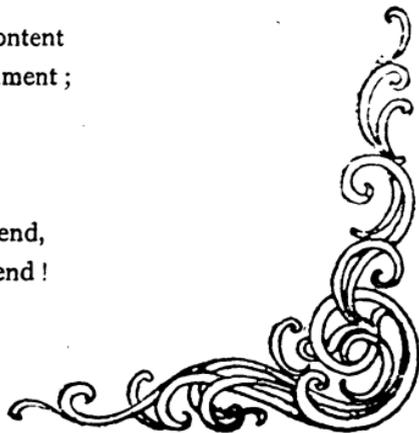
'Tis done! Ere yet the throbbing stars have paled,
The height is won, the dizzy pathway scaled :
The guard, amazed, with wild and wondering eyes
See men, like phantoms, from the deep arise,
Whose breathless foremost leap upon the foe,
To gain a respite for the friends below ;
And as the morn breaks radiant o'er the land,
The chosen ranks in calm formation stand !
Fair morn ! so big with fate, wherein the Past
Shall melt and vanish in new landscape vast,
And War and Discord fold their wings at last !

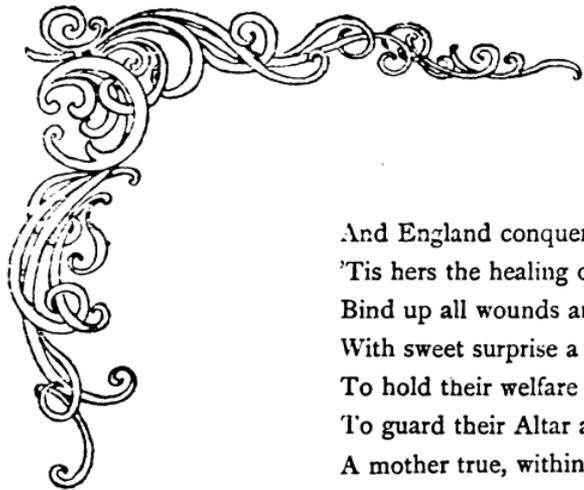




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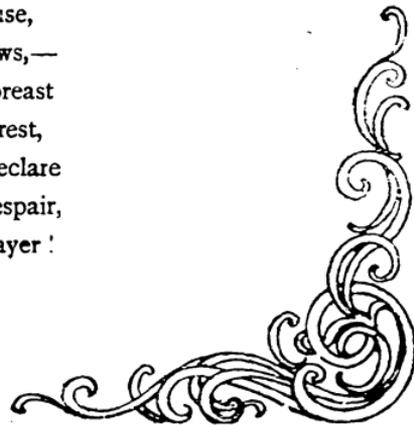
To plead before High Heav'n their last appeal
And learn the sentence which the Fates reveal,
Here, on this Altar, uplift to the skies,
Two nations offer solemn sacrifice !
Twin hearts, of single mold, and each content
To leave this hard-fought field his monument ;
To pass to glorious rest, ere set of sun,
Whate'er betide, his duty nobly done—
Here is no longer foe, but only friend,
The Lilies and the Cross above them blend,
True emblem of new life that shall not end !

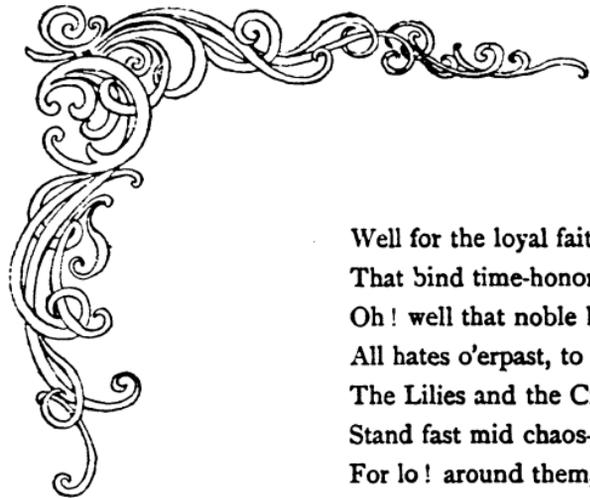




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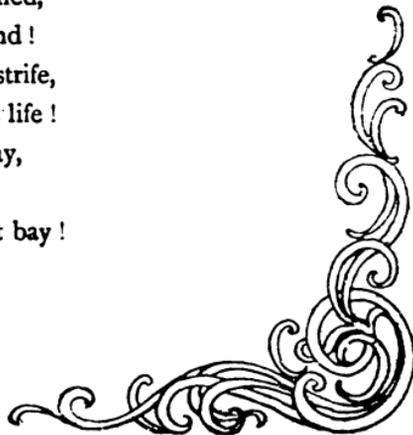
And England conquers, and the strife is o'er—
'Tis hers the healing oil and wine to pour,
Bind up all wounds and let large Freedom's thrill
With sweet surprise a waiting people fill ;
To hold their welfare as the common cause,
To guard their Altar and protect their laws,—
A mother true, within whose sheltering breast
Each new-found son secures untroubled rest,
Till gladsome hearts and deep content declare
Love conquers hate, joy triumphs o'er despair,
And grateful homage swells to patriot prayer !

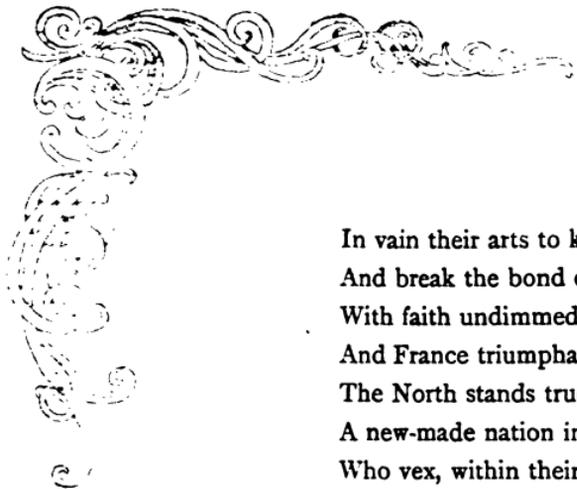




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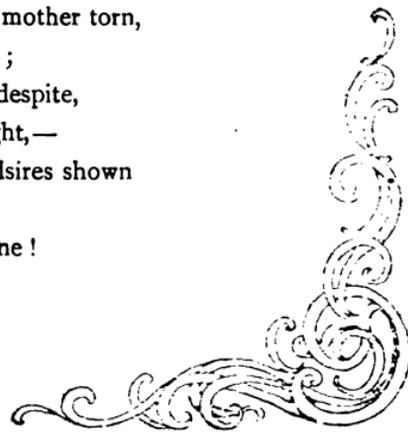
Well for the loyal faith and knightly grace
That bind time-honored foes in close embrace !
Oh ! well that noble hearts can soar above
All hates o'erpast, to brotherhood of love !
The Lilies and the Cross, by God entwined,
Stand fast mid chaos—marvel to mankind !
For lo ! around them, locked in deadly strife,
Sons of one household seek each other's life !
By grievance fired and evil counsels' sway,
Unfilial sons with aliens join the fray
And strike the mother, breathless and at bay !

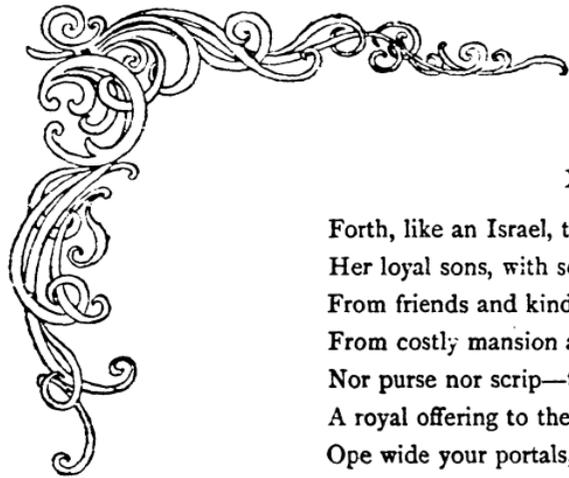




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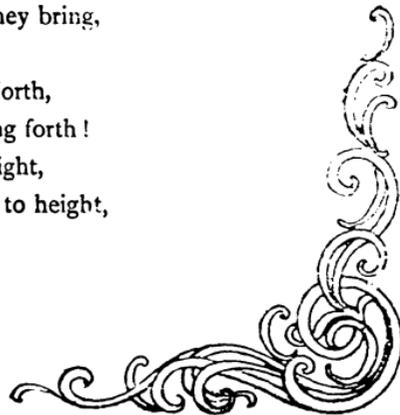
In vain their arts to kindle hate again
And break the bond of sacred trust—in vain !
With faith undimmed, though England seem to fall
And France triumphant on her children call,
The North stands true—while, from the mother torn,
A new-made nation in the South is born ;
Who vex, within their bounds, in fierce despite,
All loyal hearts that shared the losing fight,—
The narrow soul that marked their grandsires shown
In secret charge by evil whisper blown,
And wanton malice when the fight is done !

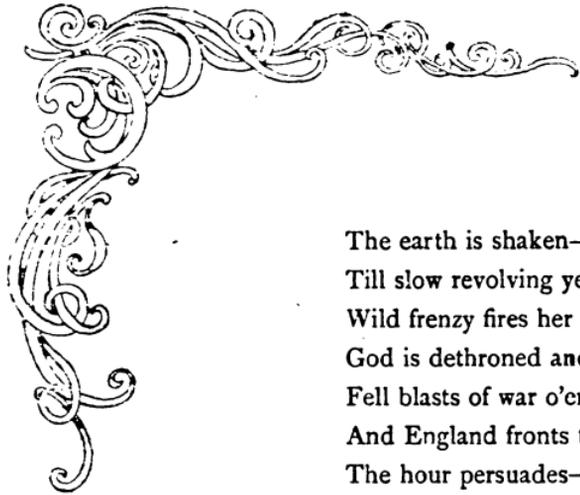




XXII.

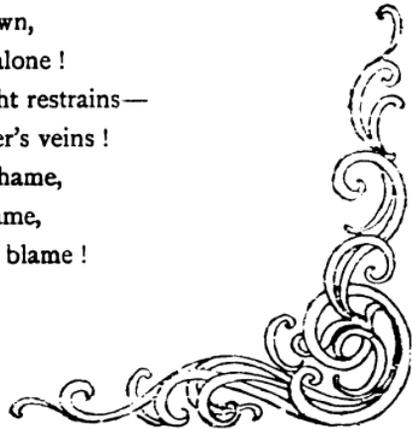
Forth, like an Israel, to the wilderness
Her loyal sons, with souls unshaken, press :
From friends and kindred, see ! the chosen come,
From costly mansion and from lowly home ;
Nor purse nor scrip—true hearts alone they bring,
A royal offering to their rightful King !
Ope wide your portals, brethren of the North,
Lift up your voice and shout your greeting forth !
For lo ! as star draws star with untold might,
Deep answers deep, and height responds to height,
So loyal hearts to loyal hearts unite !

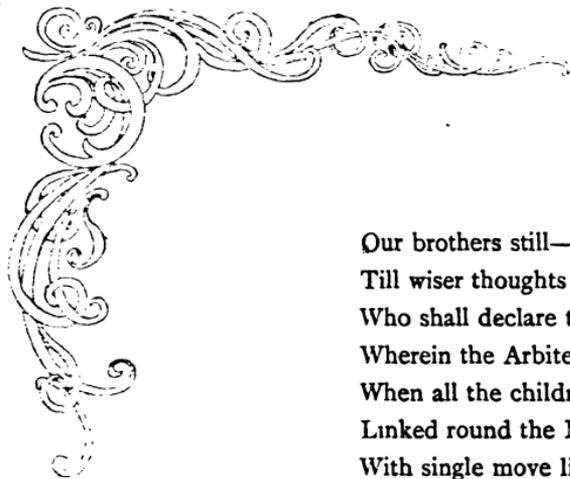




XXIII.

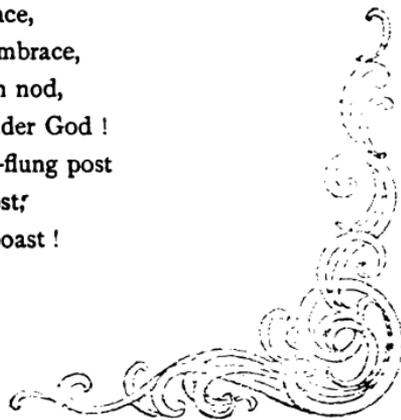
The earth is shaken—France is France no more
Till slow revolving years her peace restore ;
Wild frenzy fires her burning heart and brain,
God is dethroned and only demons reign ;
Fell blasts of war o'er every land are blown,
And England fronts the world in arms, alone !
The hour persuades—no gracious thought restrains—
Once more her kindred bleed the Mother's veins !
What hurls them back in terror and in shame,
But simple valor linked with Honor's name,
And sword unskilled in hands devoid of blame !

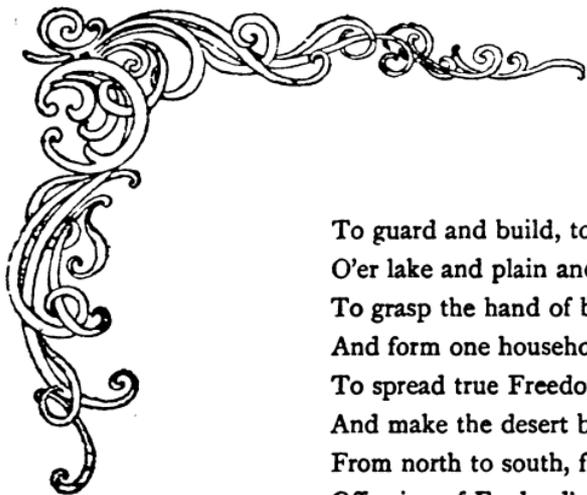




XXIV.

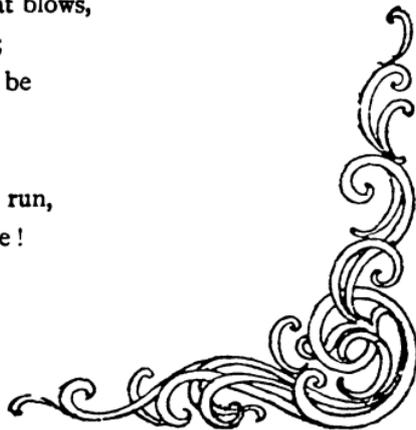
Our brothers still—though they their birthright spurn
Till wiser thoughts with older years return—
Who shall declare the glory of that morn
Wherein the Arbiter of Earth is born,
When all the children of the mighty race,
Linked round the Mother in a close embrace,
With single move like Jove's Olympian nod,
Shall right all wrongs and rule men under God !
Meantime we stand and guard our out-flung post
In sacred trust 'gainst every foreign host,
Nor fear the foe, nor doubt, nor idly boast !

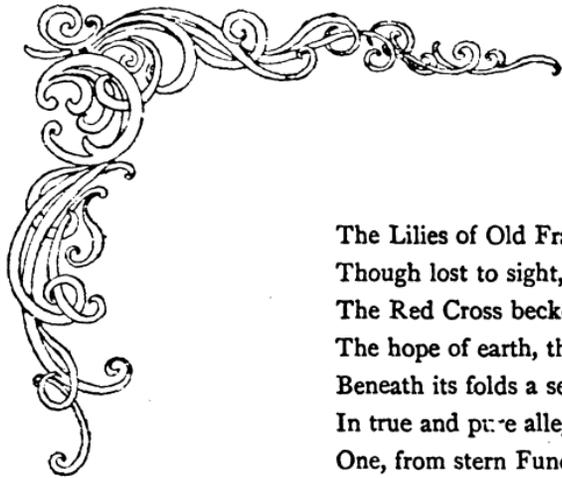




XXV.

To guard and build, to found our empire wide ;
O'er lake and plain and lofty peak to stride ;
To grasp the hand of brothers found apart,
And form one household of one mind and heart ;
To spread true Freedom on each wind that blows,
And make the desert blossom as the rose ;
From north to south, from east to west to be
Offspring of England's Law and Liberty !
Behold ! the task our fathers had begun,
Through toil and strife and dangers nobly run,
Behold ! the task, the glorious task is done !





XXVI.

The Lilies of Old France are just as fair ;
Though lost to sight, their fragrance still is there—
The Red Cross beckons ever in the van,
The hope of earth, the steadfast friend of man.
Beneath its folds a serried people stand
In true and pure allegiance, heart and hand ;
One, from stern Fundy's deep arterial tide
To where the Great Lakes spread their waters wide ;
One where the Rocky Mountains proudly soar ;
One still upon the far Pacific shore ;
One people,—to be sundered nevermore !

