

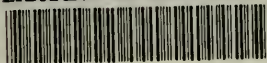
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Songs of Good Fighting

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Songs
of
Good Fighting

By /
Eugene R. White



LAMSON, WOLFFE AND COMPANY

BOSTON, NEW YORK AND LONDON

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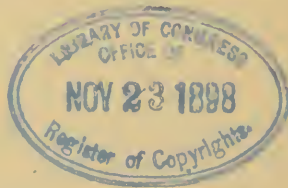
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To H. P. T.

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DEDICARE

WE are they that seek the Clew, riding
for the Name,
Past the wayward winds that blew,
past the lures of Fame ;
Men fail and the words of men, shall deeds of
men fail, too ?
A rouse for the Endless Errantry, we that seek
the Clew !

*For the Name thrice-murmured in our
ears*

*Is a spur ye never knew,
Who listed laggard through the Years,
Nor sought to gain the Distant View.*

Leave Love and the Lover—'tis ours to discover.
Though Death be the portion of this our Long
Quest ;
So in with the rowel, out with the avowal,
The Oath of the men who know riding is best.

*Though the Clew, mayhappen, long ago
Was passed in the Vale of Youth,
Yet yonder hill, for all ye know,
May bear a sign of the Utter Truth.*

Songs of Good Fighting

Lay the lashing by—never! we still seek the
lever
To pry the Great Secret from God's granite
lips www.libtool.com.cn
By the Oath we essayed it, by the Name we
ha' prayed it,
Forsworn in the service of Blood Fellowships.

*Though the marrowed bones of the early
Band
Long since have ashed to dust,
We'll reach at least what they have
spanned,
By the zeal of the riding-lust.*

We are they that seek the Clew, riding for the
Name,
Past the wayward winds that blew, past the
lures of Fame;
Men fail and the words of men, shall deeds of
men fail, too?
A rouse for the Endless Errantry, we that seek
the Clew.

—1898

A SONG OF GOOD FIGHTING

AND it's oh ! for the days when Men were
Men, and Souls were feoffed to Flesh,
And the raucous call of a sea-born brawl,
with the gray winds running fresh,
Thronged through the hearts of Saxon men as
they aimed the Death-stroke true ;
Drank manhood up from the Battle-cup—the
wine of the gods' own brew.

O goodly men of other days, who died in a
well-fought fight,
Whatever may your lives have been, your
deaths, at least, were bright !
And blood, they say, will purge away the smear
of blot and stain,
And the Seraph looks at record books washed
clean by a crimson rain.

If justice meed or Christian creed has pulled
Heaven's latchkey in,
There's Woden's hall will hold you all who
died in the Good Fight's din.
You are far and away too great to stay with the
gentle, pious folk
Who hoarded Life with a niggard soul and
cringed before the Stroke.

Songs of Good Fighting

There may be pits of molten flame for Cozeners
and Thieves,
And Burning Spits for Hypocrites, in the
~~Gath'ring of the Sheaves~~ ;
But none for those who fell in fight, and used
their ebbing breath,
Not in a useless prayer to God, but a Saxon
curse for Death.

Weak-watered, in these petty days, it is yet in
the heart of Man—
Its roots, deep set, by blood were wet since
ever the Earth began—
This love for the sight of goodly fight ; and,
whether on land or sea,
The Valiant Kin are lusting yet for the Strong
Man's empery.

It was there in the day the Cavemen strove
with hatchets they struck from stone ;
It rang through the strife of early life with
crunching of ax-clove bone.
It was writ on the face of the Teuton race—on
their muscles and arms and thews ;
When the Vikings drave through the Northern
Seas it sang to the spray-dashed crews.

A Song of Good Fighting

It was there in the hardy English Isle, it rang
in the twang of the yew,
And the arrows whistled a glad refrain from the
bows which the archers drew ;
And when Spanish hosts, like baffled ghosts,
flapped tattered sails to Spain,
The chorus rose with a mighty swing o'er the
heaps of the Popish Slain.

Let wan-faced Peace with mild increase bid
Janus' gates be barred ;
Wherever the blood flows red in hearts, where
muscles there be and hard,
There's an unknown stir for the days that
were ; and the tale of a fight fought true
Still makes the Saxon blood to dance to the
tune their Fathers knew.

And when the summoned lines of Souls up
through the Ether swim,
And herd before the Great White Throne and
reach to the River's rim,
Then raise your song o'er the Pallid Throng
that cringe in white dismay—
March boldly to the sight of Him as though to
an earthly fray.

Songs of Good Fighting

Stand forth on that day, Sturdy Men, who
knew no gospel of hate,
E'en as you lived, so stand ye forth, who
cavilled with none save Fate !
When the Prayerful Horde have their reward,
and the Good have gained their Grails,
Will naught else weigh on that Last Day with
the One who holds the Scales ?

—1896

A BUCCANEER CHORUS

THEY say the Devil has fled from Hell
To sail on the Spanish Main—
By the yoke of the Spell, the Folk say well
When they say that the Devil has fled
from Hell.

From out the Sea-Born Sunset is cast a crimson
tinge—

*With a Yo, and a Ho, from a Band of Four-
score Men—*

The Gates of Hell yawn redly upon the
World's grey hinge,

And we sail to the Postern to see the Devils
cringe—

*With a Yo, and a Ho, from a Band of Four-
score Men.*

The Sea moans Dead Men's Dirges, Shapes
muster Soul on Soul—

*With a Yo, and a Ho, from a Band of Four-
score Men—*

There creeps a Cloud before us, an ashen aureole,
The Beast of Doom has littered, and Morgan is
her foal!—

*With a Yo, and a Ho, from a Band of Four-
score Men.*

Songs of Good Fighting

And Life is but a Tavern, so let us stay and
Sup—

*With a Yo, and a Ho, from a Band of Four-
score Men—*

And Death is in the Taproom and Death is in
the Cup,

And Death's a Merry Gentleman, so drink the
potion up—

*With a Yo, and a Ho, from a Band of Four-
score Men.*

For though Life is worth the Living, when Life
is on the Sea—

*With a Yo, and a Ho, from a Band of Four-
score Men—*

And it's worth the Devil's forfeit to let the arm
swing free,

And show the Spanish Dastards what Men the
Rovers be—

*With a Yo, and a Ho, from a Band of Four-
score Men.*

Come, Death, you royal Gamester, and have a
final bout—

*With a Yo, and a Ho, from a Band of Four-
score Men—*

A Buccaneer Chorus

For we are growing weary of the Revel and
the Rout,
And while the Dice are rattling, go Snuff the
Candle out—
*With a Yo, and a Ho, from a Band of Four-
score Men.*

*They say the Devil has fled from Hell
To sail on the Spanish Main—
By the Thrice-sworn Spell, the Folk say
well
When they say that the Devil has fled from
Hell.*

—1896

THE LEES OF THE WINE
OF WRATH

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THEY said that we should see it in the
Parting of the Ways ;
They said that we should find it in the
Rounding of the Days ;
They said an end's to everything, though paths
are often hid ;
They said that we should know it—
And we did !

Beyond the sea, where the shadows tryst, where
the void has whelped its monsters grim,
Where Hate and Spleen stand high and keen
to gorge on the marrow of splintered limb ;
There went we mute and masterless, there
stood we face to face with Him.

'Twas not for us to feel a fear, it was we who
had hewed a narrow path,
Through the sundered ken of what were men,
a chrism of blood for the new-born's bath ;
We had slain and hewed, and hewed and slain,
till the Fiends slunk by in baffled wrath.

And God had passed for a hollow jape, and
as for his coystrels, men,

The Lees of the Wine of Wrath

They are panders and punks, ask their head-
less trunks—we have met them one to ten.
Bow to the left, bow to the right, down the
center and back again !

We left a town where the sun stood slant on
the fardled dead in the whetted square—
The murrey sun on a cruise foredone fluxed
the West to a tawny glare,
And a cozening wind coaxed at our sails, as
we set forth to Otherwhere.

Three years have gone since that fell day,
three years have passed o'er a fated crew ;
Each year is wet, should we forget, with
goodly blood, with venomd rue ;
Each year the Fiend foreflocks his souls, his
richest tithe and revenue.

Hard-hunted by the Spawn of Death, each to
his end stood strait and fair,
Not I, nor you, but the Devil knew, the end
of them foregathered there,
Elbowed by the ghosts of them, the fardled
dead in the whetted square !

Some were slain by their fellows' knives, for
a wench's leer in Jamaica's stews ;

Songs of Good Fighting

Some swung in chains where the sponging
rains flushed their flesh which the crows
refuse ;
Some were found in their sodden beds, their
eyes agape with Hell-hearth news.

What hate-born bolt of this Thy wrath, awaits
for me, the laggard one ?
What baleful end shall Thou then send, to
him forespent, for his race is done,
Whose heart by hetcheling teeth of Fate,
already teased and torn and spun ?

Come as it may, not yet I pray churlish-
kneed to thwart the stroke,
Not fearful-eyed will he abide, the lone last
man of the Sturdy Folk—
Yet what was that which crept by then ?—
Ha' mercy Lord ! was it Thou who spoke ?

*They said that we should see it in the Parting of
the Ways ;
They said that we should find it in the Rounding
of the Days ;
They said an end's to everything—to band, to
troop, to crew ;
They said that we should know it—
And we do !*

—1898

THE SONG OF THE MEN OF TEACH

1718

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THE Townfolk talk of living—but we have
sailed the sea ;
And out upon the Niderings who strut
in lace and state—
It's a sorry life I wot ye, in the town where
wenches got ye ;
On the sea the storms allot ye
The bludgeonings of fate.

*And oh ! the glory of it, a wrathful God
above it
May trumpet doleful thunders at the crime
of being free ;
A curse for churl and craven, a rot for home
and haven,
For we have got dominion on the Great
Grey Sea.*

The Poets sing of Loving—but we have sailed
the sea,
And no low-louting jobernoll can sing us
what is best.
Here's one to hurr and hale you, here's one
that will avail you,
And which will never fail you
Foregathered at her breast.

Songs of Good Fighting

*Your wench may count her dozen—but
here's a dame to cozen
No weak and puling little minx, no
simperer is she.
Out with your powdered faces, here's one
for Man's embraces,
The mightiest of mistresses, the Great
Grey Sea!*

The Preachers prate of Godcraft—but we have
sailed the sea ;
A rot upon such canters—here's the good
sea running wide.
'Fore God's wrath let them falter, and drone
their mournful psalter,
Though we may greet the halter,
We lived before we died.

*So let our hearts beat faster, there's none
that we call Master ;
No cringe or crawl in humble wise, nor
bow on bended knee ;
Salute no God nor Demon—but knotty-
hearted seamen,
We burn our red path Deathwards on the
Great Grey Sea.*

The Song of the Men of Teach.

This is the End of Living—to sail upon the
sea,
With head and breast uncovered to catch the
stinging spray. www.libtool.com.cn
A thirst, in blood we'll slake it ; a galleon,
we'll take it ; a colony, we'll break it—
And then to sail away.

*So sail we on together, no tie our hearts can
tether,
And knave or coystrel, gentleman, whatever
we may be,
We've slain the Spanish bastard, we've
fought and cut and mastered,
The world may be our headstone in the
Great Grey Sea.*

OF THE LOST SHIP

WHAT has become of the good ship
Kite?

Where is her hull of chosen oak?
Who were the Victors, what the Fight?

The Old Wives—whom did they invoke,
That should tell them so uncannily:

“Fell through a crack in the Floor of the Sea?”

“Trafficked with death in a cruise foredone,”
The Preachers drone to the Salem Folk,
When the Sea has swallowed up the Sun
And the white gulls glint—was it they who
spoke?

Wes’-Sou’-West from the Devil’s Quay:

“Fell through a crack in the Floor of the Sea?”

Of the old-time Band there’s not a man
Who has ever told how the ship went down.
Were they marked by God with the fearsome
ban?

Butchered they priests in a sun-white town?
Do they harry Hell where they may be:

“Fell through a crack in the Floor of the Sea?”

Of the Lost Ship

Though ye searched the West to the guttering
sun

Or the East till the baffled lights burn black,
Or North to the bergs till the South be won

The changeling shadows answer back,
And their trembling lips pale piteously :

“Fell through a crack in the Floor of the Sea ?”

And when the great grim Finger becks

The whining Seas from their ancient bed,
Shall some tongue speak from the world-old
wrecks

To read the log of the Thwarted Dead ?
Is there never an end on the mystery :

“Fell through a crack in the Floor of the Sea ?”

—1897

A SONG FOR THE LULL IN
THE FIGHT.

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THE liquor brewed in the vats of Spring
Has aged with the ageing year
(Here's to the strength its age shall
bring)
Up! For the draught is here!

So here's to the Name, it's ever the same,
And out on the cantrip the laggards call
Fame;
Some end is beholden, all glamour and
golden, let the Old Oath embolden—
Here's to the Name!

And here's to the Way, God grant a Long Day
Till we clear the fair earth of such dastards as
they;
For the end's Armageddon, which the others
ha' bled on, by the Name still we're
led on—
Here's to the Way!

And here's to the Pace, dismay not a trace,
Outriding the Fiend in the Devil's own race;
Though hot be the spurring—on! fresh,
undemurring, the Romp is but stirring—
Here's to the Pace!

A Song for the Lull in the Fight

*The blue has ashed in the turquoise sky,
And dimmed to a hodden-grey ;
But the Stars review, while I and you
But wait for another day.*

And here's to the Hearts, the longing still
smarts
For an open-aired swing at their Baal-gotten
arts ;
But the cravens are hidden—out, knaves !
when you're bidden that the Path shall be
ridden—
Here's to the Hearts !

And here's the Reward—it's to each at the
ford,
Where Life takes from Death the old two-
handed sword—
And the belt we are tightening, the standards
we're righting—the Reward is the Fight-
ing !—
Here's the Reward !

*But it's time to pause when the struggle's
done,
And not when a day is born,
And the dead leaves lisp, and the ground
treads crisp,
And there is the new-washed morn.*

Songs of Good Fighting

*For the Hope that Stirs in the Heart of
Things*

Casts her Glove in the teeth of Doubt.

*Here's to the Strength that the Old Oath
brings,*

So on! And we'll fight it out.

—1898

THE SONG OF MORGAN'S MEN

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(1070)

SAILING to Hell, the sea and her spell,
Croon to the timbers a dolorous knell—
An issue with Doom. Grant the knave
room,
We'll tear out his heart in the shadowless
gloom.

*Sailing to Hell, Panama fell,
And Spaniards to God their scurvy tales
tell!*

Let God lash the sea, the ship staggers free,
Does He think then to frighten such callants
as we?
Pass rum for a round—what masterless hound
Refuses to drink when the sacrament's
downed?

*Sailing to Hell, Panama fell,
And Spaniards to God their scurvy tales
tell!*

Songs of Good Fighting

And here's to the Pit, a rouse that is fit,
Fingers on Fate's throat till the braggart
cries quit—
Hell bratted the pup! Roysterers, up!
And drain in your drinking each drop in the
cup!

*Sailing to Hell, Panama fell,
—And Spaniards to God their scurvy tales
tell.*

—1896

A SONG OF THREE SEASONS

WHEN the smell from off the Sea is the
best of things that be,
And the nackered Night lies ready
for a kiss ;

When the Rose's crimson choir chants the
treble of desire

To the distance-sifted violings of bliss ;

When Delight is a flashing pageantry :

This is the Time of Life to Be.

For this is the Time to Be, my lads ;

Here's a cup to the Time to Be.

And here's to a rout with a hoyden star,

For the heart is moored to a moonbeam bar—

Toss it off—to the Time to Be !

When the Fates from out their path turn the
phials of their wrath,

And the Sturdy get a buffet from behind ;

When we know that gins are laid, and in silent
ambuscade

They are marshalling—the Demons and their
kind ;

When the stars seem strange that once we knew :

This is the Time of Life to Do.

Songs of Good Fighting

*Yes ! this is the Time to Do, Strong Hearts,
In silence—the Time to Do.
Here's the teeth set firm and the long sword
bared,
With never a thought how the Others fared—
Glass up now—the Time to Do !*

When we huddle to the fire and watch them
piling higher
The last feeble sand-les in the glass ;
When the rabble crowds without, with a jostle
and a shout,
Are singing of Life's largesse as they pass ;
When the Wind has blurred the trail through
the snow :
This is the Time of Life to Know.

*Ah, this is the Time to Know, Old Friend,
Will ye pledge it—the Time to Know ?
For the shrouded minutes are ticking short,
And a lone dog howls in the Inner Court—
Here's a last one—the Time to Know !*

THE SONG OF SAWKINS' MEN.

(1680)

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AN eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth,
Valiant or Suckling we give them no ruth.
Quarter—we know not the meaning, for-
sooth!

An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.

Throw the dead Dons upon the white Dunes,
Scuttle the galleons, seize the doubloons ;
We know the low lilt the Summer Sea croons :
Throw the dead Dons upon the white
Dunes.

With cutlass for sceptre the Sea is our State
And Death is our portion, come soon or come
late ;
So meet it half-way then, leave Cowards to wait—
With cutlass for sceptre the Sea is our State.

That Saxon and Briton may ravish the Main,
And purge from the waters the pennon of Spain,
We've Death for our Mistress and Fate for our
Thane,
That Saxon and Briton may ravish the Main.

Songs of Good Fighting

Yon's a town on the Mainland where Jesuits
hoard,

Where trophies of temples by Spaniards are
stored,

We'll have it this fortnight despite the Good
Lord—

Yon's a town on the Mainland where
Jesuits hoard.

Give a rouse to the Morrow when first we attack,
With a Ho ! from the Hearts for the joy of the
Sack ;

Then from each and from all of this Worshipful
Pack

Give a rouse to the Morrow when first we
attack.

—1895

A SONG OF THE FREEBOOTERS

“ **A**ND *how did the Dead Man live his life,
Mistress Sea ?*
“ *The Dead Man's life with blood was
red, as the curtains o'er Death's
bridal bed,
And the hands of the Slain have cursed his
head
From out of me.*”

Then here's to the Bight where the Sea-
wolves be,
Here's to the Salt Sea's liturgy :
Yo ! for the song that the Dead Man sang,
Ho ! for the gibbet that feels him hang !
And he bows to the moon while the shadows
flee ;
Here's to the Salt Sea's liturgy !

Some for the Pennon of the Good Queen
Bess,
Ours is a service—masterless.
Tho' Death is the Port on the Devil's cruise,
And the timbers strain in the Good Ship's
thews,
Life is as free as a hawk from the jess,
Ours is a service—masterless.

Songs of Good Fighting

One is gone—but the rest are ten,
Up with the glasses, Gentlemen!
Up! with a rouse to the Dead Man—he
Still with the Band keeps company.
To one more brawl on the Sea, and then—
But up with the glasses, Gentlemen!

*“ And what shall light the Dead Man’s Feast,
Mistress Sea ? ”*

*“ The Table’s spread when Death is done,
this is the light that shines thereon :
The Eyes out-plucked from the Slaughtered
One
For such as he ! ”*

1896

A BUCCANEER TOAST

TO the Fiend of the Seven Seas,
To the Print of the Dead Man's Thumb,
To a Curse at Death with a dying breath,
Here's Death in a Draught of Rum !

*Here's to Hell, toss it off in a quaff, lads,
Drink the health of the Devil and laugh,
lads,
Pledge the tale of the Wheat and the
Chaff, lads,
Here's to Hell !*

To the Dead in the Dismal Sea,
To the Bleaching Bones on the Beach,
To a hate-born stroke of the Valiant Folk,
And the Tunes that the Sea can teach !

*Here's the Sea, for her grey clutch has
got ye,
May her salt kisses poison and rot ye,
By the Soul of the Beast who begot ye,
Here's the Sea !*

To a slash at the heart of a Don,
To the Port that never may be,
Drink deep to the Ghosts of the Spanish Hosts,
Who loom in the Mists of the Sea !

Songs of Good Fighting

*Here's to Hell, toss it off in a quaff, lads,
Drink the health of the Devil and laugh,
lads,
Pledge the tale of the Wheat and the
Chaff, lads,
Here's to Hell!*

—1895

OF THE GREAT LAKES AND
THE SEA
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AS SAID THE SEA:—

NOW, list to me, said the Cresting Sea,
ye wastrel spawn of land,
Ere that ye claim, so confident, kin to
the Master's band ;

For I am grey as Time is grey, for I am the
Twin of Time.

I have seen the haze of the Elder Days, I have
looked on the ancient rime,

I have battled with man, I have battled with
cliff, I have battled with ships and dune,

At the Altar of Fate I pledge my hate that
none may be immune.

Though I be grey with baffled deeds, yet red
is the race I ran,

No rest I take my thirst to slake till the Earth
be purged of man.

From this, my end, no force can bend, no
power my lust can curb,

To wrack the timbered ships of man, pitiless,
acerb.

Songs of Good Fighting

I have glutted and gorged on the meat of them
that take to the Sea in ships,
And many there be who yet through me shall
kiss the grey-white lips.
And I shall own no shackle nor clamp, nor feel
no yoke nor goad—
Highway to Hell, where the buoys knell, I am
the chosen road.
Born of a birth with Time was I and we yet
feel our youth,
Nor age shall teach each unto each, the lilt of
the Song of Ruth ;
For wide is the swale and strong and hale, and
the sea-folk know their kin,
And I am the gate to God's Estate and look
that they enter in.
This is the plan since we began, Time and I, to
teach,
And show to man his farther span, the length
of his manhood's reach ;
So I cozen some to the well-earned death, but
some I show at a stroke,
For all shall need some teaching ere they fare
to the Thrice-tried Folk.

Of the Great Lakes and the Sea

The Long Dead Stars have whispered me the
secrets of the Pit,
And this I know that there they go, the thief,
the hypocrite, www.libtool.com.cn
And them that lurk by woman's smile and idle
out their days,
And them that drown in the sluggish town nor
know the Master's ways.
But the Utter Garth shall be their hearth, who
have learned the things I show—
That with breast to wave they yet may save
their manhood ere they go.
And I have married with the Morn that men
may come of it,
And I have married with the Night that death
be fair and fit.
So if ye claim for kin of mine, speak quick ! my
tale is spun,
I have marked some men for the Hall to-night
and the dark has just begun.

AND THE LAKES SPAKE:—

WE HAVE done thy deeds in little, we
have writ thy tale in small,
Yet are we of one Mother, yet are
we of a blood ;

Songs of Good Fighting

Close-irked by scarp and headland, held hard,
the great cliff's thrall,
Yet has our song been as thy song, oh Lord
of the Wider Flood.

Erie her low-lilting surge sings to sedge
and shore,
Superior is murm'rous with the bass of
mighty things,
All the winds from Michigan croon it o'er
and o'er,
Ontario and Huron are lush with whis-
perings.

Riant through a continent, blustrous at
our will,
Syllabling a summer song, chaunting
runes of wrath,
Lissom with limpidity, purling Peace Be
Still,
Writhen sore with ravening, Death is
in our path.

We have thy pride in little, we have gorged
our maw in small,
Master of Man, or Servant, as freaks our way-
ward whim,
Each to his meed fulfilling the Summons and
the Call,

Of the Great Lakes and the Sea

For we, as Thou, oh Larger Sea, bow to the
will of Him.

Erie watted with the sun, guards her
garnered dead,
Superior wards her secrets well in her
unfathomed breast,
A winding sheet is Michigan over many
spread,
Ontario and Huron are vaward in the
quest.

And when forespent with Time, his race,
it yet may come to be,
'Twas thine the wider scope and pace,
that He has choiced the Sea,
His palimpsest where He loves best to
screen His power and will—
Yet may you see, in smaller script, our
story written still.

*BUT THE ELDERS OF ALL TIME
SHALL SAY:—*

FEOFFS of the Mighty Hand
Here, beyond, above !
In the Great Design, no not one line
Can ye ken the meaning of.

Songs of Good Fighting

Braggarts ye are, with Time,
Prating of what may be,
While the Stars stand nigh to give the lie
Thy sparse cosmogony.

Sib are the Lakes and Sea,
Sib are the Sky and Beach,
The Land is kin and each has been
A brother unto each.

The dust of the world is One
One is the Sea and Sod,
The Night is one with the Urgent Sun
In villeinage to God.

Peace to the Lashing Lakes,
And peace to the Braggart Sea,
For each repeat the Paraclete
His rede, unwittingly.

What ye have done in deeds ?
What ye have done to men ?
Ye may not know, the plan reads slow—
Ye know not how nor when.

An embassy alike,
The Lakes, the Sky, the Sea,
As on they fare to Him they bear
An equal ministry.

Of the Great Lakes and the Sea

Master of All that are !
Master of All which were !
Thy churls forget, while we do yet
Await the Vintage!

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ENVOY.

I *F*one could hear aright the murmurings
Of some shore-stranded sea-shell as it
sings,
It might be then that he would come to
know
An inkling of the Planner's purposings.

*The weary shuttle can no more divine
Of how its thread looks in the whole design,
Than we poor shuttles in the hand of Fate
Can fathom of the plan a single line.*

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