

SONS OF THE SEA

All through the livelong night the tempest raged,
While Nature in an angry mood employed
Her mightiest forces of destruction; whipped
The erstwhile placid waters of the sea,
That yesterday looked smiling at the sky,
Into a maddened demon whose foam-flecked lips
Spat spume, and hurled a mighty challenge
To puny man who dared defy its dangers.
Wide gaped the monster's jaws as if t'ingulf
Within its maw the prey, that heretofore
Had trusted to its seeming friendliness,
And lay upon its bosom unaware
That in that breast surged tumult, angry hate,
And rage suppressed. That soft deceiving swell
Was not the quiet beating of a heart
Of palpitating love, but smothered fury.
The morning dawns upon another day;
The rising sun, to Orient returned,
Looks down from his celestial seat upon
An oft-enacted tragedy. Far out
Upon the ocean's brim, where sea and sky
Embrace, a stage is set, and Death
Directs the scene. A sometime noble ship
That oft before had reared her masts on high,
Had proudly spread her canvas wing and wing,
And cleft her way before the favouring breeze,
Unheeding, trustful, beating heart to heart,
Responsive to the Sea's impulsive swell—
Gives hopeless battle to her treach'rous friend.
Her masts are swept away, her canvas ripped
From boom to boom; with sloping decks awash
She flounders helplessly, while all around
The spume-flecked waves rush on with mighty crash
Against her battered side. Anon a wave,—
The ninth—much huger than the rest, broadside
Against her strikes, and tears a gaping hole.
The good ship, wounded unto death, rears up
Upon the next great wave, as if to show
She dies unflinchingly; then slowly sinks
Into the great profound. The waves sweep on;
The curtain falls; the tragedy is done.
Oh cruel Sea! Why must thou so destroy