



.. Feathers ..

from

"Pegasus."

BY

A. H. HARRY.

1916.

The following verses, with three exceptions, have appeared at odd times in the Geelong College "Pegasus" above the signature "H"; they are now, by request, published in aid of the Red Cross Funds.

REG. NO. 169.

FEATHERS FROM "PEGASUS."

Sic itur ad astra.

Born when the blood of Medusa outpouring
Showed where the weapon of Perseus had riven,
Steed of Bellerophon, heavenward soaring,
Carried on wings by the gods' favour given;
When thy bold rider,—the dragon defeated,—
Claimed as his meed with immortals to dwell,
Proudly thou spurnedst him; baffled, unseated,
Dashed again earthwards he impotent fell.
Thee for our emblem we choose, to remind us
Each to aspire to a loftier height,
Leaving the base and ignoble behind us,
—All that may clog us or fetter our flight:—
So shall we break through the meshes that bind us,
So win our way to celestial light.

To Ligurinus.

(Translation of Horace Lib. IV. Od. X.)

Still cruel youth well versed in lovers' ways,
When thy proud chin first feels th' unlooked-for down,
And from thy neck are shorn the locks that crown
In waves thy shoulders; gone thy colour too,
Far brighter than the purple rose in hue;
When rough the beard, my Ligurinus, grows,
How oft thou'lt say, while gazing in the glass,
"Why had I not this mind in boyhood's days?
Where is the bloom that graced my cheek? Alas!
That as the wisdom comes the beauty goes."

In Memoriam.

(CHARLES NORMAN MORRISON.)

(November, 1909.)

None ever came within his ken
But loved him from that hour;
His tenderness and power
Combined won from the hearts of men
A homage that the years increased.
They learned that he, a friend
At first, until the end
A friend remained, nor ever ceased
To give them of his best. In deeds
Not words his merit lay,
In kindness day by day,
And generous help to others' needs.
His frankly-penetrating gaze,
Stern only to the wrong,—
And even then ere long
Indulgence following on the blaze
That wrong evoked,—we miss, and fain
Would catch his eager tread,
And hear his words re-said,
And share his counsels once again.
Though voice and glance and step are gone
Into the silent land,
His spirit is at hand
With memory's cords to lead us on
To nobler acts. Perchance we said,
"Our guide, our friend, our all,
Has answered Death's swift call,
What's left?" To live the life he led.

Under the Willows.

Full-stretched I lie beneath the willow trees
That fringe the Barwon¹ stream,
And hear faint-echoed by the passing breeze
A lonely curlew scream.
The rhythmic splash of oars beyond the sedge,
The glint on sun-flecked arms,
The coxswain's cry, that from the water's edge
The startled thrush alarms:
These, all-familiar and yet ever new,
Lap me in sweet content:
I'll dally here until the sun's adieu,
Of time improvident.

Memoriae Catenae.

They tell that one who in the heat
Of passion flung his foe within
A deep, clear stream, with judgment meet
Did expiate his sin.
Above the ghastly, staring corse
Was moored a solitary boat,
Wherein the murderer perforce
Was doomed for aye to float.
Though waves unnumbered rolled between,
The body still was clear to view,
Save that or broad or long 'twas seen
As past the eddies drew.
So we to our dead deeds are bound,
And, though we'd give our all to keep
Some haunting recollection drowned
In Lethe's waters deep,
Below the ever shifting waves
Of thought the hideous memory lies:
Our acts may perish in their graves—
Remembrance never dies.

A Garden in Spring.

How sweet the roses' dew-enfolding petals,
The violets close nestling to the soil,
The scented honeysuckle-hedge, where settles
The brown bee busy at his endless toil!
On yonder bed a golden-crowned iris
In valorious isolation braves the wind,
Who, in o'er-hearty comradeship desirous
To do the fair flowers homage, leaves behind
On their pale cheeks the print of hot caressing;
But nature weeps and from the damp earth's smell
We learn her tears have changed the curse to blessing.
O'er the hill's brow a sweet-tongued convent bell
Calling to vespers tells that day is ending,
With evening calm before the morrow's strife,
Like nature's self the twofold message blending,
That life to death must yield and death to life.

My Kingdom.

Fair breezes, golden suns,
A sky of tender blue,
The friendship of mysterious stars,
Glad waves agleam with moonlit bars,
Dawn meadows fresh with dew;
The clasp of a comrade's hand,
A heart from envy free,
The joy of life with patient toil,
A little grief for mirth a foil:—
This shall my kingdom be.

Life's Mystery.

The dull-eyed weaver tires in heart and hand—
Yet not so tires but that he still has power
To draw from out the loom each single hour
Perfect designs a master mind has planned;—
And at his labour fails to understand
The pattern woven there,—some dainty flower,
Or gloomy seascape wherein stormclouds lower
And waves tumultuous leap upon the strand.
So in our lives, when all is cold and grey,
We from time's headland gazing out alone
Foreseeing troubled years, at whiles may say,
"What means this strange confusion, is there none
Can solve this undetermined riddle?" Nay,
'Twill be revealed in the Great Unknown.

Jubilee Day.

(October, 1911).

THE PUBLIC.

From the south and the north they are faring forth to answer
the old school's call,
From the east and the west at her behest they are rallying
one and all,
Up from the station and down from the farm, coming because
they love her,
And their eyes grow bright and their blood runs warm at the
sight of the flag above her.

THE OLD BOYS.

Hands all round while on common ground we tell of the
deeds we have done;
How in this place we met disgrace, in that fresh laurels won;
Here we were vanquished, to rise again, facing the foe
undaunted,
Grasping with clutch of determined men chances a kind fate
granted

THE SCHOOL.

To you who here from far and near have gathered to mark
this day,
To you who send from the wide world's end the message you
cannot say,
Greeting I give,—let pride in our past nerve us to future
endeavour,
On dull days and bright days alike stand fast, loyal and true
for ever.

Ⓢ Vagrant Wind.

O Vagrant Wind, in thy swift arms enfold me,
And bear me far from out this daily stress;
Let cloudless skies and soft green meadows hold me
Enraptured, feeling still thy sweet caress;
Or, my soul mingling with the mountain's vastness,
Watching the tossing trees with thee at play,
Cradled securely in thy secret fastness,
Grant me awhile to dream the day away.

The Valley.

The sleepy valley lay beneath,—
The air so still that all the world
Seemed listening; while upward curled
The soft grey smoke in many a wreath.
In long, fine wisps across the sky
It trailed above the poplar trees;
The kine in clover to the knees
Gazed at it passing, stolidly.

Upon the rusty churchyard gate
A knot of urchins rode, or played
About the wheezy bridge, that swayed
Above the stream. Disconsolate
The croak of friendly frogs was heard
Beneath the gurgling waters where
They lay concealed, and here and there
A drowsy chirp betrayed a bird.

The purple twilight shadows crept
Across the hills that screened the vale
From their own afterglow, soon pale,
For Night, the great star-mother, stepped
Along the heavens with leisured gloom,
And round the dreaming fields she wove
A web of mist, and from above
Diana watched her at her loom.

Unrealized Ideals.

Who of us all but in a quiet hour
Nurses, though vainly, fugitive ideals;
Some more, some less, and each with varying power
To start to life the impulses he feels?
But the world calls with tasks to be fulfilled,
Purposes vague claiming maturity,
Till drop by drop our precious thoughts are spilled
From the full cup of what we fain would be.
Who then will chide us that our fleeting vision
In the grey day has no completion gained?
Better a moment's peep at things Elysian,
Though all our dreams elude us unattained.

Britons All. (August, 1914.)

In days of old our kinsmen bold fought for the truth and
died for us,
So Britons all we stand or fall by what our chiefs decide for
us.
Peace or War? In our heart's core we longed for peace, we
prayed for it;
But at the cost of honour lost, too dearly had we paid for it.
Should the foe come with throb of drum, his arrogance clat-
ing him,
Whene'er it be, on shore or sea he'll find Australia waiting
him:
Not ours the fault, but if assault should set our armed men
hastening
From farm and mart to take their part in haughty foemen
chastening,
No need of fear, (a British cheer!) we'll yield us to no other
land;
The die is cast, while life shall last we'll fight for our dear
Motherland.

The Fisherman.

Ere in her car the cloud-world's queen
Has scaled the midnight sky
The harvest of the waves I glean
For gentlefolk to buy.

The weapons of my honest trade
Are basket, hook, and net,
And crazy boat my hands have made
To take the spoil I get.

Necessity's acute demands
My slumb'rous eyes unseal;
So from the warm and sheltering sands
Out to the deep I steal.

What joy, while landsmen sleep, to drift
Where my good fortune sends,
And from reluctant billows lift
A draught of finny friends.

No living kin my cottage holds
To bear me company,
But what my trusty net enfolds
Is wife and child to me.

My day's work o'er, I smoke at ease
Before my modest home,
And hear the gulls, and watch the sea's
Unending lines of foam.

To the Brave.

It seems but yesterday since here they sat
Conning the tasks that oft-times irksome proved,
Or joined in friendly banter or the chat
That schoolboys love, as noisily they moved
Along the corridors. Anon they'd troop
To join their luckier comrades on the green,
And there fresh knowledge gained,—how not to stoop

To trickery or subterfuges mean,
But, head erect, unmurmuring, the attack
Of Fortune's blows to meet, prepared in turn
To give a fair and honest buffet back
To honourable foes,—this did they learn.
Mere thoughtless boys how short a time ago,
But heroes now with endless honour crowned!
And some have still their faces to the foe,
And some, alas! are cumbering the ground;
Living and dead alike have played their part
With manly courage, and with purpose pure;
Their memory's enshrined in our heart
And shall be while the old school's walls endure.

Hymn to Nature.

For the sun, the strong brother,—Was e'er such another
In splendour so great and so fair in his might?—
For the moon, the chaste sister, (none other hath kissed her
Save him, with the gift of his own glorious light);
For their faithful attendants, the stars in ascendance,
For the night that enshrouds them yet adds to their glow,
For winds, clouds, together; storms, calms, and all weather
That gives to earth's creatures the vigour they know;
Clear water, bright fire, our every desire
So ready to serve within limits ordained,
But chief the earth-mother, by whom, by no other,
The fruits and the flowers of the field are sustained;
For the world's countless wonders, its lightnings and thunders,
For all forms of beauty that nature imparts;
For hands to employ them and souls to enjoy them,
We praise the great Maker with o'erflowing hearts.

A Winter Fire.

A book of delight, a cosy chair, and congenial friends beside
us,
Mid the lightning's flame and the thunder's roar we are safe
in our calm retreat:
The world and its troubles forgot awhile, in our snug little
den we'll hide us,
Cold flash of the living fire without makes the warmth of
our own more sweet.

Cold? What of that! Pile up the logs:
A fig for frosts and clammy fogs.

What though outside the querulous Wind is trying with
unseen fingers
The doors and windows,—his ghostly tricks he may practise
on other folk;
What though in his baffled fury he with insensate rage still
lingers;
Him and the threats of his sudden gusts we'll treat as a
famous joke.

Pile up the logs: let the Wind roar
His fill: we'll merely mock the more.

But the storm goes by—each lash of the gale to its sullen
frenzy adding,—
To the angry sea and the bare white cliffs that glimmer
beneath the moon;
The noise of its thundering hoofs abates to the muffle of
bloodhounds' padding,
Till the cheerless drip of the falling rain gives way to the
night-wind's croon.

Come closer, lads; heap up the fire
Till the blatant bell proclaims "Retire!"

Berenice.

The tale of Berenice, who of old
Was wedded to the proud Egyptian king,—
That Ptolemy the third who bore the name.
Right tenderly she loved him, thought him all
A paragon; and so in truth he was,
Else had not men called him Euergetes,
"The Benefactor," kind to small and great.
But deeply though she loved, and deeply he
Her love returned, their passion had no strength
To hold him back when Mars, the red god, called.
"Come, brave Euergetes, and take your stand
Before your heroes in fair Egypt's cause."
He heard and, buckling on his armour, went;
But ere he went their souls met in a kiss,
A single kiss of concentrated love.
Even as a burning glass attracts the rays
That stream at random from the generous sun
And draws them into one, so their embrace
Focussed the love of days gone by, and fears
Of future woes. Her husband gone, she dragged
Her lingering footsteps to the room that breathed
Remembrance of his words and deeds, and there
Kneeling before the shrine where they were wont
To sacrifice together, with her arms
Uplifted, thus to Aphrodite prayed.
"O thou, the great love-goddess, if thy heart
Is pierced by grievous woes of new-wed brides,
Vouchsafe a gracious hearing to my prayer.
I vow that if my dear one safe returns
From all war's dangers, I these locks of mine,
These locks which he, my lord, deemed beautiful,
Will dedicate to thee as earnest of
My gratitude." So saying, quick or ere
Her purpose changed, she shore those tresses off
Which only now had been her pride, had been
As well the envy of her retinue.
The goddess heard, was pleased, and in due time
Euergetes, his battles o'er, rejoined
His happy spouse. The legend further runs

That, on a day, an awestruck messenger
 All breathless to the listening Court announced
 That Berenice's locks had disappeared
 From out the temple where they had been put.
 Whereat said Conon,—steeped in all the lore
 Of mathematics and of courtly phrase,—
 "Most gracious Majesty, they sure have been
 Translated by the gods from earth to sky."
 And so it on investigation proved;
 And ever since as constellations clear
 They keep in heaven their own appointed place,
 A marvel, telling of the gods' delight.

SCHOOL SONGS.

A Football Song.

Others may tell of their prowess at cricket and boast how
 they piled up a score,
 They may argue for hours about leg before wicket till every-
 one votes them a bore;
 Your golfers may talk of their putts on the greens, of niblicks
 and driving irons too,
 But each in his heart to another sport leans, to football we're
 all of us true.

Chorus:

Play up, College! College, play the game:
 Rain or sun, lost or won, always the same:
 Calmly accepting a win, bearing defeat with a grin,
 Shouting this watchword above all the din,
 "College, play the game!"

Swimmers may stand on the cold bank and shiver, for tennis
 a few may sigh;
 Oarsmen may tell of the joys of the river, its pleasures we'll
 not decry;
 But what can compare with the thud of the ball, that sets our
 blood running apace,
 What pleasanter sound than the captain's clear call, that
 hurries each man to his place?
 Play up, College! etc.

The Admiral's Boom.

(A PARODY.)

There once was an Emperor brave and bold, the Deutchers'
 pride was he,
 And he cried, "I'll reign on the rolling main, as I do on my
 inland sea, as I do on my inland sea."
 So he said with a chirp to his friend Von Tirp as they guzzled
 their Lager Beer,
 "Now that Admiral Beatty is by himself, don't you think that
 The Day is here, don't you think that The Day is here?"

Ho! Ho! mein Freund Beatty, don't you wish you could
 Jellicoe see?
 But before you can meet we will strafe your fleet to the
 bottom of the deep North Sea!"
 Ho! Ho! mein Freund etc.

But Beatty he smiled a knowing smile. "Let them boast for
 a time," said he,
 "I'll fight just for fun with this braggart Hun, till Jellicoe
 comes to me with his battleships over the sea."
 Then he said to his men, "We may never again see Old
 England over the sea,
 But we'll show our worth to the land of our birth as she cries
 in her agony, "Are you ready to die for me?"
 We must fight or we must flee, but I'm sure you'll all agree.
 We should strike a blow at the insolent foe with his ships
 made in Germany,
 We must fight etc.

So the fight was begun and at first the Hun was filled with
 unholy glee,
 "Queen Mary is gone." "Never mind, fight on! We have
 plenty as good as she, we have plenty as good as she."
 So he kept them at bay and they found that The Day was
 further away than it seemed,
 When Jellicoe brave o'er the North Sea wave with his gallant
 Dreadnoughts steamed, with his gallant Dreadnoughts
 steamed.

"Ho! Ho! said Von Tirp, "I can see this is not a fit place for
me,

I must hurry back while the night is black with the news of
our victory."

"Good-bye," said Von Tirp, "I can see this is not a fit place
for me,

I must hurry back while the night is black, 'twas a famous
victory!"

Sic itur ad astra.

Born when the blood of Medusa outpouring
Showed where the weapon of Perseus had riven,
Steed of Bellerophon, heavenward soaring,
Carried on wings by the gods' favour given;
When thy bold rider,—the dragon defeated,—
Claimed as his meed with immortals to dwell,
Proudly thou spurnedst him; baffled, unseated,
Dashed again earthwards he impotent fell.
Thee for our emblem we choose, to remind us
Each to aspire to a loftier height,
Leaving the base and ignoble behind us,
—All that may clog us or fetter our flight:—
So shall we break through the meshes that bind us,
So win our way to celestial light.

Under the Willows.

Full-stretched I lie beneath the willow trees
That fringe the Barwon stream,
And hear faint-echoed by the passing breeze
A lonely curlew scream.
The rhythmic splash of oars beyond the sedge,
The glint on sun-flecked arms,
The coxswain's cry, that from the water's edge
The startled thrush alarms:
These, all-familiar and yet ever new,
Lap me in sweet content:
I'll dally here until the sun's adieu,
Of time improvident.