

IN LITERARY FIELDS.

A New Oakland Poet.

Ambrose Bierce, the San Francisco satirist, who praises so much more infrequently than he condemns, that his commendation is desired by all young writers, sent to the Washington Post, not very long ago, a poem written by Mr. George Sterling, of this city. Its subject was Memorial Day, and its quality was so remarkable as to lead Mr. Bierce to say of and its writer:

"George Sterling is a poet and a great one—one may safely stake on that all the reputation for literary judgment that one may hope to have. Not 'for a weary space' has any singer of English struck and held a higher, purer note than he in these noble lines. I would rather have written them than to have written Lowell's Commemoration Ode."

That readers of the Enquirer may understand upon what Mr. Bierce's strong praise was based, the opening stanzas of Mr. Sterling's "Memorial Day," which is unquestionably a fine piece of work, are given herewith:

To each the city of his dreams,
Far lifts the purple of her walls,
And pure her domes eternal gleam
Above the promise of her halls.

Unto each soul her chosen ways
And travail upward from the night;
Enough, that from her dark of days
She have in quest the trusted light.

Tho' in futility she hold
To heights eternally afar,
Eyes that the waited morning's gold
Bless never—she hath stood a star.

Weary the ways whereon we strive
To heirdom of the ends of strife;
Saber and cannon, lance and gyve
Prepare the after-peace of life.

Irrevocable, fraught with dread,
The mandates of the cosmic plan
Await in tracteries of red
The men that frame the House of Man.

Whereof as hold lies the stone,
Deep in obscurities of dust,
As that whereby the years shall own
The far fulfillment of the Trust.

(Ah, dream of unavailing eyes!
Ah, glory of the lucent cross!
By hope foreseen on future skies
To hush the memory of loss!

The cannon take their pall of rust;
Its gentler harvests wait the sword;
The deep of war's recurrent lust
Submissive to a deeper word.)

As honored by that farther day
Shall be the warrior as the bard;
and equal, shall its wisdom say,
The hands that build, the hands that guard.

And we, above the war-grown graves,
Stand conscious of their homage due.
We wonder where the cypress waves,
Sad for the dead we never knew—

From whom we gather, in regret,
Tribute of unregretful breath;
Of whom the panoply we set
That molders on the road of Death.

Large writ in blood their annals burn,
And hallowed through the morning star
Of Peace arise, and nations earn
The red enfranchisement of War.

—Oakland Inquirer.

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