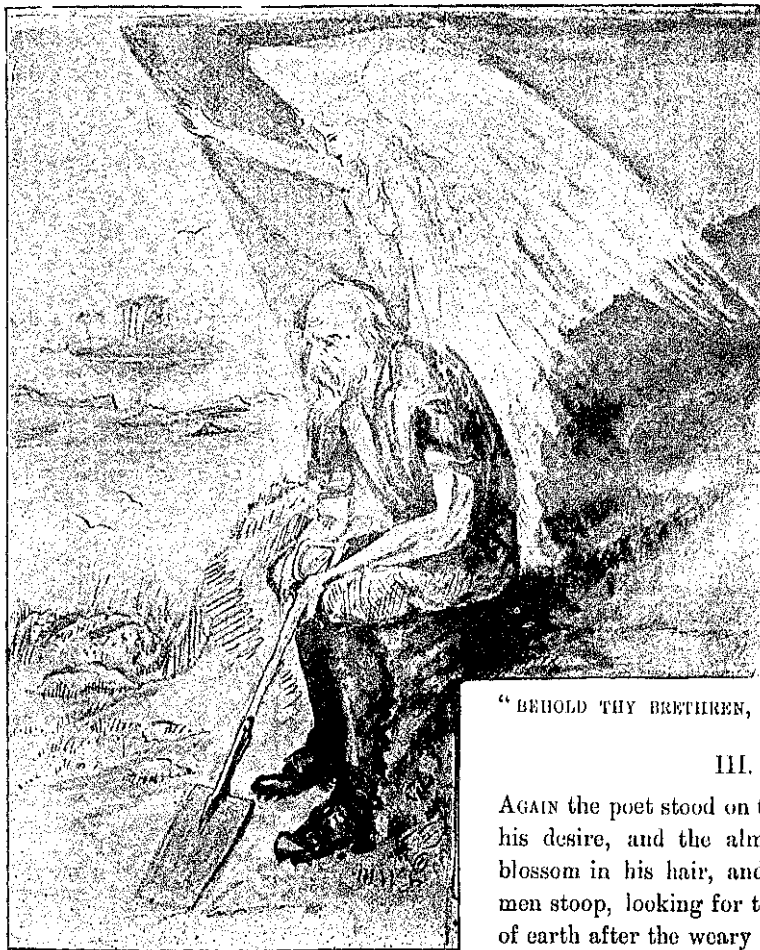


and harvest. Only rarely did he look on his own people; they were as lonely, but as bound and busy as he. He had half come to himself, and standing on the mountain of his desire, he set his foot firmly on the flowers of illusion, and spoke again to his own soul.

"I have not bought—the world—not yet, not yet. Fool that I was to take my handful of early whin blossom for the everlasting gold that buys Hertha's love and Hertha's secrets.

highway of life. And still in my breast I feel the flame that consumes me trying to unite with its own mighty essence—the aconian flame at the heart of Hertha. Woe is me for the Thrall-guarded walls of flesh that hold the spark pent! Woe is me for the invisible bonds that hold the sons of a new land from the ethereal essence of beauty! Beauty we have ever before us, the face of the Nature-

nymph, unawake, unaware; but nowhere are we touched with the pregnant air of the ancient Kingdoms, palpitating with the long sighs of the nature-lovers and nature-singers who have made one glorious company from the world's dawn till now. Woe is me, straining in the unfruitful, cold space that broods over an unstoried land!"



"BEHOLD THY BRETHREN, THE CORAL INSECTS."

III.

AGAIN the poet stood on the pale mountain of his desire, and the almond had begun to blossom in his hair, and he stooped as old men stoop, looking for the dreamless pillow of earth after the weary day.

"I have hunted the marsh light," he said, "I have followed fire that is no fire. The snow-drifts of time have heaped me with a frozen doubt that will not melt this side of the judgment day. All these years I have hidden in my heart light that was no light, fire that was no fire. Who am I that have called my fellows barnfowl—my fellows, who have lived their ripe and accepted lives in animal content and honest mediocrity? They

But I have the gold here, here in the mines of my spirit. The sordid Thralls of poverty, care and barren world-clatter, sit mouthing by the caverns, guarding against light and grace as of old; but they shall be scattered yet. It is long waiting. 'Iron sharpeneth iron,' but where are they whose spirits should strike fire on mine like flint on tinder? No living spark yet out of the cold, common