

KING HACON'S LAST BATTLE.

ALL was over ; day was ending
 As the foemen turned and fled.
 Gloomy red
 Glowed the angry sun descending ;
 While round Hacon's dying bed
 Tears and songs of triumph blending
 Told how fast the conqueror bled.

"Raise me," said the king. We raised him—
 Not to ease his desperate pain ;
 That were vain !

"Strong our foe was—but we faced him :
 Show me that red field again."
 Then with reverent hands we placed him
 High above the battle plain.

Sudden on our startled hearing
 Came the low-breathed, stern command,—
 "Lo ! ye stand ?

Linger not—the night is nearing ;
 Bear me downwards to the strand,
 Where my ships are idly steering
 Off and on, in sight of land."

Every whispered word obeying,
 Swift we bore him down the steep,
 O'er the deep,
 Up the tall ship's side, low swaying
 To the storm-wind's powerful sweep,
 And his dead companions laying
 Round him—we had time to weep.

But the king said, "Peace ! bring hither
 Spoils and weapons, battle-strown—
 Make no moan ;

Leave me and my dead together ;
Light my torch, and then—begone.”
But we murmured, each to other,
“ Can we leave him thus alone ? ”

Angrily the king replieth ;
Flashed the awful eye again
With disdain :
“ Call him not *alone* who lieth
Low among such noble slain ;
Call him not *alone* who dieth
Side by side with gallant men.

Slowly, sadly we departed ;
Reached again that desolate shore,
Never more
Trode by him, the brave, true-hearted,
Dying in that dark ship's core !
Sadder keel from land ne'er parted,
Nobler freight none ever bore !

There we lingered, seaward gazing,
Watching o'er that living tomb,
Through the gloom—
Gloom which awful light is chasing—
Blood-red flames the surge illumine !
Lo ! King Hacon's ship is blazing ;
'Tis the hero's self-sought doom.

Right before the wild wind driving,
Madly plunging—stung by fire—
No help nigh her—
Lo ! the ship has ceased her striving !
Mount the red flames higher, higher,
Till, on ocean's verge arriving,
Sudden sinks the Viking's pyre—
Hacon's gone !