The watercourses were my guide,
I travelled grateful by their side,
Or through their channel dry;
They led me through the thicket damp,
Through brake and fern the beaver's camp,
Through beds of granite cut my road,
And their resistless friendship showed;
The falling waters led me,
The foodful waters fed me,
And brought me to the lowest land,
Unerring to the ocean sand.
The moss upon the forest bark
Was polestar when the night was dark,
The purple berries in the wood
Supplied me necessary food.
For nature ever faithful is
To such as trust her faithfulness.
When the forest shall mislead me,
When the night and morning lie,
When the sea and land refuse to feed me,
It will be time enough to die;
Then will yet my mother yield
A pillow in her greenest field,
Nor the June flowers scorn to cover
The clay of their departed lover.

IV.
Twas one of the charmed days,
When the genius of God doth flow,
The wind may alter twenty ways,
A tempest cannot blow;
It may blow north, it still is warm;
Or south, it still is clear,
Or east, it smells like a clover farm;
Or west, no thunder fear.
The musing peasant, lowly great
Beside the forest waters sat:
The wide lake edged with sand and grass
Was burnished to a floor of glass,
Painted with shadows green and proud
Of the tree and of the cloud.
He was the heart of all the scene;
On him the sun looked more serene,
To hill and cloud his face was known,
It seemed the likeness of their own;
They knew by secret sympathy
The public child of earth and sky.
You ask, he said, what guide
Me through trackless thickets led,
Through thick-stemmed woodlands rough and wide;
I found the water's bed.

LIFE AND DEATH.

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