Old Ironsides.

By Holmes, Oliver Wendell .

Ay, tear her tattered ensign down!

Long has it waved on high,

And many an eye has danced to see

That banner in the sky;

Beneath it rung the battle shout,

And burst the cannon's roar; -

The meteor of the ocean air

Shall sweep the clouds no more!

Her deck, once red with heroes' blood,

Where knelt the vanquished foe,

When winds were hurrying o'er the flood,

And waves were white below,

No more shall feel the victor's tread,

Or know the conquered knee; -

The harpies of the shore shall pluck

The eagle of the sea!

O better that her shattered hulk

Should sink beneath the wave;

Her thunders shook the mighty deep,

And there should be her grave;

Nail to the mast her holy flag,

Set every threadbare sail,

And give her to the god of storms,

The lightning and the gale!