

**THE LAND OF WAR
AND OTHER POEMS**

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The Land of War and Other Poems by W. Phillips Thompson

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BY

W. PHILLIPS THOMPSON

LONDON

HEADLEY BROTHERS

14, BISHOPSGATE STREET WITHOUT, E.C.

1903

P R E F A C E.

ABOUT half the contents of this book were published in a volume copyrighted in the United States about twenty-five years ago, and which has long been out of print. The present issue contains the greater portion of the former work somewhat improved—with other matter added.

BIRKENHEAD,
June, 1903.

A grand subscription next they raised
Ere he got well again,
The vicar put down ten-and-six,
The squire gave one pound ten ;
And all subscribed, both great and small,
Throughout the country round,
Till Friend Abinadab was asked
(A colporteur renowned).

But Friend Abinadab looked grave,
He slowly shook his head ;
"Have ye a strict inquiry made
Into this case ?" he said ;
"For if ye have not, much I fear
That this will prove the man
Who stole a Bible from my stall,
And 'cross the market ran."

Alas for all the poetry
Of my poor simple tale !
Our Friend Abinadab was right,
And at the county gaol
The Superintendent testified
He knew the man full well,
For thirteen times before had he
Been tenant of a cell.

HOW THEY EARNED A LIVING.

"Steamboat explosions are now a matter of almost hourly occurrence on the western rivers of America."—*English Paper*, 1868.

LONE in a shanty
Hard by Missouri
Sat an old couple,
 Sally and Ned ;
Patchy the roof seemed,
Weak were the rafters,
Save where some *strong* beams
 Sheltered a bed.

Ned sat upon that,
Whittling an axe-helve,
While by the fire sat,
 Spinning, his spouse.
"Steamer," she muttered,
Hearing a puffing ;
(Steamers were frequent),
 Ned did not rouse.

Curious noises
Quickly succeeded
(Noises of all kinds
 Boats often made) ;

Dreadful explosion
Followed the noises,
(Blow-ups were frequent),
Nothing was said.

But 'neath the *strong* beams,
Moving her distaff,
Sal, by her husband,
Worked as before ;
While through the rafters
Fell a man headlong,
Who, by the blow, lay
Stunned on the floor.

Waiting his waking
Both went on working,
(Naturally men fell
After a burst.)
Soon, he recovering,
Asked them the damage,
"Twenty in greenbacks,"*
Ned answered first.

"Me give you twenty !
I'll see you hanged first !"
Loud the indignant
Stranger replied.
"Twenty," said Ned, "our
Regular charge is :
No one on less terms
Here would reside."

* In 1868, when this was written, greenbacks (American paper currency) were at a great discount.

"Stop," said he : "last week
I at Chicago,
Falling through roof and
Uppermost flat,
Smashing the *floor*
As well as the shingles,
Only was charged ten
Dollars for that."

Stubbornly Ned held
On to the twenty,
Till the intruder,
Hurling the cash,
Swore he "would ne'er, when
Blown up in those parts,
Fall down on *their* roof
After the crash!"

Ned, while he muttered,
"Plenty there will be
Only too glad, though
You hold aloof,"
Filled up a printed
Form for the joiner,
Who by a contract
Mended the roof.