

“A SAILOR’S SONG”

BY

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Oh for the breath of the briny deep,
And the tug of the bellying sail,
With the sea-gull’s cry across the sky
And a passing boatman’s hail.
For, be she fierce or be she gay,
The sea is a famous friend always.

Ho! for the plains where the dolphins play,
And the bend of the mast and spars,
And a fight at night with the wild sea-sprite
When the foam has drowned the stars.
And, pray, what joy can the landsman feel
Like the rise and fall of a sliding keel?

Fair is the mead; the lawn is fair
And the birds sing sweet on the lea;
But the echo soft of a song aloft
Is the strain that pleases me;

And swish of rope and ring of chain
Are music to men who sail the main.

Then, if you love me, let me sail
While a vessel dares the deep;
For the ship 's my wife, and the breath of life
Are the raging gales that sweep;
And when I 'm done with calm and blast,
A slide o'er the side, and rest at last.