



THE HAMMERER

To whom it may concern.

STRIKE while the iron's hot ;
So mayst thou mould thy lot
As thine own power and purpose would, I wot.

Wait till it cool,—in vain
Thy sinews thou shalt strain :
As others shaped it, will the mass remain.

For, Fate's propitious hour
Neglected, purpose, power,
Are futile, as on desert sands the shower.

Yet hammer on ; each blow
Will mitigate some throe
Of thy regret—worst grief the soul may know !

And from the metal cold—
Like Tubal-cain's of old—
Thy strokes undreamed-of music may unfold.

For suffering 'tis, they say,
That wakes the poet's lay—
As grapes must break ere the pent juice find way.

And when—thy workday past—
The hammer down is cast,
We 'll say—'At least, he hammered to the last !'

NOËL PATON.