

THE TREASURE AND THE LAW

SONG OF THE FIFTH RIVER

When first by Eden Tree,
The Four Great Rivers ran,
To each was appointed a Man
Her Prince and Ruler to be.

But after this was ordained,
(The ancient legends tell),
There came dark Israel,
For whom no River remained.

Then He That is Wholly Just,
Said to him: 'Fling on the ground
A handful of yellow dust,
And a Fifth Great River shall run,
Mightier than these Four,
In secret the Earth around;
And Her secret evermore,

Shall be shown to thee and thy Race.’

So it was said and done.

And, deep in the veins of Earth,

And, fed by a thousand springs

That comfort the market-place,

Or sap the power of Kings,

The Fifth Great River had birth,

Even as it was foretold—

The Secret River of Gold!

And Israel laid down

His sceptre and his crown,

To brood on that River bank,

Where the waters flashed and sank,

And burrowed in earth and fell,

And bided a season below;

For reason that none might know,

Save only Israel.

He is Lord of the Last—

The Fifth, most wonderful, Flood.

He hears her thunder past

And Her Song is in his blood.

He can foresay: ‘She will fall,’

For he knows which fountain dries,

Behind which desert belt
A thousand leagues to the South.
He can foresay: 'She will rise.'
He knows what far snows melt;
Along what mountain wall
A thousand leagues to the North.
He snuffs the coming drouth
As he snuffs the coming rain,
He knows what each will bring forth
And turns it to his gain.

A Prince without a Sword,
A Ruler without a Throne;
Israel follows his quest:—
In every land a guest.
Of many lands the lord.
In no land King is he.
But the Fifth Great River keeps
The secret of her deeps
For Israel alone,
As it was ordered to be.