

THE SCULPTOR.

I saw a sculptor all intent
Upon his marble white,
And all his energies were bent
To mould it day and night.
With mallet hard, and tools of strength,
And many strokes severe,
The block was made to feel at length
That skillful hands were near.

And I beheld a child look on,
And gaze with wondering eye;
She saw the splinters, one by one,
In all directions fly:
The doubts that filled that simple mind
Were hard to understand,
Like curious things that children find
Upon the ocean's strand.

The marble chips, at every stroke,
Were scattered one by one,
When childish doubt broke out and
spoke,
"Father, why waste the stone?"
"It is," he said, in accents mild,
"By strokes and heavy blows,
That as the marble wastes, my child,
The more the statue grows."

– Selected.