

The Legend of the Dalles.

*The Indian legend is that the Cascades of the Columbia  
were caused by a natural bridge that fell in Fred Balch's story "The  
Bridges of the Gods" is founded  
upon this legend*

In the morning of days  
When the world was young,  
In Oregon land  
A white haze hung.  
Volcanic blaze,  
Somber and grand,  
Illumined the revels  
Of Fiend-folk and devils.

By an inland lake  
The Titan-fiends dwelt;  
They plucked up the mountains  
As pebbles to pelt.  
Their laughter did shake  
The earth's deepest fountains.  
The world stood in wonder  
To hear the deep thunder.

Quoth the arch fiend one day,  
"Let us cease to be brutal;  
Peace songs let us carol,  
Our war-fare is futile!"  
Scarce this did he say  
When peace-words were made sterile:  
Away fled the master  
From fiendish disaster.

By the sullen boom  
Of the anvils dread,  
On the heights of the Dalles  
Where the devil has fled;  
One knows in the gloom  
That the Titan's pals  
With hideous clangor  
Besiege him in anger.

He flees o'er the plain  
From his enemies, legion,  
To the great water lake  
In the mountain region.  
He smites, and in twain  
The barrier brake.  
The waters abhorrent,  
Swept through as a torrent.

The chasm thus reft  
In the Cascade ridge  
Was a fiend grave deep.  
But a narrow bridge  
O'er the channel was left.  
See now o'er it creep  
Those foes of the devil,  
Who escaped the first evil.

Again did he smite  
With his iron tail,  
And a vaster trench  
Did the ground assail.  
But there in mid flight  
No imp did blench,  
They plunged on the edges  
Of those fearful ledges.

Columbia roared  
On her oceanward journey.  
With seething mad spasms  
To end the war-tourney  
The lake waters poured.  
In those rocky chasms  
The Fiend peopke perished --  
No single imp cherished.

Then down sank the fires  
That the Fiends fanned alive.  
The devil retreated.  
Huge rocks he might rive  
Touch no more his desires.  
He is gone and defeated.  
But there the deep river  
Flows onward forever.

- - -