

*Appendix:*  
Igdrasil. From the Norse\*

THOMAS CARLYLE

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\*FROM AN UNPUBLISHED MS. OF THOMAS CARLYLE'S, IN THE POSSESSION OF  
C. OSCAR GRIDLEY, ESQ.

**O** TREE OF IGDRASIL, DEEP-ROOTED DOWN IN HELA'S death-realms. Whose boughs fill all Immensity and reach to Heaven. Tree of Existence, ever-growing, ever-dying; mounting out of deep Death-Kingdoms, and deciduous returning thither; old, oldest, yet ever new; another, yet the same. From the fates at Mimer's well, deep watering thy lowest roots, to me thy outmost leaf, one of thy million million leaves!

Who shall express in human numbers, in words of Man, thy many-voiced, unfathomable music, storm-toned, which is the speech of gods? From of old thou wert; in the beginnings of the morning; when Being first was. Lo I, I am of yesterday, and pass swiftly: how shall I speak or sing?

Can I read this Picture-writing; written letter to us from the gods? O Earth, thou Earth, my godlike Mother, what art thou who in such sort seemest,†—green-mantled, rock-crowned, neck-laced with diamond-glancing streams? To me, O divine Mother, to me thou speakest: how shall I dare to comprehend thee?

Comprehend the incomprehensible? Mark down in music-notes the great Song of Thunder and the Tempests? What Human History, and the storm of Nations in their Paroxysm means? O Tree of existence, wide-waving are thy boughs; all wild-sounding, ever onwards, out of old Eternity; and all man's speech is little, is dumb and nothing!

We will sit by the Tombs of our Fathers; we will sit silent, looking up at the firmament of Heaven. Silent: for what word is there? Silent they sleep there; their over-wearied dust reposing; fruit that the Life-tree of Immensity has dropped. They have done their speaking, their working, and enduring, and the sound they made is done; part of Human History in Eternity, unchangeable as the highest God.

O Fathers, O our Fathers, that were alive in love and sorrow and sore labour even as we! Deep now is such\* rest, most deep. The stars also rest. Loud are many things, and pass swiftly; but silent, changeless are these now: the divine stars above us, the divine sepulchres below. Eternal Stars, eternal Spirits of our Loved ones, all hail in silence, fit word of salutation there is none.

And yet arise, O soul; to speak also is thy task. Unnumbered harmonies quiver through that tempest-tone of Igdrasil; like lightning streaks in the black of Thunder—as beautiful as they, as terrible as they. Canst thou not snatch a unison with some of them? Come, venture, dare,—thy voice too becomes eternal, part of Igdrasil, and of the stars and graves, and all memories\* of the gods.

Although the title infers it to be a translation, the language and ideas it contains appear to me sufficient to stamp it as Carlyle's original work. Compare especially the reference to the 'stars and sepulchres' with Carlyle's translation of Goethe's "Mason's Son" ("Essays," Vol. VII.), which was such a favourite with him.—C. O. G.

† "Such sort seemest" indistinct in MS.

\* "Such" and "memories" indistinct in MS.