

LUCRETIUS.

BY ROBERT LOUIS BURGESS.

This is the man who slew the fear of death.
Mere saints are wheedlers for long life compared
With him, the soul's own Regulus, who dared
Return to the grey Carthage whence the breath
Of man rises; armed with no shibboleth
Of immortality his reason fared
Calmly into annihilation bared
By that firm phrase of his, "My master saith."

Too proud a Roman to contrive a pact
Between reason and desire for life, he cried
Refusal so supremely it became
A great acceptance in itself, an act
Promethean, whereby man's soul denied
That man's mortality is grief or shame.