**The Hippopotamus**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| *Similiter et omnes revereantur Diaconos, ut mandatum Jesu Christi; et Episcopum, ut Jesum Christum, existentem filium Patris; Presbyteros autem, ut concilium Dei et conjunctionem Apostolorum. Sine his Ecclesia non vocatur; de quibus suadeo vos sic habeo.* | | |
|  | | | S. Ignatii Ad Trallianos. |
|  | | |  |
|  | | | *And when this epistle is read among you, cause that it be read also in the church of the Laodiceans.* |
| THE BROAD-BACKED hippopotamus |  |
| Rests on his belly in the mud; |  |
| Although he seems so firm to us |  |
| He is merely flesh and blood. |  |

Flesh and blood is weak and frail, 5

Susceptible to nervous shock;

While the True Church can never fail

For it is based upon a rock.

The hippo’s feeble steps may err

In compassing material ends, 10

While the True Church need never stir

To gather in its dividends.

The ’potamus can never reach

The mango on the mango-tree;

But fruits of pomegranate and peach 15

Refresh the Church from over sea.

At mating time the hippo’s voice

Betrays inflexions hoarse and odd,

But every week we hear rejoice

The Church, at being one with God. 20

The hippopotamus’s day

Is passed in sleep; at night he hunts;

God works in a mysterious way—

The Church can sleep and feed at once.

I saw the ’potamus take wing 25

Ascending from the damp savannas,

And quiring angels round him sing

The praise of God, in loud hosannas.

Blood of the Lamb shall wash him clean

And him shall heavenly arms enfold, 30

Among the saints he shall be seen

Performing on a harp of gold.

He shall be washed as white as snow,

By all the martyr’d virgins kist,

While the True Church remains below 35

Wrapt in the old miasmal mist.