

# SCRIPTURE STORIES IN VERSE;

*WITH SACRED SONGS*

*AND*

*MISCELLANEOUS PIECES.*

BY

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TO THE  
EARTHLY SURVIVORS OF THE BOYS AND GIRLS  
TO WHOM,  
IN THEIR 'JUVENILE MAGAZINE,'  
MOST OF THESE METRICAL PIECES WERE ORIGINALLY ADDRESSED,  
AND TO THE  
CHILDREN, YOUTH, AND PARENTAGE  
OF THE CHURCH GENERALLY,  
THIS LITTLE VOLUME IS AFFECTIONATELY INSCRIBED BY  
THE AUTHOR.

## P R E F A C E.

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THE greater part of the pieces which make up the following volume appeared about from twenty to fifteen years ago in the pages of the *United Presbyterian Juvenile Magazine*, then edited by the Rev. H. M. (now Dr.) MacGill. A few of them were printed in other periodicals; some for the first time see here the light of publication. They are now collected and presented to the reader in this form, partly in accordance with desire expressed by others, but mainly in fulfilment of a purpose dimly cherished while they passed, one by one, from the Author's pen, traceable to the sense of pleasure he had in writing them, and, no doubt, to the partial fondness of a workman for the production of his own hand.

As the series of Scripture stories began, the design

was to keep them strictly juvenile in character ; but the Author was sensible, as the work proceeded, that, though not altogether forgotten, this purpose was less formally kept in view. The later of the sacred songs did not at all aim at keeping up any special adaptation to youthful readers, except in so far as the nature of the Bible passages on which they were founded appeal to the young imagination and heart.

The writer wishes to say, honestly, and without affectation of humility, that he does not profess to have produced a book of poetry. He has too high an estimate of the creative art, to claim a place for these slight effusions amid the songs of bards. Yet he may venture in equal honesty to add, that, if he thought them altogether destitute of the poetic aroma—scentless waxen blossoms merely—he would not have gathered them together, to offer them, as they are now offered to the reader's candid acceptance, according to their value. So far as the weaving of these rhythmical endeavours was not the mere effort and outflow of what would not be restrained, it had for its purpose the presentation of Scripture scenes and

lessons in some new forms and lights, in the faith that even an unskilled hand may turn the diamond so as to bring out the sparkle of some facets not observed before.

The Author is conscious that more than ordinary indulgence is needed for the introduction of some, at least, of the early pieces. May youthful associations and parental partiality be allowed, as an extenuating plea?

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STORIES FROM  
THE OLD TESTAMENT.



I.

STORY OF THE FALL.

A PLEASANT land was Eden  
In the young earth so fair ;  
And lovely was the Paradise  
That God had planted there.  
He decked it with all pretty flowers,  
And every shrub and tree  
That was good for fruit, or sweet to smell,  
Or beautiful to see.

In middle of the garden  
Two trees conspicuous stood :  
One was ' The Tree of Knowledge,  
Of Evil, and of Good ;'  
And near it grew the other,  
' The Tree of Life ' by name :  
In the streets of the New Jerusalem  
The prophet saw the same.

There, made in God's own image,  
Were the world's great parents placed ;  
While of all the fruitful trees around  
He bade them freely taste.

*STORY OF THE FALL.*

But He said, 'Of the Tree of Knowledge  
Eat not in any case ;  
For the day you eat is a day of death  
To you and all your race.'

They thought it not hard, for God they loved,  
And their hearts were pure from sin :  
They were blest ; for all was bright without,  
And all was peace within.  
And to keep and dress the garden  
Was still their pleasing care,  
And to worship the good and holy One  
That made their dwelling there.

But there came a wily serpent,  
His tongue all smooth with lies ;  
And he watched till he found out Eve alone,  
Then cried, with a feign'd surprise :  
' Can it be true that God forbids  
The fruit of any tree ?'  
' There's one,' she said, ' it's death to touch,  
But all the rest are free.'

Then bold the wicked Tempter wax'd—  
'Twas Satan in the snake—  
And with a false, blaspheming tongue  
Against God's truth he spake.  
He called the command deceitful,  
And the threat'ning but a lie :

‘You may eat,’ he said, ‘and fear no harm ;  
Ye shall not surely die.

‘Yea, God Himself could tell you,  
’Twill open wide your eyes,  
Till you know both good and evil,  
And like the gods be wise.’  
Eve hearkened to the cunning speech,  
And she thought it promised well ;  
And knew not ’twas a subtle snare  
To lure her soul to hell.

So she stept to the tree, admiring  
How goodly it was to view,  
And she marked how rich and tempting  
The mellow fruitage grew ;  
And she thought, what a fine thing knowledge  
Of good and ill must be ;  
And what a glorious privilege  
With the eyes of a god to see !

Then she stretched her hand, and plucked the fruit,  
And ate it where she stood ;  
She had no more fear of dying,  
For the taste was sweet and good.  
And she took some to her husband,  
And bade him eat as well ;  
And he hearkened, and forgot his God,  
And took, and ate, and fell !

Full soon their eyes were opened,  
And they felt their deed was sin ;  
Then burning shame came on them,  
And agony within.  
So they fled among the leafy trees  
To hide themselves in fear,  
As God walked forth in the evening wind,  
And they heard His footsteps near.

He called the guilty fugitives,  
And they could not choose but go ;  
He asked if they had eaten the fruit,  
And they durst not answer ' No.'  
But they tried, with vain excuses,  
To shift the blame the while ;  
The man accused the woman,  
And she the serpent's guile.

He called the snake, and smote him prone  
And grovelling at his feet ;  
And cursed him 'bove all creatures,  
And gave him dust for meat.  
And then to our first parents  
He spake a mournful doom—  
A life of griefs and toils and cares,  
To issue in the tomb.

Yet with wrath He mingled mercy,  
And to judgment added grace ;

For he lighted a star of blessed hope  
To Adam and his race.  
He promised the woman's Seed should rise  
To war with the serpent dread :  
His heel should be bruised, but with conquering  
foot  
He should bruise the serpent's head.

Then He drove them forth from Paradise,  
With sorrowing hearts and sore,  
For the fallen and faithless ones might eat  
Of the Tree of Life no more ;  
And with cherubs' flaming sword He barred  
The way to where it grew ;  
But He opened to faith a path to heaven,  
Where it blooms for man anew.

And now, dear children ! ponder  
This mournful tale of truth ;  
And let its solemn lessons  
Instruct and warn your youth—  
How vile and bitter sin is,  
Each reader here may learn ;  
For shame's the fruit of wicked works,  
And death's the hire they earn !

When tempted to an evil thing,  
Ne'er say, *The sin is small ;*

'Twas the eating of forbidden fruit  
Brought curse upon us all.  
And never let the wicked plea,  
*It's but once*, your conscience blind ;  
It was one offence of Adam  
That ruined all mankind.

Refuse your ear to a crafty speech  
That would make the right seem wrong ;  
Ne'er parley with a tempter,  
Lest your evil thoughts grow strong :  
For temptation is a fiery spark,  
And there's tinder piled within ;  
And who shall quench the burning,  
If once the flame begin ?

Pray much that God would keep you  
From Satan's dreadful power ;  
For still, like a roaring lion,  
He seeketh to devour.  
In the strength of the Prince that crushed him,  
When He died upon the tree,  
And with sword of the Spirit, resist him ;  
Thus a child will make him flee.

Oh ! pity the nations long enslaved  
By sin and by Satan's sway ;  
And in faith of the stedfast word of God,  
For their freedom work and pray !

For 'tis written in heavenly oracles—  
And the fulness of times draws nigh—  
That in all the world the truth of God  
Shall prevail o'er the serpent's lie.

Then speed the glad tidings the gospel brings  
Of liberty, light, and peace,  
Till the captives burst their fetters,  
And the reign of darkness cease ;  
For the strong man armed shall be bound and  
spoiled  
By the stronger Man than he ;  
And earth shall again be Paradise,  
The home of the pure and free.



## II.

## THE STORY OF THE GREAT FLOOD.

## I.

THE eye that never slumbers  
Looked down on the sons of men ;  
And all the nations, far and wide,  
Lay clear within its ken.  
More piercing than the sunshine  
At summer noon-day streaming,  
And swifter than the lightning  
O'er midnight darkness gleaming,  
On city, town, and hamlet,  
On mountain, down, and dell,  
Wherever man had dwelling,  
That glance, all-seeing, fell.  
And before the holy vision,  
Earth like a plague-land lay ;  
All wickedness abounding,  
Wrought in the face of day.  
There was war in every border,  
There was feud in every street ;  
Oppression and corruption  
Sat on the judgment-seat.  
The great were cruel tyrants,  
The poor were false and vile ;



The strong man murdered with the sword,  
The weak by plot and guile.  
There was hatred among kinsmen,  
And around the household fire  
The wife rose 'gainst her husband,  
And the son against his sire.  
There was none that loved his neighbour,  
There was none that feared his God ;  
They mocked the calls of mercy,  
They mocked the threatened rod.  
The tabret and the wine-cup  
Were in their brawling feasts;  
But for a world hereafter  
They lived as live the beasts.  
Even of good Seth's descendants,  
One only just was found ;  
And he was the scoff and laughter  
Of all the country round.  
And the whole earth was one foul scene  
Of lust and lies and blood ;  
And in His wrath the great God swore  
He should not always strive nor spare,  
But at length His vengeful arm make bare,  
And sweep the world with flood.

II.

As sometimes in the desert,  
Or amid the winter's gloom,

Where all is death around it,  
    A single flower will bloom ;  
As sometimes, 'mid the darkness  
    Of the clouds by tempest driven,  
A single star will twinkle forth,  
    Like a blossom up in heaven ;  
As from a heap of rubbish  
    A precious pearl will gleam ;  
As a golden grain will sparkle  
    In the sands beside the stream ;  
As amid the flight of cowards  
    One patriot brave will stand,  
To turn the edge of battle  
    With his own unaided hand ;—  
So, true among the faithless,  
    Precious among the base,  
Heaven's only living witness  
    To a dead and godless race,  
One man against the millions,  
    The holy Noah stood ;  
And all unmoved by the sceptic crowd,  
Though their hiss was strong, and their laugh was  
    loud,  
His faith in the Great Unseen avowed,  
    And dared to be wise and good !

## III.

By night the patriarch slumbered,  
    When a voice the silence broke ;

He knew it was the voice of God,  
And these were the words it spoke :  
' From heaven upon the sons of men  
I have bent my searching eye,  
To see if human wickedness  
Be fearful as its cry ;  
And the world is filled to groaning  
With violence and strife ;  
All flesh corrupt their doings,  
Their crimes are rank and rife.  
Their inmost heart's devices  
Are evil all and aye ;  
And it grieves me I have made the world  
For creatures such as they.  
Yet six score years I'll prove them—  
So long shall my patience plead—  
Ere, in a flood of waters,  
Shall come the end decreed.  
But thee have I accepted,  
For thee reserved my grace ;  
Thee only I have righteous found  
Amid the godless race.  
Arise, forewarned, and build thee  
An ark, as I shall bid :  
There, in the day of vengeance,  
Shalt thou and thine be hid.  
And when the swelling waters  
Make mankind's common grave,

The ark shall bear thee safely  
Upon the harmless wave.'  
Uprose, forewarned, the patriarch,  
And, with godly reverence moved,  
Whilst yet, unseen, the Avenger spared,  
An ark to save his house prepared,  
Condemned the world, his faith declared,  
By righteous deeds approved.

## IV.

Forewarned of coming judgment,  
And moved with holy fear,  
He hewed him timber from the woods,  
And builded year by year.  
In the bright weeks of summer  
The work of faith began ;  
And soon, as birds had told it,  
Abroad the story ran.  
Then the neighbours came in wonder  
To ask him what he did ;  
And he told them how he builded  
An ark, as God had bid ;  
For the wicked world was ripening fast  
For judgment's awful day,  
When an angry flood of waters  
Should sweep mankind away.  
Then, loud his voice uplifting,  
He reasoned of their sin ;

And cried, Repent while mercy waits,  
And prayer may pardon win.  
But they laughed to scorn the warning,  
And mocked the doting eyes  
That could see the signs of deluge  
In the calm and sunny skies ;  
And, to their homes dispersing,  
The merry tale sent round,  
How Noah built to float his house,  
When the world should all be drowned.  
And from many a jocund party  
A louder laughter broke,  
When in scoff of the old man's folly  
Some sceptic witling spoke.  
And his ark became a proverb ;  
A jest his word divine ;  
And drunken revellers made him  
Their song amidst their wine.  
The passers-by reviled him,  
And called him crazy fool ;  
But he heard as one not hearing,  
And the busier plied his tool ;  
For well he knew their laughter  
In wail full soon should end :  
And still, as God commandment gave,  
He built the ark his house to save,  
When o'er the world His wasting wave,  
The deep, unbarred, should send.

## v.

Ere long the jest grew bitter,  
And scorn was changed to ire;  
For meekness foils the mocker,  
As water quenches fire.  
If a man will only bear it,  
And calmly hold his way,  
The laughter of the jeering crowd  
Will last but a little day.  
Now Noah all so meekly  
His neighbours' flouting bore ;  
And all so calmly, none the less,  
Kept building as before ;  
And all so oft and faithfully  
Still warned them of their doom ;  
Derision soon grew weary,  
And hatred took its room.  
So scarce their hands unholy  
From bloodshed they had kept ;  
But the arm of God was round him—  
A guard that never slept.  
By heavenly favour shielded,  
In presence of his foes,  
While circling seasons came and passed,  
'Midst summer's calm and winter's blast,  
Slowly, but surely, firm and vast,  
His ark of safety rose.

VI.

At length, as years rolled onwards,  
Even hate began to tire,  
Till of Noah's ark 'twas rare to hear  
In mockery or in ire;  
Only the passing travellers  
Would cast an idle gaze,  
As on some castle-building  
Of childhood in its plays.  
And when the preacher warned them  
Of wrath's approaching day,  
They said he prated vainly,  
And turned their steps away.  
For their hearts were seared and brutish ;  
And because their works were vile,  
They loved to live in darkness,  
And shunned the light the while.  
So they hied them to their pleasures,  
The wassail, feast, and rout ;  
And if a thought of death came in,  
They chased the bugbear out.  
This world was all their portion,  
The grave was far away :  
By giddy love of joyance led,  
They ate, they drank, they wooed, they wed ;  
Of heaven no hope, of hell no dread,  
Of the soul no care had they.

## VII.

The six score years of mercy  
Have faded like a dream ;  
The latest day is gliding past,  
As glides the flowing stream.  
The ark of hope stands finished,  
A fabric huge to ken ;  
In length three hundred cubits,  
In breadth two score and ten ;  
In height three lofty stories  
Ascending floor on floor ;  
With curious window wrought above,  
And in the side a door.  
Formed of the during gopher-wood  
Were beam and plank and pin ;  
And with waterproof bitumen  
'Twas pitched both out and in.  
Within the spacious chambers  
Were stored all kinds of meat,  
Which bird, or beast, or reptile,  
Or man, was wont to eat.  
For soon in that strange vessel  
Shall earth's whole life be locked :  
Abroad upon a shoreless sea,  
Heaved with its swellings, safe and free ;  
As if the world's new infancy  
Were in its cradle rocked.



VIII.

Not aught that God commanded  
Had Noah failed to do,  
Till the ark's replenished storehouse,  
Conspicuous, rose to view.  
Then once again the word divine  
To the good patriarch came ;  
He had heard the voice aforetime,  
And knew it now the same.  
'Seven days,' it said, 'are numbered,  
And when the last has fled,  
I will call the loosened ocean  
Up from his ancient bed ;  
And forty days, unceasing,  
Shall pour the torrent rain,  
Till earth, with all its life, shall sink  
Beneath the mighty main.  
But thee, alone found faithful,  
My mercy joys to save,  
This ark my providence shall guard  
And guide amidst the wave.  
Come, then, with all thy household,  
Seven souls thine own beside,  
And safe within your refuge  
In the day of vengeance hide !  
And of all the living creatures  
That tenant earth or air,

Of each clean tribe I give thee sevens,  
Of each unclean a pair :  
That when the rest shall perish,  
Forth from the rescued few  
A stock of other life may spring—  
Cattle, and beast, and creeping thing,  
And feathered fowl of every wing—  
To fill the world anew.'

## IX.

Forthwith, behold a wonder !  
From forest, field, and hill,  
Approached the chosen creatures,  
Led by their Maker's will.  
Not all in blent confusion  
A vast and motley throng,  
But in orderly succession  
They passed by turns along.  
Birds came of every feather ;  
All various reptiles came ;  
And from mountain-land and meadow  
The savage beast and tame.  
The eagle left his eyrie  
In the cliff that met the sky,  
And the stork forgot her dwelling  
Upon the pine tree high.  
Two ravens there came on dusky plume ;  
Two herons from the brook ;

Two falcons that in midway flight  
Their quivering prey forsook ;  
Swallows on swift wings twittering,  
And sparrows from the eaves ;  
And warblers of the wild woods,  
From their homes among the leaves ;  
And gentle doves came flocking  
On their plumes of silv'ry white ;  
And amidst the evening shadows  
Two hooting birds of night ;  
While warned of stranger tempest  
Than ever yet they knew,  
And bent for stranger refuge,  
To land the sea-birds flew.  
The lion and his lioness  
Came meekly from their den ;  
They left their cubs behind them,  
Munching the bones of men.  
And behemoth stupendous  
His way from the marshes took ;  
His mate came up behind him,  
From the willows of the brook.  
Wild goats came from the mountain,  
And coney from the rock ;  
And from the grassy pastures  
A little herd and flock.  
Swift-footed from the upland,  
The deer, unhunted, ran ;

Slow trode the docile camel,  
The patient friend of man.  
And wolves there came, and foxes,  
Leopards, and bears so grim ;  
But Noah led them in, unharmed,  
For all were mild to him.  
Nor shrunk he back endangered,  
When, from the tangled brake,  
Groveling in dust, and venomous,  
Crept the curse-laden snake.  
And hundreds more, on foot or wing,  
Too long and strange to name,  
Female and male, by sevens and pairs,  
To safe asylum came.  
There, in allotted chambers,  
In meek content they lay,  
And, kept by Him who kept them where  
They roamed erewhile the earth or air,  
Waited without a hope or care,  
Their freedom's coming day.

## x.

So passed six days successive,  
Till of every living race  
The parents of a future world  
Had found their fitting place.  
Last on the seventh—sole remnant soon  
Of million human lives—

The patriarch brought his sons within,  
    Their mother, and their wives.  
None sought to enter with them,  
    Though many an eye could mark  
How the brute tribes—prophetic sight!—  
    Took refuge in the ark.  
But they saw without perceiving,  
    Blind in their ease and pride;  
Thoughtless as were the grazing herd  
    When their fellows left their side.  
Even so a better refuge  
    Ten thousands spurn to-day;  
Though wisdom's voice, uplifted, cry,  
Turn, sinners, turn! why will ye die?  
Men pass heaven's ark, unheeding, by,  
    And hold their downward way.

XI.

Now wrath no longer lingers,  
    Long-suffering waits no more;  
The old world's knell has sounded,  
    Jehovah shuts the door.  
Within the ark is safety now,  
    Beyond, the world's a tomb;  
That closing door foretokened  
    A generation's doom.  
Hear it, ye sons of pleasure!  
    God takes you in your sins.

Even now the avenging word is given,  
Flood-gates are opening up in heaven,  
Ocean's great bars are backward driven :  
The flood—the flood begins.

## XII.

All cloudless came the morning  
Of that avenging day,  
And the sun leapt up rejoicing  
To run his glorious way ;  
And some who heard the prophet  
Proclaim, seven days before,  
How the world, reprieved for six score years,  
Had but a short week more,—  
Looked forth to see the dawning,  
The glowing azure eyed ;  
And 'Where's His promised coming ?'  
In impious scoff they cried.  
Then turned them, idly jeering,  
Each to his own resort—  
Some to accustomed labour,  
And some to wonted sport.  
And when the sun at noon-day  
On the broad earth looked down,  
The world was moving bravely  
In country and in town.  
The buyer and the seller  
Were chaffering in the mart ;

In his shop the cunning brazier  
Was busy in his art.  
The shepherd on the streamlet's bank  
Beside his flock was laid ;  
And the harper to the idle throng  
Was playing in the shade.  
Matrons were cooking dainties  
To load the festive board ;  
And the bride among her maidens  
Was 'tiring for her lord.  
Woe to the world so happy !  
So busy and so gay !  
Their sottish hearts they nourished,  
As for a slaughter-day !  
For when the Lord had shut His own  
Within the closèd ark,  
The earth was felt to shiver,  
And the heavens grew sudden dark ;  
The sun, to west declining,  
Sunk in a cloudy pall ;  
And fitful gleams athwart the sky  
Proclaimed the hour of vengeance nigh :  
The Lord Himself descends from high  
To judge the nations all.

XIII.

Ten thousand mighty angels—  
God's ministers of wrath—

Passed from the heavens of glory,  
Attendant on His path.  
Like the noise of rolling thunder  
Was the rushing of their wings ;  
Like the chariot-wheels of armies  
In the battle-day of kings.  
For to the sleepless spirits  
That, round the throne of heaven,  
Watch to fulfil His pleasure,  
This task the King had given :  
To rend the bars of adamant  
That shut the vast abyss  
Of waters, kept in storehouse  
For such a day as this ;  
And to open wide on every side  
The treasures of the sky,  
Where the great rains of Jehovah's strength  
Reserved for judgment lie.  
Swift on their awful mission  
The holy legions sped,  
Intent, without a question,  
To do as God had said.  
Of ocean's nether fountains  
They rent the rocky bands,  
And bade the swelling billows  
Roll ebbless o'er the sands ;  
And wide they flung the windows  
That lock the floods on high,



And with rain-clouds, as with sackcloth, spread  
The universal sky.

So Enoch, seventh from Adam,

Had prophesied before,

Ere to God and glory taken,

Men saw his face no more ;

What time, from earth translated—

Freed that he should not die,

In chariots of the cherubim

He mounted to the sky.

‘Behold!’ he cried, ‘the Lord from heaven,

With myriad saints shall come,

To judge the godless sinners all,

Whose godless deeds for vengeance call ;

To smite the proud, the bold appal,

And strike blasphemers dumb.’

XIV.

You’ve seen the summer thunder-shower

Come rushing down to earth,

And give in every furrow

A mimic river birth ;

While full and fast and frequent,

With plash and quick rebound,

The great broad drops, in millions,

Came leaping to the ground ;

And all the air was silent,

Save with the noise of rain

On roof and leaf and river,  
Descending o'er the plain.  
But soon the cloud passed empty,  
The little streams were stayed,  
And sunbeams eft were playing  
On every glist'ning blade.  
So, swift and dense and headlong,  
Like summer thunder-shower,  
From all the heavens the mighty rain  
Rushed in that wrathful hour ;  
But though the startled scorner said,  
'Twas sure to cease as soon,  
For many a day, unpausing,  
It fell from noon to noon.  
Sudden at gloomy eventide,  
The floods began to pour ;  
And when the heavy dawning came,  
'Twas raining as before.  
And all from morn to mid-day,  
From noon to night as well,  
And on through hours of darkness  
The ceaseless torrents fell.  
The ear that woke at midnight  
From fear's uneasy sleep  
Heard but the rush of rain without,  
And the gurgling waters' sweep.  
The eye that watched for morning,  
And hoped to see the sun,

Saw but the rainy torrents  
    Pour from the welkin dun.  
Big rose the streams on every side,  
    By thousand currents fed ;  
And o'er the plains adjacent  
    Their boiling waters spread.  
The runlet rushed a fordless flood,  
    The river foamed a sea ;  
And, girdled by the sudden wave,  
Thousands that sought their lives to save,  
Henmed in an insulated grave,  
    Found it too late to flee.

xv.

Meanwhile the heaving ocean,  
    Swollen from his springs below,  
O'er all his wonted barriers  
    Had sent his waves to flow,  
Far past the highest tide-mark,  
    That eldest eyes had seen ;  
Past the old stone that stood to tell  
    Where once the brine had been.  
Far up to meet the rivers,  
    Stemming their torrent force,  
And turning back their tribute,  
    Rejected, to its source.  
For He that for its bed of old  
    Had scooped the hollow sea,

And made the sands its border,  
By sure and strong decree,  
And said to its surging waters,  
Here shall your pride be stayed !  
Now gave the chafing billows rein,  
And bade unchecked the mighty main  
Once more his ancient realms regain,  
As ere the land was made.

## XVI.

Then, as from dreams a sleeper,  
The world to truth awoke,  
And knew how surely came from heaven  
The warning Noah spoke.  
'Mid pleasures long unheeded,  
Then pealed the voice within ;  
And bold transgressors, trembling, felt  
How dread a thing is sin.  
Then, in its lies convicted,  
The scoffer's tongue was mute ;  
And brutish sinners vainly wished  
They had indeed been brute.  
Then knees were bowed in anguish,  
That never bent before ;  
But mercy, once so swift to hear,  
Inclined her ear no more.  
Some to the ark ran frantic,  
And knocked access to gain ;

But none within made answer,  
And cries and tears were vain.  
Some clomb the hills for refuge,  
Or scaled the lofty tower ;  
But death was climbing after,  
And took them in its hour.  
For when the Lord Himself pursues,  
Who e'er escape shall know ?  
What arm shall prosper in the fight,  
What foot shall safety win by flight,  
Where shall he hide, in depth or height,  
Who makes his God his foe ?

XVII.

Full swiftly, to the drowning world,  
Fled those drear days of rain ;  
While, hour by hour, resistless  
The waters rose amain :  
The ravenous seas held banquet  
They never held again ;  
While, hour by hour, the wave devoured  
Its hecatombs of men.  
And, like some riven argosy  
Which storms had made their sport,  
Lone sinking in mid ocean,  
Far from her destined port,  
The earth, with all its freight of life—  
None for its doom to weep—

A stricken thing, was settling down  
    Into the yawning deep.  
Down sunk the spreading champaign,  
    Sunk every hollow dell ;  
Sunk knoll and heaving upland  
    Amid the billows' swell ;  
Sunk all the peopled cities—  
    Sunk wall and tower and dome ;  
Sunk on the hillside, lonely,  
    The shepherd's humble home ;  
Sunk all the spreading forests,  
    With the birds upon their boughs ;  
Sunk the tall cedars, where they stood  
    Cresting the mountain-brows.  
Died in the waves all cattle ;  
    Died all the fowls of air ;  
Died the wild beasts, in wood or waste  
    That make their savage lair.  
Died men of every station—  
    The mighty and the mean ;  
Died grey-haired eld, and infancy,  
    And stalwart prime between ;—  
The rich, the poor, the strong, the weak,  
    The coward, and the brave—  
Some singly, with unechoed shriek ;  
Some crowded on the treacherous peak ;  
Some fleeing ; some in haste to seek  
    The inevitable grave !

## XVIII.

But high upon the waters  
The ark in safety rode ;  
By guardian angels compassed,  
And piloted by God ;  
Darkling 'twixt cloud and ocean,  
'Midst elemental strife,  
Majestically gliding,  
Charged with a new world's life.  
The sea that swelled a world to whelm,  
Cradled its hull with care ;  
And death, that revelled round it,  
Dared not to enter there.  
I wot so strange a galley,  
Freighted with richer store,  
Ne'er swam so strange a water  
Thereafter or before.  
Float on ! divinely-guarded ship !  
And ye, within, have cheer !  
Though gurgling floods around you sweep,  
And mountains melt amid the deep,  
God is your refuge, strong to keep :  
Ye have no cause to fear.

## XIX.

Thus have I seen in fancy :—  
'Scaped from a foundered skiff,

Beside a drooping eagle,  
On a once beetling cliff—  
O'er-wearied and despairing,  
Yet struggling while he can,  
To his last refuge climbing,  
The last surviving man.  
In days while earth yet prospered,  
A doughty warrior he ;  
But vain his arms and giant strength,  
Matched with the stronger sea.  
O'er the black waste of waters  
He cast his weary eye ;  
And gnashed his teeth in anguish,  
As the ark went looming by.  
The narrow rock he sat on—  
He saw it sinking fast ;  
And groaned to think that hope was none,  
And death was there at last.  
The shades of starless evening  
Closed over his despair ;  
And when the dawning showed the scene,  
Where earth's last wreck of life had been,  
Nor eagle plume, nor human mien,  
Nor island cliff was there.

xx.

As when a hostile army  
Sweeps some invaded land,



And, fort by fort, its strongholds  
Yield to the foeman's hand ;  
So rose the waves victorious,  
O'ertopping hill on hill ;  
And when a thousand summits sunk,  
Victorious rose they still ;  
Till 'bove the loftiest mountain,  
As o'er the level wold,  
For thrice five cubits upwards  
The mighty waters rolled ;  
And not a foamy ripple,  
Or eddy's curling wreath,  
Showed o'er the highest crest, to tell  
An alp was hid beneath.  
Then, when for forty days and nights  
The ceaseless rains had poured,  
And ocean from his bed had risen  
At summons of his Lord,  
The flood-gates of the clouds were locked,  
And in the depth below—  
The same great word restraining—  
The fountains ceased to flow.  
Hush fell all sound, and softly o'er  
The universal wave  
A deep and leaden calm came down—  
The stillness of the grave.  
No isle rose on its bosom,  
And heaving surge was none,

Save where, in swift responsive glide,  
Moved to the moon unwonted tide ;  
And on that trackless ocean wide  
The ark appeared alone.

## XXI.

Three months and more rolled onward,  
And the flood o'er earth had sway ;  
While lone, on the waste of waters,  
The great ship floating lay.  
For so had God ordained it,  
The patriarch's faith to test ;  
And fear, at times, with patient hope  
Held conflict in his breast.  
For strange it was, and solemn—  
When the rains were heard to cease,  
And the boiling surges underneath  
Had wrought themselves to peace—  
To see no sight but water,  
To hear no waking sound,  
While day and night went gloomily  
Their slow and drowsy round.  
At times the whispering tempter  
Would faithless thoughts suggest,  
How God had left the favoured few  
To vengeance like the rest ;  
And how it had been better far  
To perish in the wave,

Than find the ark that was built for life  
    Prove but a later grave.  
Then would the good man, prostrate,  
    In suppliant wrestlings, lie,  
And to the mighty God and true  
    Up send his urgent cry :  
That for earth's living remnant  
    His mercy now should wake,  
And bid the mighty waters  
    The deluged world forsake.  
God heard the prayer, accepting,  
    And called a wind to blow,  
And led the strong sun, cloudless, forth,  
    To drink the wave below.  
And to the dark, deep storehouse—  
    Great treasure of His ire—  
Whence at His word they issued,  
    He bade the floods retire.  
So when five months were numbered  
    From the day they entered in,  
And, rushing on the pitchy roof,  
    They heard the rains begin,  
The ransomed eight had gladness ;  
    For on the lofty crest  
Of Ararat's majestic cone  
    The mighty keel had rest.  
And, day by day, the waters  
    Fell from its hull away,

Till o'er the prospect far and near,  
When, three more months, had waned the year,  
Uprising in the sunshine clear,  
Hill-tops, like islets, lay.

## XXII.

With joy the swelling summits  
The watchful patriarch hailed,  
And marked how daily round them  
The ebbing billows failed ;  
And when they sunk beneath his sight,  
Because he fain would try  
How far beyond his vision,  
The rising earth was dry,  
Forth from the opened window,  
A strong-winged raven he sent,  
And, midst his gathered household,  
Stood watching how it went.  
Away among the rocky heights  
The bird, unprisoned, flew,  
Nor turned to seek the ark again—  
To its old instincts true.  
Seven days he waited longer,  
Then sent a dove to fly,  
For he hoped, and longed to know it,  
That the vales beneath were dry.  
But the waves still drowned the woodlands,  
Where she loved her food to quest,

And not a bough her foot could find  
Her weary wing to rest ;  
So she turned her to the refuge,  
Where her mates were nestling still,  
And, pecking at the lattice,  
Entered at Noah's will.  
Seven days he waited longer,  
Then bade her fly again ;  
And all day long she wandered  
Near the old homes of men.  
But when the evening shadows  
Fell brooding o'er the land,  
She turned again to rest her wing  
Amidst her sister band ;  
And, lo ! as Noah took her in,  
The good man joyed to see  
Borne in her bill an olive leaf,  
Plucked freshly from the tree.  
I ween it was a welcome sight,—  
That leaf so greenly fair ;  
(The costliest gem beside it  
Had been worthless to compare)  
The household passed it hand to hand,  
And turned it o'er and o'er,  
As fondly as they ne'er had seen  
An olive leaf before ;  
For it told how down in the valley,  
Where cultured lands had spread,

From garden and from olive-yard  
The wasting flood had fled.  
So, when another week had passed,  
Forth flew the dove once more ;  
But ne'er again at evening-tide  
Returned she as before.  
And the ebbing waters hasted still  
Down to the hollow sea,  
Till again the sands for border  
Were fixed by Heaven's decree.  
High rose the girdling mountains,  
Beneath the valleys spread ;  
And rill and winding river  
Flowed in accustomed bed.  
The fields were clothed with verdure,  
The woods with foliage green ;  
Only, no song their echoes stirred,  
No voice was there of tuneful bird,  
And in the field no flock, no herd,  
No tending swain was seen.

## XXIII.

At length the hand that locked it,  
The long shut door set ope,  
And the tenants of the ark went forth  
Beneath the sunny cope ;  
From long and gloomy prison—  
But home of safety too—

The parent pairs, by Heaven preserved  
    To people earth anew ;  
The bird, the beast, the reptile,  
    Of every various name,  
All as at first, a year before,  
    At God's behest they came.  
In order, as they entered,  
    The patriarch brought them forth,  
And saw them part, divinely led,  
    To east, west, south, and north.  
Adown the sloping mountain,  
    With joyous bound they went,  
Or sailed with buoyant pinion  
    The open firmament,—  
Some to the shadowy forest,  
    Some to the reedy mere ;  
Some, tame and gentle, lingered still  
    The patriarch's footsteps near.  
I wot it had been passing strange  
    Those streams of life to see,  
Down the great mountain pouring,  
    Exulting to be free,  
While Noah and his household last  
    Came, light of step and mind—  
A little herd before them,  
    And a little flock behind.  
Now in the subject valley  
    The glad procession stays ;

And at the priestly sire's command,  
Mother and children, happy band,  
With lifted heart and voice and hand,  
Prepare their God to praise !

## XXIV.

But first a fitting altar  
Upon the sward he built ;  
And in faith of coming sacrifice  
To cover human guilt,  
And in praise for past salvation,  
Oblations due prepared  
From creatures clean, of every kind  
The deadly flood had spared.  
Of beast and bird commanded,  
He slew him one of seven ;  
And from the kindled offering  
The smoke arose to heaven.  
And a savour sweet to God on high,  
Rose fragrant with the blaze ;  
He thought of Jesus' glorious death—  
The cross of after-days.  
Then in His heart He purposed  
To smite the earth no more,  
Since judgments dire should leave the race  
Corrupted as before.  
Not so shall earth be hallowed,  
Not so shall hearts be won ;



No more on man be ruin hurled !  
But, mercy's banner wide unfurled,  
Let mighty love subdue the world,  
The love of God's great Son !

## XXV.

But, lo ! while yet they worshipped,  
The heavens with clouds grew dark,  
And a space their wistful thoughts went back  
To the mountain and the ark ;  
For the rain came down of sudden,  
Waking an instant's fear ;  
But the drops fell soft and balmy,  
And the birds kept singing near.  
Soon, too, the cloud passed eastwards,  
When from the glowing west  
The setting sun his radiance shed  
Full on its glowing breast ;  
And a rainbow, bright and lofty,  
Beneath the shadows sprung,  
And o'er the landscape bending,  
Its sevenfold glories flung.  
The garland of the tempest's brow !  
The girdle of the storm !  
When golden beams, like mercy's smiles,  
Illumed his murky form.  
Then from above the starry arch  
A voice came sweet and clear ;

And Noah and his sons bowed low,  
The word of God to hear.  
'This bow,' it said, 'my hands have bent,  
My covenant's gracious sign,  
To you and yours, for ages,  
The pledge of peace divine.  
For, long as earth remaineth,  
And rainbows shine from rain,  
The spring shall wake its blossoms,  
And autumn ripe its grain ;  
And night and day successive  
The world shall hush and wake ;  
And ne'er, at wrath's dread summons, more  
Shall ocean pass his girdling shore,  
To sweep the earth as once before,  
For guilty sinners' sake.'

## XXVI.

Anew the prophet worshipped ;  
Then with his household went,  
And with peaceful breast and joyous  
Outspread his evening tent,  
In the green and glistening valley,  
Among the fragrant flowers ;  
While the grass was bright and dewy  
With the balm of recent showers ;  
In the calm and happy valley,  
Beneath the rainbow's smiles :

Another Adam seemed he then—  
Great father of the tribes of men,  
Whose teeming millions fill again  
Earth's continents and isles.

XXVII.

The flood has done its errand,  
And ages since have fled ;  
The spirits are in prison  
Of those ungodly dead.  
But though ten thousand thousands  
Their steps full well have trod,  
No second deluge yet has risen,  
To pour the wrath of God.  
The ocean's chafing billows  
Fret oft around the shore ;  
But a child, upon the beach beyond,  
May smile at the harmless roar.  
The clouds of wintry tempest  
Full oft invest the skies ;  
And, swollen by torrent rains, the brooks  
To foaming rivers rise ;  
But we know that sunshine follows,  
And the waters ebb apace :  
Nor clouds above, nor waves beneath,  
Have charge against the race.  
For God abideth faithful,  
His covenant keepeth aye ;

So winter melts in balmy spring,  
And darkness dies in day.  
And see ! where the shower is passing,  
Forth looks the joyous sun,  
Binding its skirts with glory ;  
And, kindling, one by one,  
The pearly raindrops falling,  
Lights up the lustrous bow,  
That heralds Heaven's long-suffering  
To sinful man below.  
Look on its ' glorious circle,'  
And Him that made it praise !  
All hail ! bright pledge of love divine,  
Still in thy beauty, peerless, shine,  
From age to age the radiant sign  
Of covenanted grace !

## XXVIII.

Yet dream not slumbering justice  
Will ne'er its debts require ;  
The world preserved from deluge  
Is kept for final fire.  
Once more with myriad angels  
And sainted throngs around,  
The Lord shall come, incarnate,  
With shout and trumpets' sound.  
The sleeping dead shall hear Him,  
Where'er the dead shall be,—

In mountain cave, or valley grave,  
Or deep beneath the sea.  
And all the world then living  
Shall change—as we who die—  
Fast as the eyelid twinkles,  
Or the lightning glances by.  
And straight before the Judge revealed  
Shall stand the gathered race,  
The vessels of His anger,  
And the children of His grace ;  
And heaven and earth shall kindle  
In the glory of His look ;  
Wrapt, like a robe, together,  
Or scroll of ancient book.  
As wax shall melt the granite,  
Red fires shall drink the sea :  
The solid earth, convulsed and rent,  
Ocean, and airy firmament,  
In one funereal burning blent,  
Before His face shall flee.

XXIX.

Then snares and fire and brimstone  
On sinners He shall rain :  
None may defy that tempest,  
And refuge none may gain.  
More than o'erflowing waters  
That storm resistless sweeps,

And lost ones sink before it  
In dark Gehenna's deeps—  
Down in unfathomed billows  
Of Tophet's fiery lake,  
No joy, no love, no rest to know ;  
And on their starless night of woe  
(Longsuffering love has waited so)  
What morn of hope may break ?

## xxx.

But lo ! an ark of refuge  
The Father's love provides :  
The guiltiest there finds safety,  
Whoever timely hides.  
Behold the Man ! a covert  
When wintry tempests beat ;  
And in the weary wilderness  
A shadow from the heat.  
'Tis Jesus, blessed Jesus !  
The sinner's friend from heaven ;  
Who trusts Him lives for ever,  
Blood-ransomed and forgiven.  
Once crucified, but deathless now,  
Risen from the spoiled grave,  
He reigns to utmost ages,  
Willing and strong to save.  
Wide stands the door of mercy,  
World-wide the welcome runs ;

The refuge is for sinners,  
The call to Adam's sons.  
Hear it ! remotest nations,  
Flee to the stronghold, flee !  
There's room for all who enter ;  
To all the entrance free.  
O speed the gracious tidings,  
Speed them the great globe round !  
Till vice and war and rapine cease,  
Oppression's captives hail release,  
And earth, beneath the bow of peace,  
Smile to her furthest bound.

XXXI.

For see around the glorious throne,  
Where sits the Father high,  
A rainbow shines, encircling,  
Like emerald to the eye.  
Fires from the throne are streaming,  
And thunderous voices sound ;  
But the Lamb is seen amidst them,  
And the bow is glittering round.  
Approach ! ye trembling nations,  
And bow, without a fear ;  
All harmless gleam those lightnings,  
When Jesus leads you near.  
And round the Judge's awful throne,  
Revealed in flaming fire,

That circling bow shall shine, to bound  
The tempest of His ire.  
And o'er celestial landscapes  
Its radiant orb shall shine,  
The undecaying symbol  
Of peace and love divine !  
Where glows that heavenly hieroglyph,  
No tempest spreads its gloom :  
The wintry rains have passed for aye ;  
The wintry vapours melt away ;  
In cloudless, everlasting day  
Eternal summers bloom.

## XXXII.

Bright rainbow ! child of sunbeams !  
Once more I bid thee hail,  
All lands thy glories gladden,  
Thy foot's in every vale.  
Soon, too, o'er every nation,  
The Gospel's light shall shine,  
Familiar all, and welcome, like  
Thy parent sun's, and thine.  
Then, gazing on thy beauty,  
They'll think on the bow above ;  
And on thy arch-belt, glad of soul,  
Earth's million sons, from pole to pole,  
Shall read, as on a glittering scroll,  
This writing—GOD IS LOVE !



III.

THE STORY OF THE PASSING OF THE  
JORDAN.

It was the time of harvest ;  
And rapid, and deep, and red,  
Swollen with the rains and the melted snow,  
O'er all his banks, with turgid flow,  
Jordan his waters spread.

On the eastern side, not distant,  
In numberless array—  
I wot there had never been seen before  
So goodly a sight by that river-shore—  
The tents of Israel lay.

The tents of ransomed Israel,  
The savèd of the Lord !  
He had promised the fathers Canaan's land ;  
And their seed had come, at His command,  
To win it by the sword.

He brought them forth from Egypt,  
With arm outstretched to save ;  
He cleft the sea to make their path ;  
Then whelmed the foemen in His wrath  
Beneath the closing wave.

52     *THE PASSING OF THE JORDAN.*

All through the burning desert  
    He led them like a flock ;  
He rained them manna from the sky ;  
He brought them rivers at their cry  
    From out the flinty rock.

He gave them laws from Sinai,  
    Holy and good and meet ;  
And He bade them make a tent for Him,  
Where He dwelt between the cherubim,  
    Above the mercy-seat.

With the pillar of His presence  
    He led their journeys on :  
By day, it was a fiery cloud ;  
By night, all gleaming through its shroud,  
    A shaft of flame it shone.

And how their wars He prospered  
    Were here too long to say,—  
How Sihon's land, and Og's, were spoiled ;  
How Midian's kings, in league, were foiled  
    In one avenging day.

Now pitched beside the Jordan,  
    Their tents arrayed the ground—  
Like a forest of the aloe-tree ;  
Ridging the plain like a billowy sea,  
    For many a mile around.

Three days they held their station,  
Nor sign of motion gave ;  
And Jericho saw, with joy and pride,  
How her foes were stayed by the foaming tide,  
And blest the barrier wave.

But all the camp next morning  
Was busy stir and hum ;  
Some struck the tents, some piled the wains,  
Some armed and mustered on the plains :  
The day of march was come.

For yesternight the heralds  
Cried all the army through :  
' Up, sanctify yourselves to-night,  
For wonders, with the morrow's light,  
The Lord's right hand will do.'

Anon the host was ready,  
And waiting the signal stood :  
Like the starry train of the midnight sky,  
Like the countless sands by the shore that lie,  
Were that vast multitude.

Beneath its lifted standard  
Each tribe its station took ;  
And all was hushed expectancy,  
And they thought of their fathers beside the sea  
When the waves their bed forsook.

Now, from the front advancing,  
A priestly band behold !  
Slowly they tread, with reverend care ;  
The awful ark of God they bear  
Upon its staves of gold.

Straight to the brink of Jordan,  
The onward way they led :  
With swell, and foam, and thunder hoarse  
The river held his wonted course  
Adown his rocky bed.

But when their foremost footsteps  
In the rippling verge were dipped,  
Swift as a flash, a furrowing rift,  
As if some keel the wave had cleft,  
From shore to shore there swept.

As when embattled squadrons  
Rush on in serried rank,  
Then at a word their files divide ;  
So parted Jordan's torrent tide,  
Severed from bank to bank.

Back rolled the coming waters,  
And stood like a rampart high ;  
The nether stream pursued its flow,  
And left for two good leagues below  
The hollow channel dry.

Forth came the startled peasants  
That dwelt the further vale ;  
Hung on the sight with wildered gaze,  
Then fled in terror and amaze  
To bruit the wondrous tale.

Then on the heights surrounding  
From every town outpoured,  
Assembled thousands, mute with awe,  
Amidst His ransomed armies saw  
The marching of the Lord.

To the midst of the emptied channel  
The priests went down, and stayed ;  
And where the deepest stream had flowed,  
On the wave-worn stones their sacred load  
With pious heed they laid.

And there, the ark encircling,  
They stood, and knew no fear ;  
Though the wallèd waves behind were seen  
With nought but the word of God between,  
And the mystic coffer near.

All day they stood intrepid,  
For their faith was strong in Heaven ;  
While far beneath to the distant sea  
The river's bed lay dry and free,  
A path to the ransomed given.

56      *THE PASSING OF THE JORDAN.*

On trode the marshalled thousands  
Where foot ne'er trode before ;  
And with banners raised, and trumpet's blast,  
That strange broad highway swiftly passed,  
Safe to the further shore.

Like living waves, unpausing,  
Tribe after tribe swept through ;  
Reuben's warriors led the van ;  
The rear-guard were the sons of Dan—  
All in their order due.

At length to the western margin  
The hindmost rank has passed ;  
The priests resume their sacred care,  
And prompt—but not in haste—prepare  
To leave the channel last.

But first, at God's commandment,  
Twelve chosen men appeared ;  
And where the feet of the priests had stood  
Twelve massy stones (amid the flood  
Long after seen) they reared.

Twelve more from out the river  
With lusty strength they bore,  
And raised, where at night encamped they lay—  
Memorial of their wondrous way—  
A sacred heap on shore.

And oft, in later ages,  
When youth the reason sought,  
The old would tell how Jordan fled,  
And their fathers from his deepest bed  
These trophy-stones had brought.

Then from their place, triumphant,  
Up came the priests of God ;  
Till past the river's furthest mark  
They stayed their steps, with the veiled ark,  
On the dry and grassy sod.

Forthwith, like a war-horse bounding  
When his rider gives the rein,  
With torrent rush, and echoing roar,  
Adown the bed where he foamed before,  
The river swept amain.

So poured his waves at evening,  
Where morn had seen them pour ;  
But a host that night in Gilgal lay,  
Whose millions were seen at dawn of day  
Upon the other shore.

Thus, in my Christian journey  
To the promised land on high,  
Athwart my path full oft will sweep  
A tide of waters dark and deep ;  
But faith the flood will dry.

58     *THE PASSING OF THE JORDAN.*

And at the swelling Jordan—  
    Dark stream that feeds the grave—  
When fainting flesh shrinks back in fear,  
I'll call to mind, my soul to cheer,  
    How Israel crossed the wave.

Then, looking up to Jesus,  
    My Priest, my Ark, my Guide,  
I'll dip my foot in the gloomy brim,  
And fear no ill while I follow Him  
    Safe to the further side.

The saints are Jesus' soldiers,  
    Their heritage the world ;  
And where the white-robed armies stand,  
He bids them 'go in to possess the land,'  
    With the flag of His truth unfurled.

But Christians halt faint-hearted,  
    For torrents bar the way ;  
Dark floods of error, hate, and pride,  
Swelling and surging, deep and wide,  
    Their onward march to stay.

Yet forward, ever forward,  
    Ye consecrated band !  
Fear not—be strong ; He goes before  
'Who divideth the sea when the waves thereof roar :'  
    His blood has bought the land.



Rise to Thy rest, O Saviour !  
Ark of Jehovah's strength ;  
Lead on, ye ministers of heaven !  
We follow, at the signal given,  
To win the world at length.



## IV.

## HOW THE STRIPLING SLEW THE GIANT.

‘ UP with the springing dawn, my son,  
                    and to the camp repair,  
And bring me tidings of the war,  
                    and how thy brethren fare ;  
And tell them we are well at home,  
                    and daily pray for them :  
God shield them safe, and bring them back  
                    in peace to Bethlehem !  
Salute the captain of their troop,  
                    and bear this gift from me ;  
And take thy brethren’s pledge of weal,  
                    that mine own eyes may see !’

At even the old man Jesse thus  
                    his youngest son addressed ;  
And from his rural stores selecting,  
                    gave him of the best :  
Ten cheeses for the captain brave  
                    that Bethleh’m’s cohort led ;  
And for his sons, with parchèd corn,  
                    ten cakes of kneaded bread.

For stalwart three, his eldest born,  
                    for God and Israel's right,  
Had followed, at the trumpet's call,  
                    their sovereign to the fight.

Obedient, with the breaking morn,  
                    up sprung the youth from sleep,  
And to a trusty servant gave  
                    his little flock to keep ;  
First, lowly to his father's God  
                    he bent the suppliant knee :  
Heaven's answer to the stripling's prayer  
                    two hosts that day shall see !  
Then on his way so willingly,  
                    'twas yet but early day  
When he came where, trenched on Elah's heights,  
                    the tents of Israel lay.

Nigh to the rampart as he drew,  
                    borne on his ear from far,  
Up from the valley rolling came  
                    the din of mustering war ;  
The tramp of armèd multitudes,  
                    the swelling martial shout ;  
For Saul to battle in the vale  
                    had led his warriors out ;  
And down the adverse hill, beyond  
                    the brook that flowed between,

Pouring to fight, in proud array,  
Philistia's host was seen.

From Ekron and from royal Gath,  
and Gaza's distant coast,  
From Ashdod, and from Askelon,  
had come that swarming host ;  
Mindful of Dagon's former shame,  
when headless on the ground  
Before Jehovah's captive ark  
the idol-god they found ;  
And stung with sore discomfiture  
when Saul's heroic son,  
Mighty in faith, at Michmash late  
had glorious victory won.

On through the tents and down the hill  
young David eager ran,  
To greet his brothers where they stood,  
close on the battle's van :  
There he could see the marshalled ranks  
stand front to front opposed ;  
But not as yet in deadly strife  
the combatants had closed.  
And faltering voices told him soon,  
how dread portentous cause  
Had Israel's faith and valour quelled,  
and given their onset pause.

‘ For forty days at morning-tide,’  
                  he heard the soldiers say,  
‘ Forth have we come, as now thou seest,  
                  and stood in armed array ;  
For forty days, ere noon has shone,  
                  without a lifted spear,  
Back to its tents the host has fled,  
                  smitten with panic fear ;  
For Gath has brought Goliath up,  
                  a terror to the sight,  
And none of Israel’s warriors all  
                  may meet him in the fight.’

Even while they spake, huge like a tower,  
                  in glittering armour’s sheen,  
Forth issuing from the foemen’s ranks  
                  the champion dread was seen ;  
Six cubits’ height with added span  
                  his giant bulk was reared,  
Whom as they saw, with deafening shout  
                  Philistia’s armies cheered.  
Loud rose the exulting challenge-cry  
                  up to the azure cope,  
For on that arm hung confident  
                  his country’s joyous hope.

His spear-staff was like weaver’s beam,  
                  or some young pine-tree’s trunk,

And 'neath the brazen load he bore  
the strongest else had sunk.  
For he was sheathed from head to heel ;  
and with resounding clang,  
As he strode onward o'er the vale,  
the ponderous armour rang.  
Midway between the ranks he stood,  
and thus with words of boast,  
And lifted voice, like wild beast's bray,  
he challenged Israel's host :

' Hear me, ye tribes of circumcised !  
ye slaves of Saul, attend !  
Show me a man to fight with me,  
and let the war have end.  
Philistia leaves her cause to me ;  
your champion furnish now :  
If I be slain, let Israel rule ;  
if he, let Israel bow.  
I ask in vain : your host has none  
that dares the battle try ;  
And all the armies of your name  
I here to-day defy.'

And none there was for country's weal  
that dared to jeopard life ;  
And none had faith in God's great name  
to gird him for the strife.

But trembling, as in wind the leaves,  
    before that presence dread,  
Back to their tents, inglorious,  
    the host of Israel fled.  
David alone the flight would stay,  
    and 'mid the panic cried,  
' Shall the armies of the living God  
    be thus in vain defied ?'

For he had marked the giant's vaunt,  
    and strangely, as he heard,  
The Spirit of the mighty God  
    his bosom heaved and stirred.  
As waters of the mountain stream,  
    when spring winds softly breathe,  
Swell up to burst the icy bonds  
    they struggle now beneath ;  
So, moved of Heaven, his heart thoughts swelled  
    to wipe from Israel's name  
The dark reproach of unbelief,  
    the blot of coward shame.

From troop to troop, with cheering words  
    calming their fear, he turned,  
While holy faith and patriot zeal  
    within his bosom burned.  
' Let no man's heart despond !' he cried ;  
    ' I make this combat mine ;

And strong in God go forth to meet  
    yon dreaded Philistine.  
For who is he, the worshipper  
    of idol-gods abhorred,  
That dares defy, with impious scoff,  
    the armies of the Lord ?'

They brought him to the royal tent,  
    and with eager voices told  
How God had sent, in Israel's need,  
    a champion leal and bold ;  
But when the king the stripling saw,  
    and marked the ruddy glow  
That mantled still his downy cheek,  
    and thought him of the foe :  
'Alas !' he cried, ' thy tender years  
    forbid the unequal strife ;  
'Twere young blood's very frenzy thus  
    to cast away thy life !'

Then up spake David to the king—  
    his words were calm and clear—  
' The battle is the Lord's, my liege,  
    and faith forbids to fear.  
As late I kept my father's flocks—  
    good omen for to-day—  
A lion from the thicket leapt,  
    and made a lamb his prey.



I followed in his track, I caught him  
by his shaggy mane,  
Wrenched from his jaws the trembling lamb,  
and left the prowler slain.

Scarce had I turned, when from the woods,  
her red eyes shooting flame,  
Her hungry cubs behind her left,  
a raging she-bear came:  
Straight to the slope where fed the flock  
she took her furious way;  
The scattered sheep fled at the sight,  
as Israel fled to-day.  
I met her in her fierce career,  
I tore her limb from limb;  
And who's this heathen Philistine,  
that men should shake at him?'

As from some mountain's lofty crest  
the night-engendered cloud,  
Before the breath of sunny morn  
uplifts its dusky shroud,  
So cleared, at the young hero's word,  
the monarch's brow of care—  
Such power has valiant faith to chase  
the shadows of despair:  
'Go in thy happy hope,' he cried,  
'and in thy God's great strength,

If so be proud Philistia's chief  
may thus be met at length.'

They harnessed him in Saul's own mail,  
in greave, and helm, and shield;  
And gave him for that duel dread  
the royal sword to wield.  
He forth beneath the cumbering weight  
assayed at first to go;  
But turning cried, 'With these unproved,  
I may not meet the foe.'  
With that he doffed the pond'rous steel,  
resumed his sling and crook,  
And took him in his shepherd-scrip  
five pebbles from the brook.

Across the streamlet's hollow bed  
light as a hind he sprung,  
Away to meet the fight whereon  
the fate of armies hung;  
Two breathless hosts, with eager gaze,  
the stripling's steps pursued,  
To where, in burnished brass encased,  
his foe defiant stood;  
The giant marked his ruddy youth,  
and scorned him in his pride,  
Then, cursing by his gods, aloud  
in scoff and rage he cried:

‘Am I a dog, that with a staff  
                  thou hop’st to scare me hence?  
But come, presumptuous boy, and rue  
                  thy idiot confidence!  
This day, before these thousands armed,  
                  by Dagon’s name I swear  
To give thy flesh to hungry wolves  
                  and ravenous fowls of air.’  
David had paused, but not in fear,  
                  to hear his vaunting cry,  
Then dauntless in his faith sent back  
                  this Heaven-inspired reply :

‘Attend, thou boastful Philistine,  
                  Jehovah’s message hear!  
Thou trustest in thine arm, and com’st  
                  with sword, and targe, and spear ;  
I meet thee in the mighty name  
                  of Him thou hast defied :  
God’s armies thou hast challenged, and  
                  God’s answer must abide.  
He bids me bear thy fate—this hand  
                  He sends to strike thee low—  
And all the earth, that Israel’s Lord  
                  is LORD alone shall know!’

So saying, in the sling he bore  
                  he fixed a stone aright,

*HOW THE STRIPLING*

Poised in his hand a space, then forth  
                  hurled it with all his might.  
Unswerving to the mark careered  
                  the deadly bolt along,  
(The smitten air rung as it passed,  
                  closing its wound with song),  
Till winged with victory and with death,  
                  crashing through helm and bone,  
Sheer in the giant's forehead sunk  
                  that God-avenging stone.

As in Canadian forest felled,  
                  some great primeval tree  
Sways to the ground with all its boughs,  
                  a ruin huge to see ;  
Or vast sea-cliff, by earthquake shook  
                  or subterraneous mine,  
Swings heavy to and fro, then headlong  
                  plunges in the brine ;  
Adjacent shores confess the shock,  
                  and, seaward far away,  
The slumbrous fisher starts to feel  
                  a sudden surge's play,—

So prone to earth Goliath reeled,  
                  with clash of useless arms ;  
Loud shouted Judah in their joy  
                  great as their old alarms.

Fast fled the host of Philistines  
soon as they saw him fall :  
The victors urged the hot pursuit  
to Gath and Ekron's wall.  
Upon his prostrate foe the while  
stood David, where he sunk,  
With his own falchion smote his neck,  
and left the headless trunk.

As through the land the tidings spread,  
to east and south and north,  
Matrons and maids, in joyous troops,  
to meet the king came forth ;  
With tuneful dance, and symphonies  
of pipe and tabret sweet,  
The daughters of the land their sires  
and sons and brothers greet :  
'Welcome to Israel's home,' they sang,  
'be Israel's valiant men ;  
King Saul has slain a thousand foes,  
and David thousands ten !'

So still in battles of the Lord  
weakness shall vanquish might ;  
And giant force shall fail when faith  
girds but a child for fight.  
The Nazarene, despised of men,  
the King of kings is crowned ;

72 *THE STRIPLING AND THE GIANT.*

The truth which fishermen first preached  
changes the wide world round ;  
The stone, without a hand prepared,  
Heaven's own iconoclast,  
Shall smite brute power to dust, and strew  
its powder on the blast.



V.

MOUNT GILBOA.

THE conqueror of Amalek—  
Where is his prowess now?  
Why is there pallor on his cheek,  
And damp upon his brow?  
Philistia's sons are only men;  
Goliath has not risen again.

A vision drear of yesternight  
Palsies the royal heart;  
He sought to gain unhallowed sight,  
By an accursèd art;  
And when He called the mighty dead,  
Too well the invocation sped.

For he hath come, the mantle-drest,  
With prophecy of woe.  
The sun is gilding Gilboa's crest,  
And Saul the king doth know  
That death and rout are in his glance  
To conquest sure the foe advance.

But Jonathan has bent the bow,  
That empty turns not back.  
Stay your proud steps ! imperious foe,  
Or rue your vain attack !  
Ah spare thy valour—lion son !  
When God writes lost, who ever won ?

Aminadab has bared his sword ;  
Melchishua's edge is keen :  
But Israel's sin-avenging Lord  
Fights for the Philistine.  
They fell, as warriors love to die,  
'Their faces to the enemy.

The king is fled ; but of his blood  
The foeman's shafts have drunk,  
And life is ebbing with the flood :  
'Strike !' cried he as he sunk,  
'Lest some uncircumcised sword  
Maltreat in death thy royal lord.'

The youth withheld his trembling hand,  
Nor dared the piteous deed—  
Oh, sad ! a monarch's last command  
His follower shuns to heed :  
On his own sword, despairing, fell  
The anointed king of Israel.



Accursed be Gilboa's mountain land,  
A sterile solitude !  
Nor shower nor dew refresh the sand  
That drank of royal blood.  
An iron soil, a barren heaven,  
For ever to thy fields be given !



VI.

THE STORY OF THE PROPHET WHO FLED  
FROM THE PRESENCE OF THE LORD.

*Part First.*

A MERCHANTMAN of Tarshish  
In Joppa's harbour lay ;  
But her lading was full, and her rowers aboard,  
And they hasted her anchor to weigh ;  
When a stranger came hurrying down to the beach,  
Equipped like a man in flight,  
And he entered the ship, and he paid his fare,  
And hid himself from sight.

Away, away, with a shout and a cheer,  
And the splash of the dipping oar !  
While the seamen's friends stood waving adieu  
On the fast retiring shore.  
The breeze sprung up, and with canvas spread  
Swiftly the good ship flew,  
Till her distant sail like a sea-bird seemed  
On the verge of the waters blue.

But the breeze grew a gale, and the gale a storm  
Swift-winged, and loud, and strong ;

And the big waves rose, as the fearful wind  
Rode on their crests along;  
For God had bid it to blow amain,  
And it blew in its terrible might.  
Woe for the day ! but the sailor well  
May shudder at thought of night !

The oars were idle, the masts were broke,  
The rudder could help no more ;  
And the helmsman said that a storm so dread  
He had never seen before.  
And creaking and trembling, from prow to stern,  
The ship in the surges rolled ;  
And the seamen grew pale, though their arms were  
strong,  
And their hearts were stout and bold.

So their wares into the waters,  
To lighten the ship, they threw !  
But the storm blew on, till hope forsook  
The bravest of the crew.  
Then loud in his helpless anguish,  
Each cried on his god to save ;  
But no answer came save the rush of the wind,  
And the roar of the angry wave.

For such, let Christian children think,  
Are the gods the heathen fear ;

No arm have they to succour,  
No ear have they to hear.  
And millions know no better god  
Than senseless stock and stone ;  
While we, with hope and confidence,  
Approach the Father's throne.

As prayed in vain the mariners,  
So thousands pray this hour ;  
While dangers worse than yawning seas  
Are ready to devour.  
And who shall hear their bootless cry,  
And shall not haste to tell  
Of the Lamb once slain, who lives again,  
To rescue souls from hell ?

Now all this while the stranger  
Lay stretched in slumber deep ;  
The tempest nought disturbed him,  
He was so fast asleep.  
The breaking billow roused him not ;  
And when, in fear to die,  
Rose on the gale the seamen's wail,  
He woke not at the cry.

Down went the master of the ship  
To where the sleeper lay,  
Much marvelling he could slumber so,  
And called him thus to pray :

‘What meanest thou, besotted man !  
To sleep with death so near ?  
Hast thou no god to vow to,  
If haply he might hear ?

‘The tempest direly rages,  
The ship is like to sink ;  
Arise ! arise ! thy god perchance  
May on dying seamen think !  
For none of all we worship  
Has heard us when we cried ;  
And helm and oar avail no more,  
And every hope has died.’

Up rose, ashamed, the sleeper,  
And within him conscience woke ;  
To him the voice of the stormy wind  
Of his sin and folly spoke.  
He bowed his knee, confessing,  
And he breathed a fervent prayer ;  
But it was, I wot, an answer strange  
That God returned him there.

For when the seamen lots would cast,  
Craving the gods to tell  
Which of them all their wrath pursued,  
The lot on the stranger fell ;  
And amid the circling mariners  
Forth stood the guilty man ;

And thus to eager questionings  
The tale of his sin began :

‘ I serve the God of the Hebrews,  
The God my fathers knew ;  
The God of heaven, the only God,  
The living and the true.  
His hands have formed the solid land,  
And filled the boundless sea ;  
And well I know this storm is His,  
And sent to follow me.

‘ For He bade me go to Nineveh,  
And words of terror preach ;  
But I thought the work was perilous,  
And the city was far to reach.  
So I would not go, and rose to flee  
From the land of His presence away ;  
But His swift and angry messengers  
Arrest me here to-day.

‘ And now I see you tremble  
At the thought of a God so dread ;  
But fear ye not, for vengeance falls  
Alone on the guilty head.  
For thus my God instructs me,  
One way remains to peace ;  
Cast me into the billows,  
And the storm at once shall cease.’

But, touched with awe and pity,  
The seamen long forbore ;  
And hard they rowed amid the waves  
To bring the ship to shore.  
But the strong sea wrought against them,  
And they strove to save in vain ;  
So with trembling hands they took him up  
And cast him in the main.

Yet first, with lowly reverence,  
To the great God they prayed,  
' Lord ! let not guiltless blood this day  
Upon our heads be laid !  
Count not our deed foul murder,  
Since this is but Thy will ;  
And in Thy sight, O sovereign God,  
Let our lives be precious still ! '

The raging sea closed o'er him,  
Then from her raging ceased ;  
And the tempest hushed its roaring,  
Like an angry thing appeased ;  
And the evening sun shone sweetly out  
Upon the placid sea,  
And the mariners stood wondering  
How such a change would be.

Then they feared the Lord exceedingly  
And from idol-worship turned ;

And offerings meet, with incense sweet,  
To Israel's God they burned.  
And still, where'er they wandered,  
The story they loved to tell,  
How the sea arose in tempest,  
And how again it fell.

*Part Second.*

God's way is in the waters,  
His footsteps strange to trace ;  
Man's very wrath shall praise Him,  
And sin shall serve His grace.  
To Nineveh, the prophet said,  
A preacher he would not be :  
God found him other audience  
Upon the stormy sea.

And from the ocean's depths, like one  
Uprisen from the dead,  
He brought the truant back again  
To do the work he fled ;  
And to the startled Ninevites  
He set him forth a sign :  
The preacher was himself the proof  
His errand was divine.

With trembling hands the mariners  
Had cast him in the wave ;



Nor doubted, as he sunk from sight,  
The billow was his grave.  
Yet with wistful eye they oft looked back,  
As they rowed their bark to shore ;  
The sea lay calm behind them,  
But him they saw no more.

But God had made a mighty fish—  
A wonder it is to tell—  
And it came and swallowed him, unharmed,  
Where in the waves he fell ;  
For the power of God all creatures made,  
And His will they all obey,  
That roam the earth, or sail the air,  
Or in the deep sea play.

From the woods, at His word, the she-bears came,  
And the mocking children tore ;  
He spake to the raven, and morn and even  
A meal to the seer it bore ;  
And when they had thrown the holy man  
That would not give o'er to pray  
To the hungry lions in their lair,  
Like lambs at his feet they lay.

In his strange and loathsome prison,  
In dreary, rayless gloom,  
Three days and nights the prophet lay  
Within a living tomb ;

And his soul sunk dark and dreary  
    'Mid the shadows of despair,  
Till a beam from Zion bade him hope,  
    And he poured his soul in prayer.

‘ I thought myself a castaway,’  
    So rose to heaven his cry ;  
‘ But to Thy holy temple, Lord,  
    I venture still mine eye.  
Outcast at Thy commandment,  
    Amidst the seas I fell ;  
And now my voice I lift to Thee,  
    As from the womb of hell.

‘ From the bottoms of the mountains,  
    From ocean’s hollow caves,  
From the midst of all Thy billows,  
    From the depths of all Thy waves,  
Where the floods my soul have compassed round,  
    And the weeds enwrap my head,  
I cry to Thee, O Lord my God !  
    Redeem me from the dead.

‘ My soul is faint within me,  
    But Thy name I still recall ;  
The idol-gods are vanities,  
    And a lying refuge all ;  
And their blind and hapless worshippers  
    From their own mercies flee ;

But Thou canst help to the uttermost :  
Salvation is of Thee.'

So from the deep his prayer went up,  
In faith and in hope it went ;  
And a favouring ear, forgivingly,  
The Father of mercies lent.  
And when the second morning dawned,  
He gave the fish command,  
And safe to shore the seer it bore,  
And he stood unhurt on land.

So, ages long thereafter,  
Borne lifeless from the tree,  
They laid the Lord in the garden tomb,  
And wept the sight to see.  
And there past two nights of sorrow ;  
But when the third day shone,  
Forth from the grave, a conqueror,  
The living King had gone.

And as Jonah, rescued from the deep,  
A sign to the Ninevites gave ;  
So a witness to men the Saviour shines,  
Exalted from the grave.  
And to earth's remotest circle  
He bids us the glad news speed :  
The victory's won, and death's undone,  
For ' the Lord is risen indeed.'

*Part Third.*

Mightiest of cities, in days of old,  
Was Nineveh in her pride,  
Where she sat in queenly majesty  
Upon the Tigris' side ;  
Though tower and wall and palace now  
Are but ruins waste and hoar ;  
And the ancient river only  
Flows where he flowed of yore.

But as yet Assyria's royal seat  
In all its greatness stood,  
And the compass of its girdling walls  
Was three days' journey good ;  
When the second time the word divine  
To the prophet gave command  
To visit the guilty city,  
And preach its doom at hand.

He reached the gates at eventide,  
He entered at break of day,  
And right along the busiest streets  
He took his onward way ;  
And still amid the gathering crowds  
He uttered this startling cry :  
' Yet forty days and Nineveh  
Shall all in ruins lie.'

From dawn till evening twilight  
On through the town he trod ;  
And his voice was ever of vengeance near,  
The wrath of the living God.  
And all men paused to listen,  
And listened all to fear ;  
For conscience echoed in the heart  
The warning on the ear.

Then swift through the city, on breath of dread,  
A stirring story ran—  
How mariners from Tarshish there  
Had told that they knew the man ;  
And how 'twas the same they had cast of late  
In the midst of a stormy sea :  
They had seen him and heard him, and marked  
him well,  
And were sure that this was he.

So sleep that night in Nineveh  
From every eyelid fled,  
For a voice to judgment had loudly called,  
A voice as from the dead.  
And in all abodes were whisperings  
Of terror and dismay ;  
And none to his neighbour could speak of  
aught  
Save the preaching of that day.

The king sent for his nobles  
Counsel in haste to take;  
Then they summoned the people to solemn fast,  
And bade their sins forsake,  
And, clad in garb of mourners,  
Send up a mighty cry:  
If so be God might pity yet,  
And the people should not die.

The monarch hasted from his throne,  
His royal robes unbound,  
And, girt with sackcloth, sat him down  
In ashes on the ground;  
And high and low together  
Lay fasting in the dust;  
Even the poor beggar, in his want,  
Forbore to eat his crust.

The marts were all forsaken,  
The streets were lone and sad,  
With sackcloth as in sorrow  
The very beasts were clad;  
And all the prostrate thousands,  
Forgetful of aught beside,  
With one accord to the mighty Lord  
Aloud for mercy cried.

God saw the humbled city,  
He heard its fervent prayer;

And He turned Him from His anger fierce,  
And bade His justice spare.  
For He looks evermore on the contrite heart,  
The lowly ones loveth He;  
And the man who trembles at His word  
He bends from heaven to see.

But sore displeased was Jonah  
When he saw that wrath was stayed;  
And, in his frantic passion, dared  
God's mercy to upbraid:  
'I knew it,' he cried, 'ere I left my home,  
I said it would end even so;  
So I fled at the first, for I liked not so far  
On an errand vain to go.

'I knew Thee full of pity,  
And slow to anger still;  
Thy threat'nings all too easily  
Forbearing to fulfil.  
And now, I beseech Thee, take away  
My life, too long enjoyed;  
For 'twere better far to die than live  
To see my preaching void.'

Oh, what a wicked thing is wrath!  
How blind and senseless too!  
The prophet, in his madness, speaks  
As only fiends might do.

Then still let us seek to be lowly and meek,  
And rule our spirits well;  
For pride and rage, in youth or age,  
But ripen the soul for hell.

The angry seer from the city went forth,  
And sat on the eastern hill;  
For half he hoped, in his sullen ire,  
To see it perish still.  
He made him a booth on the mountain-side,  
And sat to watch the close.  
God asked him to think on his sinful rage,  
But he brooded on fancied woes.

Then a gourd, in His goodness, the Lord prepared:  
Up in a night it grew,  
And over his head, in its greenness spread,  
A grateful shadow threw.  
With its leafy screen it covered him,  
From the high sun's burning ray,  
And, refreshed beneath its shelter,  
With a gladdened heart he lay.

But a worm crept near as the night came on—  
God formed it to devour—  
And it smote the gourd in its roots beneath,  
And it withered in an hour;



And when Jonah rose at morning-tide,  
And sought its pleasant shade,  
Shrivelled and dead, on the ground dispread,  
Were yesterday's green leaves laid.

Then keen from the east a hot wind blew—  
At the bidding of God it came—  
And the sun uprose in his sultry strength,  
Like a globe of scorching flame ;  
And the prophet grew faint in the vehement heat,  
And in anguish and wrath he said,  
'Than a life like this, it were happier far  
To be numbered with the dead.'

'Dost thou well to be angry,' said God, 'for the  
gourd ?'

Mad answer the prophet gave :  
'I do,' he said ; 'I do well, indeed,  
'To be angry, to my grave.'  
'O sottish man !' long-sufferingly  
So reasoned his gracious Lord—  
'Weeping to see a city spared,  
And wroth for a fallen gourd !

'This faded plant thy sorrow stirred,  
Though without thy care it grew ;  
All in a night it flourished,  
In a night it perished too.

And shall Nineveh, full of living men,  
No heavenly pity gain?  
And the very souls my hand has made,  
For mercy plead in vain?

‘ There are six score thousand infants,  
And countless cattle there ;  
And is thy wrath a seemly thing  
When I am moved to spare?  
Go, weep thine impious passion,  
Go hide thy head in shame !  
Glad for thyself that love is still  
My nature and my name.’

And now, dear little children,  
Who have read this story through,  
You may find it in your Bibles,  
And read it there anew ;  
And when you have closed the holy Book,  
You will pause to think and pray ;  
And haply the heart of some little child  
May prompt him thus to say :

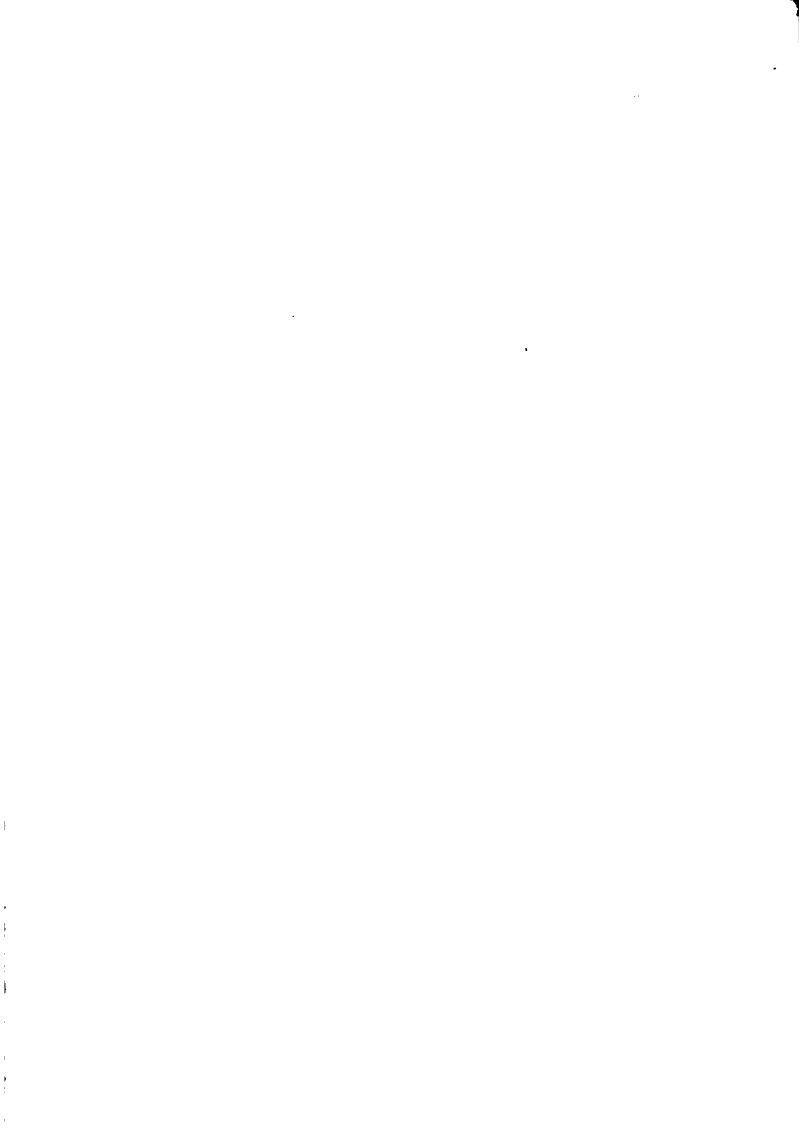
‘ O foolish, fretful Jonah !  
I would not sin like thee ;  
When God has given me work to do,  
I would never from duty flee.  
In an evil course may I ne’er be at ease,  
For wrath, without a doubt,

For sin unforgiv'n, like a storm from heaven,  
At length should find me out.

' I would pray in mine affliction,  
Like Jonah in the deep ;  
And better than he, when my prayer is heard,  
Would the mercy in memory keep.  
And to hear of a sinner repenting,  
Right glad my heart shall be ;  
A contrite world were a glorious sight—  
A world on the bended knee !

' And for earth with its countless cities,  
Their dwellers doomed to die,  
Where are six score thousand thousands  
Of children young as I,  
I will give, I will pray, I will labour,  
Nor cease till my latest breath :  
Earth has no bliss that is purer than this,  
To save a soul from death.'





STORIES OF JESUS.



I.

LUKE II. 1-18.

MIDNIGHT was stilly brooding  
O'er Bethlehem's ancient town ;  
And starry watchers from the heavens,  
Unwatched, were shining down,  
As stretched in pleased forgetfulness,  
Travel and toil lay sleeping ;  
Save where the shepherds in the fields  
Their fleecy care were keeping,

And save where at the crowded khan,  
By pilgrim throngs possessed,  
A humble pair kept vigil by  
A gentle babe at rest.  
The hands of her that bore him  
That hour had swathed her child ;  
And cradled in the oxen's crib  
Her first-born undefiled.

For late and poor and wayworn all  
Last night the twain had come,  
And all the caravanserai  
Was bustling stir and hum.

Though sprung of Judah's royal race—  
Shoots from old Jesse's stem—  
Save in the empty cattle-stall,  
There was no room for them !

O Earth ! was this thy welcome  
To Eve's long-promised seed ?  
O Israel ! must thy King be born  
Where beasts have used to feed ?  
O virgin mother ! angel-hailed,  
Is't thus thy joy begins ?  
Even in the manger, see, O man,  
The burden of thy sins !

Long time have rams and bullocks  
On Judah's altars bled ;  
Far other victim slumbers now  
Low on His strawy bed.  
By ancient seers predicted, and  
By ancient types foreshowed—  
The first true sacrifice—the last—  
Behold the Lamb of God !

Now o'er the pastures ranged the flocks,  
Or couched among the flowers ;  
With friendly talk the shepherds nigh  
Beguiled the slumberous hours ;  
When, brighter than if midnight skies  
Had summer noon revealed,



A sudden glory shrined them round,  
And flashed athwart the field.

And 'midst the beaming splendours  
An angel form hung near ;  
The shepherds, at the dazzling sight,  
Shook with a startled fear :  
Yet bright with love his visage shone,  
As one whom mercy sped,  
And thus with words of gladsome tone  
He hushed in haste their dread :

' Fear not ; I bring you tidings good,  
A joy of joys proclaim !  
Glad news for Israel's thousands all,  
And tribes of every name :  
This day, in royal David's town,  
Has given the Saviour birth ;  
Your long-desired Messiah comes,  
The Lord of all the earth.

' Go seek the regal infant,  
The promised gift divine !  
And, to approve my message true,  
Be this the easy sign :  
The heavenly babe awaits your search  
Within the cattle-shed ;  
Wrapt where He lies in swaddling bands,  
The crib His lowly bed.'

He ceased ; and, lo ! a seraph host  
Burst on their wondering sight,  
And praises from celestial choirs  
Rose on the ear of night :  
' Glory to God, in loftiest heights,'  
The angel-anthem ran ;  
' Glory to God, and peace on earth,  
And Heaven's good-will to man !'

So chanted they hosannahs,  
So struck the sounding key,  
Whence, ages since, glad melodies  
Have swept o'er land and sea ;  
And still shall swell the music of  
Salvation's choral hymn,  
Till ransomed earth sing meet response  
To psalms of seraphim.

They ended, and the closing heavens  
Received their shining train ;  
And silently the stars shone out,  
As erst, above the plain.  
A while the shepherds lingering stood,  
Held with a mute amaze ;  
Then hasted where the heavenly child  
Waited their wondering gaze.

Beneath the stable's lowly roof,  
Even as the herald told,

They saw the new-born infant laid  
Within the manger cold.  
In swaddling bands they saw Him lie,  
Wrapt by a mother's care—  
Believed the angel's word, and knew  
Their King was cradled there.

Then all throughout the country round  
The heavenly news they spread ;  
And much the neighbours marvelling talked  
Of what the angels said ;  
And many a day thereafter,  
Oft as they hapt to meet,  
Would bid the favoured shepherds still  
The wondrous tale repeat.

They saw the Saviour cradled ;  
We know Him risen and crowned !  
Let us, too, tell the story  
Even to the wide world round ;  
Till, wondering, trusting, praising,  
All flesh His glory see,  
Who slumbered in the manger,  
And died upon the tree !



## II.

### MATTHEW II.

O'ER Chaldee plains the sun had set,  
With twilight's following train ;  
And night with sparkling coronet  
Had come in turn to reign ;  
When sages grave came forth intent  
To read the glowing firmament.

Familiar with all stars were they,  
That gemmed the azure dome ;  
They knew each planet's devious way,  
Each constellation's home ;  
And in the Zodiac's girdling line  
Had noted each revolving sign.

Nor knew alone those heavenly lights,  
But Him who bade them shine ;  
Worshipping, as they watched by nights,  
The ASTRONOMER DIVINE,  
Who gave each orb its place and laws—  
The eldest, highest, latest Cause.

For they had searched the sacred page  
Lent by the exiled Jew ;

And wisdom more than hoariest sage  
Of all the Magi knew,  
They drank from those old rolls inspired  
That Judah's kings and prophets fired.

But now all o'er the East had spread  
Hopes of a King at hand,  
To make His own the nations' head,  
And rule o'er every land—  
The Sceptre and the Star foretold  
By Beor's gifted son of old.

And nightly from their vigil-post  
Those wise men scanned the skies,  
To see amid their glittering host  
A stranger star arise,  
For such 'twas promised to their sight  
Should mark the Monarch's natal night.

At length their watch had recompense :  
Low in the western heaven,  
Bright herald of the infant Prince,  
The meteor-light was given.  
The sages knew and hailed the sign ;  
The King was born in Palestine.

So from their treasures forth they told  
The costliest and the best—

Incense and myrrh and orient gold ;  
And to the distant West  
Long journey took their Lord to greet,  
And pour their tribute at His feet.

At length all Salem suddenly  
Rang with the stirring news,  
How eastern Magi asked to see  
The new-born King of Jews ;  
For they had seen His natal star,  
And came to worship Him from far.

Swift through the city ran the tale,  
Even to the palace gate ;  
And Herod, as he heard, grew pale  
With terror and with hate ;  
And when the tyrant's dread it knew,  
The craven city trembled too.

Then met the reverend Sanhedrim,  
On summons from the king—  
Charged in all haste to answer him  
Whence Judah's Branch should spring ;  
And where this new-born Prince may be  
Those orient sages came to see.

'They told him how in sacred page  
Of ancient seer 'twas writ,

That he who in the latter age  
On Judah's throne should sit,  
Must have his rise from David's stem,  
And for his birthplace Bethlehem.

Then, hatching in his wicked heart  
A dark and bloody thought,  
The despot, versed in lying art,  
To court the Magi brought ;  
And, feigning gladness, asked to hear  
What time they saw the star appear.

'And haste !' he cried, 'To Bethlehem go ;  
Find out the infant King ;  
In loyal homage bend you low,  
And back the tidings bring ;  
For I would also bend the knee,  
And own His rightful majesty.'

So spake the glozing hypocrite.  
They, trustful, went their way ;  
When, lo ! to greet their raptured sight,  
First in the skirt of day  
Now parting, sweetly shone once more  
The star which they had seen before.

Joyous they hailed the heavenly guide  
That moved to point their road ;

And, following where they marked it glide,  
Soon o'er the child's abode  
Beheld its starry lamp suspended,  
And knew their toilsome journey ended.

So, entering in with reverent quest,  
They saw with wondering eye,  
Cradled on Mary's loving breast,  
The infant Jesus lie :  
Meet homage to their Sovereign paid,  
And at His feet their offerings laid.

Then told they, fondly communing,  
How they His star had seen ;  
And how to presence of the King  
Their steps had guided been :  
And much, in turn, of strange and new  
From Joseph and from Mary drew.

Next morn, with happy hearts and light,  
Beheld them homewards hie ;  
But, warned in visions of the night  
Of Herod's treacherous lie,  
Their journey took a circuit wide,  
And left the capital aside.

Which, soon as bloody Herod knew,  
Furious with rage was he ;



And forth in haste the fiercest crew  
Of all his soldiery  
To Bethlehem and her coasts he sent,  
To slay her infants innocent.

Then bled the babe in mother's arms,  
Oh, piteous sight to see !  
Clasping her breast in wild alarms,  
Or slumbering on her knee :  
Bootless her agonized appeal  
To ruffians hardened as their steel.

For what recked they of mothers' wail,  
Or fathers' writhing groan ?  
Nor shrieks, nor tears, nor prayers avail  
To move their hearts of stone ;  
Yet haply some might curse that day  
The rage they durst not disobey.

But, safe and far from Herod's wrath,  
See the young Jesus borne !  
A pilgrim group by lonely path  
Went forth ere break of morn ;  
For Joseph had divine command  
To hide his charge in Egypt's land.

But who can tell of Bethlehem's woe  
That saw that hideous day

Her infants' blood in torrents flow—  
The wolfish tyrant's prey?  
Fulfilling what the prophet old  
In mournful elegy foretold.

A voice was heard from Ramah's tomb—  
So wrote the weeping seer—  
And wailings, in the gathering gloom,  
Rose on the piercèd ear.  
'Tis Rachel weeps her children dead,  
Refusing to be comforted.

Yet, when the Crucified shall rise  
To sit at God's right hand,  
Methinks, to meet Him in the skies,  
Shall come that martyred band.  
They died for Him in Bethlehem:  
His blood on Calvary streams for them!

And now, as from the op'ning heaven,  
I seem to hear them say  
To hearts of mothers, anguish-riven;  
Grim death that plucks away  
Fair human blossoms, as they rise,  
But gathers flowers for Paradise.

### III.

#### MATTHEW III.

'Twas eighteen hundred years ago,  
and tens of summers more,  
Where the wilderness of Judah lies  
skirting the Dead Sea shore ;  
Forth from the wilds a prophet came,  
his steps to Jordan bent,  
An awful voice of warning still  
uplifting as he went.  
'Repent,' he cried, 'and be baptized ;  
repent and be forgiven ;  
For the hour is near that ushers in  
the promised reign of Heaven.'

His mien, I wot, was grave and stern,  
although his years were young ;  
His locks unshorn—the Nazarite's—  
loose o'er his shoulders hung ;  
His eye was keen as sparkling fire  
beneath his brow severe ;  
And when he spoke, his lifted voice  
was like a trump to hear—

A herald he of God's rebukes—  
a new Elijah sent ;  
And the burden of his startling cry  
was evermore, ' Repent ! '

In spirit of the ancient seer,  
in ancient garb he stood ;  
Woven of the camel's shaggiest pile,  
his cloak was coarse and rude ;  
A girdle of a skin, undressed,  
the sackcloth mantle bound ;  
His food the gathered locusts, dried  
upon the sunny ground,  
Or honey from the wild bee's haunt,  
where swarmed the humming flock,  
Storing with sweets, industrious,  
the fissures of the rock.

Forth through the land the rumour spread,  
and thousands pressed to hear,  
Till all Judea's teeming homes  
were emptied, far and near :  
Down from Jerusalem they came,  
and Hebron's distant hills,  
As pour into the Jordan's flood  
her tributary rills ;  
And round the preacher's steps, attent,  
in awful silence stood

(One voice alone in every ear),  
a stricken multitude.

A motley throng ; for every rank  
    had mingled in the crowd :—  
The rich in his fine linen, and  
    the poor in camlet shroud ;  
The shepherd leaning on his crook,  
    the soldier on his spear ;  
The very robber from his cave  
    has crept that voice to hear.  
The publican, with smitten heart,  
    was there ; and, spite of pride,  
The Pharisee, beneath his cloak,  
    stood trembling by his side.

Then hundreds, pressing nigh, their sins  
    before the seer confessed,  
And sought for baptism at his hands,  
    their sorrow to attest ;  
While loud he spoke, ‘ Oft lurks deceit  
    in word and sigh and tear :  
Go hence, and prove by holy deeds  
    your penitence sincere !  
For to devouring fire is doomed  
    the tree that bears no fruit.  
And, lo ! the axe, with whetted edge,  
    lies gleaming at the root !’

*STORIES OF JESUS.*

'Tis He ! 'tis He ! the promised Christ !'  
the eager whisper ran ;  
But while they mused and muttered thus,  
again the voice began :  
'With water I indeed baptize—  
my word the herald's cry ;  
But, all unknown, among you stands  
One mightier than I.  
To loose the sandal from His foot  
were honour I might boast :  
He shall with fire your souls baptize,  
and with the Holy Ghost.'

'Twas eve ; and all the throng, baptized,  
were lingering yet to leave,  
When, last, the holy Jesus came,  
and would the rite receive.  
No need had He ; but thus He must  
all righteousness fulfil,  
For He had come beneath the law,  
to do His Father's will.  
Then from the river's verge He went  
a little space away,  
And, followed by all eyes attent,  
bent to the ground to pray.

And, lo ! as thus He knelt, the heavens  
were cleft with gleaming light,

As when, through riven clouds above,  
the sunbeams stream to sight.  
Shrining the Suppliant round, so soft  
and pure that radiance fell,  
That it came far behind the sun,  
it were not hard to tell.  
Then, from the parting sky, a voice,  
loud as the thunder's roll,  
Spoke : ' This is my belovèd Son,  
well-pleasing to my soul ! '

While yet 'twas heard, a dovelike shape,  
as of ethereal flame,  
With hovering motion, 'midst that light,  
from the rent azure came ;  
And, as the gentle bird it seemed,  
falling, with wing outspread,  
To where the Saviour knelt below,  
it lighted on His head.  
Slowly the opened heavens were closed,  
faded that heavenly sheen,  
But, luminous o'er Jesus still,  
the Dove of fire was seen.

Up from the earth He rose, beneath  
that form of flaming light,  
And to the wilderness went forth  
to meet the coming night.

The wondering throngs beheld Him pass—  
the Spirit led Him on ;  
To battle with the old arch-fiend  
the Woman-born is gone—  
Till, mid the gathering shadows, fallen  
upon the waste afar,  
That glory, lessening still, at length  
sunk like a setting star.





IV.

LUKE IV. 16-30.

· STILL journeying on, behind His spreading fame,  
To Galilean Nazareth Jesus came—  
His mother's town, where Jesse's stricken tree  
Hid its last root in low obscurity ;  
His early home, what time from exile brought  
Safe refuge for her infant Mary sought ;  
There had He grown from childhood up to man,  
Had lisped the babe, and toiled the artisan.  
And since no seer 'mid countrymen and kin,  
By jealous envy judged, may honour win,  
When, following first the Baptist's herald cry,  
He raised His voice to preach the kingdom  
nigh,  
He left awhile His nurture-soil aside,  
Nor stirred compatriot's prejudice and pride ;  
But now at length by mighty works made known  
The Christ of God, He came to bless His own.

In circling course the Sabbath sun has shone ;  
Up to God's house the villagers have gone :  
Jesus sat there—where erst for many a year  
He sat before—His Father's word to hear ;

But eyes that oft had marked Him grave with  
thought,  
With purpose new to-day beheld Him fraught.  
He rose, and asked to read,—hushed like a wave,  
Silence grew stiller as the book they gave :  
He took the roll, Isaiah's ancient page,  
Bright with rapt visions of the future age ;  
Unfolded slow, and found the quested place.  
Then, radiant love illuming all His face—  
For heavenly breath His holy bosom fired—  
Clear in their audience, read the strain inspired.

‘ The Spirit of Jehovah on me rests,  
Inflames my soul—my claims divine attests ;  
For He hath sent me, by that unction sealed,  
To bid the sad be cheered, the sick be healed ;  
To preach glad tidings to the poor of earth,  
And tune their broken hearts to strains of mirth ;  
To make the dumb lip praise, the blind eye see,  
To set the bruised and fettered captive free,  
And sound the silver trump of Heaven's high  
jubilee.’

He ceased (yet seemed His words to fill the air),  
Gave the closed volume to the servant's care ;  
Then sat Him down : the synagogue attent  
One fastened gaze upon His visage bent ;  
With circling eye He met their looks and cried,  
‘ This day you hear that Scripture verified ! ’

Then, as the kindling light from day-spring  
gleams,  
As limpid flood from opened fountain streams,  
Truth from His lips, and melting mercy flowed,  
The voice of man, the eloquence of God !  
With wondering ear, and charmed, the audience  
heard,  
So deep their soul that gracious sermon stirred ;  
Till, as He paused, in eager whispers, one  
Spoke to another : ‘ Is it Joseph’s son ? ’

Thence sudden sprung a change, as thought’s  
recoil  
Brought back the humble workman at his toil.  
Ill could they brook that one so lowly born  
Fame should so herald, gifts so rich adorn.  
And as I’ve seen the glorious summer’s noon  
In blackening thunder-tempest sink full soon ;  
Or, when the vanward cloud of coming storm  
Hangs o’er some quiet lake its dusky form,  
Low muttering gusts the darkening surface  
sweep,  
And fitful surges to the margin creep,—  
So broke their calm to murmur—darkened down  
Their faces so to envy’s sullen frown.  
Jesus beheld, and cried, ‘ I know your thought !  
Physician, heal thyself—thy wonders wrought  
Where only rumour wafts them to our ear,  
Show us at home, and prove thy mission here.

'Twere vain : his own the prophet still despise,  
And leave his light to gladden other eyes ;  
But know ye this: in the great Tishbite's time,  
When gaunt long famine pressed the fainting  
clime,

In Israel's land full many a widow wept,  
As her last morsel in the cruse she dipt ;  
Relief to none the missioned prophet bore,  
But blessed alone the Gentile's failing store.  
So, in Elisha's day, full many a cry  
In Israel's gates proclaimed the leper nigh ;  
But none was cleansed. ' The Syrian came for  
cure,

In Jordan washed, and, as a child, was pure.'

Even at the word their rage to madness swelled,  
Nor frenzied shout nor fierce assault withheld ;  
With impious grasp they tore Him from His  
place,

And thrust Him forth, as men a felon chase,  
Along the street, and out beyond the town,  
To the hill brow, to hurl Him headlong down.  
Furious as boiling torrent on they sweep,  
And drag Him, unresisting, up the steep ;  
Now on the brink they stand, prepared to  
urge

Their guiltless victim o'er the dizzy verge—  
Their hold relaxes, idly fall their hands,  
A might unseen their frantic crime withstands :

The Saviour turns—awe-struck, the throngs fall  
back,  
And leave, amidst, an unobstructed track.  
Unharm'd, unstayed, with pitying look He left,  
As if a beam of light some dark cloud cleft ;  
Oh ! hapless, guilty town, so of thy Lord bereft



V.

JOHN V. 1-17.

BETHESDA'S circling porches five  
Enclose her healing pool ;  
And weak, and sick, and weary ones  
Have thronged those porches full.  
The troubling of the waters  
Their eager longings wait ;  
Each hopeful that when next the wave  
Proclaims a present power to save,  
He shall not come too late.

For, ever and anon, from heaven  
A seraph, swift of wing,  
Sped him, by God's commission, down  
To move the mercy-spring ;  
His touch into that fountain  
Such wondrous virtue poured,  
Whoever first—no ail except—  
Into the rippled waters stept,  
Came back a man restored.

His crutches ready at his side,  
The cripple watchful sat ;

Facing the pool, the fevered one  
Lay weary on his mat ;  
Aside, the leper wistfully  
Gazed on that stream so pure ;  
The blind man near him strained his ear  
The first faint gurgling rush to hear,  
Sounding the hour of cure.

Amidst those crowds one sick man lay,  
Child of unhappy lot !  
No friend at hand to aid or cheer,  
Forsaken and forgot ;  
For since his strength was withered  
The babe had grown to prime ;  
Twice nineteen years, in weary round,  
Had palsy's fetters held him bound—  
Sad scourge of early crime !

To-day some kindlier neighbour's hand  
Had borne him, at his quest,  
Up to the house of mercy, there  
To lay him 'mong the rest ;  
But woe for lonely impotence  
Stricken in every limb !  
The angel-flight, the troubled spring,  
The wave, health-laden, murmuring—  
Of what avail to him ?

But now, amidst those sickly ranks,  
A stranger's form was seen ;

His steps fell softly as He passed,  
Gentle and grave His mien.  
He paused beside that sufferer's couch,  
Much moved to see him lie ;  
Despond was in the wan, worn face :  
The Saviour knew the piteous case,  
And mercy filled His eye.

‘Wouldst thou be healed?’ He stooped and  
spoke  
In tone of pitying love ;  
The sick man on that visage looked,  
Bent o’er him from above :  
So true, so kind, so pure it seemed,  
Hope, as he gazed, up sprung ;  
His eye the kindling glow confessed,  
While answering with a beating breast  
And with a faltering tongue :

‘No friend have I to help me near ;  
And, when I slowly creep,  
Some other, happier, steps before,  
And I am left to weep.’  
He ceased ; but still his longing eye  
All eloquently prayed :  
Might he but drink fresh life and strength,  
Borne to the healing spring at length  
By that good stranger’s aid !



‘ Arise, take up thy bed and walk !’

The Stranger, answering, said.

Strong with the word the palsied rose

And bore away his bed,

Filled with a wildering joy to feel

Health’s bounding pulse anew ;

Nor voice for grateful word he found,

Till, mingling with the throng around,

The Healer passed from view.

Away, away, with joyous step,

As in a dream, he strode ;

Up to the temple, meetly, first

To render laud to God !

’Twas Sabbath ; and the paschal feast

Had thronged the sacred pile :

The scribe and Pharisee, displeased,

Saw the long prisoner walk released,

Bearing his couch the while.

‘ The law forbids thy load,’ they cried ;

‘ Break not the holy rest !’

He meekly answered, judging well

His plea was of the best :

‘ He bade me bear my bed whose word

Raised me to-day from death.’

Questioned, he said he wot not who ;

But well the wily querists knew—

Jesus of Nazareth.

Short space he parted thence, when, lo !  
Again the Healer came ;  
It needed but a glance to know  
That holy face the same.  
' See ! thou art healed,' He gently said,  
' And joyest in thy cure !  
Go, watchful in thy gratitude,  
Sin now no more, lest guilt renewed  
A heavier curse secure.'

Soon heard the Jews, and wrathful came,  
To charge the Lord with wrong,  
For that in holy Sabbath-time  
He made the weak one strong ;  
To bid him bear his couch beside !  
They shuddered at the sin ;  
But darker grew their hate to hear,  
As eager throngs kept pressing near,  
His high defence begin.

' My Father worketh hitherto !  
His Sabbath sun goes round ;  
In sacred hours His dropping showers  
Water the thirsty ground.  
He leadeth Jordan's rolling flood,  
Unpausing, to the sea ;  
The great world's life He keepeth still,  
Quickening and healing whom He will :  
I ALSO WORK AS HE.'

VI.

MATTHEW XIV. 13-21.

ALL day around the Master's steps  
Crowds in the waste had hung ;  
As round the rocks in Rephidim  
The tribes of Israel clung,  
What time the flint its bosom oped,  
Smitten by Moses' rod,  
And poured a living river forth,  
To glad the hosts of God.

The deaf, who came in silence wrapt,  
Was there with listening ear ;  
The lame man leaping as a hart,  
The dumb man singing clear ;  
The blind rejoicing first in light,  
The palsied hale and strong ;  
The leper clean, the madman sane—  
A happy, praising throng.

And still the Teacher's blessed voice  
They heard with strange amaze,  
While fastening on His gracious face  
A loving, marvelling gaze ;

*STORIES OF JESUS.*

So wondered Israel first to see  
The manna, dew-like, given ;  
So Adam, on the seventh day's eve,  
Gazed on the stars of heaven.

For never learnèd scribe before  
Had spoke such words divine—  
Like early rains, like honey-cells,  
Like jewels from the mine.  
It seemed as all things vocal grew  
Around them and above,  
And heaven, and earth, and depths of sea  
Were eloquent of love.

For He had shown each object stored  
With parables of good ;  
The sunshine sheathed an inner light  
To him that understood ;  
The lilies preached of faith, in robes  
Richer than monarch's wear ;  
And every little bird rebuked  
The cloudy brow of care.

With many a holy truth He linked  
The fisher's humble craft,  
And bade the breeze that filled his sails  
Lessons of wisdom waft ;  
He made the mountains monitors,  
He gave the trees a tongue ;

With clusters richer than her own  
The spreading vine He hung.

And evermore the burden ran,  
How sorrow springs from sin ;  
How bliss is ne'er in outward good,  
But the pure heart within ;  
How from His throne in awful light  
The loving Father bent,  
And, all to bring His lost ones back,  
His Well-belovèd sent.

So taught He till the western sun  
Announced the closing day,  
And weary groups, with fasting weak,  
Must take their homeward way.  
With pity moved, the Saviour saw,  
And to His followers said,  
' Their homes are far, their strength is faint ;  
' Provide them ye with bread.'

Oh, strange behest, and hard to hear !  
How meant the Master then ?  
Five barley-cakes, their little all,  
To feed five thousand men !  
But He commands who fills the barns  
From grains beneath the sod ;  
And deed impossible to man  
Is easy still to God.

So, at His bidding, rank by rank,  
Those thousands laid them nigh ;  
The grassy sward their couches spread,  
Their canopy the sky.  
Guests at the board of heaven's own King,  
When from the feast they go,  
To light them through the banquet-hall  
The starry lamps shall glow.

Full in their sight the Saviour rose—  
The twelve beside Him stood—  
And, lifting high His eyes to heaven,  
He blessed the Father good ;  
Then brake the loaves, and bade around  
The welcome portions bear,  
Till not a child in all the crowd  
Had missed allotted share.

And still, as came and went the twelve,  
They marked, with wildered eye,  
How there, in undiminished pile,  
The barley-cakes would lie ;  
For to the Maker's hand, at will,  
Swelled the unwasted store :  
That will had called from void of space  
The teeming worlds before.

The thousands ate, and left, sufficed ;  
And gathered fragments o'er

Twelve baskets heaped—a tribute strange  
To the disciples' store.  
With thought less stirred their sires of old  
First gathered angels' bread,  
And filled their omers with the corn  
Celestial fields had shed.

Thou wonderest, youthful reader, much  
How, at the voice divine,  
At Cana's feast, the water heard,  
And reddened into wine.  
Not less to be admired the power,  
Couldst thou but understand,  
That ripens on the pendent bough  
The berry to thy hand.

'Tis strange to think five little cakes  
Five thousand guests should fill ;  
But hast thou thought that Jesus' hand  
Like wonders worketh still ?  
Who, year by year, from buried seeds  
Makes eared stalks to spring ?  
And builds from out a tiny nut  
The mighty forest-king ?

Familiar change we slightly note,  
And call it nature's way ;  
But He who wrought in miracles  
Yet worketh every day.

To Him the sudden is as slow ;  
The gradual swift appears :  
Millenniums are to Him but days,  
And days are thousand years.





VII.

LUKE VII. 11-16.

SLOWLY from out the city gate  
The funeral train was wending ;  
Touched with a reverent sympathy,  
All Nain was there attending ;  
And scarce an eye  
In the dense throng was dry.

A widowed mother, sad to see,  
Behind the bier went weeping ;  
Her only child, stricken in prime,  
In his' last robes lay sleeping :  
Cold on that sled  
Her latest hope was dead.

To his lone resting-place, prepared  
In the dull cave, they bore him ;  
And hundreds, with no hireling grief,  
Their wail kept muttering o'er him ;  
Alas ! poor flower,  
Blighted in morning hour !

So the fair citron, blossom-hung,  
'Mid forest trees surrounding,

Falls to the earth, riven by the blast ;  
The woods, with dirge resounding,  
Moan in the storm  
O'er the fair prostrate form.

And still with grief's fresh surgings, heaved  
Up from her full heart ever,  
(Like wellings of an artery gashed,)   
That mourner's frame would quiver ;  
Tingled each ear  
Those shuddering sobs to hear.

But lo ! upon the adverse way,  
Opposite crowds advancing ;  
Like waves at play beneath the sun,  
Their looks with joy are glancing ;  
No death-couch there ;  
No wailings smite the air.

In His own city, yesterday,  
Jesus had healed the dying,  
To plea of Gentile soldier's faith  
For a sick slave, replying :  
To-day to Nain  
He comes, with jubilant train.

As sunshine and the shadows meet  
In hollow of the dingle ;

As joining rivers, dark and clear,  
Contrasting ere they mingle;  
As wail with songs  
Meeting, so met those throngs.

‘Weep not,’ the pitying Kinsman said;  
And as from rains descending  
The sunbeams light the rainbow, so,  
That mother’s woe suspending,  
The gentle voice  
Said in her heart, Rejoice!

Next to the bier He stept, and touched:  
The bearers stood in wonder;  
The following crowds, in serried lines  
Closing, short space asunder,  
The battle-ground  
Of life and death surround.

‘Young man! I say to thee, Arise!’  
They heard the brief word spoken;  
He heard it too on his cold bed:  
The sleep of death was broken;  
The youth upsprung,  
Life murmuring from his tongue.

Then to the bier the loving Lord  
Led close the wildered mother,

To her glad grasp her child's hand linked,  
Kindly as elder brother.  
    'Woman! thy son!'  
With a fresh life begun.

She led him to the old dear home—  
Doubting, for very gladness;  
The burden of her happiness  
Scarce lighter than her sadness.  
    In awful joy  
She clasped her ransomed boy.

Ah! had He met our dead, you sigh,  
And sent them back the living,  
What ceaseless songs round happy hearths  
Had praised the matchless giving!  
    Hush the vain fret!  
That meeting waits them yet.

From His own city in the heavens  
Cometh the Lord of Glory;  
When finished is the mystery,  
And time with years grows hoary,  
    To meet the bier,  
This globe's sepulchral sphere.

Earth at His touch arrested stands;  
Angelic hosts attending,

Behold, from all her depths of death,  
The buried saints ascending !  
Immortal speech  
Wakes on the lips of each !

Then parted friends, in Jesus one,  
Shall meet, no more to sever ;  
Safe in their Father's kingly house,  
And with the Lord for ever :  
So death shall die,  
Swallowed in victory.



## VIII.

MATTHEW XI. 28-30; LUKE VII. 36-50.

'COME, weary souls, and burdened, all !'

So rose the Saviour's gracious call ;

    'Come, weary souls, to me !

I give the restless spirit peace ;

I bid the lorn heart's aching cease ;

    I set the captive free.'

*She* heard it, mingling with the throng,

The slave of guilty passions long,

    As the pierced hart may feel.

Shivering, amid the crowd she cowers ;

For pleasure's wreaths, though deemed of flowers,

    Are links of burning steel.

And long beneath a brow of shame,

And open sin's opprobrious name,

    Her breast concealed a hell ;

Now first upon her ear, as rains

Upon the chapt and burning plains,

    The words of mercy fell.

'Come, weary souls, and laden, all !'

For her, for her the gracious call ;

    Moved, melted, won, she goes.

The Saviour knew her pleading look ;  
The burden of her sins He took,  
And gave her soul repose.

He heard it too—the Pharisee ;  
No weary laden sinner he !  
He had no need to go.  
As who not asks, but offers rest,  
He bade the Saviour be his guest,  
In hospitable show.

To the proud feast the Meek One went,  
On His own hidden task intent ;  
His mission there He knew—  
And, 'midst the throng assembled round,  
A lowly place, unheeded, found,  
His Father's will to do.

The host no kiss of welcome gave,  
Nor sent His wayworn feet to lave,  
Nor oil of fragrance poured.  
Honour enough it seemed, I ween,  
To give the wandering Nazarene  
A place beside his board.

But, lo ! as there the Lord reclined,  
She, weeping, gently stole behind,  
And, kneeling where He lay,

His feet washed in her tears' hot tide;  
And with her tresses, long her pride,  
Wiped the rude dust away.

Then oped a perfume-box she bore,  
Erewhile her toilet's treasured store,  
And on those sacred feet,  
With fond caress, outpoured it all  
(The bursting fragrance filled the hall)—  
Her love's oblation meet.

But, mingling with the scented air,  
A sweeter incense floated there,  
Accepted of the Lord—  
A broken heart abjuring sin,  
Opened to let the Saviour in,  
Its heavenly odour poured.

Simon, with scowling brow, beheld,  
And instant scorn his bosom swelled,  
As thus he inly mused :  
No prophet this—no prophet, sure !  
Or else that sinner's touch impure  
His knowledge had refused.

The Master knew the proud man's thought ;  
His ear, with solemn greeting, sought,  
And thus rebuke bestowed :



‘Two debtors, sunk in indigence,  
One fifty, one five hundred pence,  
The creditor had owed.

‘But finding nought to pay, to both,  
The pitying lender, nothing loath,  
A full remission gave.  
Tell me—thy ready judgment can—  
Who most shall love the generous man  
That only sued to save?’

Forthwith the Pharisee replied—  
The question easy to decide—  
‘He that had most forgiven.’  
‘Well hast thou judged,’ the Lord renewed.  
‘And as in earthly gratitude,  
So in the debts of heaven.

‘I came thy guest. No kiss to greet  
Thou gav’st ; no water for my feet ;  
No ointment for my head.  
But she my feet hath kissed ; her hair  
Dried what her tears had washed ; her care  
Sweet perfumes o’er them shed.

‘Much love hath proved much sin forgiven ;  
Her contrite heart, with sorrow riven,  
Henceforth hath peace in me !

But he who deems his debts are small,  
Loves little, if he love at all,  
And wonders love to see.'



IX.

MATTHEW XXI. 8-16.

THE shady slopes of Olivet  
With branchy palms were waving ;  
And leafy boughs, and garments spread,  
The dusty road were paving ;  
In lowly pomp to Zion came,  
Her King—the Just, the Saving.

No chariot-wheel in thunder rolls,  
No war-horse proudly prances ;  
Nor glittering beam from spear or helm  
Of steel-clad warrior glances ;  
Riding upon an ass's colt,  
The Prince of Peace advances.

From Bethany and Bethphage  
Came crowds, with palms, attending ;  
From Kedron's banks, in answering wave,  
Went throngs, with palms, ascending ;  
Till, on the crest of Olives' hill,  
Their joyous ranks met, blending.

Then up against the sunny cope  
The welcome shout went ringing ;

Ten thousand voices, jubilant,  
The ancient psalm were singing,  
'Hosanna to great David's Son,  
Israel's salvation bringing !'

They thought of all His mighty works,  
Blest miracles of wonder !  
How death itself confessed His power,  
Above the earth and under ;  
And louder yet the glad acclaim  
Broke from their hosts in thunder.

In ear of the proud Pharisee  
The hateful song rung galling ;  
On their dark hearts, as burning drops,  
Those swelling notes were falling.  
'Rebuke them !' was their envious cry,  
Upon the Master calling.

But he who stills those songs of joy  
May hush the sea-waves' noises.  
'I tell you,' was the King's response,  
'This day the land rejoices :  
Could these be dumb, the very stones  
Would find adoring voices !'

Even as He spoke, upon the brow—  
Salem's fair walls before Him—

Gazing upon her girdling towers,  
He staid the beast that bore Him.  
Sad grew His face, as some dark cloud  
Had cast its shadow o'er Him ;

For wall and dome and temple high,  
In golden sunshine blazing,  
He saw, with far prophetic glance,  
The ruthless foemen razing ;  
And loud, with sorrow's lifted voice,  
He wept as He was gazing.

'Jerusalem ! Jerusalem !'  
So cried He 'midst His weeping :  
'How oft in vain would I have drawn  
Thy children to my keeping ;  
As birds beneath the parent wing  
Their tender brood fold sleeping !

'Oh ! hadst thou known, in this thy day,  
Things to thy peace pertaining !  
But now they leave thy blinded eye  
Amid the darkness straining !  
Thy hearth is left thee desolate ;  
Thy courts the dogs profaning.'

Even thus, if tears in heaven may fall,  
Weeps still the loving Jesus ;

When madly bent on losing life  
His eye of mercy sees us—  
Hell's captives, scorning yet His arm  
All-mighty to release us.

As when, at summer's sunny noon,  
A sudden rain-cloud springeth,  
And earthward, blotting out the day,  
Its sable mantle flingeth ;  
Great drops fall sounding through the gloom,  
Like tears mute anguish wringeth :

So darkling on the triumph fell  
The grief none comprehended ;  
Zion beheld her King in tears,  
Wildered, amazed, offended.  
'Tis past. To murmuring Kedron's banks  
The lowly pomp descended.

Then up the steep, and through the gate,  
The palmy tide flowed welling ;  
While all the city rushed to meet,  
Moved to her loneliest dwelling.  
'He comes ! He comes ! Hosanna now !'  
Anew the shout rose swelling.

But hark ! what choirs, responsive, clear,  
Take up the psalm of hailing !

The pleasèd heavens, like fragrant clouds  
Of holy incense, scaling ;  
The rougher shouts are hushed, to hear  
Those angel-notes prevailing.

Lo ! in the temple-courts stood throngs  
Of little children praising ;  
And sweetly smiled the Lord to hear  
The music they were raising ;  
The kingdom theirs, to babes revealed,  
The proudly wise abasing.

Beside, in bitter scorn and rage,  
The hollow scribes stood scowling—  
Wolves clothed in wool ; around their prey,  
Children of darkness, prowling.  
'Hearest thou these ?' they cried ; and hate  
Deep in their heart lay growling.

'I hear them,' said the Blessed One,  
'And Heaven their voice attendeth ;  
Grateful to my great Father's ear  
The song of babes ascendeth ;  
With angel-psalms, and sweet as they,  
The meek hosanna blendeth.

'Have ye not read in God's own page  
What best the foe still hushes ?

Not valour mailed, nor lore, nor craft  
The dire avenger crushes ;  
But prayer from childlike lips, and song  
From the child-heart that gushes.'





SONGS OF THE KINGDOM.



I.

MATTHEW XIII. 1-23.

FORTH to sow the sower went  
In the dewy prime ;  
Starry watchers o'er him bent—  
Eyes of the high firmament  
That mark the deeds of time.

Went the sower then afield,  
Bearing precious seed ;  
Germs of mystic life concealed,  
That to patient hope may yield  
Joyous reaper's meed.

Onward in the springing day  
Passed the sower on ;  
Where the furrowed acres lay  
Reddening in the orient ray,  
Hath the sower gone.

Pacing now the ploughed field o'er,  
Handfuls of the grain  
Cast he from the load he bore ;  
Scattering wide the precious store—  
Scattering not in vain.

Yet not all the seeds he sowed  
Harvest hopes shall meet :  
Some fell idly where he trod,  
On the hard and sterile road,  
Worn by passing feet.

On the beaten barren way,  
Riches vainly showered,  
All exposed the treasure lay :  
Flocking fowls the easy prey  
Greedily devoured.

Next from forth his teeming store  
Fertile grains he threw,  
Where the rock's impervious floor  
Scanty earth had lackered o'er,  
Moist with recent dew.

Fresh and fair from the slight soil  
Sprung those seeds amain ;  
Hope beheld rewarded toil  
Share already autumn's spoil—  
Mocked with promise vain.

For the summer's high sun shone,  
Hot the south winds blew,  
Parching the earth on bed of stone ;  
And the fair green shoot anon  
Faded where it grew.

II.

MATTHEW XIII. 31, 32.

THE Dresser of the garden  
Dropped in the earth the seed,  
So tiny, that the bird's own eye  
Gave, as it fell, no heed.  
But the kindly dews came down at ev'n,  
And the soft spring shower fell ;  
And the buried germ sprung up apace,  
And spread and flourished well.

Then wintry days came back again,  
And northern winds blew keen ;  
Shrunk the fair plant, and faded all  
Its hues of living green.  
Yet the root of life, securely hid  
Beneath the friendly sod,  
Lay waiting for the summer hour  
Ordained before of God.

The summer hour came, warm and bright,  
The sullen rigours fled ;  
And the faded plant sent forth its shoots,  
As quickened from the dead.  
It rises, spreads, and blossoms now,  
A goodly sight to see ;

Yet not all the seeds he sowed  
Harvest hopes shall meet :  
Some fell idly where he trod,  
On the hard and sterile road,  
Worn by passing feet.

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A goodly sight to see ;

*SONGS OF THE KINGDOM.*

And the birds sit nestling in its boughs,  
As in a stately tree.

In far prophetic vision,  
The minstrel-seer of yore  
Beheld that plant magnificent,  
And sang its praise before :  
How its boughs ran to the river verge,  
Its branches kissed the main ;  
Its foliage robed the mountain-side,  
Its clusters filled the plain.

Oh ! Spirit of the mighty God !  
Rain Thy blest influence down,  
Till the Royal plant the wide earth fill—  
That plant of old renown ;  
Till, beneath its shade reclining,  
The weary race has rest ;  
And the nations, blest of Jesus,  
Shall call Him ever blest.

Time shall not smite that glorious Plant,  
Nor a world in flames destroy ;  
For its roots are struck in the soil of heaven,  
By the streams of life and joy ;  
Clothing the hills of that summer land  
By the feet of the holy trod,  
The tree shall spread and bloom for aye  
In the Paradise of God.



III.

ISAIAH XXXV.

DESERT plains shall blossom fair,  
All with flowery verdure clad ;  
Lonely wastes shall harvests bear,  
Echoing through the odorous air  
Voices of the glad.

Regions drear, whose burning sands  
Nurse afar the fell simoom,  
Rich as Sharon's cultured lands,  
Beautiful as Carmel stands  
Robed in vines, shall bloom.

Horeb's heights, where horrors frown—  
Naked wilderness of stone !—  
Oaks shall shade and cedars crown ;  
Like the mountains of renown,  
Glorious Lebanon.

Where the robber made his den,  
Gloomy haunt of blood and fear,  
Happy homes of holy men  
Meet the lingering pilgrim's ken,  
Hymns of praise his ear.

Where the venomèd asp had crept,  
Where the fiery scorpion lay,  
Where the gorged hyæna slept,  
Childhood fair, that never wept,  
Fearlessly shall play.

For the glory of the Lord,  
Even our own God's excellency,  
When the Spirit forth is poured,  
(Second Comforter adored !)  
All the earth shall see.

Strengthen, then, the trembling knee ;  
Bid the fainting heart be strong ;  
Fear not, meek ones, fear not ye !  
God shall come, and foes shall flee ;  
Wake, O lands, to song !

Lame men, leaping as the fawn,  
Hail the promised Healer come ;  
Blindness, with its veil withdrawn,  
Gazes, rapturèd, on the dawn ;  
Shout for joy the dumb.

Fountains, from the desert gushing,  
Cleave with grateful streams the sands ;  
Reeds by glassy pools are rushing ;  
Dragon-lairs are gardens, flushing  
In the parchèd lands.

There the King's highway is seen—  
Way of holiness and light,  
Never trod by steps unclean ;  
Simple wayfarers therein  
Err not from the right.

There no lion fierce shall stalk,  
There no ravening beast may roam ;  
God's redeemed alone there walk ;  
'Of the city still their talk,'  
Whither go they home.

So, at length, with voice of songs,  
Crowned with gladness fading never,  
Heaven receives the ransomed throngs ;  
Tears and sighings, woes and wrongs,  
Flee away for ever.



## IV.

ISAIAH LV.

Ho ! ye thirsty, near to die,  
To the waters come, each one !  
Come, though ye have nought to buy ;  
Draughts of life are sold to none.  
Purchase here, though nothing paying,  
Corn the finest, milk, and wine !  
Take but freely, nought gainsaying—  
Freely, sinner, all is thine !

Why for that which is no bread  
Spend ye toil and travail sore ?  
Richest feasts the world can spread  
Leave you famished as before.  
Souls can ne'er be filled with dust ;  
I alone their life can give :  
Now your Father's bounty trust,  
Eat the bread of heaven, and live.

Mercies—by the cross secured  
When the royal Jesus bled ;  
By His empty grave assured  
When He rose and woke the dead ;  
By His throne all thrones above ;  
By His sceptred hand of power—

In eternal bond of love,  
Bless the sinner's contrite hour.

Lo ! your King ! elect of old,  
David to the nations given !  
With His banner broad unrolled,  
Witness for the God of heaven.  
For the Holy One that crowned Thee,  
For Thy God who made Thee glorious,  
Tribes unknown are flocking round Thee,  
Round Thy cross, revealed victorious.

Seek Jehovah ! He is near ;  
Seek Him now ! He may be found ;  
Humble prayer shall reach His ear,  
Mercy at your cry abound.  
From their wicked way and thought  
Back to God let sinners turn !  
He gives pardon soon as sought ;  
Not the vilest grace shall spurn.

Ne'er with feeble reason's rod  
Metre Eternal Wisdom's plan ;  
Measure not the love of God  
By the heart of guilty man :  
For the thought and way divine  
Far transcend all thoughts below,  
As the fields where star-lights shine  
Fields where earthly blossoms grow.

As the snows and rains, descending,  
Reascend not whence they fell,  
But to earth their waters lending,  
Bid its genial bosom swell ;  
Till, from germ and bud outspringing,  
Harvest all her stores displays—  
Sowers reap with voice of singing,  
Hungry millions eat and praise :

So, the God of truth hath said,  
Shall my gospel prosperous go !  
On its blissful mission sped,  
Not in vain my word shall flow ;  
All my will effecting ever,  
All my pleasure working still ;  
Ne'er returning, failing never,  
Till the world my glory fill.

Go ye forth, ye joyous throngs !  
Led with peace, with freedom crowned ;  
Hills before you burst to songs,  
Clap their hands the woods around !  
For the thorn upsprings the pine,  
Myrtles spread where briers grew ;  
Blazoning far the name divine,  
Earth is Paradise anew.

## V.

## DANIEL II. 31-35.

TOWERING broad against the sky  
Rose an image, huge and high ;  
Giant bulk, of human form,  
Like mist-spectre of the storm.  
Dread, yet glorious to behold,  
All the head was dazzling gold ;  
Like the sun from noon-day throne,  
Lustrously the visage shone.  
Arms and breast of silver bright  
Gleamed afar with moonlike light ;  
Trunk and thighs of burnished brass  
Rose beneath, a glowing mass,  
Like some cloud in western skies  
That the parting sunlight dyes ;  
Limbs below, from knee to heel,  
Pillars stood of hardened steel ;  
But the feet ('tis strange to say)  
Showed of iron mixed with clay.  
So the fearful statue stood,  
Mould as if of Titan brood.  
In his dream the monarch gazed,  
Much admiring, awed, amazed—

Questioning in his heart, intent,  
Whence and what the strange portent.

Wonder new, and mightier still !  
Lo ! a stone, hewn from the hill,  
Yet by ne'er a workman's stroke  
Severed from the parent rock,  
Hurled by force no eye could see,  
Smote the pile resistlessly—  
Smote it on those motley feet,  
Where the mire and metal meet.  
With the stroke earth reeled and quivered :  
Like a sherd to pieces shivered ;  
Like the forest, trunk and branch,  
Crushed before the avalanche ;  
So, where dread the flint-stroke crashes,  
Falls the very iron to ashes.

Like a tower, that foes mine under,  
Or the lightning rifts asunder,  
So that image, huge in vain,  
Rushed to ruin on the plain.  
Silver, iron, brass, and gold  
Rubbish undistinguished rolled,  
Each the other breaking, bruising—  
Lustre, shape, and substance losing—  
Till, like chaff of thrashing-floor,  
Or the spray where cascades roar,



Or the dust of summer's day,  
On the winds they passed away;  
On the whirlwinds fled together,  
Not an eye could follow whither :  
In their room, the conquering stone  
Filled the marvelling gaze alone.

Wonder yet ! that stone unhewn  
Swells a mighty mountain soon :  
Crowned with cedars, clothed with flocks ;  
Pouring fountains from the rocks ;  
Filling all the champaign wide  
With glad life on every side ;  
While above its glorious head  
Everlasting sunshine spread.

Earthly glory, earthly power  
Shines or sways a passing hour.  
Ancient Babel's golden throne  
Lies in dust, for aye o'erthrown ;  
Persia's riches could not save ;  
Greece but conquered for her grave :  
Rome's colossal might must bend,  
Iron force is doomed to end.  
Kingdoms of the sword decay ;  
Truth alone holds deathless sway.  
Lo ! descended from the skies,  
Love, to found her empire, dies :

On the cross is built the throne  
All the tribes of earth shall own ;  
Sceptred grace, in Jesus' hand,  
Breaks the yoke in every land ;  
Prisons open, slaves rise free,  
Peace o'ershadows land and sea,  
Love leads conquering in the blest world's  
jubilee.



SONGS OF LOVE.



I.

LOVE BETTER THAN THE GIFT OF  
TONGUES.

I CORINTHIANS XIII.

IN grand old phrase the Hebrew seer  
Uttered his oracles of fire ;  
Melodious numbers tranced the ear,  
When Homer struck the Grecian lyre.  
With classic echoes Forum rung  
When Roman Tully's voice addressed ;  
And many a noble living tongue  
Sounds o'er the earth from east to west.  
Glorious from seraph lips above  
Of heavenly speech the accents fall ;  
But better far the heart to love  
Than deftest power to speak them all

Though I could roam the wide world o'er,  
Mix with all tribes, polite and rude ;  
And, fraught with matchless linguist lore,  
Knowing all tongues, refined or crude,  
Explore each spacious continent,  
And plant my foot on every isle ;

And still with man, where'er I went,  
In his own language talk the while,  
Varying my dialect at will,  
As speeches vary round this ball;  
'Twere vain to boast the magic skill :  
One throb of love were worth it all.

What though my voice, delight to hear,  
In each proud capital of earth  
Could win intensest sorrow's ear,  
And lure gay folly from its mirth ;  
Though every word were eloquence,  
And every tone were music thrilling,  
Holding the listening throng suspense,  
And all the breast with rapture filling ;  
Beat there no heart, from malice free,  
Beneath the flowing wordy pall—  
One pulse of blessed charity  
Should shame the tinkling rhetoric all.

What though, when saints in concert meet,  
On the blest day that calls to rest,  
To sit and hear at Jesus' feet,  
To bring Him song, and suppliant quest ;  
Could I assume the preacher's place,  
Discourse in words that seemed from heaven,  
Till trickling tears bedewed each face,  
Or hearts with fear were pierced and riven ;

And thousands shouted loud, retiring,  
A thunder-son, a modern Paul,  
Burned there no love, the speech inspiring :  
'Twere but a clangorous trumpet all.

Could I ascend the loftiest sky,  
Where angels see the great King's face,  
And 'midst their choirs, beneath His eye,  
Obtain a guest's allotted place ;  
And, as the hymn celestial swelled  
In heaven's own speech and music glowing,  
Lead in the song—till others held  
The voice, to list my strain victorious,  
The offering were offence and base,  
While pride and self the heart enthrall :  
God stoops to hear meek infant's praise,  
But scorns the unloving chorus all.

The thought is idle, and a wrong :  
Pride ne'er that temple threshold trod ;  
No breath is there for loveless song ;  
For God is love, and heaven is God.  
Who loves not, must in heaven be mute ;  
Who loves not, must in heaven be dead :  
His lips that air may ne'er pollute,  
That light grows darkness round his head.  
It killeth hate, heaven's air to breathe ;  
Heaven's beams slay malice, sweeten gall :

Who loves not, has abode beneath,  
For up in glory love is all.

Prayer hath no wing where love is lost ;  
Praise hath no perfume for the skies ;  
Preaching no might to win—as frost  
Calls vainly to the flowers to rise,  
His grasp the soil to iron turneth,  
Where blossoms, like emotions, sleep ;  
And earth the hardening insult spurneth,  
Bidding her heart its treasures keep ;  
But hidden life-germs 'neath the sod  
Wake at the soft spring's gentle call :  
So, when earth's deserts bloom to God,  
Triumphant love shall work it all.

Love hath a language all its own,  
A felt though voiceless eloquence ;  
It speaketh in a look, a tone,  
A deed of frank beneficence.  
The savage knows it in his wild,  
It hath a speech for monarchs fit ;  
It soothes the old, it wooes the child,  
The lettered sage confesseth it ;  
In every climate understood—  
In tent and temple, hut and hall :  
Great are the wise, greater the good—  
Greatest who loveth most of all.



II.

LOVE BETTER THAN THE GIFT OF  
PROPHECY.

OH for an eye all gloom to try,  
A mind all problems solving ;  
Searching all height, all depth profound,  
Those walls of black that hem us round  
In its keen glance dissolving !

Vain wish, depart ! be mine the heart  
That loves all being dearly !  
Love hath ethereal path to light :  
Where reason gropes in thickest night  
Her beaming eye sees clearly.

—o—

On Moab's heights, 'mid lurid lights  
From twice seven victims blazing,  
Called from the east, the wizard seer—  
King Balak and his princes near—  
On Israel's tents stood gazing.

'Thus saith the man,' so proud began  
The unwilling prophet's speech,

‘Whose eye has oped, in heavenly trance,  
On visions sealed to mortal glance  
And thought’s remotest reach.

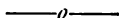
‘I see afar the rising Star  
Of Jacob’s conquering race,  
The Sceptre-Staff, whose kingly might  
Shall all the strength of Edom smite,  
And Moab’s pride abase.

‘From Israel springs the King of kings ;  
Him all dominion waits.  
Hosts perish from the Victor’s path ;  
He bursts asunder, in His wrath,  
The city’s brazen gates.

‘O’er western deep, behold they sweep,  
The ships of Chittim strong,  
Afflicting Eber in their pride :  
Their mighty ruins strew the tide,  
When He shall right the wrong.’

O favoured seer ! God’s word to hear,  
And read the unrolled decree,  
Foreshowing Jesus’ glorious sway,  
And haughty Rome’s perdition day  
The saints yet sigh to see !

Nay, seer abhorred ! to Israel's sword  
His life accursed was given—  
Hating the day his lips foretold,  
His secret counsel, bought with gold,  
Tempted the blest of heaven.



Gentle and mild, a Hebrew child  
Sat at her mistress' feet ;  
A robber horde, in bloody raid,  
Had captive borne the little maid  
To Syria's royal seat.

The child they gave, a welcome slave,  
To the chief captain's spouse.  
Dear to the king, and great was he ;  
But foul and blanching leprosy  
Sat on his laurelled brows.

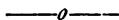
'So well may light avenging blight  
On Israel's spoilers all !'  
Far other than such vengeful thought  
Love to the captive maiden taught,  
Victorious even in thrall.

Would God,' she sighed, and meekly eyed  
The warrior's lordly dame,

'Oh! would to God my master brave  
Could prove the prophet's power to save :  
All Israel knows his fame !'

The great man heard the trustful word,  
And sought the promised cure.  
In Jordan's waves he left his stain :  
Seven times he washed, and came again  
Fair as a child, and pure.

O noble child ! though captive styled,  
Thine shall the crown appear ;  
In thy love's whisper greater far  
Than warrior in his thundering car,  
Or vision-honoured seer.



Exiled and lone, belovèd John  
Saw the sealed book uncloset—  
Beheld the future's marvels pass,  
As stars before the optic glass,  
Mystic, but glorious shows :

From mountain height, in sunless light,  
Saw the Lamb's wife come drest  
In pearl and gold and radiant gem—  
The holy new Jerusalem,  
The home of all the blest.

O honoured man—to read the plan  
Of Heaven's high purpose so !  
To scan the leaves of destiny,  
The great white throne of doom to see,  
To know as gods may know.

Yet, favoured seer ! I more revere  
Thy name all peers above,  
When borne on couch amidst the flock,  
Thy farewell voice, they tell us, spoke,  
' Children, abide in love.'





MISSIONARY HYMNS.





## THE CHILDREN'S 'CALABAR.'

SHE's bound for heathen Afric,  
Her freight is holy men ;  
The little gifts that bought her  
Were ten times thousand ten :  
'Tis a gallant sight, and goodly,  
A British ship of war ;  
But the mission ship's the sight for me—  
The children's 'CALABAR.'

From hull to streaming pennon,  
She's beautiful and bright ;  
Her sails, like wings of angels,  
Bear her on paths of light :  
Her every timber's sacred,  
Her every cord and spar ;  
For on mercy's holy errand sails  
The children's 'CALABAR.'

Ten thousand little voices  
Shall night and morning pray,  
That He who rules the billows  
May speed her on the way.

May favouring breezes waft her,  
And sun and moon and star  
Shine gloriously and sweetly o'er  
The children's 'CALABAR!'

The town of good King Eyo  
Shall shout the ship to see,  
And Duke Town's dusky children  
Shall clap their hands with glee ;  
And they'll talk together, wondering,  
Of the boys and girls afar,  
Who bought with love's warm offerings  
The little 'CALABAR.'

The mission ship's commander  
An honoured man shall be ;  
And honoured men the sailors  
That work her o'er the sea.  
A nation's thanks give tribute  
To the valiant British tar :  
The Church shall bless the mariners  
That man the 'CALABAR.'

Thanks to the little workmen  
That gathered all this store !  
We asked for scarce a thousand—  
They sent us thousands more !  
God make them all yet kinder  
And happier than they are ;

And prosper long the youthful firm  
That own the 'CALABAR !'

And prosper long the Mission,  
And all our brethren dear ;  
Let every month bring tidings  
'Twill glad our hearts to hear :  
And ne'er may fell destroyer  
The good beginning mar,  
Till Eyo reign a Christian king  
O'er Christian CALABAR.

## THE SEVEN.

BROTHERS, to the swart race sent !  
Brothers, to the Lord's work lent !  
Go the way your Master went,  
By the Spirit driven ;  
To the desert and the war—  
To the kloofs and isles afar,  
Where the spoiler's strongholds are,  
Valiant go, ye seven !

By the blood the blest One shed,  
When He bowed to death His head ;  
When the piercèd limbs streamed red,  
And the side was riven ;  
By the bursting of His grave,  
Signal of His might to save ;  
By the living fire He gave,  
Conquering go, ye seven !

He who once from Olives' crest,  
Parting to His glorious rest,  
North and south, and east and west,  
Sent His own eleven ;  
Bade them, swift as couriers, run,  
Publishing salvation won

Widely as the circling sun—  
Sendeth you, His seven.

Fear not earthly bonds to sever ;  
He forsakes His servants never :  
'I am with you, lo, for ever'—  
So the word was given :  
Leaning on the promise sure,  
Underneath His shield secure,  
Strong to do, and dare, and dure,  
Joyous go, ye seven !

Long have veterans, from the field,  
Bending weary o'er their shield,  
Brave, but few, for help appealed ;  
Patient have they striven :  
Now be grateful succours sped !  
Step where stood the honoured dead,  
Where the pioneers have led,  
Follow on, ye seven !

Hark ! they call you, o'er the wave,—  
Sons by fallen warriors' grave ;  
Children of the exile slave ;  
(Be the wrong forgiven !)  
Haste, then, herald sons of peace,  
Bid the mourner's wailing cease ;  
Sound the captive soul's release ;  
Speed ye, brothers seven !

As you toil, this thought will cheer,  
Sevenfold love has linked you here ;  
And when summons, late or near,  
    Calls your first to heaven,  
There shall he, in white robes drest,  
As he mingles with the blest,  
Whisper, mindful of the rest,  
    I am one of seven !

Rod from noble Erskine's root !  
Branch from good Gillespie's shoot !  
Twined and clustered now with fruit,  
    Like the cedar thriven ;  
Happy Church, united, free,  
Bless the King that blesseth thee,  
Prospered aims, adoring, see,  
    Sending forth thy seven.

Pledge them, honoured as thou art,  
Pledge them open hand and heart,  
Pledge them prayer, when far apart,  
    Offered morn and even ;  
Till in Eden bloom shall smile  
Caffre glen and Indian isle,  
Sending blessings back the while  
    Seventy-fold for seven.

THE FIRST THREE.

FROM the homes and the graves of their kinsfolk afar,  
Side by side in the land of the heathen they sleep ;  
But they died, as die heroes, in van of the war,  
And the glory that shrouds them forbids us to weep.

Their lives, cries the world, they have perilled and lost ;  
Their lives, answers faith, they have ventured and  
found ;  
For their toils were in love, and, though blood was the  
cost,  
Their reward shall be thrones when the martyrs are  
crowned.

Their course they have finished, their fight has been  
fought ;  
Write, Blest are the dead, when in Jesus they die !  
From their labours they rest, and the works they have  
wrought  
Shall go after, their witness and joy, to the sky.

We have tears for their kindred—for widowed hearts  
riven ;  
We have tears for their brethren bereft of their aid ;

But we've songs for their spirits ascended to heaven,  
And hope shall keep watch where their ashes are laid.

For the voice shall be spoken which sleepers must hear  
From the shores of all continents—depths of all seas ;  
And the three shall be thousands when HE shall appear,  
Their companions around them, their children all  
these.

Our lamps have been quenched for thy light, Calabar !  
We have sown thee our lives for a harvest in thine :  
Buried seeds spring to sheaves ; and the night, star by star,  
Hides her train in the dawn, that the dayspring may  
shine.

We have buried our dead, dear to Christ, in thy sand,  
The redemption of Afric believing to see !  
For we bought our Machpelah, a pledge for the land,  
When we laid in thy bosom the first of the three.

Now the bond we had fastened in love and in trust  
Death has riveted thrice : who would sunder the  
chain ?

The voice of the fallen ones even from the dust  
Cries, ' Onward, still onward ! Messiah must reign.'

These three—these the first ! who will step where they  
lie ?

Close not up your thinned ranks yet, ye warriors afield !



‘Who will go?’ shall be answered with, ‘Lord, here am I,’  
And the breach in your phalanx anon shall be healed.

Who will follow to death? who will follow to glory?  
Who will speed to win souls in the wars of the Lamb?  
Their names shall be woven in the lines of the story  
That shall tell how He conquered the kingdoms of  
Ham.

‘With your shields, or upon them!’ cried matrons of  
Greece,  
As they sent forth their sons for their country’s defence:  
Shall the patriot dare more than the preacher of peace?  
Shall our faith be called coward? our love a pretence?

To the rescue, young men! ye are brave, ye are strong!  
With the cross for your ensign, the word for your  
sword!  
Till from Niger to Nile burst the dark lands to song,  
When the sons of the Ethiop are sons of the Lord!



## WHY SHOULD I LOVE THE JEW?

WHY should I love the Jew?—The Jew is human :  
Bone of my bone, and of one blood with me ;  
My kinsman, brother : born and nursed of woman ;  
As Saxon, Hindoo, Mussulman is he ;  
Man—dying body, and undying soul ;  
Being aye sweeping onwards, never at the goal.

Why should I love the Jew?—The Jew is lost :  
Fallen in first Adam, though of Abraham born ;  
By Moses cursed, though Moses be his boast ;  
Dead as the Gentile dogs, his fathers' scorn ;  
Shut up in guilt at Sinai's flaming bar—  
Israel by name, from Israel's commonwealth afar.

Why should I love the Jew?—The Jew is blinded :  
Reading the prophets with a heart veil-wrapt ;  
Gainsaying, disobedient, fleshly-minded,  
His spirit in a judgment-slumber lapt :  
Still, echoing o'er the earth, that cry pursues him :  
' His blood on us and ours ! ' when Rome's pale  
judge would loose Him.

Why should I love the Jew?—The Jew has suffered :  
The nations trode him down, and mocked his woe ;

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And, all-forgetful by whose love they differed,  
Even Christians said, ' 'Twas well : God meant  
it so,'—  
Hardened the poor Jew's heart, then called him vile,  
Scorned, scattered, hunted, hissed at, plundered,  
peeled the while.

Why should I love the Jew?—A Jew was Jesus—  
Offspring of Mary—royal David's Son—  
Who paid the ransom-price of blood that frees us  
From sin, death, hell : the Just and Holy One !  
From Judah comes salvation, Shiloh springs,  
Star-usher'd Child of Bethlehem, crowned the King  
of kings !

Why should I love the Jew?—God loves the Jew :  
His oath-pledged covenant with His friend He  
keeps ;  
He saves the remnant still His grace foreknew,  
And the old promise has not died, but sleeps ;  
The Goel comes, His Spirit free outpouring,  
And, mourning Him they pierced, all Israel turns  
adoring.

Why should I love the Jew?—In the Jew's lot  
Lies man's—that cluster on the topmost bough,  
A gleaming scant and late—destroy it not :  
There blessings for the nations ripen now ;

Life from the dead to the wide world shall be  
The turning back in love of Jacob's long captivity.

Why should I love the Jew?—I love my kind :

I love my fellow-sinner—lost like me ;

I love the wronged—the miserable blind ;

I love the Jew that died on Calvary's tree ;

I love the Lord's beloved, for Abraham's sake ;

I love millennial morning, struggling soon to break.



**MISCELLANEOUS VERSES.**



## WHERE SHALL THE HOME OF THE CONQUEROR BE?

WHERE shall the home of the conqueror be?

High in the morning-star :  
Nearest the coming sun dwells he ;  
Day ever brightening His eyes shall see  
Through endless ages far.

Where shall the conqueror's seat be found?

In the palace, and on the throne :  
His brows with unfading garlands bound ;  
Even as his Lord with the Father is crowned,  
And will not reign alone.

What shall this royal conqueror wear?

Garments of snowy white :  
As the sun is clear, as the moon is fair ;  
As the angels ; as Christ, when He comes in air ;  
As God revealed in light.

What shall be spread for the conqueror's board?

Fruits from the living tree  
Heaven-planted, when Eden was barred by the  
sword ;  
Bread from hid manna, gathered and stored  
For immortality.

These for the conqueror—open and known,  
But more that can never be told ;  
For a new name, written on pearly stone,  
Shall be given him—read by himself alone,  
In ‘glory manifold.’

Shall the conqueror ever his palm resign,  
Fallen in new battle?—NEVER.  
A pillar he stands in the heavenly shrine,  
Proclaimed by the graving of names divine—  
God’s, Zion’s, Christ’s, for ever.



PSALM LI.

A NEW AND FREE VERSION.

1.

FOR Thy kindness pure and sweet,  
For Thy pity, at Thy feet ;  
For Thy vast compassion's stream,  
For Thy love's eternal beam :  
Father, see me where I lie,  
From the deeps attend my cry.

2.

Mercy, Lord, alone I plead ;  
Mercy's affluence I need.  
For my sin, like mountains high,  
Towers before my aching eye,  
Never absent from my sight ;  
Hide it, Lord, in mercy's light.

3.

When my life incurred this blot,  
Thee it was my soul forgot ;  
Sinned this sin before Thy face,  
Braved Thy justice, wronged Thy grace ;

Shouldst Thou doom, Thy right were clear,  
Sentence is already here.

## 4.

'Twas no casual warp or flaw  
All against my nature's law ;  
Ripeness of this bitter fruit  
Grew from ancient poisoned root ;  
Flowed the stream from fount within—  
Birth and genesis in sin.

## 5.

But beneath the deepest ill  
Works to cure Thy gracious will ;  
To its inmost hidden part  
Truth and love shall search my heart ;  
To the depths of all my soul  
Conquering grace shall make me whole.

## 6.

Wash me, Thou, from this my guilt,  
Thou canst cleanse me if Thou wilt ;  
Purge with hyssop dipt in blood ;  
Bathe in love's renewing flood ;  
Then not freshest mountain snow  
Spotless as my soul shall show.

## 7.

Let me hear my Father's voice  
Bid my pardoned soul rejoice ;

So my crushed and broken frame,  
Parched with anguish, black with shame,  
Shall to health and gladness wake,  
Singing, He hath bound who brake.

## 8.

From my trespass, crimson-red,  
Hide Thy face so pure, so dread ;  
From my guilt avert Thy look ;  
Rase it from Thy judgment book ;  
As a black cloud from the sky,  
Blot my dark sin from Thine eye.

## 9.

Thou, whose all-restoring word  
Formless earth in darkness heard !  
Thou, to whom my bosom lies  
Opened in its mysteries !  
Come and all my heart renew ;  
Make me clean and right and true.

## 10.

From Thy presence, brightest day !  
Cast not, cast not me away !  
Nor deny me still a place  
Near the glory of Thy face ;  
Nor recall—oh, that were death—  
From my soul Thy Holy Breath !

## 11.

Once the priceless joy was mine  
Felt where dwells thy grace divine ;  
Now again Thy favour give,  
And my heart anew shall live :  
By Thy Spirit, strong and free,  
Hold me up, and close to Thee !

## 12.

So shall I, restored and glad,  
Know to raise the fallen and sad ;  
Heal the stumbling in the way,  
Help the broken heart to pray ;  
Wanderers from the path instruct,  
Back to Thee the lost conduct.

## 13.

God of my salvation Thou !  
Hear my cry, receive my vow.  
Save me from foul murder's blot,  
Cleanse from all ensanguined spot ;  
Then shall loudest voice express  
Praises of Thy righteousness.

## 14.

Long has lain my harp unstrung,  
Dark my heart, and parched my tongue ;  
Long, thy visions unrevealed,  
Have my lips been closed and sealed ;

Touch them, Lord, and break the bond—  
Songs of glory shall respond.

15.

Didst Thou sacrifice desire,  
Blood of bulls and goats require,  
I would give it—I would bring  
Hecatombs for offering ;  
But far other gifts than these  
Can alone Jehovah please.

16.

Where the heart for sin is broken,  
And the contrite word is spoken ;  
Where the spirit mourns and bleeds,  
Penitent for guilty deeds—  
There is pleasing sacrifice  
Thou shalt never, Lord, despise.

17.

Look in love on Zion hill,  
Do it good in Thy good will ;  
For my foul dishonour done,  
Build her fair before the sun ;  
Salem's shattered walls restore,  
Nor let treason shake them more.

18.

So from glad adoring throngs  
Prayers shall rise, and grateful songs ;

Sweetest odours climb to heaven,  
Love and wealth and service given ;  
And Thy happy Israel be  
Living sacrifice to Thee.



AGAINST ANXIETY ABOUT TEMPORAL  
WANTS.

MATTHEW VI. 25-34.

CHRISTIANS ! dismiss your anxious care,  
Nor ask, with mind distraught,  
What shall we eat or drink or wear :  
Your Father taketh thought.

Your life is surely more than food,  
Your body more than dress ;  
Shall He who gave the greater good,  
Withhold or grudge the less ?

Behold the feathered tribes of air !  
They neither sow nor reap ;  
Nor, with a prudent thrift, prepare  
The granary's treasured heap.

Yet all with bounteous hand are fed :  
Your Father gives them meat ;  
And shall His children pine for bread  
His very ravens eat ?

Which of you all, by caring, can  
One line his stature raise ?  
Or lengthen by a narrow span  
The measure of his days ?

And ye who lack of raiment dread,  
Mark how the lilies grow !  
No web they weave, they spin no thread,  
No weary labours know ;

Yet, of a truth, King Solomon,  
In all his splendours drest,  
Arrayed in no such glory shone  
As these fair flowers invest.

But see !—in beautiful attire  
They freshly shine to-day ;  
To-morrow, withered for the fire,  
They lie in shrunk decay.

Shall God so clothe the fading plant,  
The blossom from the dust,  
And suffer you a coat to want ?  
O ye of feeble trust !

For earthly good—the heathen's care—  
Cease then your anxious heed ;  
Your heavenly Father's well aware  
Of all your bodies need.



But first let holy, heavenly bliss  
Engage your earnest quest ;  
Then fear not, He who gives you this  
Will freely add the rest.

And wisely let to-morrow's thought  
To-morrow's burden bear ;  
The day has ills enow unsought,  
Without a borrowed share.



## DEATH'S NET.

THERE is a fisher, his name is Death—  
He gathers of every kind :  
The ocean of life he ravageth,  
Nor leaveth a soul behind.

Six thousand years in the seas of time  
He hath fished from age to age ;  
Nor shelving rock, nor oozy slime  
Can screen from his sateless rage.

In the summer's rest, in the winter's storm,  
At noon, and at midnight drear,  
You may see o'er the deep his shadowy form,  
Or the splash of his drag-net hear.

He searcheth the depths where the waters sleep,  
He searcheth the restless tide ;  
Not a pool of life but his net must sweep,  
Where a breathing thing might hide.

O of all fishers he beareth the palm—  
Eldest and mightiest he ;  
Ruler of tempest, and lord of the calm,  
The tyrant of all the sea.

His great draw-net he is filling each day—  
He is filling it all day long ;  
The weak are not left as too mean a prey,  
Nor can strength avail the strong.

To the shadowy verge of the world unknown,  
He draggeth his net amain ;  
Heaps upon heaps are his captives thrown  
On the shore of that dark domain.

And angels are there with a severing hand,  
The good and the vile to take—  
Those to the streams of the deathless land,  
These to the fiery lake !

O ere that net shall my life enfold,  
May a greater my soul embrace !  
The meshes of death are strong to hold,  
But stronger is Jesus' grace.

Drag on then, grim fisher ! thine hour shall come :  
The captor shall captive be ;  
And myriad lips, by thy touch made dumb,  
Shall shout for the victory.

Thy latest victim ensnared, at last  
Thy net shall thyself enclose ;  
To the bottomless deep thy shape be cast,  
The hell whence it first arose.

The ransomed shall shout as they see thee fall  
    'Mid the waves of the dark abyss :  
O Grave, thou art reft of thy victory all !  
    O Death, is thy triumph this ?

For the waters of life from the throne divine  
    That roll—heaven's crystal river—  
Shall never be darkened with shadow of thine,  
    And thy net shall vex them never.



WHAT IS LIFE?

SAY, what is life?—A fragile flower,  
Blooming and fragrant for an hour ;  
Then withered with the scorching heat,  
Or prostrate at the mower's feet.

Say, what is life?—A shuttle sharp,  
Twinkling across the parted warp ;  
Still, as the woof-threads come and go,  
Weaving a web for weal or woe.

Say, what is life?—A flowing river,  
To the great ocean stretching ever ;  
A middle reef the stream divides,  
And parts its wave to adverse tides :

One leaps in foam to dark abyss ;  
One gently glides to light and bliss :  
Oh steer your bark, while yet you may,  
To shun the gulf, and reach the day.

Say, what is life?—A vapour light,  
Veiling the mountain-crest by night ;  
Gone with a breath, or morning beam  
That dissipates the sleeper's dream.

Say, what is life?—A time to sow  
Seeds whence immortal harvests grow :  
Who sow to pleasure, reap in pain ;  
Who sow to God, shall glory gain.

Say, what is life?—A season's space,  
Proving the vine-plants good or base :  
Art thou a tree that bears no fruit ?  
The axe lies gleaming at thy root.

Say, what is life?—A shadow's flight,  
Eluding grasp, and mocking sight ;  
With the light cloud it flits away,  
Nor leaves a trace where now it lay.

Say, what is life?—A threshold stone,  
With heaven's great temple open thrown ;  
The gates are moving while you wait,  
To shut out all who linger late.

Say, what is life?—A story told,  
This moment new, the next 'tis old ;  
Soon ended. But the dead must tell  
The sequel still in heaven or hell.

Say, what is life ?—A loss or gain ;  
A treasure saved, or spent in vain ;  
A resurrection from the dead,  
Or second darker death instead.

Say what is life ?—Let Paul reply :  
'To live is Christ, and gain to die :'  
Who liveth so, no death may fear,  
Who lives not so, is dead even here.

## CHRIST IS ALL.

I ENTERED once a home of care,  
For age and penury were there,  
Yet peace and joy withal ;  
I asked the lonely mother whence  
Her helpless widowhood's defence,  
She told me, Christ was all.

I stood beside a dying-bed  
Where a sweet infant drooped his head,  
Waiting for Jesus' call ;  
I marked his smile—'twas sweet as May ;  
And as his spirit passed away,  
He lisped out, ' Christ is all.'

I saw the gospel herald go  
To Afric's sand, and Greenland's snow,  
To save from Satan's thrall ;  
Nor home nor friends he counted dear ;  
'Mid wants and perils owned no fear—  
He felt that Christ was all.

I saw the martyr at the stake,  
And not fierce flames his faith could shake,  
Nor death his soul appal ;



I asked him whence such strength was given,  
He looked triumphantly to heaven,  
And answered, 'Christ is all.'

I dreamt that hoary time had fled,  
And earth and sea resigned their dead,  
And fire dissolved this ball ;  
I saw the church's glorious throng,  
I heard the burden of their song,  
'Twas Christ is all in all.

Then come to Jesus, come to-day !  
'Come,' Father, Son, and Spirit say,  
The Bride repeats the call ;  
Come, He has blood for all your stains ;  
Come, He has balm for all your pains ;  
Come, He is all in all.



EARLY PIECES.



## THE BRIGHTEST STAR.

OF all the worlds that people bright  
Creation's wide and radiant bounds,  
And, circling paths of golden light,  
Fulfil, in melody, their rounds,  
Robed in a splendour 'bove the rest—  
Which speaks its Maker's glories best?

Is it yon globe, that rolling nigh  
The hills celestial, spotless quite,  
Might seem with Heaven's own beams to vie,  
Shedding afar a rival light?  
Is it where seraphs burn and sing,  
And cherubs wave the immortal wing?

No! like a little islet, far  
Amid the sea's wide waters set,  
Remote from heaven there glows a star,  
Which they who visit ne'er forget;  
But, leaving worlds that shine more fair,  
Delight to linger, museful, there.

And why? 'Tis but a borrowed ray  
That gilds its sunny seas and hills:

'Tis fair, yet not more fair than they  
Whose light its skies with glory fills ;  
Yea, blackest crimes its beauties stain,  
And ghastly death there holds his reign.

But it has scenes that lift it high  
In glory, 'bove the brightest sun,  
Far as that orb, which angel's eye  
May scarce, undazzled, look upon—  
Outshines the starlet, twinkling dim,  
In furthest light's remotest limb.

Hark ! heaven and earth ! the wonder list !  
Which heard, ye then shall cease to admire  
When deathless souls no more exist,  
And endless years themselves expire :  
God, manifest in creature's form,  
Died there, to save a rebel worm !



THE OMNIPRESENCE OF GOD.

THERE is on high who slumbers not nor sleeps ;  
There is an eye eternal vigils keeps ;  
There is a presence fills heaven, earth, and hell,  
Where angels blest, or men, or demons dwell—  
Enfolds all nature in its vast embrace,  
And wide pervades illimitable space.

Wouldst thou escape it?    Whither canst thou  
fly?

Mount on the lightning's wing, the loftiest sky ;  
Stay not thy flight even at the furthest star  
That feebly glimmers on thy sight from far,  
But onwards still, till that stupendous height  
Seem but a step to thy unmeasured flight—  
Till high heaven's self, in radiant glory's blaze  
Resplendent, burst upon thy ravished gaze :  
There, entering, mingle with the shining throng,  
Who veil their faces, as they swell the song,  
Around the splendours of that awful throne  
Created eye hath never gazed upon :  
There, as thou stand'st beside the fount of light  
Revealed in blaze unutterably bright,

Thou art nought more near a present God  
Than when this lowly world thy footsteps trod.

Retrace thy way, and take a downward flight;  
Pass the remotest bounds of life and light,  
And down the gloomy fathomless profound  
Urge on thy rapid wing while years roll round,  
Till, stretched before thy vision, dark and drear,  
The far, far realms of endless woe appear:  
There make thy dismal bed: God still is nigh—  
Nigh as amidst the glories of the sky.

Return to earth, and seek the caverns deep,  
Where, locked in store, diluvial waters sleep;  
Where fiercely glow those hidden fires of earth  
That rock the world, and give volcanoes birth;  
Where never pierced one beam of heavenly day,  
But death and darkness hold perpetual sway:  
There hide thy head: the God whose glories fill  
The realms of starry light is with thee still—  
Still holds thee there that mighty arm unseen,  
On which depending worlds unnumbered lean;  
And vain to dream the unillumined night  
May e'er avail to wrap thee from His sight:  
Before that vision's unbecclouded ray  
Night hides her gloom, and darkness melts to day.

His is an eye whose all-pervading glance  
Shines through extension's measureless expanse;



That marks alike the mighty systems roll,  
And reads the secrets of the inmost soul.  
His is an ear awake to every sound  
Creation yields throughout her furthest bound ;  
That lists alike the seraph's song above  
And the soft lays that wake the echoing grove.  
His is a power that widest nature owns  
From hell's dark depths to heaven's exalted  
    thrones ;  
That forms alike the sparkling star to shine,  
And lits the diamond in the secret mine ;  
Propels the planet on its mighty way,  
And guides the circles of an insect's play.  
Time bounds Him not.    Ere earth from chaos  
    sprung,  
And o'er an infant world glad seraphs sung,  
He was.    And when this framework shall decay,  
And sun and moon and stars shall fade away,  
When time's vast cycle shall have fully run,  
He still shall live—the omnipresent One.

## WHERE IS HE?

WHERE is he? He was here erewhile  
The child, like us, of hope and fear,  
Wearing for earthly joys a smile,  
Shedding for earthly griefs a tear.

Where is he? He is here no more :  
He tracks no more life's mazy road—  
Gone with his joys the smiles he wore,  
Fled with his griefs the tears that flowed.

Where is he? He is gone elsewhere :  
He sinks not back to nothing's womb;  
Nor rests his deathless spirit there,  
Where sleeps his dust in darksome tomb.

Where is he? HE of each may tell  
Whose eye creation's limits sweeps—  
Views brightest heaven and deepest hell,  
Where seraph joys, or sinner weeps.

THE ASCENSION.

'Twas jubilee 'mong angel choirs :  
The day God made had come,  
And myriad seraphs took their lyres  
To hymn Messiah home.

On earth had gladness filled the hearts  
Of Jesus' faithful few ;  
Once more the Saviour, ere He parts,  
Has blessed their raptured view.

Risen from the grave He made with men,  
Their living Lord appears ;  
Their eyes have seen His face again,  
His voice is in their ears.

That aspect, bright with matchless love,  
Dawns on their hearts like day ;  
That voice, as music from above,  
Charms all their cares away.

With words of life, to sinners free,  
Their longing souls He fed,  
As outwards far as Bethany  
His little flock He led.

And east and west, and south and north,  
He bade those words proclaim,  
And to all nations herald forth  
His own redeeming name.

He ceased—their steps the village nigh ;  
'Preach' was His last behest,  
And raising then His hands on high,  
The circling band He blessed.

That blessing was their Lord's adieu,  
For, lo ! ere yet He ends,  
He leaves the world, He quits their view,  
And to the skies ascends.

He's gone, with shouts and trumpets' sound,  
Where angels meet their King,  
And thousand thousands thronging round  
Glad hallelujahs sing.

Rapt in a cloud from mortal sight,  
His followers looked in vain ;  
Till, as they wondered, robed in white,  
Appeared a shining twain.

And thus they spake : 'Ye favoured men,  
Why stand ye gazing here ?  
Ye've seen Him go to heaven : again  
Shall Jesus so appear.'

Oh, joyous thought ! oh, words that burn,  
    Enkindling visions bright !  
And is it so ? Shall Christ return  
    To greet His followers' sight ?

Yes, they shall see their Lord again,  
    They know His promise true ;  
Nor they alone behold Him there,  
    For we shall see Him too.

He comes to take His brethren home,  
    In mansions pure to dwell ;  
Nor there the hour shall ever come  
    That asks a new farewell.



## A GRAVE SCENE.

IN the twilight grey, ere the rising day  
Had waked the world from sleep,  
Sad, by the side of a new-made grave,  
I saw a mother weep ;  
For beneath the damp cold earth the dust  
Of an infant daughter lay,  
Nipt, like a flow'ret, opening just  
To the genial beams of day.

One dawn had seen her prattling and fair,  
Smiling and blooming and strong,  
Blythe as the lark when he mounts in air,  
And carols his morning song.  
Another sun rose, and sick she lay,  
And panting hard for breath ;  
A third—she was resting, a clod of clay,  
In the icy embrace of death.

And the mother had gone, in the frenzy of grief,  
'Neath the lone night's darksome shade,  
To seek for her bursting soul relief,  
By the tomb where her girl was laid.

She sat her down on the cold flat stone,  
And the tears ran unwiped from her eye,  
As sadly she mused on the days that were gone,  
And the pleasures for ever past by.

And, 'Cruel Death,' I heard her say,  
'Why robbedst thou me of my child?  
Oh, hadst thou on earth no meeter prey  
Than an infant so fair and mild?  
Sure, were thy bosom not pitiless  
And hard as the flinty stone,  
Such a blossom as this, in its loveliness,  
Thou hadst left to flourish on.

'Ah! could it not melt thine adamant heart,  
And thy murderous arm unbrace,  
To see, as thou shookest thy deadly dart,  
How she smiled in thy grisly face.  
No, no! thou hast stretched her low in the grave,  
Her face I must see no more;  
And the long rank weeds betimes shall wave  
On the clods that cover her o'er.'

She paused, for her grief could utter no more,  
And I heard but broken sighs;  
I turned away, for my heart was sore,  
And the briny drops dimmed mine eyes.  
I looked again, and beheld her kneel:  
She was breathing a lowly prayer

To Him who the broken heart can heal  
With the balm His own hands prepare.

She rose, and wept not. The God who hears  
The mourner's cry distressed,  
Had wiped away her burning tears,  
And soothed her soul to rest.  
'Yet all is not thine, dull grave!' she said;  
'To the mansions above the sky,  
Her enfranchised spirit has joyously sped,  
To join the redeemed on high.

'And now, while her absence I'm mourning below,  
She is hymning her Saviour's praise,  
Where no griefs it shall ever be hers to know,  
Through eternity's cloudless days.  
Or, perchance, as I weep, she is hovering near,  
And would soothe my grief-torn breast—  
Whispering, could I but the accents hear,  
"Oh sorrow not, mother; I'm blest!"

'Yes, blest, my child! To a world of ill  
Thou hast said for ever farewell;  
And gone, unsuffering and sinless, still  
In thy Father's house to dwell.  
So, sweet little bud! the rifling hand  
That hath plucked thine infant form,  
Hath but planted thee safe in a summer land,  
Afar from the biting storm.



‘Then tears of repining I’ll shed no more,  
But, submissive, in patience stay  
Till Jesus, my earthly pilgrimage o’er,  
Shall summon me too away !  
Then to earth I shall bid a joyous adieu,  
And, where death cannot come to sever,  
Amid pleasures and praises eternally new,  
We shall serve Him together for ever.’



## HYMN.

## THE PRINCE OF PEACE.

KING of Salem ! come, oh, come,  
Make my weary heart Thy home,  
Sway Thy peaceful sceptre there !  
Give my burdened spirit rest !  
Heal my wounded, aching breast  
With the balm Thy hands prepare.

King of Salem ! come, oh, come,  
Make this outcast world Thy home !  
There uprear Thy glorious throne !  
Till all tribes and tongues adore Thee,  
Till all nations bow before Thee,  
And the earth be all Thine own.

Lo ! He comes—the Prince of Peace ;  
Strife and hate and battle cease,  
Love's blest banner floats unfurled :  
Men the gracious ensign hail,  
Seraphim within the veil  
Hymn a renovated world.

Alleluia ! Jesus reigns ;  
Peace He offers, peace ordains :  
    Strike again your harps of gold !  
Alleluia ! swell the sound  
Till this vast creation round  
    By every lip His praise be told.



## H Y M N.

## LORD! I WOULD FALL ASLEEP.

LORD! I would fall asleep,  
Leaning on Thine arm!  
Thou alone canst safely keep  
Soul and body far from harm.

Gentle come my rest,  
Brooding like the dove!  
Sweet as slumbers of the blest,  
In the homes of perfect love.

Holy be my dreams,  
Leading me away  
By the peaceful living streams  
Of the better land to stray.

Lord, I would calmly wake,  
Looking still to Thee,  
See on night the morning break,  
And know Thy count'nance shine  
on me.

*LORD! I WOULD FALL ASLEEP.* 231

So would I fall asleep,  
In the night of death—  
So rest, so wake, no more to weep,  
Or find myself a fleeting breath.



## THE REFUGE.

FROM ISAIAH XXXII. 2.

THE storm over earth a hurricane dread  
Breathed from the lips of hell :  
Oh, where shall the feeble one shelter his head  
From the blast of that tempest fell ?  
List ! there's a voice sounding sweet on his ear :  
' Turn to Me, fainting wanderer, a covert is here.'

There's a cloud on the face of earth's troubled sky,  
Black with the symbols of wrath :  
Oh, where from its bolts shall the trembler fly,  
For it frowns on his dreary path ?  
' With Me there is safety,' that voice speaks again,  
' I bore once these thunders ; I bore them for men.'

The pilgrim sinks fast 'neath a burning heaven,  
As he journeys life's waterless waste :  
Oh, where shall the shade to his scorched head be  
given,  
The spring to his parchèd taste ?  
Hark ! 'tis that voice tells in accents bland  
Of a stream-nursing rock in a weary land.

'Tis the voice of the Saviour melting in love :

Sinner, believe and be blest ;

Gentle and sweet are the words from above,

'I give to the weary rest.'

He seeks it to find it who asks for it there,

He seeks it to lose it who searches elsewhere.

Spirits of darkness ! vain is your ire :

Jesus Almighty defends.

Sinai ! no dread can thy voice inspire,

Its thunder on Calvary ends.

Life ! thou hast sorrows ; but what needs he fear

Whose home's in the heaven, and whose Comforter's here ?



## LINES TO THE STARRY HEAVENS.

MAJESTIC heavens ! how I love to gaze  
On your bright bespangled blue,  
And let thought roam the while, unchecked, 'mid the  
maze  
Of ten thousand worlds, that in glory blaze  
On the rapt astronomer's view.

Gems of the crown of that glorious King,  
Whose fingers fixed you there !  
Beautiful stars, that your splendours fling  
O'er regions where fancy droops the tired wing,  
Say whence came your hosts so fair ?

Burst ye forth at a birth from the womb of night,  
Formed by Jehovah's power ;  
Kindling the dark with a universe of light,  
And beginning 'mid ether your mystic flight,  
In one primal plastic hour ?

Or is there amongst you some eldest son,  
By eternity first begot,  
With whose form was creation's work begun,  
And which beamed a fair orb when there beamed but  
one,  
In a sole illumined spot ?



If 'tis so, then tell me, thou aged star,  
How long didst thou singly blaze,  
With old night waging unsuccoured war,  
And chasing her startled gloom afar  
By the might of thine infant rays?

And what wonder was thine, when first by thy side  
A sister orb there sprung,  
And o'er thee, in virgin beauty's pride,  
Fair as to Adam seemed Eden's young bride,  
Her smiling radiance flung.

Then marked ye how each emerging world  
From chaos or emptiness rose,  
Till athwart on the ocean of being hurled,  
Suns and planets, in mazy orbits whirled,  
Their stations uncounted chose.

Is it true that earth's astronomers tell  
Of those strange clouds that float mid your spheres—  
How embryo worlds in their bosoms dwell,  
To come forth, when matured by attraction's spell,  
The stars of other years?

Patriarch of worlds! has stern decay  
Imposed on thee yet his hand?  
Are thy beams waxed feeble, and dim thy ray?  
Feel'st thou as if thou wouldst pass away  
To oblivion's dreary land?

Roll on, ye bright globes ! for your mystic throng  
Have a hymn which Jehovah hears ;  
Man's ear lists it not, but the voice is strong  
Which pours in the tide of your thunder-song  
The music of the spheres.



THE SPIRIT'S FAREWELL TO EARTH.

THE sea was asleep in the lap of eve,  
Like an infant hushed to rest ;  
And the soft ripple swelled like the gentle heave  
Of its breathing, beating breast.

'Twas a holy hour, such as seraph might choose  
To stray from the choirs above,  
When his burning heart bids him descend to muse  
On the scenes of Immanuel's love.

I had found me a seat by the rocky shore  
That girdled that slumb'ring sea ;  
And the sweet calm woo'd my fancy to soar  
On a wing that was wild and free.

And thus, as unbridled thought roamed at will,  
And my eye watched the wavy deep,  
A strange sweet rapture, dissolvingly still,  
O'er my sense began to creep.

I know not whence had my vision birth,  
All rapt in the bliss it gave ;  
I asked not was't dream of the shadowy earth,  
Or a light from beyond the grave.

To my sight a spirit seemed on its way  
To the homes of the pardoned blest,  
That had just kissed adieu to its partner clay  
In death's cold arms at rest.

Like snow from the womb of the cloud unstained  
Were the robes that the sainted one wore ;  
And the garland and palm told the victory gained :  
The conflict of earth was o'er.

And around him were circling a cherub band,  
Radiant as evening star,  
Guiding his flight to the peaceful land  
Where the spirits of just men are.

They paused in mid air, and in angel tone  
A voice was borne to my ear :  
'Twas that spirit's adieu to the scenes he had  
known  
When he wandered a pilgrim here.

' Farewell ! ruined, beautiful world,' he said,  
' Time was that I loved thee well ;  
And still though those doting hours are fled,  
Thou shalt sacred in memory dwell.

' First land of my being ! how could I forget ?  
Thou wast nurse of my infant way ;

On thy breast were my earliest footsteps set,  
Thy sun made my earliest day.

‘ My playmates I found in thy blossoms and  
flowers,  
In childhood’s ecstatic prime ;  
And my music-hall were thy vocal bowers,  
Where echoed thy warblers’ chime.

‘ By thy prattling brooks in warm youth I have  
strayed,  
And deemed they were eloquent things ;  
And where beauty has slept in some fairy glade  
I have bathed me in rapture’s springs.

‘ And when stars were up, and the moon’s soft light  
Silvered the spot as it fell,  
I have asked, “ What are you ? ” since a scene so  
bright  
In a sin-wrecked world can dwell.

‘ Yet more ! thou wast home of my better life,  
When, awaked from the death of sin,  
The good Spirit nerved me in holy strife  
This palm of my triumph to win.

‘ And, oh ! o’er thy face what fresh glories were  
shed,  
When I read of a Father there !

And each floweret that lifted its gilded head  
Seemed a herald of Jesus' care.

' Then mountain and valley, then ocean and shore,  
Then each orb of the painted sod,  
Spread a page to my sight that was fraught with  
lore  
In the hieroglyphics of God.

' Full well I remember to thought how sweet,  
Mid the wandering of after days,  
Were the haunts that were trod by my infant feet,  
That dawned on my childhood's gaze.

' I bade them adieu, but they clung to my heart,  
That home and the loved ones there ;  
Years glided away, but they would not part ;  
In the distance but smiling more fair.

' Green were the spots where a father's hand  
Had guided my feeble way ;  
Where with brothers and sisters, a prattling band,  
I sported the blithesome day.

' So, earth ! shall it be, that where'er I roam,  
My dreams shall be oft of thee ;  
And memory shall turn to *that* childhood's home  
Whose prime is eternity.

*THE SPIRIT'S FAREWELL TO EARTH.* 241

' I shall visit a thousand worlds afar,  
Gorgeous and glorious and vast ;  
But none shall seem lovelier than thee, sweet star !  
In the twilight of the past.

' I am of thee no more, but thou hast of mine,  
On thy bosom sleeps my dust ;  
Keep it in peace till a voice divine  
Calls for the sacred trust.

' With unnumber'd throngs I shall visit thee then ;  
We shall see thee sink in flame,  
But only to rise from thy ashes again  
With a new and a holy name.

' So we'll hymn thee no dirge, but the anthem wake  
Of immortal jubilee ;  
An echo of gladness and glory shall break  
From thy sister worlds for thee.

' Farewell till that hour, and fair as the spring  
Soon blossom thy wilderness ;  
Fling wider thy gates to the Saviour King,  
He wills and waits to bless.

' Once more let me speak it, my native earth !  
In memory dear to dwell ;  
Home of my childhood, land of my birth,  
Lovely and loved, farewell.'

It died on my ear, that angel tone,  
That glory faded from sight :  
I woke from my trance, I sat alone  
In the shades of descended night.





**MURRAY AND GIBB, EDINBURGH,  
PRINTERS TO HER MAJESTY'S STATIONERY OFFICE.**























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