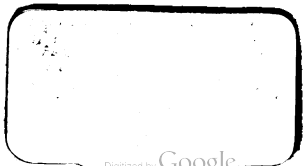

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OLD CLASSIFICATION



POEMS

ON

Subjects in the Old Testament.

GENESIS—EXODUS.

BY THE

AUTHOR OF "HYMNS FOR LITTLE CHILDREN," ETC.

POEMS

ON

Subjects in the Old Testament.

PART I.

GENESIS—EXODUS.

BY

C. F. A.

Lescaudre

AUTHOR OF "HYMNS FOR LITTLE CHILDREN," "MORAL SONGS," ETC.

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TO

MY DEAR FATHER,

FROM WHOSE POETICAL TASTE I MIGHT FEAR A MORE SE-
VERE JUDGMENT THAN I FEEL HIS AFFECTIONATE
PARTIALITY WILL AWARD THEM,

I DEDICATE THESE POEMS.

C. F. ALEXANDER.

*Derg Lodge,
February, 1854.*



PREFACE.

THE children of the Church in this day are exposed to a peculiar danger. At the season of life, when the reason is most liable to be coloured by the imagination, they meet with abundance of religious poetry, which, with much that is beautiful and holy, intermingles not a little that is inconsistent with the fulness of Christian truth which our Church exhibits.

The writer's wish then would be to prolong the child's love of the glorious Old Testament stories, by throwing round them something of the poetical tinge which is attractive to almost every mind in opening youth; and thus to connect associations of quiet pleasure with the examples of holy life,

and the doctrines of saving truth, which the Bible contains in such exceeding abundance. And because so much of our religious poetry possesses the tendencies to which allusion has been made; she has desired to view every moral or doctrinal lesson, as a mind, trained in the good old ways of our English Church, might be supposed to contemplate it. Her aim, in short, has been, to produce a collection of short poems for young persons from twelve, to fifteen, or sixteen years of age, which might in some measure improve their taste while they increased their love of Scripture; and which should on the whole leave such an impression, as our Church seems to wish, of the Christian life and character. That this design is imperfectly executed, she is painfully aware; but such as it is she prays the great Head of the Church to pardon and bless it.

It may be well to add that this little volume is the first of a series, which, if it please GOD to bless the attempt, is meant to extend through the historical books of the Old Testament.



POEMS

ON

Subjects in the Old Testament.

I.

The Creation.

"Thus the Heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them."—Gen. ii. 1.

YOUNG heart, impatient of thy powers,
Why wilt thou fret to know
That knowledge comes with weary hours,
And heavy step, and slow?

That each thing great in its degree
In toil and care begins,
And no perfection here may be
But that which labour wins?

Perchance 'twas writ to do thee shame,
 That He Whom angels praise
 Paused o'er His fair creation's frame,
 And lingered six long days.

His word at once had hung them there,
 Planet, and star, and sun ;—
 Perchance to teach thee patient care,
 He made them one by one.

Think how the great world silent lay,
 A void and formless place,
 GOD'S SPIRIT brooding far away
 Over the water's face,—

Till bursting on that darkness wide
 The glorious light had birth,
 And in her beauty and her pride,
 He made the fair young earth.

Three days she hung all cold and still,
 Wrapp'd in that sunless light,
 No golden lustre on the hill,
 No silver moon at night.

GOD made the sun, and in his ray
 Sprang flowers by stream and meadow,
 On all her heights the sunlight lay,
 And on her sward, the shadow.—

The graceful moonbeams touched her sod
 With slanting silver bars,
 "Shouted for joy the sons of GOD,
 And sang the morning stars."

Slowly He wrought, and duly set
 All things above, below;—
 Wilt thou, His creature, chide and fret
 If thine advance be slow ?

Patience, and zeal, and toil He asks—
 Then let thine heart be strong,
 Nor weary of thy lowly tasks,
 Because the time is long.

II.

Eden.

"And the LORD GOD planted a garden eastward in Eden."
 —Gen. ii. 8.

WHERE is that garden of the LORD GOD planted
 Eastward in Eden in the days of old,
 Where the large blossoms and the fruits enchanted
 That filled the earliest tale our mothers told ?

Lingers it yet, kept by an Angel warden,
 Over the purple mountains far away—
 Untouched, since sinless Adam dressed the garden,
 And the LORD walked there in the cool of day ?

Nay, ask not—wherefore should our spirits venture
 Over the eastern hills—beyond the bars,
 Where the broad sun girt with his rosy emure
 Comes burning up, and darkens all the stars?

Why should we wish o'er sea and desert going
 To find the vision true in some far land,
 To dwell beside the gate—and hear the flowing
 Of the great river with its golden sand?

The font stands yet in many a church's portal,
 The prayers still echo round where we were made
 Heirs of an Eden beautiful, immortal,
 Where never serpent glided through the glade.

There flows eternally the gifted river,
 Whose healing wave is as the crystal clear,
 There grows the tree of life that sheddeth never
 Its twelve bright fruits renewed twelve times a year.

For us that cooling wave, for us the beauty
 Of that bright place that has ner sun, nor night,
 If but by CHRIST's dear grace, in love and duty,
 We walk below like children of the light.

So may we dream of those invisible bowers,
 The water's tremulous flow, the flowery sod,
 Hopeful that CHRIST's new Eden shall be ours,
 The home of saints, the Paradise of God.

III.

The Temptation.

"She took of the fruit thereof, and did eat."—Gen. iii. 6.—
 "then the devil leaveth Him."—S. Matt. iv. 11.

IT was in GOD'S own garden-bowers,
 The sweetest spot earth ever knew,
 Eve met the serpent in the flowers—
 When soft as drops of honied dew,
 He poured the poisoned words untrue,
 That lost this world of ours.

He said the golden fruit was good,
 He showed it pleasant to the eyes,
 He spake of knowledge by that food
 To make the daring spirit wise:
 In the full heart of Paradise,
 She pluck'd it where she stood.

It was a wild unlovely place
 That fed no trees with fruitage crowned,
 Nor bore upon its barren face
 Bright blossoms shedding fragrance round,
 Where Satan erst the SAVIOUR found
 Who raised our ruined race.

In vain His soul with hunger tried
 He tempted in that lonely hour
 To make the bread of Heaven denied ;
 In vain he showed earth's pomp and power,
 And prompted from the Temple tower
 The deed of daring pride.

Him fleshly lusts might not ensnare,
 Nor gorgeous pomps with pleasure rife
 That seem to worldly eyes so fair ;
 He heeded not the pride of life,
 But rose triumphant in the strife,
 And bruised the serpent there.

LORD, by that threefold promise spoken,
 O'er the baptismal water bright,
 And by Thine own dear anguish token,
 We too are pledged to that stern fight.
 Look on us, help us with Thy might,
 Nor let our vows be broken.

In all our paths the tempter strays,
 For each a separate snare he knows,
 The Eden of our happy days—
 The desert of our lonely woes—
 Thou that hast fought, and foiled our foes,
 Lead us in all our ways !

IV.

Cain and Abel.

"And she conceived and bare Cain, and said, I have gotten a man from the LORD; and she again bare his brother Abel. . . . Cain rose up against Abel his brother, and slew him."—
Gen. iv. 1, 2, 8.

DEEM not thine heart by household loves
So duly filled, and guarded well,
That wrath, and strife, and cruel hate,
Shall never reach its charmed cell.

Had ever earth a safer nook,
Where love might hope to weave a crown
Of flowers untouched by envy's breath,
Nor by fierce passion trampled down;

Than where in Eve's maternal bower,
Two boys in rosy childhood lay,
Learned love's first lesson from her eyes,
And clasped her vesture in their play?

The first two babes that ever watched
The round sun rise 'twixt awe and mirth,
The first whose laughter ever waked
The echoes of this great old earth.

Each dwelling in a world apart,
That had no creature but the other,
To share his sport or know his thought,
And learning first the name of brother.

Alas! full soon the red earth heard
 The brother's blood that cried to Heaven,
 And bore upon her shuddering breast
 The outcast from GOD's presence driven.
 Guard well thy spirit's inmost cell,
 Lest, when sweet love makes music there,
 Some little envious thought creep in,
 Untuning all its concord rare.
 And ask of Him on bended knee
 Whose love surpasseth brother's love,
 Whose Spirit filling all thy heart,
 Is tender as a brooding dove;
 That close He draw, and closer still,
 Each chord that kindred love endears,
 Nor let the strain thy childhood loved
 Forget to charm in after years.

 V.

Enoch.

"And Enoch walked with God, and he was not, for God took him."—Gen. v. 24.

HAST thou not seen at break of day
 One only star the east adorning
 That never set, or paled its ray,
 But seemed to sink at once away
 Into the light of morning?

From it, the sage no portent drew,
 It came to light no meteor fires,
 But silver shone the whole night through
 On hawthorn hedges steeped in dew,
 And quiet village spires.

Like him of old who dwelt beneath
 The tents of patriarchal story,
 Who passed without the touch of death,
 Without dim eye, or failing breath,
 At once into GOD'S glory:—

The Patriarch of one simple spot,
 The sire of sons, and daughters lowly,
 And this the record of his lot,
 "He walked with GOD, and he was not,"
 For the LORD took him wholly.

Like a child's voice in sacred song
 That trembling rises high and higher,
 Till lost at last, it peals along,
 Swelling the anthem sweet and strong
 Of great cathedral choir:—

So year by year, and day by day
 In pastoral care, and household duty,
 He walked with GOD—nor knew decay,
 But faded gently, rapt away
 Into His glorious beauty.

There's many a household fair to see
 By woodland nook, or running river,
 Where children climb the parent's knee—
 O, that those homes like his might be
 Filled with GOD's presence ever!

O, that our thoughts so heavenly were,
 Our hearts to CHRIST so fully given,
 That all our loves, and toil, and care,
 Might only lead us nearer there,
 Where He is set in Heaven.

 VI.

The Ark.

“And the ark went upon the face of the waters.”—Gen.
 vii. 18.

STRANGE thoughts are thine, mysterious ark!
 A dreary path, a weary motion,
 A sound of waters falling dark,
 And all the world one shoreless ocean.

Strange ship!—upon a marvellous sea,
 Without or helm, or compass driven,
 Fraught with a wondrous company,
 And lonely as the moon in Heaven.

Still rocking to a restless force
 Of endless endless surges swelling,
 Upborne along thy silent course
 Above high hill, and human dwelling,

Above the place where year by year
 Still toiled at his prophetic labour
 Unmoved by taunts the faithful seer;
 While sounds of song, and dance, and labour,

From all the mad earth round him came,
 And laughed in scorn her sons and daughters,
 Till—reared at last thy mighty frame—
 Thererushed from Heaven th' avenging waters.

But more than dread, or warning high,
 Comes with thy wondrous story blended,
 Home of the faithful! when the cry
 Of guilty earth to GOD ascended.

A precious type to us thou art
 Of CHRIST'S own Church, the safe and holy,
 The ark that bears within her heart
 The weak, and strong, the high, and lowly.

And sweeter than thy haven wild
 Upon the purple mountains lying,
 When through her tears the young earth smiled,
 Like babes that laugh amid their crying:

O, sweeter far the haven nest
 Whereto our ark is ever riding,
 Though rocking to the world's unrest,
 And vexed by all her billows chiding.

For upward, upward bears she still,
 And leaves below sin's pain and pleasure,
 Till, stranded on the Heavenly hill,
 She yield to CHRIST His ransomed treasure.

 VII.

The Dove.

"But the dove—returned unto him into the ark."—Gen.
 viii. 9.

BIRD with soft eye, and snowy breast,
 Whose wild note every echo learns,
 The first to build thy woodland nest
 When early spring returns ;

Along the frost-bespangled lawn
 I love thy plaintive strain to hear,
 At breaking of the April dawn
 Ere yet the day is clear ;

From out the grove where snowdrop bells
 Spring underneath the leafless arch,
 And softly fall the rosy shells,
 That tip the tufted larch.

The skylark's song hath more of fire,
 The thrush a sweeter note than thine,
 But none of all doth so inspire,
 The soul with thoughts divine.

For art not thou the blessed bird
 That went forth with the raven dark,
 When the decreasing waters stirred
 Around the stranded ark?

He rushed along his own wild track;
 Thou, mindful of our human grief,
 Didst bear the weary prisoners back
 The hopeful olive leaf.

And was not thine the form of love
 Wherein the HOLY GHOST was shed,
 When breaking from the cloud above
 He touched the SAVIOUR'S Head?

Type of GOD'S grace! in many a fane
 We read that image pictured fair,
 Or traced upon the painted pane,
 Or carved in marble rare.

And in our lowly churches yet,
 We seem to see those wings outspread
 When baby brows are duly wet,
 And holy words are said.

All song is sweet in sky or grove,
 But for the blessed thoughts it brings
 Thy soft low murmur most I love,
 Bird of the silver wings!

VIII.

Abraham's Call.

“Get thee out from thy country, and from thy kindred, and come unto the land that I shall show thee.”—Acts vii. 5.

FORTH from his childhood's sunny home
 At GOD'S command the Patriarch went;
 O'er burning sands he turned to roam,
 From where the wild acacia bent
 Above the well, whose waters lent
 A fairy greenness to the glade
 Around his father's summer-tent,
 From wild haunts where his youth had strayed,
 When on the feathery palm the silver moonlight
 played.

To distant Canaan's fertile clime,
 First pilgrim to that holy land,
 Where mailéd knights in after time,
 And warrior kings of many a strand,

And many a bold crusading band,
 Should come from homes beyond the sea,
 And palmer grey with staff in hand,—
 A simple herdsman journeyed he,
 And led his quiet flocks along the desert lea.

What though for him, no pastoral nest
 Lay in those purple hills enisled,
 Nor spot whereon his foot might rest,
 Faith's vision on his spirit smiled
 Of vineyards dressed, and cities piled,
 Where countless as the bright stars driven,
 Unnumbered as the sea sand wild,
 The promised race his GOD had given,
 Should hold that favoured land in fief to highest
 Heaven.

For this his pleasant place of birth
 Where great Euphrates' waters roar,
 He left—a pilgrim on the earth,
 A houseless stranger evermore,
 Nor turned again to that sweet shore,
 But still to distant Canaan pressed,
 And passed the burning desert o'er,
 Type of true faith—who first confessed,
 He had no country here, but sought a better rest.

Christian, that better rest is thine!
 The land with milk and honey flowing,
 The land of Eshcol's purple vine,
 And Jordan's waters westward going,

Was but a shadow dim, foreshowing,
 Beyond death's river dark and lone,
 The jasper wall like crystal glowing,
 The rainbow round about the throne—
 Arise, and hear the call that makes that land thine
 own !

 IX.

Lot and Sodom.

“And Lot lifted up his eyes, and beheld all the plain of Jordan that it was well watered everywhere, before the LORD destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah, even as the garden of the LORD.”—Gen. xiii. 10.

BY stately Sodom's palace walls
 The crimson rose is blushing bright,
 And silver sweet the Jordan falls
 Beside Gomorrah's marble halls,
 Where harp, and song, and festal calls
 Are sounding day and night.

And lovely as a garden fair
 Lies blooming all the enchanted plain ;
 The purple grapes hang heavy there,
 The flowers fling out a fragrance rare,
 And softly wave in perfumed air
 The fields of golden grain.

The river's silver trump has found
 An answer in the heart of Lot;
 The lavish beauty breathing round,
 And those two sister cities crowned,
 The queens of that well watered ground,
 Allure him to the spot.

Southward he turns from Abraham's tent—
 Ah venturous man! that could not hear
 Above the river's murmur sent,
 Above the town's wild merriment,
 The cry of sin, and shame that went
 Up to GOD's patient ear :

That dreamed not of the vengeance dire,
 When those two messengers of Heaven
 Should call the swift consuming fire,
 And drag him forth, most wretched sire,
 From that great city's funeral pyre,
 In awful mercy driven.

O, Christian youth, baptized and blest,
 GOD has been merciful to thee,
 Let not thy soul with sinners rest,
 Nor make in Sodom's bowers thy nest,
 Nor choose the fairest, but the best,
 Thine earthly place to be.

The world has songs of Sodom still,
 And if they needs must vex thy soul,
 Call GOD's good angels in to fill

Thine home, and heart, and turn in will
 To Abraham on the eternal hill,
 Ere fires of judgment roll.

A greater guest to thee hath come
 Than stood in Sodom's street by night—
 Sure when CHRIST's trump shall break the
 gloom
 O'er that salt sea, her people's tomb,
 For him shall be a heavier doom,
 Who sins to grace and light.

X.

Abraham's Sacrifice.

"Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the land of Moriah, and offer him there for a burnt offering, upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of."—Gen. xxii. 2.

STOOD dark and still Moriah's mountain lone,—
 GOD's chosen place amid the heathen land—
 His altar of imperishable stone,
 Hewn by no mortal hand!

Stood dark and still the solitary height—
 Not girded then with palace-wall, and tower,
 Nor on its purple breast the temple white
 Laid like a marble flower!

A deep stern silence held the mountain air ;
 Nor Canaan's songs, nor Kedron's murmur wild
 Might reach so high ; there only whispered there
 The Patriarch, and his child.

The roe deer hiding in the thicket near
 Heard a young voice that said, " I see the fire
 The knife for sacrifice—the wood is here,
 Where is the lamb, my sire ?"

Thou that hast taught thine heart o'erfond to twine
 Round other heart its every living chord,
 Who canst not take thy treasure from its shrine,
 And give it to the LORD!

And thou, whose wayward spirit will not learn
 To bear the little yoke that galls thy pride,
 Who canst not teach thy soul submission stern—
 Come to this mountain's side !

See faithful Abraham lift his hand to slay
 The darling of his age, his promised son,
 See gentle Isaac give his life away
 Without one murmuring tone.

Each high resolve, each shade of self-denial
 Hath here its type not meaningless, nor weak—
 The soul that nerves the martyr for his trial—
 The child's obedience meek.

Here too, like murmur of a far off strain,
 Borne on long echoes through the silent hills,
 Shall come a shadowing of diviner pain,
 Till all thy bosom thrills.

A thought of Him Who clomb that mountain's
 face,
 Bearing with patient arm the cruel wood,
 True victim Lamb, true Son of Abraham's race,
 Who won thee with His Blood !

He of His grace teach us the path to prove
 That led His saints, and martyrs up to GOD—
 He give us Abraham's faith, and Isaac's love,
 And guide us where they trod.

XI.

The Cave of Machpelah.

"There they buried Abraham, and Sarah his wife, there they
 buried Isaac and Rebekah his wife, and there I buried Leah."
 —Gen. xlix. 31.

CALM is it in the dim cathedral cloister,
 Where lie the dead all couched in marble rare,
 Where the shades thicken, and the breath hangs
 moister
 Than in the sunlit air.

Where the chance ray that makes the carved stone
whiter,

Tints with a crimson, or a violet light
Some pale old Bishop with his staff and mitre,
Some stiff crusading knight!

Sweet is it where the little graves fling shadows
In the green churchyard, on the shaven grass,
And a faint cowslip fragrance from the meadows
O'er the low wall doth pass!

More sweet—more calm in that fair valley's bosom
The burial place in Ephron's pasture ground,
Where the oil-olive shed her snowy blossom,
And the red grape was found,

When the great pastoral prince with love undying
Rose up in anguish from the face of death,
And weighed the silver shekels for its buying
Before the sons of Heth.

Here, when the measure of his days was numbered
—Days few, and evil in this vale of tears!—
At Sarah's side the faithful Patriarch slumbered,
An old man full of years:

Here, holy Isaac, meek of heart and gentle,
And the fair maid who came to him from far,
And the sad sire who knew all throes parental,
And meek-eyed Leah, are;

She rests not here, the beautiful of feature,
 For whom her Jacob wrought his years twice
 o'er,
 And deemed them but as one, for that fair creature,
 So dear the love he bore !

Nor Israel's son beloved,¹ who brought him sleep-
 ing
 With a long pomp of woe to Canaan's shade,
 Till all the people wondered at the weeping
 By the Egyptians made.

Like roses from the same tree gathered yearly,
 And flung together in one vase to keep,—
 Some but not all who loved so well, and dearly,
 Lie here in quiet sleep.

What though the Moslem mosque be in the valley,
 Though faithless hands have sealed the sacred
 cave,
 And the red Prophet's children shout "El Allah,"
 Over the Hebrew's grave.

Yet a day cometh when those white walls shaking
 Shall give again to light the living dead,
 And Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, re-awaking
 Spring from their rocky bed.

¹ "And the bones of Joseph buried they in Shechem."—
 Joshua xxiv. 32.

XII.

Isaac and Rebekah.

“ And Isaac brought her into his mother Sarah’s tent, and he took Rebekah, and she became his wife.”—Gen. xxiv. 67.

I READ in GOD’S great holy book
 The tale of Isaac’s bridal tent;
 And like the murmur of a brook,
 (That brings to “ one in city pent”
 Gleams of the country far away,
 Of blossomed orchards in their glory,
 And clover fields, and scented hay)
 Were thoughts that came with that sweet
 story;—

Till I was rapt into a dream
 Of olden days, and eastern clime,
 Wherein I saw, (or so did seem)
 The men of Patriarchal time,
 The pastoral chiefs who spake with GOD,
 The veiled maid, the comely wife,
 The rich flocks scattered o’er the sod,
 And all the charms of tented life.

The desert’s burning breath I felt,
 I heard the camel’s tinkling bell;
 And when the faithful servant knelt
 At even by the city well,

I saw his young lord's destined bride—
 A damsel very fair, and young—
 Come tripping to the water side,
 Her pitcher on her shoulder slung.

I marked his wonder, as the dew
 She scattered round the fountain's brink,
 While in her courteous haste she drew
 And gave the weary camels drink.
 I watched what blushes bright and warm
 To cheek and brow did instant spring,
 When on the maiden's delicate arm
 He hung the heavy golden ring.

I saw the feast of welcome spread,
 While loud he praised his master's LORD ;
 I heard how well the wooing sped,
 How gentle was the kinsman's word,
 Content—since GOD had willed it so,
 That hand and heart the maid hath given,
 And when she whispered, " I will go,"
 They blessed her with the wealth of heaven.

Another eve—and Hebron lay
 All flooded with a tender light—
 The last tints of a rosy ray
 That lingers somewhere out of sight,—
 What time, the long day's labour done,
 Came Isaac from the green well-side
 Out in the quiet fields alone
 To meditate at eventide.

He saw afar the dust uprise,
 The camel-driver's song he heard ;
 But who is she that lifts her eyes,
 Then hides them, like a frightened bird ?
 A trembling thing with covered face
 Into his mother's tent he led,
 And set her there, in Sarah's place,
 And loved her, and was comforted.

Sure such a tale, so sweet, so fair,
 Around our hearts should linger long,
 Familiar as a household air,
 And soothing as a cradle song.
 And we may learn of their meek ways,
 Their trustful faith in heaven above,
 Their calm of unambitious days,
 Their simple truth, and modest love.

XIII.

Isaac in the Field.

"And Isaac went out to meditate in the fields at eventide."—
 Gen. xxiv. 63.

THE fields are rich with golden corn,
 The fields are bright with flowers ;
 How fair the spangled dew of morn,
 The blossom of the hedgerow thorn,
 The woodbine in her bowers !

Full oft our feet have brushed away
 Those drops of diamond light,
 Full oft we've plucked the blossomed May
 And watched the sun's last crimson ray
 Fade softly into night.

What thoughts were ours, and whither sent
 Beneath the sunset heaven?
 Say, were they good, as his who went
 Forth from his Patriarchal tent
 To meditate at even?

When, as the light did sudden fade,
 Above his eastern home,
 Beside the well for Hagar made,¹
 And through the palm tree's feathery shade,
 He saw Rebekah come.

So should our walks a blessing bring
 Out in the meadows near,
 And we might meet as fair a thing
 As she who bore the golden ring,
 And dried the Patriarch's tear.

Some blessèd thought might find us there
 Of what our dear LORD said;
 The flowers He made our patterns fair,
 The harvest field, the birds of air,
 The green trees overhead.

¹ Compare Gen. xxiv. 62 with xvi. 14.

All, all, as with a living breath,
 Speak loudly unto us ;
 For all above us or beneath,
 He made them types of life, or death,
 And we should read them thus.

XIV.

Esau.

“Esau who for one morsel of meat sold his birthright, for he found no place of repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears.”—Heb. xii. 16, 17.

RED hunter ! lay the quiver down,
 And set the wingèd shaft aside,
 Nor seek along the mountain brown
 The covert where the roe-deer hide.

Another hand than thine, to-day
 Shall find thy father's favourite cheer,
 And Heaven-appointed bear away
 The blessing that thou fain would'st hear.

He kneeleth by the old man's chair
 In thine own goodly raiment dress'd,
 And while its fragrance fills the air,
 Is blessed, and he shall be bless'd.

In vain thy bitter cry shall break !
 Not all the tears thine eyes can shower,
 Not all the vows thy lips can make,
 Shall bring again that one short hour.

The birthright of the eldest born,
 Thou gav'st to soothe a-moment's pain,
 And blessings once despised in scorn,
 May never, never, come again.

O, thou that bear'st the token high
 Of better birthright lately given,
 Whose silver cross is scarcely dry,
 That signed thee for an heir of heaven,

The grace of confirmation time
 Shall come to seal again thy treasure—
 See that thou give it not for crime,
 Nor change it for uneasy pleasure.

Nor think for childhood's hours mispent,
 To give to GOD thine after day,
 Nor deem that youth to folly lent
 An age of tears shall wipe away.

Thou wilt not have the same young powers,
 The fresh warm heart that loves and glows ;
 Who ever saw sweet April flowers
 Come peeping through December snows ?

Red Esau roamed a hunter wild,
 He wooed the daughters of the land,
 And while the world around him smiled,
 GOD's gifts were passing from his hand.

He sought in vain with bitter tears,
 That first best blessing back to win;
 Beware, beware, lest future years,
 Should find no time to shrive *thy* sin!

XV.

Jacob.

“Why should I be deprived also of you both in one day!”—
 Gen. xxvii. 45.

THE sunset lies on Isaac’s tent,
 And all the glowing Syrian vale
 Is flooded with a splendour pale
 Of gold, and faintest crimson blent.

Beside the well the camel waits;
 Come slowly home the bleating herds,
 And night by night, the summer birds
 Sing sweetly from the shadowy dates.

But never more at evening’s close
 The quiet voice Rebekah hears
 That made a concord to her ears
 More sweet than any music knows.

She marks the shadows falling thick,
 They darken all the blind man’s face,
 And still she sees an empty place,
 And still her mother’s heart is sick.

And he that shared her fond deceit,
 That could not wait th' appointed time,
 He feels by night the frosty rime,
 By day, the summer's noontide heat,

An exile in another land,
 And never more his head to rest
 Upon a mother's patient breast,
 And never feel her soothing hand.

In youth, in age, alike beguiled,
 So oft deceived for one deceiving,
 Whose spousal morn was turned to grieving,
 Who wept for lost his living child.

Learn of his sorrow, Christian youth,
 When tempted sore, when right shall seem
 To come of wrong, nor ever deem
 That Heaven has need of thine untruth.

Like fountains lost, and traced in vain,
 That blend at last with ocean blue—
 Like birds that wander winter through,
 But find their summer nests again :—

God's ways, though dark nor understood,
 Shall work His righteous will at last.
 Keep virtue's path, though clouds o'er-
 cast,
 Nor sin for any seeming good.

XVI.

Rachel.

“And Rachel died, and was buried in the way to Ephrath.”
—Gen. xxxv. 19.

THE graveyard by the river lies,
In the heart of the old hills;
Over the graves the sycamore
A honey breath distils,
And from its top the mountain thrush
Breaks out in sudden thrills.

About the graves the river runs
With a low monotonous fall,
Like murmur in a mourner's heart
Who sheds no tear at all,
But ever maketh to herself
A moan continual.

It was at crimson sunset time
I sat in that quiet place,
And watched the shadows wrap the hill
From purple height, to base,
Like sorrow darkening silently
A happy human face.

The yellow furze in lines of light
Stood out on its bosom cold,
As if the gilded sunset clouds
When down the west they rolled

Had dropped upon the mountain side
A portion of their gold.

I sat beside a mother's grave
Who had travailed sore, and died—
A sun that set when into Heaven
One little star did glide—
A rose amid its opening buds
Cut off in summer's pride.

I thought of her whom Jacob toiled
In the olden time to win,
Who passed away before her arm
Had clasped her Benjamin,
Where Bethel's haunted plains are passed
And Ephrath's fields begin.

She died, when joy's full measure throbbed
Like a strong pulse in her breast—
When once again of baby lips
Her bosom should be pressed,
And yet another living son
Sink on her heart to rest.

O, lesson meet for us to learn,
With our dreams of earthly joy—
Who build our golden hopes so high,
And still without alloy,
And then they fade,—or we are gone
Like Rachel from her boy !

There is one hope that faileth not,
 For it triumphs o'er the grave;
 The Patriarch saw it dimly bright
 Beyond his burial cave,
 I read it on that Christian tomb—
 The life that JESUS gave!

XVII.

Joseph.

“And the LORD was with Joseph.”—Gen. xxxix. 2.

THE blue old Nile that welters soft and clear
 Through his own valley rich with flowers and
 song,
 Like a proud monarch lingering to hear
 His people's plaudits as he sweeps along;

The great old Nile has seen a youthful brow
 Such as his Pharaohs wear not, calm, and grave—
 Has heard his swarthy children as they bow
 Cry “honour, honour,” to the Hebrew slave.

The merchantmen of Midian by the palm
 Of Dothan bought him, heedless of his grief;
 They sold him with the spicery and balm,
 By Memnon's shrine, to Pharaoh's warrior chief.

How oft from Egypt's prison towers gazing
 He dreamed of Shechem's pasture lands again,
 Of quiet herds in rain-dewed valleys grazing,
 And the green fig-tree on the tented plain ;

Or when he watched the azure lotos gleam
 On the broad bosom of that famous river,
 Thought of the eyes that haunted, like a dream,
 His childhood's sleep, then passed away for ever !

But GOD was with him, in his master's hall,
 And when the false fair woman told her tale,
 And when like flowers unsunn'd that fade and
 fall,
 In the dim prison light, his cheek waxed pale ;

And all things that he did in home, and tower,
 The LORD GOD made to prosper in his hand,
 And raised him up, and clothed his head with
 power,
 And now he rides a ruler through the land.

Shall Christian men forget when troubles press,
 When pain afflicts, or grief, or unjust wrong,
 One that is with him in his worst distress,
 If but his heart be true, his faith be strong ;—

Who bringeth him to honour greater far
 Than aught of earthly state by Pharaoh given,
 Than purple vesture, or triumphal car,—
 The long, long life, the glory of high Heaven ?

Like a sick babe that with averted eye,
 Tosses unsoothed his little fevered head,
 Heedless of her who all night watches by,
 Wets the parched lip, and rocks the cradle bed;
 So our hearts drooping deem themselves alone,
 And CHRIST Himself is with us all the while,
 Tempers our griefs, and loveth more His own,
 Than mother hanging o'er with patient smile.

 XVIII.

Jacob and Pharaoh.

“Few and evil have the days of the years of my life been.”
 —Gen. xlvii. 9.

How rarely boyhood loves to paint
 In glowing tints his future bright,
 A picture where no line is faint—
 Whose very clouds are touched with light.
 And girlhood hails a world unknown
 And reads it in her own glad dreams,
 As lilies see themselves alone
 Reflected in their azure streams.
 But rosy clouds that morning brings,
 Ere noon may deepen into thunder—
 And life's dark stream has sterner things
 Than silver lilies growing under.

So had *he* found, the Patriarch old,
 Who, reckoning o'er by Pharaoh's chair
 His hundred years and thirty, told
 How evil, and how few they were.

One lingering look he backward cast—
 Those long dim years lay steeped in gloom,
 And through the mist that wrapped the past
 He saw but shapes of sorrow loom.

The parting of his youth was there,
 The cheated love in Leah's bower,
 The lingering toil, the long despair
 For Joseph lost in evil hour.

And such a reckoning thine must be,
 When time shall disenchant thine eyes,
 Fond youth! and life's reality
 Break on thee with a sad surprise.

But not for this bright hope forego
 Or scant one glowing dream of pleasure,
 Though life shall never find below
 A cup to hold thy brimming measure.

For thoughts of great and glorious things
 That move thy soul with inward force,
 Are but thy spirit's secret springs
 Uprising to their awful source.

The touches of a hand divine
 Still lingering on thy soiled face—
 Throbs in that deathless heart of thine
 That pants for its immortal place.

Dream on! but pitch thine hopes still higher,
 Like eagles soaring to the sun;
 The wildest stretch of man's desire
 Can ne'er surpass what CHRIST has won.

There, where for Him down sunless skies
 Eternal Hallelujahs stream—
 The truth of thine ideal lies,
 The substance of thy youthful dream.

XIX.

Joseph a Cypre.

“And sold Joseph to the Ishmeelites for twenty pieces of silver.”—Gen. xxxvii. 28.

SOLD by them that should have loved thee,
 Prisoner in the heathen's hand,
 Given by him that best had proved thee
 To the dungeon and the band:—
 From the land of flowers, and rain,
 Borne to Egypt's dewless plain,
 Leaving tent and pastoral dell
 And the sire that loved thee well,

And the airs on upland breezy
 Where the scented cedars grow,
 For the servant's toil uneasy,
 And the captive's weary woe ;—
 Out of grief to honour risen,
 Winning rapture for thy pain,
 And a palace for thy prison,
 And a sceptre for thy chain ;—
 Ruling with a gentle art
 Over many a grateful heart,
 Melting with a brother's love
 Those thine anguish could not move—
 Wearing graciously thy glory
 Through the land thy wisdom won—
 How should Christian read thy story,
 Aged Israel's favoured son ?
 As the little sapling tender
 Shows the great oak waving proud ;
 As the cold lake burns with splendour
 From the crimson sunset-cloud ;
 So in sufferings of thine
 Trace we out a grief divine,
 And thy sorrows throb and glow
 With a pulse of heavenly woe !
 Type thou art of One more holy
 Who His glory laid aside,
 Took the form of servant lowly,
 Stooped to suffering man, and died.

He was scorned, and sold, and hated
 By the men He came to save,
 With a cruel wrath unsated
 Followed to His three days' grave,—
 Not one pitying thought for Him,
 When His failing eye waxed dim,
 Not one note in sympathy
 With that love so full and free,
 When His tender spirit yearning
 Wept those tears of Godlike grief
 O'er the lawless city, spurning
 Help, and safety, and relief.

Now He reigneth high exalted
 Where the white-robed elders stand
 By the great throne rainbow-vaulted
 Each with golden harp in hand,
 Thousand thousand hearts adoring,
 Thousand thousand vials pouring
 Odours sweet of saintly prayers,
 That embalm those Heavenly airs,
 Round the LAMB once slain and wounded
 Breathing, till that awful hour,
 When by Heaven's high hosts surrounded
 He shall come again in power.

For behind each image saintly
 Burns the light of JESU'S Name—
 As the lines lie dim and faintly
 In the gothic window frame,

Till the sunlight touch the pane,
 Rising o'er the fretted fane,
 And each form, and gorgeous hue,
 Starts to sight distinct, and true.
 So doth many a sin-stained creature
 Catch a glory from CHRIST'S face,
 And a light is on his feature,
 That our eyes should love to trace.

 XX.

Moses on the Nile.

“And she laid it in the flags by the river's brink.”—Ex. ii. 3.

BLOW gently, wind! beneath the moon
 Across the river wavelets bright:
 Make music like a cradle tune
 Into the mother's ear to-night!

Flow, father Nile! unvexed by storm,
 And softly rock the bulrush ark,
 Nor whelm the little dainty form,—
 A lily on thy waters dark.

Three months in secret on her breast
 The faithful mother nursed her boy,
 And as his smiling lip she press'd,
 She trembled with a fearful joy.

And now the dreaded hour is come,
 She tears him from her throbbing bosom,

She leaves him where the river foam
Hangs white around the lotos-blossom.

O, mother, when his eyes were shut
Better thine hand had slain the child,
Than give his delicate limbs to glut
The river monsters fierce, and wild—

Than leave to that remorseless stream
The rounded form that all the night
Lay in thy bosom, like a dream
That haunts the sleeper with delight.

Nay, but her heart is strong in faith,
GOD'S shield is o'er her infant spread,
To her his eye a prescience hath,
She sees the glory round his head.

Dreams that shall visit her full oft,
When baby-lips her bosom drain,
And 'baby-touches' pressing soft
Thrill to her mother's heart again.

For lo! the fated princess fair
Comes duly to the water side :
Her maids unbind her perfumed hair,
And lead her to the sacred tide.

She sees him, and her heart allows
The claim for love and pity dear
Writ on his innocent waxen brows,
And speaking through his gushing tear.

How many a mother o'er her child
 Has prayed, and feared, and trembled long,
 Deeming the world had waves as wild
 As that broad river rushing strong!

To her a holier hand has come,
 Her twice-born darling back has given,
 And bade her take the nursling home,
 And rear him up for GOD, and Heaven.

We, precious charge from JESUS' hands!—
 We, for whom mother's prayers have gone
 Borne duly up by angel bands
 To linger round th' eternal throne!—

See that our hearts be mindful still
 Of holy vow, and heavenly care—
 What but a child's rebellious will
 Can mar a faithful mother's prayer!

XXI.

Moses at the Bush.

"And Moses said unto GOD, Who am I that I should go unto Pharaoh, and that I should bring the children of Israel out of Egypt?"—Ex. iii. 11.

WHEN thou hast read in tale or song,
 Some name that thrill'd along the line,
 Hast thou not wished his place were thine,
 Thyself as great and strong?

Hast thou not dreamed of splendid fate,
 When twilight into night was dying,
 Over the bright red embers lying
 Like pictures in the grate ?

And thought if Heaven had but decreed
 High place for thee in church or realm,
 How well thine hand would hold the helm,
 How wise would be thy deed ?

Come, cast thy dreams of pride away,
 And rather learn of him who trod
 With covered face, and foot unshod,
 By Horeb's mountain grey.

He that was valiant, courtly, wise,
 Who knew all Egypt's lore by heart,
 The sage's dream, the poet's art,
 The language of the skies ;

Yet had a soul within him, mild
 And meek withal as maiden's eyes,
 And modest as the blush that dyes
 The forehead of a child.

He watched his flock, a lowly herd,
 Content to bear his people's shame—
 He saw the unconsuming flame,
 The voice divine he heard.

Then, with no proud self-conscious thrill
 Bounded his pulse, his heart beat high—
 Fearful, he answered, " Who am I
 That I should work Thy will ?"

He trembled at that high command,
 As the eye shrinks from the full sun ;
 Wilt thou for trust and honour run,
 And stretch the eager hand ?

Nay, pause awhile, and look within ;
 There commune with thy secret heart,
 And ponder well thine own desert,
 Thy weakness, and thy sin,

The worthlessness of all thy worth ;—
 So shall thy soul find readier wings ;
 The bird still higher soars, and sings
 Whose nest is nearest earth !

The sunbeam comes to seek the flower,
 The dew drops down on her sweet face,
 Ev'n where she grows, in her own place,
 Garden, or wild wood bower.

Rest thou, content in thine own spot,
 Serve GOD in quiet day by day,
 Nor seek for trust, nor sigh for sway,
 And He will bless thy lot.

XXII.

Moses' Choice.

"Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season."—Heb. xi. 25.

HE dwelt in glory, where the light
 Fell soft by day in Pharaoh's halls ;
 And painted lamps the livelong night
 Flung ghostly shadows on the walls.

All sounds were there of love and sport,
 Sweet song of lute, wild laughter ringing,
 The splash of fountains in the court,
 And birds in stately gardens singing.

And cups, that on their carven ledge
 Bore shapes that seemed to hail with joy
 The wine that bubbled to their edge,
 Were proffered to the Hebrew boy.

And wrinkled seers that hour by hour
 Traced starry dreams on silent stone—
 And wiser yet, to whom each power
 Of nature's secret things was known,—

Came round him with their wisdom weird,
 And bade his sharpened reason soar
 Through shadowy realms, half known, half
 feared,

And taught him all Egyptian lore.

But more he loved the scanty fare,
 The shepherd's toil by vale and hill,
 The wandering in the desert bare
 With one bright vision leading still.

And other music set on fire
 His youthful soul, with cadence strong—
 Such strains as rushed from Miriam's lyre,
 Winged with prophetic words of song.

Rather he chose to suffer woe
 With GOD's own people in the wild,
 Than wrapped around with regal show
 To bear the name of Pharaoh's child.

O, blessed choice ! and such be ours—
 For better far some quiet place,
 Where simple men in lowly bowers
 Love GOD's great Name, and seek His face,

Than joys mid hearts to folly given,
 Where pleasure drives the hours away,
 Without a thought of GOD or Heaven—
 Or dream that lasts beyond to-day ;

Where world-wise men with scornful sneer,
 Tell of high deed, and holy word,
 O rather like that meek old seer,
 Our choice be those who love the LORD.

XXIII.

The Plagues of Egypt.

“ I will at this time send all My plagues upon thine heart.”

—Ex. ix. 14.

CHILD! when the silent voice within
 Shall whisper, “ Thine intent is sin,
 That thing thou shalt not do,”
 And holy text at morning said,
 Or when the evening sky grows red,
 Shall speak the warning true ;
 Scorn not the check by conscience given,
 Nor trifle with the voice of Heaven,
 That pleads and pleads again—
 Lest haply wilful in thy crime,
 There come at last an awful time
 When it shall plead in vain.

For evil habit hardens ever,
 Like the cold wave of that dark river
 That touches into stone,
 And that young tender heart of thine
 At last may heed no warning line,
 May hear no pleading tone.

Like the stern king on Egypt’s coasts
 Who strove against the LORD of Hosts,
 And hardened still his heart,
 By fear and pride alternate swayed,
 While ten times striking Heaven delayed,
 And showed the better part.

The river rolled its blood-red billow—
 The child lay stricken on his pillow,
 By every house a grave,—
 And still he battled with remorse,
 Till cold, and stiff his swollen corse
 Lay on the Red-sea wave.

More favoured thou by birth and name!
 Fear lest thy judgment be the same;
 This is thy day of grace.
 The sweet dove singeth in thine ear,
 The book of life is open near,
 CHRIST'S touch is on thy face.

Dread is it when the red right hand
 That smote of old the Egyptian land,
 Is lifted up in wrath—
 More dreadful still if He depart,
 And leave thee to a hardened heart,
 To shameless sin, and death.

XXIV.

Israel's Cry.

“I have surely seen the affliction of My people which is in Egypt, and have heard their cry, and am come down to deliver them.”—Ex. iii. 7, 8.

THERE'S many a quiet cottage laid
 Beneath some elm tree's giant shade,

Where oft at eve the speckled thrush
 Sings from the fragrant hawthorn bush,
 And rosy children run to greet
 Their weary sire's returning feet.

Light hearts are theirs, untouched by woe,
 Love's lesson all the lore they know,—
 The father's hand to spread the board,
 The gentle mother's soothing word,
 The week-day's work, the Sunday strain
 Of sweet bells chiming down the lane.

But death may dim the tender light
 In eyes that love made ever bright,
 Or sickness come to steal away
 The strength that laboured day by day,
 And need may count the lessening store
 Where frugal plenty reigned before.

Who then shall dry the sufferer's tear
 O, Christian child? what hope shall cheer?
 Is there no mightier hand to aid
 If thy worn sire be lowly laid,
 No better sunshine than there lies
 Behind thy mother's love-lit eyes?

Yea, read how Israel wept of old
 By Pharaoh's hand to bondage sold.
 What though around their prison bowers
 The broad Nile swept his foam and flowers,

What though their hands should rear a fane
That wondering time would touch in vain,

The voice of unrequited toil
Rose day and night from that fair soil.
The mother's anguish rent the sky
For her fair son cast out to die,
While the stern king unpitying gave
The double task to gall the slave;—

But, while unmoved the tyrant heard,
A mightier arm in Heaven was stirred,
And while that burning southern sun
Set hotly on their work half-done,
GOD's ear had heard their anguish strong,
GOD's eye had seen His people's wrong.

And lo! like breezes that have lain
Asleep on the Atlantic main,
And come at even wandering o'er
To cool some fainting tropic shore,
From lonely Jethro's mountain-home,
They see the great deliverer come.

Thee too He hears when hunger weeps,
When love keeps watch where sickness sleeps,
Yea, ev'n beside the new-earthed grave,
Thy great Deliverer waits to save.
Trust but His love, and seek His care;
He never spurns His children's prayer!

XXV.

The Night of the Passover.

"It is a night to be much observed unto the Lord, for bringing them out from the land of Egypt."—Ex. xii. 42.

It is a night to be remembered much
 Unto the LORD, through Israel's hosts for aye,
 When the destroying Angel by the couch
 Of Egypt's fairest children,—as they lay
 Wrapt in their rosy slumber—paused to slay.

A night of gladness, and of horror dread,
 Of eager gatherings, and of wild despair,—
 In Pharaoh's hall his eldest born lay dead,
 And the old King rose up, and tore his hair,
 And bade the people forth ere morn lit up the
 air.

Then were there rapturous thrills, and sudden starts,
 A tremulous stir in every household band,—
 And mothers bound their babies to their hearts,
 And aged men stood up with staff in hand,
 Whispering young children of the promised land.

For through that solemn eve the young lambs
 dying
 Had bleated out their sweet lives while they
 bled,
 As a child sings itself to sleep with crying :

By every hearth the victim blood was shed,
 On every board the hasty feast was spread.

And many a group stood girt for sudden flight,
 And many a sandalled foot was on the floor,
 And many a face looked out into the night,
 Where the destroying angel passing o'er
 Cast a bright shadow on the blood-stained door.

Now rich with Egypt's golden spoils they go
 Forth in that broken midnight, through the jar,
 Like a great river that with even flow,
 Sweeps on the same 'neath sun and clouded
 star,
 To its great sea that roars and raves afar.

Go forth, ye chosen heirs of Canaan's coasts,
 With your loins girded, and your sandalled shoon;
 Lo! with your banners fights the LORD of Hosts,
 And brighter far than yon red orient moon,
 The fiery pillar makes a sunless noon.

And was that glorious night alone for ye
 Sons of the Jew? Is there no thought that
 swells
 The Christian heart—no Paschal memory,
 Borne yearly where the northern peasant dwells,
 On the quick chimes of merry Easter bells?

Yea, for us too th' unblemished lamb was wounded,
 For us th' unleavened feast is duly set—
 We stand with staff in hand by foes surrounded,
 Bound for a golden Canaan fairer yet
 Than that sweet land with milk and honey wet.

Yea, the destroying Angel has passed o'er,
 The blood is on the lintels of our heart,
 Else how from this Egyptian bondage sore,
 That weighs us down, and makes our tears to
 start,
 Should we rise up like pilgrims and depart?

Come Paschal thoughts, and soothe us with sweet
 calm,
 Oft as we linger o'er the wondrous tale
 Of those great mysteries—fragrant as the balm
 Of last year's roses, that all cold and pale
 Sleep in their vase, yet precious scents exhale.

Haunt us, sweet Paschal thoughts! but lead us not
 Back to the lamb, that died that marvellous
 night,
 Staining the door-post with a crimson spot,
 But to the LAMB Who died on Calvary's height,
 Whose death redeemed, Whose blood shall
 wash us white.

[The page contains approximately 20 lines of text that are extremely blurry and illegible due to motion blur or poor focus.]

of the day
 hosts stood by thy **shore,**
 swelling waves before,
 Egypt's stern array,
 in wild dismay,
 led them o'er.

that marvellous **blast,**
 unfathomed waters **shrink**
 the wild sea's rocky **brink ;**
 no never line was cast,
 and weeds they **pass'd,**
 delicate pink.

women held their **breath,**
 red up with curdled **blood,**
 great wall of waters **stood**
 like mountains with a **wreath**
 all blue beneath,
 and through the flood.

monarch mad with **wrath,**
 glittering squadrons **sweep,—**
 captains, from the **steep,**
 banks were flecked with **froth,**
 down the perilous **path,**
 sea-deep ;—

once the cloven water
 her and his host—
 surges raged and **toss'd,**

XXVI.

The Red Sea.

“ And the LORD caused the sea to go back by a strong east wind all that night, and made the sea dry land.”—Ex. xiv. 21.

O, SEA ! that with thy tinted waves,
 Now purple dark, now ocean green,
 Now azure with a silver sheen,
 Dost cover o'er so many graves—
 As hoarse and dark thy billow raves,
 What wonders hath it seen !

What tales are on thine iron tongue,
 That clangs against its rocky coasts
 The death knell of so many hosts,
 Of many a gallant heart unstrung—
 Tales—some to sweeter music sung
 Than aught Parnassus boasts.

I ask thee not of navies proud,
 Whose oars have swept thy waters brown,
 With golden spoils from Indian town ;
 I ask not 'neath thy thunder cloud
 How oft the shriek rose sharp and loud,
 As shipwrecked men went down.

But tell me rather of the day
 When Israel's hosts stood by thy shore,
 And saw thy swelling waves before,
 Behind, proud Egypt's stern array,
 And cried aloud in wild dismay,
 Till the LORD led them o'er.

Then smitten by that marvellous blast,
 They saw the unfathomed waters shrink
 Back from the wild sea's rocky brink;
 And down where never line was cast,
 Mid fretted stones, and weeds they pass'd,
 And shells of delicate pink.

The trembling women held their breath,
 The men looked up with curdled blood,
 Where that great wall of waters stood
 Foam-tipped, like mountains with a wreath
 Of virgin snow, all blue beneath,
 As they walked through the flood.

They saw the monarch mad with wrath,
 And all his glittering squadrons sweep,—
 Chariots, and captains, from the steep,
 Their horse's flanks were flecked with froth,
 As they rode down the perilous path,
 Into the dry sea-deep;—

Then closed at once the cloven water
 Over the leader and his host—
 The meeting surges raged and toss'd,

Above that bloodless field of slaughter—
 And sang in triumph Amram's daughter
 O'er horse and rider lost.

Or whisper in thy gentlest tone,
 When airs at even fan thy sea
 From balmy-breathing Araby,
 And long soft ripples murmuring on
 Heave thy blue bosom, and are gone,
 Of what thou art to me.

Type of that pure baptismal tide,
 Where I went down a child unshriven ;
 Ere yet my soul with ill had striven,
 When the first taint of birth sin died
 Like Pharaoh, and his bannered pride,
 And I came forth forgiven.

Ah me! the great Egyptian lies,
 Wild sea! full many a fathom deep,
 Till CHRIST shall break the sinner's sleep
 But sins and follies round me rise
 Staining baptismal purities—
 I can but turn, and weep.

But that deep under song of thine
 Still rolls to Miriam's measure high,
 Hymning a glorious victory ;
 It tells a mightier arm than mine,
 A conquering grace, a strength divine,
 Lest my soul in me die.

XXVII.

The Camp at Elim.

“And they came to Elim, where there were twelve wells of water, and threescore and ten palm trees, and they encamped there by the waters.”—Ex. xv. 27.

REST, weary Israel, rest awhile
 Where green the feathery palm-trees grow,
 And nestling in their lonely isle
 The twelve sweet fountains sleep below.

Rest, where no sound of foes assailing
 Shall bid thine heart throb high with fear,
 No echo of the Red sea wailing
 Shall come to vex thy startled ear :

But where the long day lingering bright
 Shall see thy snowy tents arise,
 And silent stars shall wake by night
 To watch them with their golden eyes.

Where spicy plants that dwell apart
 Shall wrap thee round with odorous balms
 And sweetest quiet fill thine heart
 By the clear wells, beneath the palms.

Past is the Red sea's perilous hour—
 The desert path is scarcely trod—
 Not yet the marvellous manna shower
 Lies like white daisies on the sod.

Not yet to quench thy fiery thirst
 The rock hath given its fountain free—
 Here with furled banners linger first
 Betwixt the desert and the sea.

Betwixt thy childhood and thy youth
 Christian, there lies a sweeter calm,
 Where thou may'st drink the well of truth,
 And lie beneath Hope's shadowy palm.

The sea is pass'd, the desert near,
 Where thou shalt walk with manna fed,
 Scarce trodden yet the path of fear,
 Not yet for thee the feast is spread ;

But parents' love, and pastoral word,
 And studious hours are all thine own ;
 And prayers at morn and even heard,
 Make sweet thy desert island lone,

Fill with rich balms thy lowly place—
 A time for rest and strengthening given,
 Ere shadowing hands shall bring thee grace
 For the long strife that leads to Heaven.

Oft when the pillared cloud looks dim
 That guides thee o'er that pathless track,
 A thought, a text, a holy hymn,
 Shall lead thy spirit wandering back.

Dreaming how good these hours have been,
 How sweet thy resting by the way,
 Where Elim's palms grew fresh and green,
 And Elim's cooling waters lay.

 XXVIII.

The Manna in the Wilderness.

“And when the dew that lay was gone up, behold upon the face of the wilderness there lay a small round thing, as small as the hoar frost upon the ground.”—Ex. xvi. 14.

THE long low streaks of crimson lay
 Fringing the level sands,
 As night was blushing into day
 O'er Israel's pilgrim bands.

Hot went the fiery sun below—
 Red-hot he comes again,
 Then what is this like beaded snow
 That whitens all the plain?

Never from distant Sinai's height
 The frost-wind wandering here
 Hath bound in silver fetters bright
 The desert parched and drear.

Never as gentle as a kiss
 The snow flakes falling round
 Dropped on its breast—then what is this,
 Like hoar frost on the ground ?

Haste, Israel ! press the measure down,
 Ere yonder sun have power,
 To melt the desert's crystal crown—
 This is GOD'S manna-shower.

We, to that unreaped harvest drawn,
 Come watch their labours gay,
 Who gather, 'neath the fragrant dawn,
 Their sweet food day by day.

Our careless lips say day and night,
 " Give us our daily bread,"
 How little dream we of the might
 That erst the manna shed.

The times of old bright pictures bring,
 We give them little heed—
 That clamouring host, that small white thing
 Like coriander seed,

Found, though they never saw it fall,
 When the dew left the land—
 Are precious types to us, to all,
 Of GOD'S sustaining hand ;—

Are types of faith in CHRIST above
 That day by day returns,
 Hangs on the fulness of His love,
 Receives but ever yearns ;

Of grace that feeds our inward part
 Renewed but still the same,
 The small thing leavening all the heart,
 We saw not when it came.

They sought each morn their measure sweet
 The food their LORD had given—
 Come we each day to JESUS' feet,
 And find the bread of Heaven !

XXIX.

The Victory over Amalek.

"And it came to pass when Moses held up his hand that Israel prevailed."—Ex. xvii. 11.

ON red Rephidim's battle plain
 The banners sank and rose again ;
 The tumult of the wild affray
 Rolled round to Horeb's mountain grey,
 Rolled down to thirsty Meribah,
 As Israel's host swept past,
 And Amalek's fierce battle-cry
 Came surging up the blast.

Above the strife the leader hung
 With hands upraised, and suppliant tongue,
 And still his wearied arm was stayed,
 And still the unceasing prayer was prayed,
 Till evening held the setting sun

 Wrapt in her mantle pale,
 And Amalek, and all his host
 Rushed routed down the vale.

Then ask us not why day by day
 The same sweet morning prayers we say,
 Why night by night our evensong
 Peals in the same soft strain along,
 Why children seek the mother's knee
 At eve to lisp their prayer,
 While lingers rosy-fingered sleep
 O'er their fringed eyelids fair.

Nor say "ye vex GOD's patient ear,
 And vain the strains that linger here—
 A soulless form, a weary round,
 A cry that hath no echoing sound,—
 Ye hear no voice,—ye see no sign—
 Adown Heaven's crystal stair,
 No white-robed angels gliding bring
 An answer to your prayer."

Nay, but GOD loves the constant cry,
 He wills the words should never die
 That speak our needs—Prayer pushes prayer
 Up into Heaven's sublimer air,

There round the throne eternally
 They pass, and still repass—
 Our whispers are the airs that breathe
 Above the sea of glass.

Within His temple shrine of old
 He bade the Priests their watches hold ;
 Still through the carven cedar flowers
 The deep chant swelled at solemn hours,
 Still day by day the incense burning
 Crushed out its odours sweet,
 Still, morn and eve, the lamps were lighted
 Before the mercy-seat.

And Nature with her quiet force
 Of powers that keep their ordered course,
 And circle on we know not why
 Doth teach a hidden rule more high ;
 The dews may drop to feed the earth
 But why should planets glow ?
 Why should the golden daisy cups
 Look yearly from below ?

Yet night by night, so calmly pale
 The stars through Heaven's blue ocean sail,
 Yet year by year like scattered beads
 The wild flowers come to deck our meads.
 All have their places and their parts
 In Heaven's sublime decrees,
 And words that seem to wander wide
 Shall find their end like these.

A fiercer foe have we to check
 Than Israel's dreaded Amalek,
 And our dear Church hath many a charm
 To prompt the lip, and nerve the arm—
 Service, and psalm, and litany,
 Strong prayer, and solemn rite—
 Like Aaron holding up the hands
 That wearied on the height.

 XXX.

Mount Sinai.

“Go unto the people, and sanctify them to-day and to-morrow, and let them wash their clothes, and be ready against the third day, for the third day the LORD will come down in the sight of all the people upon Mount Sinai.”—Ex. xix. 10, 11.

NOT to that lonely mountain brown
 Where the thick cloud was rent asunder,
 And the trump rang, and rolled the thunder,
 As the LORD GOD came down.

Not to that mountain with its bound,
 Where GOD's own finger wrote the law,
 And trembling with an intense awe
 The people waited round.

Not to that temple in the wild
 Where lingered the LORD's presence high,
 Which whoso touched must surely die,
 We bid thee, Christian child!

But sanctify thy soul even now,
 And let thy robe be clean and white,
 The same we gave when for the fight
 We crossed thy baby brow.

Behold! the Mount where we are come,—
 An awful, holy, glorious spot!—
 Though there the smoke ascendeth not,
 The trumpet's voice is dumb.

A cross is on that wondrous mount,
 A place of love, and yet of pain,
 And we may touch, and touch again,
 And wash in mercy's fount.

The city all of precious stone
 Is there with jasper girded bright,
 That hath for light by day and night,
 The living GOD alone.

'Twixt earth and heaven that city waits,
 And up and down bright angels pass
 Between us, and the sea of glass,
 Us, and the pearly gates.

There are the spirits of the just,
 Sweet saints that loved us long ago,
 For whom our poor hearts sorrowed so
 When they were laid in dust :

The holy men of every time,
Martyrs to whom the world was loss,
And gentle souls who bore the cross
Unmarked in many a clime :

And JESUS too, our own high Priest,
No Moses with the tables twain,
Shivered in anger on the plain,
Sprinkling with blood of beast—

The Mediator that hath stood
Between us, and GOD'S angry face,
Sealing the covenant of grace
With His own precious Blood.

Come wash thee in that crimson tide,
And make thy garment white as snow,
And let us to that mountain go,
And linger at its side !

Sweet is our high communion there,—
The fellowship of Saints is ours,
The hope of Heaven's angelic bowers,
And CHRIST'S own presence fair.

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