

The Crucifixion.

Sun-light upon Judea's hills!

And on the waves of Galilee—
On Jordan's stream and on the hills

That gather to the sleeping sea!
Most freshly from the green wood springs
The light breeze on its scented wings—
And gaily quiver in the sun
The tall green plumes of Lebanon!

A few more hours—a change hath come

Dark as a brooding thunder-cloud!

The shouts of wrath and Joy are dumb—

And proud knees unto Earth are bowed!

A change is on the hill of Death,

The helmet watchers pant for breath—

And turn with wild and maniac eyes

From the dark scene of sacrifice!

That sacrifice!—the death of Him—

The High and ever Holy One!

Well may the conscious Heaven grow dim,

And blacken the beholding Sun!

The wanted light hath fled away,

Night settles on the middle day;

And Earthquake from his caverned bed

Is waking with a thrill of dread!

The dead are waking underneath—

Their prison door is rent away!

And ghastly with the seal of death,

They wander in the eye of day!

The temple of the Cherubim—

The house of God, is cold and dim,

A curse is on its trembling walls—
Its mighty veil assunder falls.

Well may the mighty holds of Earth
Be shaken, and her mountains nod,
Well may the sheeted dead come forth,
To gaze upon a suffering God!
Well may the temple-shrine grow dim,
And shadows veil the cherubim,
When He the chosen one of Heaven,
A sacrifice for guilt was given!

And shall the sinful heart alone,
Behold unmoved the atoning hour,
When nature trembles on her throne,
And death resigns his iron power?
Oh, shall the heart, whose sinfulness,
Gave keenness to his sore distress—
And added to his tears of blood,
Refuse its trembling gratitude!

Sephath.

The trump that tells of triumphs won,
Sends its clear note on high,
And proudly in the morning sun,
The battle banners fly;
And Israel's host in proud return,
From off the blood-stained sod,
While fires on every altar burn,
To Israel's mighty God.
Glad, grateful hymns ascend on high—
The fertile vales rejoice;
To him who gave the victory,
The floods lift up their voice."

And proudly at his people's head
 The valiant Jephthah comes,
 Strength from above his sword hath sped,
 To free their hearts and homes.
 His right arm hath been bold to dare,
 For one hath been its guide,
 Who from the voice of Israel's prayer
 Hath never turned aside.
 One, who from out the desert stone,
 For them made streams to flow,
 And bade along their pathway lone
 The lighted pillow glow.

What tide shall the victor yield
 Unto the King of Kings,
 Who safely from the battle field
 His chosen army brings?
 The first fruit of the purple vine?
 The crop the fig-tree boasts?
 A nobler offering be mine
 Unto the Lord of Hosts!
 Thus the rash Jephthah spoke aloud—
 'Let him, the first of all
 Who from the gates to meet us crowd,
 A sacred victim fall.'

A band of youthful maidens fair
 Came forth to meet the king,
 They send sweet music on the air,
 And costly gifts they bring,
 And lovely at their head appears,
 With more than kingly grace,
 The prop of his declining years,
 The pride of Jephthah's race;
 She who in childhood's sunny prime,
 Sat on his parent knee,
 And learned to lisp her infant rhyme,

And laugh in sportive glee.

But he had spoken, and the vow
Is registered on high,
And she, who comes in beauty now
To meet his smile - must die!
The single blossom of his earth,
The cherished and the dear;
To mourning ^{now} is changed their mirth
The glad smile to a tear;
And well may Israel's daughters weep
O'er her their fairest, taken
So early to a dreamless sleep,
Which morn may not awaken.

And what, alas! are triumphs won,
And what is human praise,
To him who childless and alone,
Wears out his lingering days?
The voice whose tones were clear and sweet,
A melody of old,
Will never now his ear to greet,
Its tale of love unfold.
Honours and fame are idols dear
In pleasures reign of power,
But all earth's incense fails to cheer
The heart through one dark hour.