

"ONLY WAITING."

Only waiting till the shadows
Are a little longer grown,
Only waiting till the glimmer
Of the day's last beam is flown;
Till the night of earth is faded
From the heart, once full of day;
Till the stars of heaven are breaking
Through the twilight soft and gray.

Only waiting till the reapers
Have the last sheaf gathered home,
For the summer time is faded,
And the autumn winds have come.
Quickly, reapers! gather quickly
The last ripe hours of my heart,
For the bloom of life is withered,
And I hasten to depart.

Only waiting till the angels
Open wide the mystic gate,
At whose feet I long have lingered,
Weary, poor, and desolate.
Even now I hear the footsteps,
And their voices far away;
If they call me, I am waiting,
Only waiting to obey.

Only waiting till the shadows
Are a little longer grown,
Only waiting till the glimmer
Of the day's last beam is flown.
Then from out the gathered darkness,
Holy, deathless stars shall rise,
By whose light my soul shall gladly
Tread its pathway to the skies.

FRANCES LAUGHTON MACE

SLAVERY

O for a lodge in some vast wilderness,
Some boundless contiguity of shade,
Where rumor of oppression and deceit,
Of unsuccessful or successful war,
Might never reach me more! My ear is pained,
My soul is sick, with every day's report
Of wrong and outrage with which earth is filled.
There is no flush in man's obdurate heart;
It does not feel for man; the natural bond
Of brotherhood is served as the flax,
That falls asunder at the touch of fire.
He finds his fellow guilty of a skin
Not colored like his own, and, having power
To enforce the wrong, for such a worthy cause
Dooms and devotes him as his lawful prey.
Lands intersected by a narrow frith
Abhor each other. Mountains interposed
Make enemies of nations, who had else
Like kindred drops been mingled into one.
Thus man devotes his brother, and destroys;
And, worse than all, and most to be deplored
As human nature's broadest, foulest blot,
Chains him, and tasks him, and exacts his sweat
With stripes, that Mercy, with a bleeding heart,

Weeps, when she sees inflicted on a beast.
Then what is man? And what man, seeing this,
And having human feelings, does not blush,
And hang his head, to think himself a man?
I would not have a slave to till my ground,
To carry me, to fan me while I sleep,
And tremble when I wake, for all the wealth
That sinews bought and sold have ever earned.
No; dear as freedom is, and in my heart's
Just estimation prized above all price,
I had much rather be myself the slave,
And wear the bonds, than fasten them on him.
We have no slaves at home.—Then why abroad?
And they themselves, once ferried o'er the wave
That parts us, are emancipate and loosed.
Slaves cannot breathe in England; if their lungs
Receive our air, that moment they are free;
They touch our country, and their shackles fall.
That's noble, and bespeaks a nation proud
And jealous of the blessing. Spread it then,
And let it circulate through every vein
Of all your empire; that, where Britain's power
Is felt, mankind may feel her mercy too.

WILLIAM COWPER

A HOLY NATION

Let Liberty run onward with the years,
And circle with the seasons; let her break
The tyrant's harshness, the oppressor's spears;
Bring ripened recompenses that shall make
Supreme amends for sorrow's long arrears;
Drop holy benison on hearts that ache;
Put clearer radiance into human eyes,
And set the glad earth singing to the skies.

Clean natures coin pure statutes. Let us cleanse
The hearts that beat within us; let us mow
Clear to the roots our falseness and pretence,
Tread down our rank ambitions, overthrow
Our braggart moods of puffed self-consequence,
Plough up our hideous thistles which do grow
Faster than maize in May time, and strike dead
The base infections our low greeds have bred.

RICHARD REALF

EPILOGUE

At the midnight in the silence of the sleep-time.
When you set your fancies free,
Will they pass to where—by death, fools think, imprisoned—
Low he lies who once so loved you, whom you loved so,
—Pity me?
Oh to love so, be so loved, yet so mistaken!
What had I on earth to do
With the slothful, with the mawkish, the unmanly?
Like the aimless, helpless, hopeless did I drive!
—Being—who?

One who never turned his back but marched breast forward,
Never doubted clouds would break,
Never dreamed, though right were worsted, wrong would triumph,
Held we fall to rise, are baffled to fight better,
Sleep to wake.

No, at noonday in the bustle of man's work-time
Greet the unseen with a cheer!
Bid him forward, breast and back as either should be,
"Strive and thrive!" cry "Speed—fight on, fare ever
There as here!"

ROBERT BROWNING

CATILINE TO THE ROMAN ARMY

Sound all to arms! (A flourish of trumpets.)
Call in the captains,—(To an officer)
I would speak with them!

(The officer goes.)

Now, Hope! away,—and welcome gallant Death!
Welcome the clanging shield, the trumpet's yell,—
Welcome the fever of the mounting blood,
That makes wounds light, and battle's crimson toil
Seem but a sport,—and welcome the cold bed,
Where soldiers with their upturned faces lie,—
And welcome wolf's and vulture's hungry throats,
That make their sepulchres! We fight to-night.

(The soldiery enter.)

Centurions! all is ruined! I disdain
To hide the truth from you. The die is thrown!
And now, let each that wishes for long life
Put up his sword, and kneel for peace to Rome.
Ye all are free to go. What! no man stirs!
Not one! a soldier's spirit in you all?
Give me your hands! (This moisture in my eyes

Is womanish,—'twill pass.) My noble hearts!
Well have you chosen to die! For, in my mind,
The grave is better than o'erburdened life;
Better the quick release of glorious wounds,
Than the eternal taunts of galling tongues;
Better the spear-head quivering in the heart,
Than daily struggle against fortune's curse;
Better, in manhood's muscle and high blood,
To leap the gulf, than totter to its edge
In poverty, dull pain, and base decay.
Once more, I say,—are ye resolved?

(The soldiers shout, "All! All!")

Then, each man to his tent, and take the arms
That he would love to die in,—for, this hour,
We storm the Consul's camp. A last farewell!

(He takes their hands.)

When next we meet,—we'll have no time to look,
How parting clouds a soldier's countenance.
Few as we are, we'll rouse them with a peal
That shall shake Rome!
Now to your cohorts' heads;—the word's—Revenge!

GEORGE CROLY

THE SPIRIT-LAND

Father! thy wonders do not singly stand,
Nor far removed where feet have seldom strayed;
Around us ever lies the enchanted land,
In marvels rich to thine own sons displayed.
In finding thee are all things round us found;
In losing thee are all things lost beside;
Ears have we, but in vain strange voices sound;
And to our eyes the vision is denied.
We wander in the country far remote,
Mid tombs and ruined piles in death to dwell;
Or on the records of past greatness dote,
And for a buried soul the living sell;
While on our path bewildered falls the night
That ne'er returns us to the fields of light.

JONES VERY