

Out from the forests of the waving fern
I saw them come, men of that ancient race
Who lived on this old world when it was young,
Before the earliest dawn of history.
The curtain falls, the mists of ages hide
The story of those long forgotten years.
No parchment scrolls pass down their name or tribe;
Of how they lived and suffered, loved and died,
And passed into the silent shades of night;
The night that falls at last on all mankind.
The only records that have reached our day
Are the poor weapons chipped from flinty rocks,
With which they fought the tiger in his lair
And the fierce monsters of that early world.

Out from the forests of the waving fern
The long procession slowly wound its way,
Until they reached an altar built of rock,
Close to the place where I unseen had stood.
And round the stone in widening circles formed,
These rough rude men, their women and their babes
Bowed down in homage to the God of life,
Bowed down in homage to the God of day
The glorious sun, whose burning rays were flung
In golden halo o'er his worshippers.

Then from the inner circle one stepped forth,
A leader among men, the tribe's high priest.
Upon his head the snow of age had cast,
The silvern whiteness of life's winter time.
His left hand rested on the Altar stone,
The other raised and pointed to the sun,
A noble figure filled with love divine,
This earliest man who spoke to men of God.

"To-day my children is a solemn feast,
A feast of gladness for your God returns,
Who for long months lay hid in caverns dark,
Now treads his northern march to light your homes
And with his smile to ripen harvest fields,
So will you store for winter, golden grain,
To give you food through the long dreary nights