

And many hearts were by his precepts swayed  
 To offer prayer at other shrines than ours.  
 This day, the clouds dividing with swift wing,  
 O'er land and sea toward Tithonus' realm,  
 I sped ; but paused above the wind-swept plain  
 That erst knew Ilium. Fond remembrance came  
 Of deeds by gods and godlike heroes done,  
 When gods were young and great, and ruled unchecked,  
 And humankind were like the gods in might.  
 Thence onward passed, and, on the formless winds  
 Riding, I came, where, on her ancient hills,  
 Jerusalem gleamed forth in regal pride.  
 When sounds, such as ne'er reached mine ear before,  
 Came on the breeze ; and, from the horizon far,  
 Uprose in rank on rank of order true,  
 In countless myriads, a shining host  
 Of beings never viewed by heavenly ken.  
 Winnowing with plumes immense the yielding air,  
 They came, thought-speeded, with great faces turned,—  
 Oh, how impotent are the loftiest words,  
 E'er syllabled by created tongue, to tell  
 What beauty and what majesty sublime,  
 Shone radiant on them !— toward Jerusalem.  
 Each orb of sight fixed steadfast on a hill,  
 The goal of their advance ; and so intent  
 Their eager gaze, unnoticed, me they passed.  
 As birds, that, numberless, with steady wing  
 Circle some broad based tower e'er they alight,  
 To build new homes when Spring bids earth smile ;  
 So in vast gyres moving, these at last  
 Encircled all the hill, rank above rank,  
 Receding as they rose, till high above  
 Calvaria's mount they formed a living crown.  
 No sound arose as that ethereal host,  
 With folded pinion and transfixed gaze,  
 Hung in mid-air. My sight did follow theirs ;  
 And round the hill and from the city gates  
 Still pouring, multitudinous as the leaves  
 In Latmian forests, a tumultuous mass  
 Of mortals came to look upon the pangs  
 Of the pale Galilean, on a Cross  
 Fixed writhing in enormous agonies.  
 Curses and mockeries and insults vile,  
 Were yielded by the crowd ; when suddenly  
 The sun was gloomed in unforetold eclipse,  
 And darkness rushed across the trembling orb,  
 Making a dreadful silence ; broken soon,  
 As the deep sigh rang from the suffering lips :  
 " Eli, eli lama sabathani."  
 Another pause succeeded ; then again  
 " 'Tis finished," was the cry, for death was come.  
 Then earth in horrible convulsions shook,  
 Groaning in earthquake travail ; and huge rocks,  
 Torn from their beds, hurled echoing around.  
 Made universal din ; and from the tombs,  
 The dead, long mouldering, in their cerements,  
 Came forth, a ghastly band, to tread once more  
 Paths erst familiar. From its body freed,  
 The prophet's spirit lingered not but rose  
 Upward, as born by its unbounded will,  
 To that aerial band which moveless hung  
 Like cloud that waits the breeze by summer blown.  
 Forthwith in adoration, every brow  
 Declined ; and from the serried ranks arose  
 A song of triumph loud but strangely sweet ;