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THE GREAT ARCHBISHOP.*

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We said, each man, within his sad and bitter heart : " Behold, we stand alone ;
and they who flout us now shall gather where we strowed, and reap where we have sown.
The priest and scribe, the learned and great, they pass us by with coldly-turning eyes ;
While, inch by inch, and step by step, we push the fight that yields for us no prize.
Aye! they who prated loudest, once, of love for justice, liberty, and man,
Wag snake-like tongues, and spit against us now the venom of their pious ban.
All men," we groaned, " are beasts of burden or of prey, and only we are left
To catch the dropped threads that our sires let fall from Freedom's torn and bloody web."

Ah! sorely erred we then : for,—even as we flung our fretful moans and cries
Right up, in bitter unbelief, against the dumb face of the patient skies,—
Out from the bosom of the heaving South a lustre blossomed o'er the land,
That broadening, whitening, brightening grew—a great white rose held fast in God's own
hand ;—
Grew over all the stormy heaven, and opened wide for all its glorious breast,
Till, as the exiled Jew his Zion's fanes, so Cashel's sacred ground we blessed!

Ah, High-priest of our noblest dreams! before that dreadful altar shines thy face,
Beneath which sob and call the souls of those who died—in vain—to save their race,—
" How long, O God! how long ere Thou avenge our sacrifice of blood and pain?"
And still the awful answer murmurs back : " Not yet, till all God wills be slain!"
Thy feet are drenched in scarlet wine, the sacramental flood that pours
From England's wine-press when she treads the yearly vintage of our mangled shores ;
And England's thunders threat thy consecrated head, and Christian bosoms pine
To hunt once more the unresisting priest, and break the sanctuaried shrine!
Yet, brighter still for storm and night thy face shall glow, and tell the herd around,
That upon Sinai's tempest blackened peak, thy soul the light of God has found ;
With Him whose holiest word is Love, thy soul has talked, and back to earth has brought.
The radiance by th' Immortals sealed upon the brow that wears a God-given thought.
Like Moses to the people, where, fear-stricken, 'mid the wilds they doubt and quail,
Thy prophet-voice peals forth again : " Thus saith the Lord ; this time ye shall not fail."
And on the heights, like Moses, too, of yore, thy hands are raised for us in might,
While through the shadowed valleys at thy feet a hundred Joshuas lead the fight.

Lift still thy hands, and weary not, for shining armies fill the lurid air ;
Lift still thy hands, and leave us not, for victory waits at last upon thy prayer.
And 'mid the clamor and the heat, thy warning voice breathes calm and low,—
" Be true, O children, and be pure ; be bold, yet strike no fool's or ruffian's blow."
Thine be a loftier task than sainted Patrick wrought in splendid years long past,
When from our shores—as legends tell—the crawling snake and skulking wolf he cast.
Be thine the mission to uproot from human breasts, the bestial, false and vile,
And give to us once more, purged clean with tears and fire, our long-lost Holy Isle.
—Boston Pilot.

*Most Rev. T. W. Croke Archbishop of Cashel.