

PROLOGUE.

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That fain would catch some concords of the blest
In hope's new song, whose echoes woke the west,
When, fraught with tidings told by tongues that
burned,

Strangers of Rome from Pentecost returned,
Heralds of peace—how beautiful their feet
On Alba's mountain and the Appian street!
Where Zion's angel met the muse of Greece,
And joined in anthems never more to cease.

Bear me back thither, and recall the time
False gods gan tremble, and a voice sublime
Preached to the world "The promised star has shined :
"The gates of heaven are free to all mankind.
"Peace and goodwill salute you from above :
"Be pure and live for ever—God is love."
What answered Rome? How mused the matron
grave?

What said the sage? the senator? the slave?
When seed was sown o'er earth, and hidden teemed
To change earth's aspect, while her children dreamed.