

Ere midnight came,
The child awoke, disturbed, and anxious said,
"Oh, mother dear, what is that awful sound?"
"My darling, 'tis the sighing of the wind
Among the pines." But swifter sped the tempest,
Swifter, and the pines—they bowed their heads
Before the blast and sang. The cedars high
And oaks together answered back in song.
And louder, louder, as if thunder grand,
The tempest bell of music rang. The boy
Awoke again, and feebly cried—"Oh, mother,
I'm afraid—what is that dreadful sound?"
"My darling, fear not, 'tis the voice of God—
He leads the choir. And he remembers you
And me." "Oh, mother, take me in beside you.
I'm afraid of God, but Jesus"—Here he stopped.
He struggled till he got in part athwart
The cot. And as his wearied head sank down
He whispered faintly, and there came a broken
Answer, whispering—"Near me, nearer, darling"—
That was all.

The storm, the mother's music,
But the child's affright, attained its height.
Then sudden rang the loud alarum. But
They heard it not.

* * * * *

There was once a manger.
Once a cross, and both by man despised.
But God hath both exalted high. And once
A lonely cottage lowly, overlooked
By men. But God on it had mercy.
Tho' He seemed to be in wrath.