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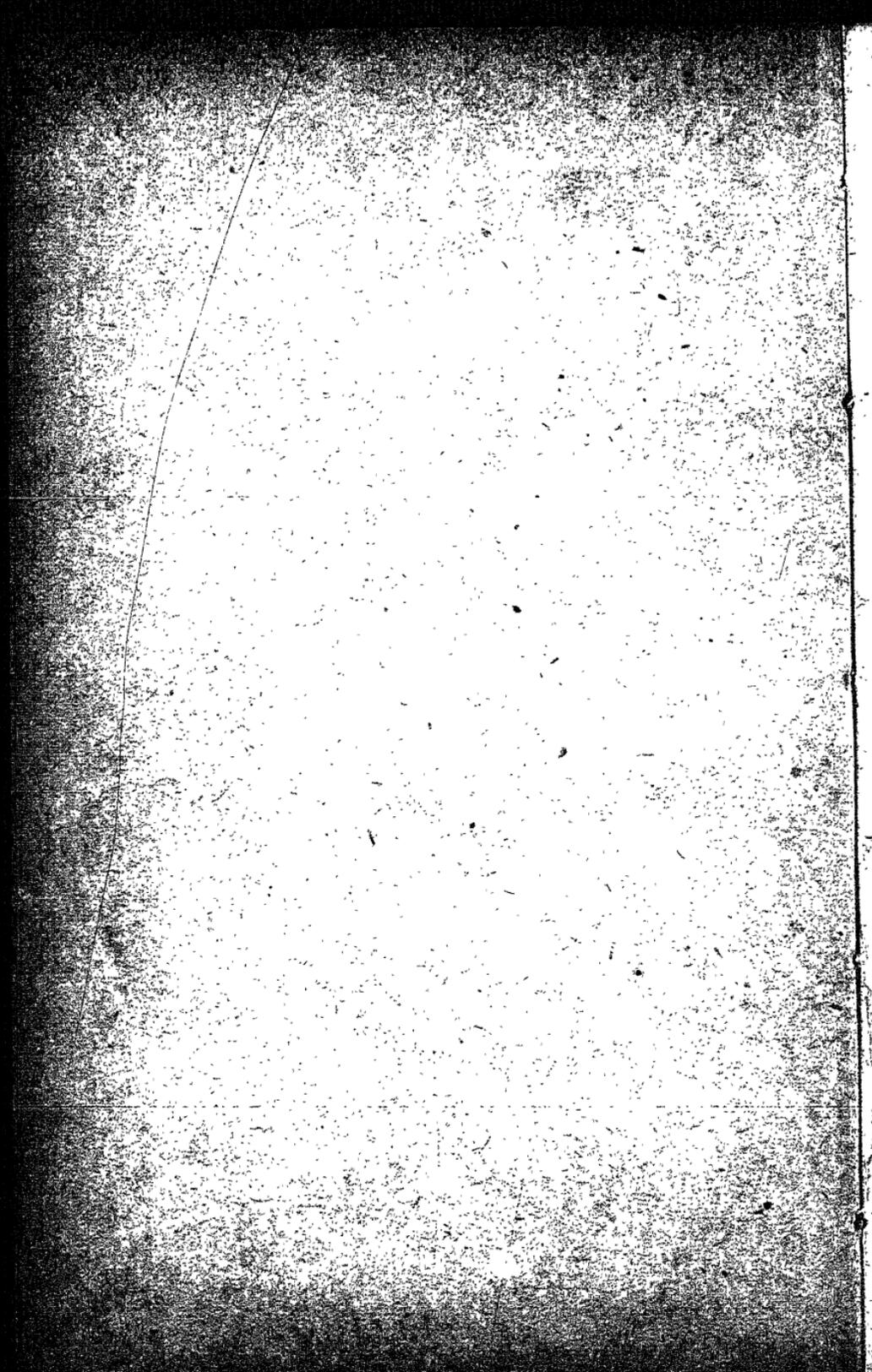
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THE NAMES OF JESUS.

A POEM.

READ BEFORE THE JUDSON MISSIONARY SOCIETY

OF THE

CANADIAN LITERARY INSTITUTE,

JANUARY 27TH, 1868.

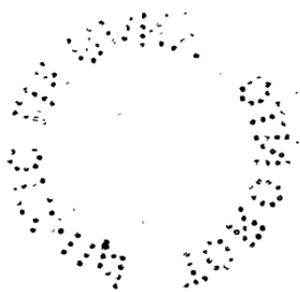
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THE NAMES OF JESUS.

I sing the names of Jesus—matchless names,
Highest and holiest earth or Heaven claims,
By which alone we may approach to Him,
Before whose faintest ray the sun grows dim,
And all the brightest glory of the skies
Like twilight's feeble glimmer faints and dies !

IMMANUEL—God with us. *With us, O Soul !*
Of this brief utterance canst thou grasp the whole ?
Nay, comprehend one attribute of God—
The Maker, Sovereign—Him, who at a nod
Can hurl all worlds to wreck ; or, with a breath
Can wake a Universe from night and death ;
And clothe in Beauty's robes of richest bloom
Ten thousand worlds snatched from chaotic gloom ?

If not, couldst grasp the thought that such as He,
Clothed in frail human flesh, a *man* should be ?
Of us and with us—veiled, his dazzling ray
Of awful Godhead, and at home in clay—
A living, dying man ?—Heaven, Earth, and Hell
The myst'ry fail to solve, Immanuel !
And yet faith calmly lays her hand in thine
And whispers low " Immanuel is mine !"

But He has other names,—it may be, less
Bewildering in their deep mysteriousness ;
O'er which we oftener linger, which we bear
Oftener to Heaven upon the breath of prayer—
Sweet, hallowed home-names ;—dearer, it may be,
Because first learned beside a mother's knee ;
The tender names of Father, Brother, Friend,—
Names that with all sweet recollections blend,—
Names full of high significancy, given
To him who intercedes for us in Heaven.

FATHER !—dear name, to thought and feeling dear !
 Thrice-precious ever in the Christian's ear !—
 An earthly father trials may estrange,
 " The Everlasting Father " knows no change !
 With tireless patience and unslumb'ring care,
 Watching wherever His earth-children are,
 Opening his hand to shelter, clothe, and feed,
 To comfort, guide, protect in time of need,
 Nor failing e'en the faintest cry to hear,
 By His weak children breathed into His ear.

BROTHER !—our Eldest—first-born of the dead,
 Of all the glorified the Living HEAD !
 Yet condescending to the youngest child,
 With tenderest looks and accents sweet and mild ;
 Who feels a wrong done to the feeblest one,
 Keenly as though unto Himself 'twere done ;
 Who sees no kindness to the humblest shown,
 But 'tis as though 'twere to Himself alone ;
 And who will judge the wrong, the kindness bless,
 With all a brother's truth and tenderness—
 Nay, more ; an earthly brother faints and dies,
 Or, faithless oft, forget's : fiction's ties ;
 His love, enduring as the eternal throne,
 No change, decay, or loss have ever known.

FRIEND !—there is music in that simple word,
 Which through all time the human heart has stirred.
 Earth cannot be a desert, joy-hereft,
 To any heart if but one friend be left ;—
 Yet friends oft change, and friendship proves a name,
 And death, at last, must ever quench its flame.

Yet there's a Friend, than brother closer far ;—
 One whose affection changes cannot mar ;
 One tempted, tried, and grieved as you have been ;
 Long a lone wand'rer through this world of sin ;
 Himself without a fiend whose steadfast heart
 Of His deep cup of anguish shared a part.

Friendless, He knelt in dark Gethsemane,
 Unfriended, hung on Cavalry's bloody tree,
 And all for what?—His deathless love to prove
 For man, His enemy!—O, matchless love!
 O, wondrous Friendship! O, unchanging Friend!
 Who, loving thus, should love unto the end;
 That, evermore, the ransomed soul might rest
 Its weary head upon His faithful breast,
 And feel, 'mid all vicissitudes and pains,
 That one true, constant, loving friend remains!

Friend, Brother, Father!—Could we ask for more?
 Yet these dear names exhaust not half the store!
 REDEEMER!—Lo! a wretched captive, bound
 With chains and fetters, wrapped in night profound,
 In helpless, hopeless bondage, dark I lay,
 When He, in pitying mercy, passed that way.
 He saw me hugging close my heavy chain,
 Loving my bonds despite their bitter pain,
 Deaf to the music of the songs of Heaven,
 Blind to the light His pitying love had given,
 Sick unto death, yet boastful of my health;
 Clothed in foul rags, yet vaunting of my wealth.

Was that a thing to love or pity?—Nay!—
 Yet He did stoop on me His hand to lay;
 Touched my dark eyes, and lo! the light was mine
 Ope'd my dull ears to harmonies divine;
 Showed me my rags, my wretchedness, my grief,
 My deadly sickness, and then gave relief;
 Paid my full ransom price; warmed, cleansed, and fed
 And clothed in spotless raiment, me He led
 Forth from the dungeons of impurity,
 To the pure air of heaven, made whole, set free
 Henceforth my all in life or death is thine,
 And thou, Redeemer of the lost, art mine!

Nor yet, with these, the exultant song should cease ;
 For this Redemmer is the PRINCE OF PEACE !—
 To be redeemed by earthly Prince would be
 High honor, lasting joy, to him set free ;
 Yet earthly princes, emulous of fame,
 O't win their way to power by sword and flame ;
 And leave the path by which they reached a throne,
 Red with slain victims, in their rage o'erthrown
 And rudely crushed beneath the maddened tread
 Of fiery Conquest, reckless of his dead.

But oh, how different is the Prince of Peace !
 He comes to bid the rage of conflict cease.
 He lifts His hand above the stormy sea
 Of human passion, surging wrathfully,
 And lo ! its maddened waves in peace subside ;
 Hushed is the tempest—roar of power and pride ;
 The desert and the wilderness rejoice,
 And life awakes at His creative voice ;—
 Peace spans with rainbow arch the weeping sky,
 And angels smile from their pure homes on high !

And yet our Prince is more. He is a PRIEST,
 In whom signs, symbols, off'rings, all have ceased ;
 For, more than Priest, a SACRIFICE HE stands,
 With streaming side and bloody feet and hands,
 Bearing to Heaven, not blood of bullocks slain,
 Nor victims' ashes sprinkling the unclean,
 But His own blood, an offering to Heaven,
 That God might thus be just and man forgiven ;
 Himself at once, Prince, Priest, and Sacrifice,
 Man mediatorial, Lord of earth and skies !—
 Angels in vain the myst'ry would explore,
 And men and angels mutually adore.

Yet, as though these were not enough, we find
 Him stooping still to meet the human mind ;

Under still other names, His boundless grace
And love to symbolize for Adam's race.

See yonder flock upon the mountain bare!
Is there no hand to guide or tend them there ?
When the wild beast comes prowling from his den,
Who will protect the helpless creatures then ?
Who, when the pastures fail, and springs are dry,
Will lead them forth where greener pastures lie ?

What! pitiest thou the helpless flock ? So He,
Thy watchful friend, in pity thinks of thee !
" I the Good Shepherd am, and ye the sheep ;
With tenderest care my little flock I keep ;
No ravenous beast shall prey upon my own ;
They know my voice and follow me alone !"

Is yonder sun a welcome sight to thee,
As up the east he rides exultingly ?—
Do the hills wake to beauty as he comes,
And valleys blush with countless opening blooms ?
Do the streams sparkle, and the woodlands ring,
With the sweet lays where happy warblers sing ?
He is a SUN, and when his radiance streams
Beauty and gladness waken in his beams,
The soul expands to perfect leaf and flower,
And ripening fruitage waits the vintage hour ;—
Songs of rejoicing float upon the air,
And 'neath his rays 'tis summer everywhere.

Is yonder vine a pleasant, goodly thing,
As upward still its laden branches spring,
As its ripe clusters woo the longing sight
To linger still with ever new delight ?—
" I'm the true VINE," saith Christ, " the branches ye ;—
The Living Vine, abide ye still in me ;
Thus shall my life to every branch be given,
Thus shall each branch bring forth the fruit of Heaven !"

See, yonder traveller in a desert land
 Toils day by day o'er tracts of burning sand ;
 A lurid sky above—beneath, around,
 The dreary desert spreads its wastes profound.

With blistered feet and aching, blood-shot eye,
 Long dimly strained some fountain to descry,
 Onward he toils, while hope, as days depart,
 Grows feebler, fainter at his weary heart.

On the horizon's verge he sees at length
 A shadowy line, and lo, his failing strength
 In a full tide returns !—His weary feet
 Speed gladly on, by courage rendered fleet ;
 He gains the fount, he drinks, and toil and care,
 And dread and danger, all forgotten are !

So, to life's weary pilgrim, Christ is made
 In the drear desert a refreshing SHADE !
 A FOUNT OF LIVING WATER, never dry,
 To all the thirsty yielding full supply,
 A WELL OF WATER, ever springing up
 To life eternal—fount of joy and hope !

Student of nature ! dost thou love, at morn,
 To tread where early flowers the wild adorn ?—
 To view the lowly blossoms of the field,
 In shady nooks half-hidden, half-revealed—
 The wild rose, scenting all the dewy air,
 The graceful lily, bending meekly there ?—

Then think, as with admiring eye you trace
 Those meek, sweet dwellers in each lonely place,
 That He, of whom I sing, well knowing how
 The heart to Nature's lovely gifts would bow,
 Would lead your thoughts with gentle winning force
 Up from created beauty to its Source.

He is **THE ROSE OF SHARON**,—fairest flower
 That perfume breathed thro' Eden's hallowed bower ;
 The **LILY OF THE VALLEY**, pensive, fair,
 With heavenly sweetness flooding all the air ;—
 Thrice-sacred symbols, breathing evermore
 Of Him whom angels cease not to adore !

Thou man of Science, who, with practiced eye,
 And glance untiring sweep'et the starry sky,
 Speeding in thought along those trackless ways,
 Where planets burn and constellations blaze,
 Leaving uncounted worlds behind thee far,—
 Listen !—" I am **THE BRIGHT AND MORNING STAR** !"
 He says :—And does not thought more gladly stray,
 Where the meek herald of the rising day
 Sits like a peaceful Vestal, bearing high
 Her radiant urn on the soft eastern sky ?—
 Thence, rising, seek the morning star of Heaven,
 Who to night's myriad suns their light has given,
 And, bowing low Light's sacred Fount before,
 In wondering, reverential awe adore ?—

Soul, ever groping through the mists of time,
 To find the path which leads to the sublime
 Still heights of God !—weak are thy steps and slow ;
 Yet there's a path no fowl of heaven doth know ;—
 No lion's whelp that secret way hath found,
 No eagle marked it from her heights profound,
 No human art, unhelped, discerned the road
 That leadeth up to happiness and God !—

Yet, anxious soul, dost thou not hear him say,
 " Cease thy vain groping—lo, I am the **WAY** !
 The Way to God—the one unerring Way—
 All other paths will lead thy feet astray ;
 I only, Wisdom, am the path that lies
 'Twixt man and God, the Sovereign of the skies" ?

Seeker of truth!—long hast thou striven to find
 This only boon which satisfies the mind.
 Through Nature's stores the treasure thou hast sought;
 Hast traversed all the boundless fields of thought;
 Questioned the lonely night, the laughing day,
 The ocean-depths, the founts that ceaseless play,
 Old hoary mountains, cliffs, and caverns lone,
 Earth's secret depths—mysterious, unknown;
 Asked of the past, the present, future; striven
 To pierce the mystery unrevealed by Heaven;
 Yet weary and unsatisfied remained,
 Longing for Truth, still far-off, unattained;
 That truth which *satisfies* the anxious quest,
 And with the attainment, bringeth *perfect rest*.

"I am the TRUTH."—saith Christ. O wearied one!
 Tired of thy fruitless search beneath the sun,
 Accept this boon, so sacred, so divine,
 In simple trust, and all thou seek'st is thine—
 Truth that makes free, that falsehood cannot dim;
 In full completeness, all made thine in Him.

Lover of life! say, what wouldst thou not give
 To know that thou eternally shouldst live?—
 Is death a thing from which to shrink with dread?—
 The dreary valley dost thou fear to tread?—
 What would'st thou give to pierce the unknown dark
 That lies before thy feebly tossing bark,
 And know what anchor in that unknown sea,
 Or wreck disastrous there awaiteth thee?—

Dost trembling cling to this frail thread of life,
 Through pain, and doubt, and weariness, and strife,
 Rather than trust thy dimly groping hand
 Its hold to fasten on that unknown land,
 Whence none return its secrets to declare,
 And tell what bliss or ruin waits thee there?—

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Well may'st thou cling to earth, unless thy ear
 Opened hast been, the voice from heaven to hear—
 To hear the Christ, amid earth's wearying strife,
 Its toil and tumult, say "I am the LIFE!"—
 "I am the Life!"—oh, then undo thy clasp
 On this frail being, and with deathless grasp
 Lay hold on Him, in whom, by whom alone,
 The bliss of Life Eternal may be known!
 Failing in this, how deep must be the gloom—
 The unpierced darkness of the lonely tomb!
 In this succeeding, what exultant day
 O'er all the future pours its blissful ray!

Is light a blessing?—He's the soul's clear LIGHT,
 The blessed Day-Star, scattering the night!—
 Is peace the sweetest boon to mortals given?—
 Jesus is PEACE, made manifest from Heaven!
 Is love the bond of life, beneath, above,
 In earth or heaven?—His highest name is LOVE!

ROCK, REFUGE, REST;—a SHIELD in conflict dire;
 Around his Saints a WALL OF LIVING FIRE;
 STRENGTH, HOPE, REDEMPTION, RIGHTEOUSNESS divine;
 FAIREST AMONG TEN THOUSAND fair, who shine
 On hills of light by high archangels trod;
 Judah's stern LION; spotless LAMB of God;
 THE SON OF GOD; the SON OF MAN; the BREAD
 OF LIFE, with which each heir of heaven is fed;
 THE RESURRECTION from the dust of death;
 AUTHOR AND FINISHER of all our faith;
 God's manifested thought—Eternal WORD
 By whom creation's eldest depths were stirred;
 ALPHA, OMEGA, FIRST, LAST, JEHOVAH, MAN!
 So ends my song just where my song began!
 JESUS!—"He saves His people from their sins"—
Thus end all praises, where all praise begins!

