

GETHSEMANE



A Poem

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'Twas eve in Judah's land !
Slowly the shadows had longer grown,
Till the last faint ray of the setting
 sun
Had faded and fled from the Western
 sky ;
Then on they came with a sweeping
 train,
Noiseless, yet sure and swift !
Down from the mountain and over
 the plain,
Flinging around their shroud of gloom
And locking in silence deep as the
 tomb
The daylight hum of man—and
 clouds arose,
Dark sombre clouds, in strange wild
 groups.

Now hiding from sight the moon-
beam's light,
Then swiftly hurrying—struggling on.
E'en the lights in the city grew pale
and dim
As the midnight hours drew near ;
And only the sound of the watch-
man's round
Fell sharp and clear on the listening
ear,
And echoing rose to the silent sky.—

When, list, 'twas the voice of
music !
A low, sweet burst of song,
Coming floating through the mid-
night,
Borne by the winds along ;
'Twas the sound of many voices,
And the strain was soft and deep,
For it came from hearts of sadness—
Strange mingling of praise and grief.

It ceased—and forth from an upper
room

A band of watchers came.
Sadly they wound through the
 gloomy streets
Towards the city's eastern wall ;
Passed through the gate, and o'er
 Kedron's brook,
Till they came to Olivet's hillside
 lone,
And the deep dark shade of Geth-
 semane.

In their midst there was *One* whose
 weary frame
Knew little of earth's repose—a
 lonely Man—
Lone in His heart's deep sympathy,
Lone in His hour of agony ;
Lone—and yet not alone, if human
 woe
Or human want had need of Him—
Then every wayside sufferer urged
 his claim,
And none was e'er denied. Then
 thronging multitudes

In crowds around Him prest—for
Jesus
Came to heal, to seek and save the
lost.

No crowd was with Him now—but a
lowly band

Whom He had chosen out from
humble life :

Not earth's nobility, but sons of toil.
They owed Him much, yet little gave
Which met His heart's deep yearning.
On them He lavished all His love,
And in return got lukewarm wavering
faith.

One day they knew Him and adored.
The next

Would ask again : “ Who art Thou,
Lord ? ”

Once, as He told them of His hour of
agony,

And spoke of coming shame and
death,

They listened—heard—and heeded
not ; their hearts

Were filled with other thoughts, with
curious strife
Disputing — who should be the
greatest !
And now they sorrow, scarcely know-
ing why,
Save that His farewell words are
sounding in their ears,
And they see His heart is wrung.
He chooses three among them, who
of old
Have known and loved Him best,
And bids the others tarry there, while
they move on.
Deeper and deeper yet within the
gloomy shade,—
All may not see the anguish of His
heart,
All in that sorrow may not bear a
part.
Then turning unto them He saith,
“Tarry ye here awhile and watch :
“My soul is sorrowful exceedingly,

“Yea, e’en to death !” He leaves
 them there,
And passes on.
Ah ! earth and sky, what saw ye
 then ?
And you, ye angel hosts before the
 throne,
In that dread hour, what witnessed
 ye ?
Bowed down to earth heaven’s high-
 est Majesty,
Fulness of Godhead, the Eternal One,
Firstborn of all Creation ! He, Jeho-
 vah’s Son
Arrayed in human garb, and bending
 low
In untold agony !
Ah ! words, — poor human words,
Vainly ye seek to tell of grief like
 this :—
Ye may not—One alone has known it,
One whose agony of love no floods
 could drown,
And He, the One who knows it, tells
 it not !

But thou, O ransomed soul, with un-
veiled sight,
Gaze on that mystery—
Gaze, and with rapture filled,
Bow down and worship Him, who
died for thee !

Copies may be obtained from
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