

67 OUT OF EGYPT

To Egypt's king who ruled beside
The reedy river's flow,
Came God's command, "Release, O king,
And let my people go."

The king's proud heart grew hard apace;
He marked the suppliant throng,
And said, "Nay, they must here abide;
The weak must serve the strong."

Straightway the Lord stretched forth his hand,
And every stream ran blood;
The river swept towards the sea --
A full ensanguined flood.

The haughty king beheld the land,
By plagues afflicted sore,
But, as God's wonders multiplied,
Hardened his heart the more;

Until the angel of the Lord
Came on the wings of Night,
And smote the first-born of man and beast,
In his destructive flight.

Throughout all Egypt, not a house
Was spared this crowning woe.
Then broke the tyrant's stubborn will;
He bade the people go.

They gathered up their flocks and herds,
Rejoicing to be free;
And, going forth, a might host,
Encamped beside the sea.

Then Pharaoh's heart repented him;
He called a mighty force,
And swiftly followed on their track,
With chariot and with horse.

Then Israel's host were sore afraid;
But God was on their side,
And, lo! for them a way is cleft, --
The Red-sea waves divide.

At God's command the restless waves
Obey the prophet's rod;
And, through the middle of the sea,
The people marched dry-shod.

But, when the spoilers, following close,
Would hinder Israel's flight,
The waters to their course return,
The parted waves unite.

And Pharaoh's host is swept away, --
The chariots and the horse;
And not a man is left alive
Of all that mighty force.

So in these days God looks from heaven,
And marks his servants' woe;
Hear ye his voice: "Break every yoke,
And let my people go!"

For them the Red-sea waves divide,
The streams with crimson flow;
Therefore we mourn for our first-born; --
Then let the people go.

They are not weak whom God befriends,
He makes their cause His own;
And they who fight against God's might
Shall surely be o'erthrown.

Sources:

Boston Transcript, November 16, 1864.

Grand'ther Baldwin's Thanksgiving, 1875.

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