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Armenia Immolata



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Edward S. Steele

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## ARMENIA IMMOLATA..



**H**O YE! Ho ye! all Europe, ho!  
Ye Nations hear and patronize!  
Unequalled realistic show  
On the World stage we advertise!  
Our repertoire will render flat  
Your little operas and plays,  
Your wagers of the ball and bat,  
Your hunting rides, and all the craze  
Of wheel and sail on land and main—  
Yea, even tame the bulls of Spain!  
Revival ours of classic sports,  
Now with a brilliance to be seen  
Which, should it reach the heavenly courts,  
Would turn the eyes of Nero green!  
To-day comes forth the Turkish beast,  
Three days kept hungry in his den,  
On the Armenian slave to feast,  
Who meets him arm-ed with a pen!  
Sure we shall win your approbation,—  
There, France and Russia on the right—

The cost not a consideration;—

The Triple Friends shall have the sight  
Here from the left, and in the center

Let Britain spread her cloth of gold!  
All in between ye small folk enter—

America shall stand and scold!  
Now all right merrily shall chime.

Ye knightly gentlemen, compose  
Your little quarrels for the time;  
Somewhat to reason each man owes,  
And to the general happiness;

Your feuds shall suffer no abate  
For an altruistical recess.

Now come ye all and come in state!

## II.

Forthwith the powers and dignities

Proclaim a truce of God, and seek  
Through all their ancient treasuries

A garb of pattern true antique.  
Not easy sits the classic mode

Upon the tender modern frame,  
And some do chafe beneath their load,

Some bear it with a look of shame.  
Soon over all the games prevail,

Right well the beast doth play his part;

So doth the martyr, too—each wail  
Sounds as it issued from the heart!

III.

Meanwhile out of that inner heat  
That thrills anon the human kind  
And rends the cold, incrusting sheet  
Of stale traditions, lies enshrined,  
Accords of jealous interest,  
Hatreds of race, and bastard rights,  
And every influence unblest  
The bloom of human love that blights—  
Out of the soul's hot inner cell  
Breaks forth implacable a curse,  
The curse of him who loveth well—  
Of all the curses none is worse.

IV.

Accurs-ed be all they that hate  
Their brother, so to serve their God!  
Soon had I cursed thy name, O Fate,  
Had I not seen thee ready shod,  
The besom in thy seasoned hand,  
To sweep six centuries of the Turk  
Out of a desecrated land!  
Woe be to him who stays thy work!

Yea, woe unto the recreant tribe  
That hath no legion for the Lord;  
That for a warrior sends a scribe  
To palter with a prodigal ward!  
Where is your manhood, O ye States?  
Ye Governments that govern down  
All in the soul that elevates!  
Ye hypocrites who, prudent, frown  
On sympathy that warms the breast,  
And boast you of the devilish grace,  
Save in the name of interest  
Ye meddle with your neighbors not!  
Ten fleets to guard a gilded pot,  
Not one to lift a bruised race!

V.

Time was when power of sentiment  
Fired Europe with a frenzied zeal;  
The stars out of their courses went  
For what the Christian heart did feel.  
Then babes with mail-ed knights did vie  
To rescue from the Infidel  
The place where once their Lord did lie,  
A rended shroud, an empty shell.  
Fanatics were they, minds distraught;  
And yet meseems did body there

Some energy of noble thought,  
Some prescience of a holy care  
Of man for man, to be fulfilled  
As man grows more and symbol less,  
And sympathy no more is killed  
By creed's intolerable duress—  
By the duress of creed and greed  
And race and rank and worn-out codes.  
Awake, O Man, and find thee freed!  
Stand up from under thy brute loads!  
Be thou thyself and claim descent  
From the eternal Great and True!  
Were but some dawning glimmer lent  
Thy mind of what thou art and who,  
Thy spirit with amaze should sink  
And sit astonished one whole day,  
Then from the vision new life drink,  
And, casting its dead past away,  
Rise in a glowing golden youth  
To share the omnipotence of love,  
The immortality of truth!  
The quick ideal thy choice should move,  
And not the fossiled precedent;  
Reason set free should free the heart,  
And with thy being's full consent,  
Thy powers no longer vainly spent,  
Shouldst thou fulfill thy natal part!

VI.

In vain! in vain! I learned erewhile  
    Man rises not on high with wings,  
But creeps the circuit of a mile  
    To rise a foot in spiritual things.  
Even so, O Christian man! are still  
    Too few of tutoring leagues behind  
To set thee on the little hill  
    Where common justice rules the mind,  
Where plain humanity has sway—  
    Yea, even on some level higher,  
Where pity doth her weeping stay,  
    And love offended lights a fire  
That heateth judgment seven times hot  
    Against the bigot's cruel ire,  
Which love or reason toucheth not?  
    By Heaven! hast thou no heart as yet,  
I'd think thy nerves would set thee wild  
    At sight of rapine without let,  
Of slaughtered man and maid defiled,  
    Of homeless mother, starving child,  
And of a patriotic race  
    Crushed in its ancient dwelling place!

## VII.

In one regard I plainly see  
Thou hast betimes great progress made;  
Religious prejudice for thee  
Hath in its sepulcher been laid.  
It grieves thee not that they who praise  
A prophet whom thou countest none,  
Afflict a land, from ancient days  
Holding the faith which is thine own.  
But pride thee not in progress such;  
It is the progress of disease,  
That holds thee in its numbing clutch  
And soon thy vital parts shall freeze.  
If thou wert truly tolerant  
Thy blood within thy veins would boil  
That creed, the worst or best, should plant  
Its foot on an unwilling soil.  
It is not breadth but policy  
That holdeth back the avenging hand;  
Of all the Turks the worst is he  
Of Christian name in Christian land.

## VIII.

O Europe! O America!  
If ye but knew this fatal day!  
If ye could read the eternal law  
Now at the parting of the way!

If ye, beholding thus distressed  
    This pilgrim, leave him here to die,  
Ye are his murderers confessed,  
    The guilt upon your souls will lie.  
T'will follow you through many a year,  
    Corrupting the sweet tides of life,  
Now in insidious blight appear,  
    And now break forth in horrid strife.  
T'will nullify religion's claims,  
    T'will mar your literature and art;  
T'will choke society's best aims,  
    To greed new energy impart.  
Nor even so shall ye evade  
    The dreaded specter of the East;  
Until by right or ruin laid  
    It shall intrude into your feast.  
But if ye do the deed of men  
    And save your brother here half-killed,  
Then shall ye be as born again,  
    Your life with upward impulse filled.  
Your better selves once shaken free  
    Will loath submit to other chains;  
And from your deed of charity,  
    Your own shall be the larger gains.

IX.

O friends of peace, dear brethren mine,  
Me of your inner circle name,  
Unless the peace which you design  
With anarchy is one and same.  
It is not war but government  
When justice wields the avenging sword;  
And force in name of justice spent  
Is oil on troubled waters poured.  
Where reason is let reason rule,  
And law where men submit to laws;  
But with the cutthroat 'tis a fool  
Attempts to arbitrate his cause.  
Nor ends responsibility  
Within the nation's narrow close;  
The world is one community,  
Each state to all allegiance owes.  
And who hath power and doth neglect  
To rescue from the oppressor's hand  
The wronged of any race or sect  
In Christian or in pagan land—  
Who hath the power and lends not aid  
Doth sin against the primal right,  
Which man not Turk nor Frank hath made  
But citizen cosmopolite!

X.

What doeth the Turk in power still  
As ends the nineteenth century?  
Lacks aught of shame his cup to fill  
Of unassuaged iniquity?  
Lacks aught of cruelty and blood?  
Lacks aught of treachery and lies?  
Lacks aught of crime 'gainst womanhood?  
Lacks mad fanaticism that plies  
All villainies in Allah's name?  
And what redeeming deed or trait  
Stands out to mitigate this blame?  
On what kind thought does Justice wait?  
What seeds of omen good may hide  
Deep in the Turkish breast, God knows;  
Scarce will they spring while rampant pride  
Yields ever fresh return of woes.  
Meanwhile thy lightsome hopes to plead,  
The cause of justice to defer,  
Makes thee a partner well agreed  
In the ensuing massacre.  
Nor will thy pennyworth of food,  
Dispensed with ne'er so pitying dole,  
The ruin of a race make good,  
Or take the curse from off thy soul.

Master, I pray thee look upon  
    This vexed youth, my only son;  
Behold, a spirit taketh him  
    And suddenly he crieth out;  
It bruiseeth every manly limb  
    And ceaseless harrieth him about—  
Now flingeth him into the fire,  
    Now dasheth him upon the earth;  
And plagued with these afflictions dire,  
    'Twere better he had wanted birth.  
And thy disciples did I ask  
    To cast this grievous demon out;  
They could not do so hard a task,  
    And left our minds of thee in doubt.  
But now, canst thou do anything,  
    Let thy compassion lead thee on;  
Have pity and deliverance bring  
    To this my torn and pining son!

















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