

MOSES IN THE BULRUSHES.

PERSONS OF THE DRAMA.

HEBREW WOMEN.

JOCHEBED, *Mother of Moses.*

MIRIAM, *his Sister, a Prophetess.*

EGYPTIANS.

The PRINCESS, *King Pharaoh's Daughter.*

MELITA; *and other Attendants.*

SCENE—*On the Banks of the Nile.*

The Subject is taken from the Second Chapter of the Book of Exodus.

PART I.

JOCHEBED, MIRIAM.

JOCHEBED.

WHY was my pray'r accepted? why did Heav'n
In anger hear me, when I ask'd a son?
Ye dames of Egypt! ye triumphant mothers!
You no imperial tyrant marks for ruin!
You are not doom'd to see the babes you bore,
The babes you fondly nurture, bleed before you!
You taste the transports of a mother's love,
Without a mother's anguish! wretched Israel!
Can I forbear to mourn the different lot
Of thy sad daughters!—Why did God's own hand
Rescue his chosen race by Joseph's care?
Joseph! th' elected instrument of Heav'n,
Decreed to save illustrious Abraham's sons,
What time the famine rag'd in Canaan's land,
Israel, who then was spared, must perish now!
Thou great mysterious Pow'r, who hast involv'd
Thy wise decrees in darkness, to perplex
The pride of human wisdom, to confound
The daring scrutiny, and prove the faith

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MOSES IN THE BULRUSHES:

Of thy presuming creatures! hear me now!
O vindicate thy honour; clear this doubt,
Teach me to trace this maze of Providence!
Why save the fathers, if the sons must perish?

MIRIAM.

Ah me, my mother! whence these floods of grief?

JOCHEBED.

My son, my son! I cannot speak the rest,
Ye that have sons can only know my fondness!
Ye who have lost them, or who fear to lose,
Can only know my pangs! none else can guess them.
A mother's sorrows cannot be conceiv'd
But by a mother—Would I were not one!

MIRIAM.

With earnest pray'rs thou didst request this son,
And Heaven has granted him.

JOCHEBED.

O sad estate
Of human wretchedness! so weak is man,
So ignorant and blind, that did not God
Sometimes withhold in mercy what we ask,
We should be ruin'd at our own request.

Too well thou know'st, my child, the stern decree,
Of Egypt's cruel king, hard-hearted Pharaoh;
"That every male of Hebrew mother born
"Must die." Oh! do I live to tell it thee?
Must die a bloody death! My child, my son,
My youngest born, my darling must be slain!

MIRIAM.

The helpless innocent! and must he die?

A SACRED DRAMA.

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JOCHEBED.

No: if a mother's tears, a mother's prayers,
A mother's fond precautions can prevail,
He shall not die. I have a thought, my Miriam,
And sure the God of mercies who inspir'd,
Will bless the secret purpose of my soul,
To save his precious life.

MIRIAM.

Hop'st thou that Pharaoh—

JOCHEBED.

I have no hope in Pharaoh, much in God;
Much in the ROCK OF AGES.

MIRIAM.

Think, O think,
What perils thou already hast incur'd;
And shun the greater which may yet remain.
Three months, three dangerous months, thou hast pre-
serv'd
Thy infant's life, and in thy house conceal'd him!
Should Pharaoh know!

JOCHEBED.

Oh! let the tyrant know,
And feel what he inflicts! Yes, hear me, Heav'n!
Send thy right aiming thunderbolts—But hush,
My impious murmurs! Is it not thy will;
Thou, infinite in mercy? Thou permitt'st
This seeming evil for some latent good.
Yes, I will laud thy grace, and bless thy goodness,
For what I have, and not arraign thy wisdom
For what I fear to lose. Oh, I will bless thee

And, at his bidding, winds and seas are calm:
In him, not in an arm of flesh I trust;
In him, whose promise never yet has fail'd,
I place my confidence.

MIRIAM.

What must I do?
Command thy daughter; for thy words have wak'd
An holy boldness in my youthful breast.

JOCHEBED.

Go then, my MIRIAM, go, and take the infant,
Buried in harmless slumbers there he lies:
Let me not see him—spare my heart that pang.
Yet sure, one little look may be indulg'd,
And I may feast my fondness with his smiles,
And snatch one last, last kiss.—No more, my heart;
That rapture would be fatal—I should keep him,
I could not doom to death the babe I clasp'd:—
Did ever mother kill her sleeping boy?
I dare not hazard it—The task be thine.
Oh! do not wake my child; remove him softly;
And gently lay him on the river's brink.

MIRIAM.

Did those magicians, whom the sons of Egypt
Consult and think all-potent, join their skill;
And was it great as Egypt's sons believe;
Yet all their secret wizard arts combin'd,
To save this little ark of bulrushes,
Thus fearfully exposed, could not effect it:
Their spells, their incantations, and dire charms
Could not preserve it.

JOCHEBED.

Know this ark is charm'd
With incantations Pharaoh ne'er employ'd;
With spells which impious Egypt never knew:
With invocations to the living God,
I twisted every slender reed together,
And with a pray'r did ev'ry ozie weave.

MIRIAM.

I go.

JOCHEBED.

Yet ere thou go'st, observe me well;
When thou hast laid him in his wat'ry bed,
Oh leave him not; but at a distance wait,
And mark what Heaven's high will determines for
him.

Lay him among the flags on yonder beach,
Just where the royal gardens meet the Nile.
I dare not follow him, Suspicion's eye
Would note my wild demeanour! MIRIAM, yes,
The mother's fondness would betray the child.
Farewell! God of my fathers, oh protect him!

PART II.

Enter MIRIAM, after having deposited the Child.

YES, I have laid him in his wat'ry bed,
His wat'ry grave, I fear!—I tremble still;
It was a cruel task—still I must weep!
But ah! my mother! who shall sooth thy griefs!
The flags and sea-weeds will awhile sustain
Their precious load; but it must sink ere long!
Sweet babe, farewell! yet think not I will leave thee;
No, I will watch thee till the greedy waves
Devour thy little bark; I'll sit me down,
And sing to thee, sweet babe; thou canst not hear,
But 'twill amuse me, while I watch thy fate.

[She sits down on a Bank and sings,

SONG.

Thou, who canst make the feeble strong,
O God of Israel, hear my song!
Not mine such notes as Egypt's daughters raise;
'Tis thee, O God of Hosts, I strive to praise.

Ye winds, the servants of the Lord,
Ye waves, obedient to his word,
Oh spare the babe committed to your trust;
And Israel shall confess the Lord is just!

Tho' doom'd to find an early grave,
This infant, Lord, thy power can save;
And he, whose death's decreed by Pharaoh's hand,
May rise a prophet to redeem the land.

[She rises and looks out.

What female form bends hitherward her steps,
Of royal port she seems; perhaps some friend,
Rais'd by the guardian care of bounteous Heaven,
To prop the falling house of Levi.—Soft!
I'll listen unperceiv'd; these trees will hide me.

[She stands behind.

*Enter the PRINCESS of EGYPT, attended by a
train of Ladies.*

PRINCESS.

No farther, Virgins; here I mean to rest,
To taste the pleasant coolness of the breeze;
Perhaps to bathe in this translucent stream.
Did not our holy law* enjoin th' ablation
Frequent and regular, it still were needful
To mitigate the fervours of our clime.
Melita, stay—the rest at distance wait.

[They all go out, except one.

The PRINCESS looks out.

Sure, or I much mistake, or I perceive,
Upon the sedgy margin of the Nile
A chest, entangled in the reeds it seems:
Discern'st thou aught?

* The ancient Egyptians used to wash their bodies four times every twenty-four hours.

MELITA.

Something, but what I know not.

PRINCESS.

Go, and examine what this sight may mean.

[Exit Maid.]

MIRIAM behind.

O blest, beyond my hopes! he is discovered;
My brother will be sav'd! who is this stranger?
Ah! 'tis the Princess, cruel Pharaoh's daughter.
If she resemble her inhuman sire,
She must be cruel too; yet fame reports her
Most merciful and mild.—Great Lord of all,
By whose good spirit bounteous thoughts are given
And deeds of love perform'd—be gracious now,
And touch her soul with mercy!

Re-enter MELITA.

PRINCESS.

Well, Melita!

Hast thou discover'd what the vessel is?

MELITA.

Oh, Princess, I have seen the strangest sight!
Within the vessel lies a sleeping babe,
A fairer infant have I never seen!

PRINCESS.

Who knows but some unhappy Hebrew woman
Has thus expos'd her infant, to evade
The stern decree of my too cruel sire.
Unhappy mothers! oft my heart has bled

In secret anguish o'er your slaughter'd sons;
Powerless to save, yet hating to destroy.

MELITA.

Should this be so, my Princess knows the danger.

PRINCESS.

No danger should deter from acts of mercy.

MIRIAM behind.

A thousand blessings on her princely head!

PRINCESS.

Too much the sons of Jacob have endur'd
From royal Pharaoh's unrelenting hate;
Too much our house has crush'd their alien race.
Is't not enough that cruel task-masters
Grind them by hard oppression? not enough
That iron bondage bows their spirits down?
Is't not enough my sire his greatness owes,
Those structures which the world with wonder views,
His palaces, his fanes magnificent,
To much insulted Israel's patient race?
To them his growing cities owe their splendour;
Their toils fair Rameses and Pythom built;
And shall we fill the measure of our crimes,
And crown our guilt with murder? and shall I
Sanction the sin I hate?—forbid it, mercy!

MELITA.

I know thy royal father fears the strength
Of this still growing race, who flourish more
The more they are oppress'd: he dreads their num-
bers.

PRINCESS.

Apis forbid! Pharaoh afraid of Israel!
Yet should this outcast race, this hapless people
E'er grow to such a formidable greatness,
(Which all the gods avert whom Egypt worships),
This infant's life can never serve their cause,
Nor can his single death prevent their greatness.

MELITA.

Trust not to that vain hope. By weakest means
And most unlikely instruments, full oft
Are great events produc'd. This rescu'd child
Perhaps may live to serve his upstart race
More than an host.

PRINCESS.

How ill does it beseem

Thy tender years and gentle womanhood,
To steel thy breast to pity's sacred touch!
So weak, so unprotected is our sex,
So constantly expos'd, so very helpless,
That did not Heav'n itself enjoin compassion,
Yet human policy should make us kind,
Lest in the rapid turn of Fortune's wheel,
We live to need the pity we refuse.
Yes, I will save him—Mercy, thou hast conquer'd!
Lead on—and from the rushes we'll remove
The feeble ark which cradles this poor babe,

[The Princess and her Maid go out.]

MIRIAM comes forward.

How poor were words to speak my boundless joy,

The Princess will protect him! bless her, Heav'n!

[She looks out after the Princess, and describes her action.]

With what impatient steps she seeks the shore!
Now she approaches where the ark is laid!
With what compassion, with what angel sweetness,
She bends to look upon the infant's face!
She takes his little hand in hers—he wakes—
She smiles upon him—hark, alas! he cries—
Weep on, sweet babe, weep on till thou hast touch'd
Each chord of pity, waken'd every sense
Of melting sympathy, and stol'n her soul!
She takes him in her arms—O lovely Princess!
How goodness heightens beauty! now she clasps him
With fondness to her heart—she gives him now
With tender caution to her damsel's arms:
She points her to the palace, and again
This way the princess bends her gracious steps;
The virgin train retire and bear the child.

Re-enter the PRINCESS.

PRINCESS.

Did ever innocence and infant beauty
Plead with such dumb but powerful eloquence?
If I, a stranger, feel these soft emotions,
What must the mother who expos'd him feel!
Go, fetch a woman of the Hebrew race,
That she may nurse the babe;—And, by her garb,
Lo, such a one is here!

MIRIAM.

Princess, all hail!

Forgive the bold intrusion of thy servant,
Who stands a charm'd spectator of thy goodness.

PRINCESS.

I have redeem'd an infant from the waves,
Whom I intend to nurture as mine own.

MIRIAM.

My transport will betray me! [*aside*] Gen'rous Prin-
cess!

PRINCESS.

Know'st thou a matron of the Hebrew race
To whom I may confide him?

MIRIAM.

Well I know

A prudent matron of the house of Levi;
Her name is Jochebed, the wife of Amram;
Of gentle manners, fam'd throughout her tribe
For soft humanity; full well I know
That she will rear him with a mother's love,
[*Aside.*] Oh! truly spoke! a mother's love indeed!
To her despairing arms I mean to give
This precious trust! the nurse shall be the mother!

PRINCESS.

With speed conduct this matron to the palace.
Yes, I will raise him up to princely greatness,
And he shall be my son; I'll have him train'd
By choicest sages, in the deepest lore
Of Egypt's sapient sons; his name be *Moses*,
For I have drawn him from the perilous flood.

[*They go out. She kneels.*]

Thou, Great Unseen! who causest gentle deeds,

And smil'st on what thou causest; thus I bless thee!
That thou didst deign consult the tender make
Of yielding human hearts, when thou ordain'dst
Humanity a virtue!—didst not make it
A rigorous exercise to counteract
Some strong desire within; to war and fight
Against the powers of Nature: but didst bend
The natural bias of the soul to mercy:
Then mad'st that mercy duty! Gracious Pow'r!
Mad'st the keen rapture exquisite as right;
Beyond the joys of sense; as pleasure sweet,
As reason vigorous, and as instinct strong!

PART III.

Enter JOCHEBED.

I've almost reach'd the place—with cautious steps
I must approach the spot where he is laid,
Lest from the royal gardens any 'spy me.
—Poor babe! ere this the pressing calls of hunger
Have broke thy short repose; the chilling waves,
Ere this, have drench'd thy little shivering limbs.
What must my babe have suffer'd—no one sees me,
But soft, does no one listen?—Ah, how hard,
How very hard for fondness to be prudent!
Now is the moment to embrace and feed him.

[*She looks out.*]

Where's Miriam? she has left her little charge

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Perhaps through fear; perhaps she was detected!
How wild is thought! how terrible conjecture!
A mother's fondness frames a thousand fears,
With thrilling nerve feels every real ill,
And shapes imagin'd miseries into being.

[*She looks towards the river.*]

Ah me! where is he? soul-distracting sight;
He is not there—he's lost, he's gone, he's drown'd!
Toss'd by each beating surge my infant floats.
Cold, cold, and wat'ry is thy grave, my child!
Oh no—I see the ark—Transporting sight!

[*She goes towards it.*]

I have it here.—Alas, the ark is empty!
The casket's left, the precious gem is gone!
You spar'd him, pitying spirits of the deep;
But vain your mercy, some insatiate beast,
Cruel as Pharaoh, took the life you spar'd—
And I shall never, never see my boy!

Enter MIRIAM.

JOCHEBED.

Come and lament with me thy brother's loss!

MIRIAM.

Come and adore with me the God of Jacob!

JOCHEBED.

Miriam!—the child is dead!

MIRIAM.

He lives; he lives!

JOCHEBED.

Impossible—Oh, do not mock my grief!
Seest thou that empty vessel?

MIRIAM.

From that vessel
Th' Egyptian Princess took him.

JOCHEBED.

Pharaoh's daughter?
Then still he will be slain: a bloodier death
Will terminate his woes.

MIRIAM.

His life is safe!
For know, she means to rear him as her own.

JOCHEBED.

[*Falls on her knees in rapture.*]

To God, the Lord, the glory be ascrib'd!
Oh, magnified for ever be THY might
Who mock'st all human forethought! who o'errul'st
The hearts of sinners to perform thy work,
Defeating their own purpose; who canst plant
Unlook'd for mercy in a heathen's heart,
And from the depth of evil bring forth good!

[*She rises.*]

MIRIAM.

O blest event, beyond our warmest hopes!

JOCHEBED.

What! shall my son be nurtur'd in a court,
In princely grandeur bred? taught every art,
And ev'ry wondrous science Egypt knows?
Yet ah! I tremble, Miriam; should he learn
With Egypt's polished arts her baneful faith!
Oh, worse exchange for death! yes, should he learn,

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In yon proud palace to disown his hand
Who thus has sav'd him: should he e'er embrace
(As sure he will, if bred in Pharaoh's court)
The gross idolatries which Egypt owns,
Her graven images, her brutish gods;
Then shall I wish he had not been preserv'd
To shame his fathers and deny his faith.

MIRIAM.

Then to dispel thy fears, and crown thy joy,
Hear farther wonders—Know the gen'rous Princess
To thine own care thy darling child commits.

JOCHEBED.

Speak, while my joy will give me leave to listen!

MIRIAM.

By her commission'd, thou behold'st me here,
To seek a matron of the Hebrew race
To nurse him; thou, my mother, art that matron.
I said I knew thee well; that thou would'st rear him
E'en with a mother's fondness; she who bare him
(I told the Princess) would not love him more.

JOCHEBED.

Fountain of mercy! whose pervading eye
Can look within, and read what passes there,
Accept my thoughts for thanks; I have no words,
My soul o'erfraught with gratitude, rejects
The aid of language—Lord, behold my heart.

MIRIAM.

Yes, thou shalt pour into his infant mind
The purest precepts of the purest faith.

JOCHEBED.

Oh! I will fill his tender soul with virtue,
And warm his bosom with devotion's flame!
Aid me, celestial Spirit, with thy grace,
And be my labours with thy influence crown'd!
Without it they were vain. Then, then, my Miriam,
When he is furnish'd, 'gainst the evil day,
With God's whole armour,* girt with sacred truth,
And as a breastplate wearing righteousness;
Arm'd with the Spirit of God, the shield of faith,
And with the helmet of salvation crown'd;
Inur'd to watching, and dispos'd to pray'r;
Then may I send him to a dangerous court,
And safely trust him in a perilous world,
Too full of tempting snares and fond delusions!

MIRIAM.

May bounteous Heav'n thy pious cares reward!

JOCHEBED.

Oh, Amram! Oh, my husband! when thou com'st,
Wearied at night, to rest thee from the toils
Impos'd by haughty Pharaoh, what a tale
Have I to tell thee! Yes: thy darling son
Was lost, and is restored; was dead and lives!

MIRIAM.

How joyful shall we spend the live-long night
In praises to Jehovah! who thus mocks
All human foresight, and converts the means
Of seeming ruin into great deliverance.

* 2 Thess. v. Ephes. vi.

JOCHEBED.

Had not my child been doom'd to such strange
perils
As a fond mother trembles to recal,
He had not been preserv'd.

MIRIAM.

And mark still farther;
Had he been sav'd by any other hand,
He had been still expos'd to equal ruin.

JOCHEBED.

Then let us join to bless the hand of Heav'n,
That this poor outcast of the house of Israel,
Condemn'd to die by Pharaoh, kept in secret
By my advent'rous fondness; then expos'd
E'en by that very fondness which conceal'd him,
Is now, to fill the wondrous round of mercy,
Preserv'd from perishing by Pharaoh's daughter,
Sav'd by the very hand which sought to crush him!

Wise and unsearchable are all thy ways,
Thou GOD OF MERCIES!—Lead me to my child.

PART IV.

Enter JOCHEBED.

How does the dread of loss enhance a blessing!
Methinks I never lov'd my boy till now.
To HIM, who gives him back, I will restore
My rescued infant.

Enter MIRIAM.

Miriam, why this haste?
Elate thou seemest.

MIRIAM.

Suddenly my sense
Is wrapt in ecstasy.—What is't I see?
What visions of delight! what scenes to come!
That prescient spirit given me from on high,
Reveals the hidden things of unborn time,
And leads my view through dim futurity.
This favour'd infant is not snatch'd from death
Merely to sooth a mother's fond distress,
Nor solely to adorn the house of Levi.
An honour'd instrument of God, he's rais'd
For mighty purposes. He will be great
Beyond ambition's dream: renown'd beyond
All who have gone before him. He shall rule,
But not in Pharaoh's kingdom. Heaven forefend!
He shall be learn'd in all the policy,

The wisdom and the arts which Egypt boasts,
But not for Egypt's weal shall he employ
The science she shall teach him. He shall stand
Before Jehovah's face, shall hear his voice—
Familiar, as man with man holds converse,
Receive his high behests—shall teach mankind
All that they owe to God and to each other.
Knowledge and skill univall'd shall be his;
Honours the most remote in him shall meet;
Ruler and judge, prophet and lawgiver,
Deliverer and guide.

JOCHEBED.

What says my daughter?
O what am I, and what my father's house,
That I should be so bless'd!

MIRIAM.

Yes, he shall lead
The chosen people to the promis'd land,
But shall not enter it. Mysterious fate!—
God shall avenge thro' him the wrongs of Israel.
On Egypt he shall bring such varied woes
As fancy scarce can image: plague on plague.
Each new infliction heavier than the last:
All loathsome, all abhorr'd, detested things,
Follow'd by all that are most terrible;
Darkness and pestilence—her first-born slain,
With blood of her own sons her houses delug'd,
Blood-stain'd her streets, her rivers chang'd to blood.

JOCHEBED.

Ah me! what horrors, tho' on foes they fall!

But shall not Israel share in Egypt's woes?
It must—the plague selects not its sad objects,
Stops not to ask if its next hapless victim
Be heathen or believer.—Darkness too
Is dark to all. Th' impartial hand of death
Inquires not if the breast it means to pierce
Be friend or enemy.

MIRIAM.

Hush'd be thy fears.
Know, the destroying angel shall have charge
To spare God's favour'd people; to them also
The darkness shall be light, the night be day.
Then shall the harden'd monarch be dismay'd,
Shall vacillate, consent, forbid, resolve.
Thy son, the heav'n-taught guide, shall lead them
forth,
And perjur'd Pharaoh be constrain'd to loose
The galling chain of slavery.

JOCHEBED.

Blest event!
My country will be free, and my lov'd son
Jehovah's delegate! But why will God,
Supreme in mercy, harden the stern heart
Of the proud king?

MIRIAM.

God hardens no man's heart.
'Tis not HIS work; he does no more than leave it
To its own callous nature; if his grace
Be once withdrawn, the hard grows harder still.

JOCHEBED.

As the withdrawing of the sun's warm beams,
Leaving the chill wave to its natural temper,
Congeals the liquid stream.

MIRIAM.

E'en so, my mother.

JOCHEBED.

Protect thy people, Lord, and spare my son!

MIRIAM.

Ah! what successive scenes in order pass!
I see all Israel march. Ah, glorious vision!
Myriads! A moving nation! Moses leads.
Here, manly vigour marches in the van;
There, female weakness follows as it may:
Here helpless childhood, there decrepid age!
Now they advance! patient, they cheer each other.
What do I see? tho' indistinct, I see it!
A moving pillar marches with our bands;
A pillar dark at noon, at midnight light:
By day a cloud to shade the fainting hosts,
By night a fire to guide them on their way.

JOCHEBED.

Miriam! thy visage changes. What alarms thee?

MIRIAM.

Ah me! they move no longer, ocean stands
Direct in front, barrier invincible!
No friendly vessel to conduct them o'er.
What refuge now is left! for on their rear
Pharaoh and his vast hordes pursue their flight:

The sea before, the enemy behind,
And Pi-hahiroth's lofty mountains stand
Close on each side, impossible to scale.

JOCHEBED.

Nothing remains.

MIRIAM.

Omnipotence remains.
They look before, behind, on either side;
Where shall they turn for succour? they look up!
They look to Him to whom none look in vain.
The ocean stop them? No. It stops them not.
O prodigy! what sights incredible
Crowd on my mental eye! Near and more near
The ranks are driv'n to sea-ward. O the transport,
The flood divides—the parted waves recede.
A solid wall is form'd on either side:
Firm, dry, and safe the intervening space.

JOCHEBED.

But dare they venture on?

MIRIAM.

Yes! they dare venture.
The fearless Hebrews trust the miracle:
With holy confidence their bands advance.
They find an easy passage through the deep—
They touch the farther shore. How loud their joy!
But still the foe pursues.

JOCHEBED.

And have they 'scap'd
The ocean's rage to fall by that of man?

MIRIAM.

Arm'd at all points see Egypt's sons advance!
They reach the open passage.

JOCHEBED.

All is lost.

MIRIAM.

But what suspends their progress? Something stays
them;

Slow, and more slow, their lagging motion seems.
Their chariot-wheels drive heavily along.
They stop; they're moveless. Now, O extasy!
The reflux waters haste to meet again!
They close above their heads! Egypt, ingulph'd,
Is lost to sight:—the rider and his horse
Together sink—they sink—they rise no more.

JOCHEBED.

Can this be realiz'd?

MIRIAM.

It can, it will.

'Tis great; but great is HE whose will controls it.
Methinks I hear the shouts of victory,
I hear triumphant Moses' grateful song!
Thou art our strength, O Lord! the work is thine,
Thine is the power, and thine be all the praise;
Pharaoh is sunk—his chariots and his host
Plung'd in the dark abyss! As lead they sank.
To save the sons of favour'd Jacob's race,
The flood, no longer liquid, stood congeal'd,
The crystal wall stood firm, as Israel pass'd:
When Egypt came, the crystal wall dissolv'd.
Thou didst stretch forth Thy hand, and Moses pass'd:

Thou didst stretch forth Thy hand, and Pharaoh
sank!

Lord! who among the gods is like to Thee?
Fearful in praises, wonderful in power,
Glorious in holiness! thou great I AM!
What mighty marvels Thy right hand has wrought!
Thy hand pre-eminent! Thou art my God!
And all I have is thine; my father's God!
Thy name I will exalt; 'tis Thou hast conquer'd.
See Pharaoh's captains perish with his host!
The horse and rider meet one common fate.
The depths have cover'd them! they sink together.
Vainly they boasted—"Though the slaves escape,
Yet we will follow them, o'ertake, and crush them."

JOCHEBED.

How should a worm contend against his God?

MIRIAM.

Not Pharaoh, nor his captains; not the sea,
With all the perils of his roaring waves;
Nor Pi-hahiroth's mountains capt with clouds,
Can aught obstruct while God is on our side.
O let the nations hear, the heathen tremble,
The people wail, let Palestine go weep!
Thou hast redeem'd thy chosen from the grasp
Of hard oppression. Thou shalt bring them out,
And firmly plant them in thy holy place.
Thy purchas'd people shall inhabit there,
The mount of thine inheritance!

JOCHEBED.

My daughter!

Thy spirit sinks beneath the mighty impulse.

MIRIAM.

Again! my mother! heard I not the shouts,
The song of victory? I too shall join it!
Yes, Miriam's feeble voice shall aid the chorus,
And swell the hymn of triumph. Israel's daughters
With songs and timbrels shall prolong the strain.

JOCHEBED.

O thy prophetic mind! what wonders fill it!

MIRIAM.

This is not all. The wonder is to come!
This land of promise, wealthy Canaan's land,
Where Israel, after many a painful toil,
Shall finally have rest; this place of blessings
Only prefigures that eternal rest
Reserv'd for God's true servants, those who fought
The fight of faith on earth. Hear further wonders:
Moses, though great, is but the type of ONE
Far greater; ONE predestin'd to redeem
Not Israel only, but the human race;
ONE who in after time shall rescue men,
Not from the body's slav'ry, the brief bondage
Of life and time; but who shall burst the chains
Which keep the soul enthral'd, the chains of sin;
Shall free the captive from the galling yoke
Of Satan; rescue from eternal death,
And finally restore, Man's ruin'd race.

Note.—The Author is fearful that she may be thought, in this last part, to have exceeded the bounds of poetical licence. For though Miriam, in the chapter which contains the Song of Moses,* is called a prophetess; and though the prophet Micah, in his sixth chapter, speaks of Miriam as assisting jointly with her brothers, Moses and Aaron, in the redemption of Israel from captivity, yet we hear little or nothing of her elsewhere in her prophetic character.

* Exodus, xv.

DAVID AND GOLIATH.

A Sacred Drama.

O bienheureux mille fois,
L'Enfant que le Seigneur aime,
Qui de bonne heure entend sa voix,
Et que ce Dieu daigne instruire lui-même!
Loin du monde élevé; de tous les dons des Cieux,
Il est orné des sa naissance;
Et du méchant l'abord contagieux
N'altère point son innocence.

Athalie.