

**VERSES,
BY THE WAY**

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Verses, by the way by John Page Hopps

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JOHN PAGE HOPPS

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By the ~~Rev.~~

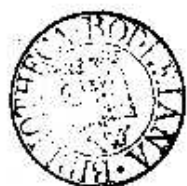
BY

JOHN PAGE HOPPS.

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OF BEAUTY.

“ALL things are beautiful,” the wise man said,—
“All things in their own time, are beautiful,”—
All that God makes, or does, or teaches us.
As Moses saw the bush that burn’d with fire,
So they who love and wait for Him shall see
His glory shining still in every place,
Where God instructs us as on holy ground,—
Where nothing that is common is unclean.

All life is beautiful :—the shifting cloud,—
The gliding river with its waving reeds,—
The opening buds that string with beads of green
The grim, weird, boughs that winter had despoiled,—
The lily’s stem, thrust from the yielding soil,—
The gentle flowers that turn with conscious need
To fill their censers where all sweets do lie,—
The bright young eyes that shame our sadder gaze,—
The ship far out at sea, with graceful sail

Throbbing against the silvery, morning light,
Like some fond dove with wings outspread for home,—
The never-silent, ever-sounding, sea,—
Its grand old psalm, now loud and terrible
Like furious battle-cry, now softly breath'd
Like whisper'd vow, or gentlest hymn of praise,—
The music of the dear old forest trees,—
The glorious harpings 'mid the stately pines,
Standing for ever true, for praise or prayer,—
The whispers, sweet and sad, that careless feet
May win from oak leaves that have had their day,
And music make, both when they slowly fall
And gently lie, needing no burial,—
The wondrous orb that can behold all this,
And that most awful mind, or greater soul
Whose dread and high prerogative it is
To reverence Him who built the stedfast heavens,
Like some bright temple-roof begemmed with stars,
And spread, beneath, so fair a temple floor,
That men and babes might kneel and worship Him.

But He who made us loves to manifest
Himself, not only in the outward things
His hands have fashioned or His care preserved,

But in the hopes and fears and thoughts of men ;
 Till His Eternal Beauty even shines
 Where only human frailty seems to be :—
 The brightness of the Father's glory seen,
 Fairest, in that dear Son who knew so well
 Our earthly path, our woes, and heavy care,
 To teach us that the Majesty of Heaven
 Does not disdain our earthly burdens sore,
 Our trivial sorrows, or our human needs.
 Thus all the common life of man receives
 An undertone of music, since it manifests
 Not man and earth alone, but God and Heaven.

All strength is beautiful that roots itself
 In God, the strong and true :—the Father's arm
 Sheltering the shrinking, trusting, little one,—
 A mother's awful love confronting greed,
 Or lust, or wrong, to save her own from harm,—
 The barren rock—storm batter'd solitude—
 An Eden fair, to struggling, shipwrecked men
 Who feel its strength beneath their trembling feet,—
 The unfailing blue,—the eternal stars, that stay
 When clouds depart and earth's poor shadows flee ;
 And, over all, the immortal face that looks

For ever on the changing ways of men.

But, none the less, is weakness beautiful :—
The head that learns to bend—the hand to lean,—
The chastened heart that comes home sorrowful
With that which gives a pathos to the tongue,—
The poor pale face that teaches men to bow,
And temper voice and thought to gentleness,—
And children, young, who lie at Heaven's gate,
And slowly, faintly, look and enter in.

And peace is beautiful :—the quiet sky
When storms are hush'd and the dear sun returns
Like some fond mother to the sorry heart,
To kiss the weeping world the cruel winds
Had all too rudely torn, and turn her grief
To shining laughter—laughing through her tears,—
The peaceful woods, far from the dreams of men,
Where dwell realities that men call dreams,—
The faces of the children in their sleep,
Tired with the pleasures of the garish day,
The sweet wild violets in their little hands,
The perfume of the woods and meadows green,
Still lingering faintly in their golden hair.

Comfort is beautiful :—the low-breathed words
Of him who comes when hope is dark and dead,—
The mother's pity that does not disdain
The trivial sorrows of her little child,—
The utterance, calm, of true high-priest who brings
The heavenly meaning of our earthly care :
For humblest faces then transfigured are
When, bending low to pour the healing word
Into the hearts of sad and sorry men,
They find "the angel of His presence" there.

O Thou ! on whose illimitable might
All lesser lights and lower gifts depend—
Who art the Fountain of our noblest powers
And Source of all that fair or holy is,—
To Thee, O Lord ! we lift beseeching hands,
And, from our sad unworthiness and gloom,
Cry, as the blind who sat beside the way
When once The Light past by and heard their prayer.
Behold, O Lord !—their cry is ours : that we,
Receiving sight, may know ourselves and Thee,
And dwell as sons at home, for evermore.