

# **THE WIND AND THE WHIRLWIND**

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The Wind and the Whirlwind by Wilfrid Scawen Blunt

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BY

WILFRID SCAWEN BLUNT

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*THE WIND AND THE WHIRLWIND.*

1

I HAVE a thing to say. But how to say it ?

I have a cause to plead. But to what ears ?

How shall I move a world by lamentation—

A world which heeded not a Nation's tears ?

2

How shall I speak of justice to the aggressors,—

Of right to Kings whose rights include all wrong,—

Of truth to Statecraft, true but in deceiving,—

Of peace to Prelates, pity to the Strong ?



*THE WIND AND THE WHIRLWIND.*

3

Where shall I find a hearing? In high places?

The voice of havock drowns the voice of good.

On the throne's steps? The elders of the nation

Rise in their ranks and call aloud for blood.

4

Where? In the street? Alas for the world's reason!

Not Peers not Priests alone this deed have done.

The clothes of those high Hebrews stoning Stephen

Were held by all of us,—ay every one.

5

Yet none the less I speak. Nay, here by Heaven

This task at least a poet best may do,—

To stand alone against the mighty many,

To force a hearing for the weak and few.

6

*THE WIND AND THE WHIRLWIND.*

6

Unthanked, unhonoured,—yet a task of glory,—  
Not in his day, but in an age more wise,  
When those poor Chancellors have found their portion  
And lie forgotten in their dust of lies.

7

And who shall say that this year's cause of freedom  
Lost on the Nile has not as worthy proved  
Of poet's hymning as the cause which Milton  
Sang in his blindness or which Dante loved ?

8

The fall of Guelph beneath the spears of Valois,  
Freedom betrayed, the Ghibelline restored,  
—Have we not seen it, we who caused this anguish,  
Exile and fear proscription and the sword ?

7

*THE WIND AND THE WHIRLWIND.*

9

Or shall God less avenge in their wild valley

Where they lie slaughtered those poor sheep whose fold

In the grey twilight of our wrath we carried

To serve the worshippers of stocks and gold ?

10

This fails. That finds its hour. This fights. That falters.

Greece is stamped out beneath a Wolseley's heels.

Or Egypt is avenged of her long mourning,

And hurls her Persians back to their own keels.

11

'Tis not alone the victor who is noble.

'Tis not alone the wise man who is wise.

There is a voice of sorrow in all shouting,

And shame pursues not only him who flies.

8