

# POEMS

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Poems by Claude Lake

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**CLAUDE LAKE**

**POEMS**



*Emily Hurdson.*  
*Flora -*  
*Grandchild.*  
POEMS. *Aug. 1867.*

BY

CLAUDE LAKE.

LONDON:

ALFRED W. BENNETT, 5, BISHOPSGATE WITHOUT.

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1867.

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1867

TO

JOSEPH MAZZINI,

THE PROPHET, MARTYR, AND HERO,

*These Poems are Dedicated,*

IN UNDYING GRATITUDE AND REVERENCE.

## POEMS TO J. M.

### I.

#### THE TORRENT.

Oh torrent, roaring in thy giant fall,  
And thund'ring grandly o'er th' opposing blocks,  
Thy voice, far louder than the lion's call,  
Through trackless forests shakes the heart of rocks,  
Runs through the marrow of the earth with shocks,  
Lashes the clouds with terror, for they fly  
Along the high wide blue with streaming locks,  
And round thee foam white dazzling flashes high,  
And with forked water-flames half licks the central  
sky.

Oh, what a storm of waters ! Oh, what chasms  
Of foam ! what seething hills ! what whirling rain !  
Billows on billows press, though torn by spasms ;  
Wounded and bleeding, yet defying pain !  
They grapple with the stones, that gnash in vain  
Their cruel teeth, for smarting wounds they brave,  
And toss in scorn their wildly flowing mane,  
When with exulting cries big wave on wave  
Rolls with a mighty sweep o'er a slain foeman's grave.

Roll on, great torrent, with triumphal song,  
Through caverned cliff, through rock and mountain  
roll ;  
Force all the barriers that around thee throng,  
Thou know'st th' eternal ocean for thy goal.  
Hence thine impetuous rush, and roar, and roll ;  
Hence thy wild heavings as thou flow'st amain ;  
Hence thy far-reaching and tempestuous call  
For stream and river, brook and rill and rain,  
Thou on thy Titan breast would'st carry to the main.



Roll on ! The heavens are with thee, for they fling  
Their lovely rainbows round thy gleaming brow ;  
Rainbows, that like the crowns of heroes cling  
For ever round thee with their magic glow ;  
Or like the wondrous halo which will flow  
Around the martyr's head ; for those sweet hues,  
They hover round thee in thy weal and woe,  
Like love, that with its tender tears bedews  
And heals the bitter pain of ev'ry earthly bruise !

Roll on ! with a white heat upon thy way !  
Lo yon, a little tiny woodland bird  
Flits on wet wing through all the surf and spray,  
And settles on a jagged rock unscared,  
Round whose grim base a billowy din is heard ;  
A bright amazed ray from its black eyes  
It darts around, and listens not afeared—  
Then diamond-powdered to the woods it flies,  
And sings to forest ears the mighty melodies.

E'en thus *thou* art ! for that Titanic stream

But a material symbol was of thee !

A dim reflection of thy being did seem

Thou man, high-souled as son of man can be !

Into whose mind, vast, noble, pure, and free,

Flash awful revelations light-like in :

Unveiling spiritual laws to thee ;

Great central truths, that glow all life within,

That move the nations on, and make the planets  
spin.

Thou hero ! for through prejudice's walls,

That lock up earth against the quick'ning floods,

And 'gainst the fresh regenerating falls

Of young ideas, that in sprouting mood

Seethe like new wine, stirred by the grape's hot blood,

In the old bottles ; thou, oh, brave and bold !

Didst force thy way, crushing night's deathly brood,

As George the sainted, in the days of old—

The dragon, who beneath his footstep writhing roll'd.

Dragons, alas ! still darken the green earth,  
War with the good, the beautiful, the wise ;  
From gulfs of ancient night they've issued forth,  
And with their shadowy wings blot out the skies ;  
Old creeds that gasp forth curses, tyrannies  
All foul with feeding on their own decay,  
Old cramping forms, and crippling social lies,  
Whose venomous breathings with corruption slay,  
Like loathsome rattlesnakes that glut upon their  
prey.

But thou assail'st them, fearless, though they spurt  
Their reeking poison in thy smarting face ;  
And careless of thy bruises and thy hurt,  
Thou still press'st on with an undaunted pace ;  
A bold path-finder for the coming race,  
And in thy faith, strong as the morning star,  
Piercing the welt'ring clouds with lucent rays ;  
Thy voice, a light above time's din and war,  
Proclaimeth to mankind the rosy dawn afar !