

**EGYPT. A  
SEATONIAN  
PRIZE POEM**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649111831

Egypt. A Seatonian prize poem by John Mason Neale

Except for use in any review, the reproduction or utilisation of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the permission of the publisher, Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd, PO Box 1576 Collingwood, Victoria 3066 Australia.

All rights reserved.

Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.  
Cover @ 2017

This book is sold subject to the condition that it shall not, by way of trade or otherwise, be lent, re-sold, hired out, or otherwise circulated without the publisher's prior consent in any form or binding or cover other than that in which it is published and without a similar condition including this condition being imposed on the subsequent purchaser.

[www.triestepublishing.com](http://www.triestepublishing.com)

**JOHN MASON NEALE**

**EGYPT. A  
SEATONIAN  
PRIZE POEM**



# EGYPT.

A Scatonian Prize Poem.

BY THE

REV. JOHN MASON NEALE, M.A.,

LATE SCHOLAR OF TRINITY COLLEGE.

Cambridge :

DEIGHTON, BELL, AND CO.

T. J. PALMER, EAST GRINSTEAD.

J. MASTERS, LONDON.

M.DCCC.LVIII.

Cambridge:

PRINTED BY J. PALMER, SIDNEY STREET.

PK  
5103  
N2435e

### ADVERTISEMENT.

"THE REV. THOMAS SEATON, M.A., late Fellow of Clare Hall, bequeathed to the University (in 1738) the rents of his Kissingbury estate, now producing clear £40. per annum, to be given yearly to that Master of Arts who shall write the best English Poem on a sacred subject. The Vice-Chancellor, the Master of Clare Hall, and the Greek Professor (who are the disposers of this premium), determine the subject, which is delivered out in January, and the Poem is to be sent to the Vice-Chancellor on or before the 29th of September following. The Poem is to be printed, and the expense deducted out of the product of the estate: the remainder is given as a reward to the composer."

---

*Cambridge, November 2nd, 1858.*

*The above PREMIUM was this year awarded to the Reverend  
JOHN MASON NEALE, M.A., of Trinity College.*

HENRY PHILPOTT, *Vice-Chancellor.*  
EDWARD ATKINSON, *Master of Clare College.*  
W. HEPWORTH THOMPSON, *Greek Professor.*

921205



## EGYPT.

### 1.

A MIDNIGHT, such as ne'er before  
Was writ on history's page;  
To be proclaimed from shore to shore,  
And sung from age to age!  
Along each dim historic line  
Of giant statues, half divine,  
That lead toward the midmost shrine  
Of Egypt's sleeping kings,  
A fierce, wild gleam is on the air;  
The tramp of gathering hosts is there;  
The torch glows out with murky glare,  
And over many a forming square  
Unearthly radiance flings,  
For not with banner, not with shout,  
No warrior's pomp nor pride,  
At midnight did the LORD go out,  
And Egypt's first-born died!

10

### 2.

O past the power of human speech,  
Past utterance of the song to teach,—  
How those granitic temples rise  
And gloom athwart the quiet skies;  
The moon, a pale and sickly disk,

20

Looks down upon each obelisk,  
 And throws a shadow, gaunt and dim,  
 O'er lines of kingly Anakim:  
 O'er human pomp and human pride,  
 And human passions deified:  
 All so unearthly, all so vast,  
 All breathing of the mighty past.  
 Here is the chieftain's latest bed 30  
     Of old heroic story;  
 The monarch, midst the monarch-dead,  
     Reposes in his glory.

## 3.

But not with warrior's pomp and boast  
 They marshal now, the midnight host:  
 Far as the plots of verdure smile  
 Down the green valley of the Nile,  
 No cot, but on the midnight gale  
 Pours out its grief, lifts up its wail; 40  
 None, where the hot tear is not shed  
 Upon the loved and first-born dead.  
 In vain, poor mother, dost thou strive  
 To keep that little spark alive:  
 The LORD of Life, the LORD of Death  
 Claims, for no fault of thine, his breath.  
 It is that Egypt may be bent  
 Before the King omnipotent:  
 It is that Pharaoh's chiefs may own  
 Jehovah GOD, and Him alone.  
 In vain to strive, in vain to flee 50  
     Thy king's resistless Foe:  
 'I reckon not of the LORD,' said he,  
     'And Israel shall not go.'

The nation quails before the stroke  
The monarch's madness dared provoke.

## 4.

Oh vainly warned! when Nile's great flood  
Rolled,—miracle of fear!—with blood:  
When league past league, on either shore,  
Came ripples, thick with clotted gore,  
As if in vengeance on their foes 60  
The murdered innocents arose.  
Oh who may paint that fearful sky  
When clouds grew dark, and winds grew high,  
The day when threatened judgment came  
In sheets of mingled hail and flame!  
Upon the tender crop it drove,  
That sleet of solid ice;  
It shattered, in the idol-grove,  
The gods of man's device: 70  
All through the cavern's dim profound  
Echoed that thunder's mighty sound;  
And pealed and pealed again its roar  
Through sepulchre and corridor.  
Oh fearful judgment from on high  
With unresisted sway!  
The LORD is fighting from on high  
Against the sons of clay.

## 5.

Day comes again: but such a moru  
From Eastern clouds was never born,  
As when, from Afric's torrid sand, 80  
The desert-swarms, a monster band,  
Came pouring o'er that cursed land,