

ETHICAL SONGS

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*Think truly, and thy thoughts
Shall the world's famine feed;
Speak truly, and each word of thine
Shall be a fruitful seed;
Live truly, and thy life shall be
A great and noble creed.*

—BONAR.

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ETHICAL SONGS.

I.—Of the Inner Life.

1.

Be true to ev'ry inmost thought ;
 Be as thy thought, thy speech ;
 What thou hast not by suff'ring bought,
 Presume thou not to teach.

Woe, woe to him, on safety bent,
 Who creeps to age from youth,
 Failing to grasp his life's intent,
 Because he fears the truth.

Show forth thy light ! If conscience gleam,
 Cherish the rising glow ;
 The smallest spark may shed its beam
 O'er thousand hearts below.

Guard thou the fact ! Though clouds of night
 Down on thy watch-tower stoop ;
 Though thou should'st see thine heart's delight
 Borne from thee by their swoop.

Face thou the wind ! Though safer seem
 In shelter to abide ;
 We were not made to sit and dream ;
 The true must first be tried.

HENRY ALFORD (Dean).

2.

Britain's first poet,
 Famous old Chaucer,
 Swan-like, in dying
 Sung his last song,
 When at his heart-strings
 Death's hand was strong.

“ From false crowds flying,
 Dwell with soothfastness ;
 Prize more than treasure
 Hearts true and brave ;
 Truth to thine own heart
 Thy soul shall save.”

“ Trust not to fortune ;
 Be not o'ermeddling ;
 Thankful receive thou
 Good which life gave ;
 Truth to thine own heart
 Thy soul shall save.”

Dead through long ages,
 Britain's first poet—
 Still the monition
 Sounds from his grave,
 “ Truth to thine own heart
 Thy soul shall save.”

CHAUCER (After).

3.

Born in each heart is impulse strong
 Aloft tow'rds heav'n its path to trace,
 E'en as the lark its thrilling song
 Sings till all lost in azure space;
 As eagle soaring sweeps amain
 O'er bleak untrodden pine-clad height,
 As struggling homeward still the crane
 Urges o'er plain and marsh her flight.
 Up then, my soul, and never flag !
 Soaring the marsh of error past,
 Thro' clouds of doubt, o'er trial's crag,
 Struggle to home in truth at last !

GOETHE (After).

4.

Say not the law divine
 Is hidden from thee, or afar removed ;
 That law within would shine,
 If there its glorious light were sought and loved.
 Soar not on high,
 Nor ask who thence shall bring it down to earth.
 That vaulted sky
 Hath no such star, did'st thou but know its worth
 Nor launch thy bark
 In search thereof upon a shoreless sea,
 Which has no ark,
 No dove to bring this olive-branch to thee.

Then do not roam
 In search of that which wand'ring cannot win ;
 At home ! at home !
 There peace is found, thy very heart within.

BERNARD BARTON

5.

Hast thou, 'midst life's empty noises,
 Heard the solemn steps of time,
 And the low mysterious voices
 Of another clime ?

Early hath life's mighty question
 Thrilled within thy heart of youth,
 With a deep and strong beseeching,—
 What, and where, is truth ?

Not to ease and aimless quiet,
 Doth the inward answer tend,
 But to works of love and duty
 As our being's end.

Earnest toil and strong endeavour
 Of a spirit which within
 Wrestles with familiar evil
 And besetting sin ;

And without, with tireless vigour,
 Steady heart and purpose strong,
 In the power of truth assaileth
 Every form of wrong.

JOHN GREENLEAF WHITTIER.

6.

I hear it often in the dark,
 I hear it in the light,—
 Where is the voice that comes to me
 With such a quiet might ?
 It seems but echo to my thought,
 And yet beyond the stars !
 It seems a heart-beat in a hush,
 And yet the planet jars !

O, may it be that far within
 My inmost soul there lies
 A spirit-sky, that opens with
 Those voices of surprise.