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Ode to the Russian people by John William Scholl

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JOHN WILLIAM SCHOLL

ODE TO THE RUSSIAN PEOPLE



BY

JOHN WILLIAM SCHOLL

Author of "The Light-Bearer of Liberty, and other poems," "Social Tragedies, and other verse," etc.



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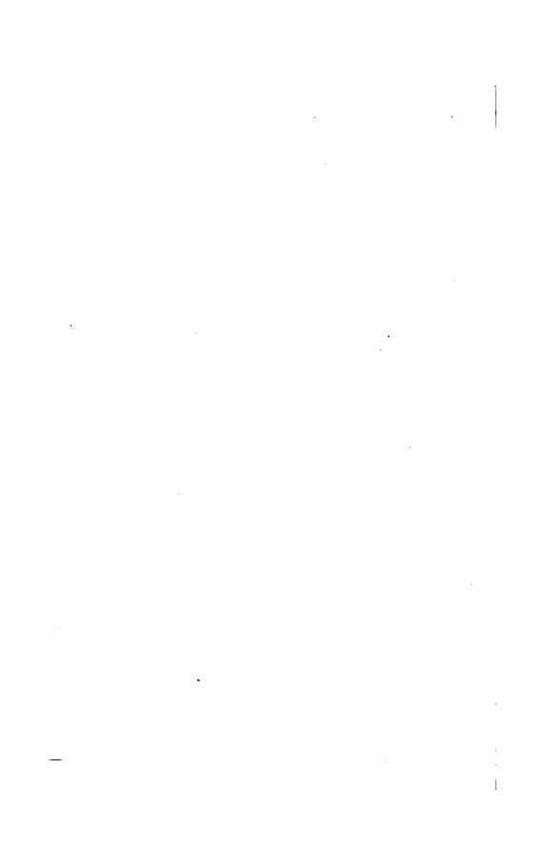
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The Gorham Press, Boston

Shall we whose fathers bravely fought and well
To make our Freemen's heritage secure,
Shall we, the sons of Freedom's lineage pure,
Hedged in with good dear-bought by those that fell,
Forget in ease and comfort those that dwell
In harsher bonds and harder to endure?
Alas, we cannot reach a hand to cure
The crying evil or the curse dispel!

But we whose money-bags are loosed to send
Quick comfort round the world to human need
When earthquake, famine, fire, or flood has
wrought,
Shall we not loose our heart-strings, nobly spend
The hoarded sympathy and cry 'God speed'
When men grow free whom our example taught?



1

God's march across the ages
Is sometimes marked with blood.
Where righteous battle rages
For Freedom and the Right,
There God stands in His might
To bless the purple flood.

II

Whilom a figure rose
Colossal mid the snows
With scepter and crown
Of old renown,
And ruled a mighty realm
With counsels firm and iron hand
No subject millions could overwhelm,
Nor yet withstand,
But they fell on their knees and worshiped rather
The crook that guided, the rod that smote,
And gathered from conquered lands remote
To kiss the hand of their 'little Father'
In loyal love.
All lords above,
God's vicar absolute,

Resistless to do his people good,
And strong in good repute
To save the multitude
From barren dreams and wild desires,—
The fatal madness that aspires
To grasp the wheel of its own fate
And guide the storm-tossed Ship of State,—
The nations, gazing from afar,
Hailed him with one accord the Great White Czar.

Ш

A challenge came to all the world:

"Let your battle-flags be furled.
Stop your cannon's brutal thunder
And undo the fatal blunder
Of the sword's supreme appeal.
Justice stronger is than steel
To protect the commonweal.
Trust is more than thickest armor,
Truth than sharp diplomacy.
Let our peoples' love grow warmer,
Knit by noble courtesy.
Cast aside your armaments,
Meet in solemn parliaments,

And war shall cease,
And olive-branched peace
Shall wing her blessings over all the lands;
For every throne that lofty stands
On piles of human skulls
Must totter and fall at last
When the God of hosts annuls
Its charter with trumpet blast."

So spake the Great White Czar.
The nations heard afar,
And good men dreamed that the hour had come
To muffle the turbulent, jubilant drum,
To forge all swords into pruning-hooks,
To fashion spears into shepherds' crooks,
Remand the warrior to the fields
Where honest toil to the eater yields
Life-giving bread
And not death's harvest red.

And seers unrolled the splendid vision Of worlds redeemed beneath the banner Of him who stood in the snows Colossal and white With imperial might And godlike manner,