

**WAR AND
WORSHIP; A POEM**

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War and worship; a poem by Henry Bedlow

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HENRY BEDLOW

**WAR AND
WORSHIP; A POEM**



WAR AND WORSHIP;
A POEM,

BY
HENRY BEDLOW.

CONVICTIONS BASED ON RECOLLECTIONS OF THE REVOLTS OF 1848.

While the officers attached to the expedition under the command of Lieut. W. F. Lynch were camped at Ain-Jiddy (En Gedi) on the shores of the Dead Sea, a messenger from Jerusalem brought tidings of the revolutionary state of Europe and the spirit of "Popular Rule" animating all parties arrayed against the dominant powers. The following verses were suggested at the time and place above mentioned, roughly sketched in Syria, and completed in Palestine and New York.

HENRY BEDLOW.

NEW YORK:
THE TRUTH SEEKER COMPANY.
1902.



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1083
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WAR AND WORSHIP.

I.

'Mid palms and cacti bivouacked,
Reclused from worldly cark and care,
A din of conflict freights the air,
And cloistral calm with tumult racked.

Clairaudient in my solitude,
Yet dubious if the stir proclaim
A strife in Freedom's cherished name,
Or mock heroics of a feud ;

Some factious brawl, corrupt in deed ;
A demagogic enterprise,
To cozen, dupe and victimize
The purblind gulls of others' greed ;

Its hurly-burly warlike made,
With cannon roar and clarion ring,
And yet a ruffian ranting thing,
A brawling mob's fanfaronade ;

Or rallying slogan, wild huzza,
Rude shock of armies, hissing bombs,
The carbine-clatter, roll of drums,
The maddening, murderous coil of war ;

Its 'larums weird, its frenzied shrieks
Of women in sacked cities, when
The red streets clogged with armed men,
But dead—each finding him she seeks.

And clairvoyant, do I behold
A vision of portentous scope,
All serfdom marshalling to cope
With despotisms manifold ?

A fond prophetic sight that sees
The bonds of slave and villeinage,
Rent in the stress of manhood's rage :
The doom of old feudalities ?

II.

Will Freedom once more count her gains?
Will outraged masses heed her calls,
And, firm of purpose, rend the thralls
And fetters of a race in chains?

Can this be riff-raff hate of Law?
Or slavery so debased the man
That bugle-blast and rataplan
Signal for Riot, not for War?

Or, feudatory forces spent,
Do serfs behold with ravished eyes
The light of Freedom's dawn, and rise
Rejoicing in the glad portent?

Or see with slumbrous gaze the gleams,
To take the sluggard's drowsy view,
And, folding arms, turn to renew
The sorc'ry of beguiling dreams?

Has alien rule their souls debauched,
Accepting fate, nor wroth nor shamed,
Where unmarred manhood would have flamed
Like rick and harvest riot-torched ?

As if the war-drum's loud alarms,
Its rhythmic throb and wild tattoo,
Were but a mirthful mob's halloo,
And not a fervid call to arms ?

III.

Resigned to darkness, will they cast
Their blinkard-eyes on light and rail,
Or, roused to loftier aims, prevail
Against the slave's ignoble past ?

Frenzied with Power's long abuse,
The doors of mercy on them shut,
Do they arise resolved to put
Their helot thews to Freedom's use ?