

**THE SABBATH,
SABBATH WALKS
AND OTHER POEMS**

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The Sabbath, Sabbath Walks and Other Poems by James Grahame

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JAMES GRAHAME

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BY JAMES GRAHAME

ILLUSTRATED BY MARGARET FOSTER



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The people rising, sing, "With harp, with harp,
And voice of psalms;" harmoniously attuned
The various voices blend; the long-drawn aisles,
At every close, the lingering strain prolong.
And now the tubes a mellowed stop controls,
In softer harmony the people join,
While liquid whispers from yon orphan band
Recal the soul from adoration's trance,
And fill the eye with pity's gentle tears.
Again the organ-peal, loud-rolling, meets
The hallelujahs of the choir: Sublime,
A thousand notes symphoniously ascend,
As if the whole were one, suspended high
In air, soaring heavenward: afar they float,
Wafting glad tidings to the sick man's couch:
Raised on his arm, he lists the cadence close,
Yet thinks he hears it still: his heart is cheered;
He smiles on death; but, ah! a wish will rise,—
"—Would I were now beneath that echoing roof!
No lukewarm accents from my lips should flow;
My heart would sing; and many a Sabbath-day
My steps should thither turn; or, wandering far
In solitary paths, where wild flowers blow,
There would I bless His name who led me forth
From death's dark vale, to walk amid those sweets;
Who gives the bloom of health once more to glow
Upon this cheek, and lights this languid eye."

It is not only in the sacred fane
That homage should be paid to the Most High;



There is a temple, one not made with hands,—
The vaulted firmament: Far in the woods,
Almost beyond the sound of city chime,

At intervals heard through the breezeless air ;
When not the limberest leaf is seen to move,
Save where the linnet lights upon the spray ;
When not a floweret bends its little stalk,
Save where the bee alights upon the bloom ;—
There, rapt in gratitude, in joy, and love,
The man of God will pass the Sabbath-noon ;
Silence his praise : his disembodied thoughts,
Loosed from the load of words, will high ascend
Beyond the empyrean.—
Nor yet less pleasing at the heavenly throne,
The Sabbath-service of the shepherd-boy.
In some lone glen, where every sound is lulled
To slumber, save the tinkling of the rill,
Or bleat of lamb, or hovering falcon's cry,
Stretched on the sward, he reads of Jesse's son ;
Or sheds a tear o'er him to Egypt sold,
And wonders why he weeps ; the volume closed,
With thyme-sprig laid between the leaves, he sings
The sacred lays, his weekly lesson, conned
With meikle care beneath the lowly roof,
Where humble lore is learnt, where humble worth
Pines unrewarded by a thankless state.
Thus reading, hymning, all alone, unseen,
The shepherd boy the Sabbath holy keeps,
Till on the heights he marks the straggling bands
Returning homeward from the house of prayer.
In peace they home resort. O blissful day !
When all men worship God as conscience wills.
Far other times our fathers' grandsires knew,



A virtuous race, to godliness devote,
What though the sceptic's scorn hath dared to soil
The record of their fame! What though the men
Of worldly minds have dared to stigmatize
The sister-cause, Religion and the Law,
With Superstition's name!—yet, yet their deeds,
Their constancy in torture and in death,—
These on tradition's tongue still live, these shall