

**CAEDMON'S  
VISION, AND  
OTHER POEMS**

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Caedmon's Vision, and Other Poems by Jane S. C. Ingham

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**JANE S. C. INGHAM**

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# CÆDMON'S VISION

*AND OTHER POEMS*

BY

SARSON C. J. INGHAM

AUTHOR OF

"THE WHITE CROSS AND DOVE OF PEARLS," "SELINA'S STORY,"  
"LAURA LINWOOD," ETC.

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## DEDICATION.

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### TO THE REV. BENJAMIN GREGORY.

To you, whose ear tuned for the Ionian lyre,  
Is ne'er intolerant of the shepherd's reed,  
If but the voice according be well-keyed  
And raised for joy and duty, I desire  
To dedicate these lyrics and confess  
A deeper gratefulness than words express.

Nor would I seek expression : being fain  
To lay upon the desk o'er which you lean  
The silent tribute of a few flowers seen  
Amid the Muse's walks, where I in vain  
Have sought to weave such garlands of delight,  
As might bloom purely in a poet's sight.

Yet since the cluster of camphire may fling  
An odour of the rose upon the wind,  
I do not fear some favour I may find  
For the small offering that I shyly bring—  
So oft "I found your study door unlocked,"  
Nor wrongly thought "you answered when I knocked."





## P R E F A C E.

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I LIKE that old Icelandic metaphor which calls Poetry the language of the gods and the poet a songsmith. I like it because of the leap which the thought takes ; for though the sentiment of poetry may be universal, its expression is confined to a few. And of these few, those who possess in fullest measure the "gift divine" have had to nerve them for the "toil divine," and to forge at a white heat, as if to prove that the language of the gods can never, any more than the divine attributes of goodness, come naturally to man, but must be the prize of earnestness and strong endeavour. Nevertheless, spontaneity is so much the privilege of the "humbler singers,"

" Whose songs 'gush' from the heart,  
As rain from the clouds of summer,  
Or tears from the eyelids start,"

as to be almost proportioned to their inferiority. There is music in the woodlark's song ; yet who would argue that the strains drawn by some great master from the majestic organ, with its diapason and its swell, the emotional capacities that lie hid in its stops, and the volumed utterances of its "many mouths of gold," would benefit by being evoked with the same careless freedom as that wherewith the bird unloosens the "liquid ditty" in its throat ?

If these simple, fervent framers of the Icelandic Edda had had more range for their comparison, they might have granted being to poets who are not songsmiths, and have enlivened their gloomy ash tree of existence (Igdrasil), whose roots struck deep down in the kingdom of Hela, or Death, with a kind of bird that "sings because it must," and has compass enough of note to vibrate the joy of life or vocalize with hope some of the shadows of death.

If that which is an endowment of Nature is to be regarded as a gift from God, the concern of any who would tremblingly say, "And I also am a poet," ought not to be to know that the gift is a great one so much as to know certainly that it

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is a true one, for even this gift is bestowed in a widely varying degree ; but the obligation to "occupy" is upon all, from the holder of one talent to the holder of ten.

The conviction of this is the only apology I have to offer for bringing some of my poems afresh before the public. A collection of them from the various serials in which they have appeared was urged upon me. I have no doubt that those who have welcomed them before will welcome them again, and I trust that the new ones interspersed will be regarded with equal favour.

Secular or sacred, they have been scattered over a period of several years, for which reason some of them contain youthful allusions, while to "Claude" and "Annie" I have given touches which may seem unfamiliar to some who were partial to them on their first appearance.

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