

JEPHTHAH'S DAUGHTER

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Jephthah's Daughter by Charles Heavysege

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CHARLES HEAVYSEGE

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DAUGHTER**

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JEPHTHAH'S DAUGHTER.

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JEPHTHAH'S DAUGHTER.

BY

CHARLES HEAVYSEGE,

• *Author of "Saul."*



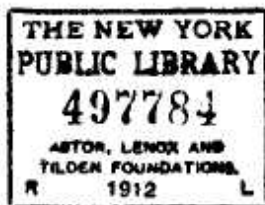
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JEPHTHAH'S DAUGHTER.



WAS in the olden days of Israel,
When, from her people, rose up mighty
men

To judge and to defend her ; ere she knew,
Or clamoured for, her coming line of kings,
A father, rashly vowing, sacrificed
His daughter on the altar of the Lord ;—
'Twas in those ancient days, coeval deemed
With the song-famous and heroic ones,
When Agamemnon, taught divinely, doomed
His daughter to expire at Dian's shrine,—
So doomed, to free the chivalry of Greece,
In Aulis lingering for a favouring wind,
To waft them to the fated walls of Troy.



Two songs with but one burden, twin-like tales.
Sad tales ! but this the sadder of the twain ;—
This song, a wail more desolately wild ;
More fraught this story with grim fate, fulfilled :
Nor with less ghastly grandeur opening,
Amid the blare and blazonry of war,
Than did the seizure of the Grecian girl,
This sore surprisal of the Hebrew maid,—
Not less the crowd, nor less the public gaze,
Than that at Aulis, filled with Grecian bands,
Advancing sternly with fanatic cries,
To hale the victim to a horrid end,
Surrounded her in *her* catastrophe.
For it befel upon high holiday
In Gilead, whose quaint-built capital,
Old Mizpeh, filled her streets with all her throng,
When Jephthah, followed by his patriot host,
From Ammon vanquished and her cities spoiled,
Returned triumphant. Banners filled the air,
And martial music, and a roar of joy

From the wild, welcoming multitude, that stood
Dense as primeval woods, aspiring, spread
In carnival attire of brightest hues,
O'er balcony and beam, o'er tower and tree,
Thick as the blooms of spring on orchard walls ;
And, climbing, clustered on adventured heights
Till nought was vacant : top of tallest pile
Was covered, and the nest of crow and crane
Invaded, whilst the grinning urchin sat
Astraddle on the gilded, yielding vane.
Thence cheers incessant showered, with widening
 way,
And noise like that heard when the hoary flood
Pours over rocks, or tempests tear the sky ;
While, underneath, the thick-as-locusts crowd,
Like to the whirlpool, roared with long acclaims ;
That still moved onward, and were still renewed
To meet the advancing victor, in whose way
White, billowy turbans waved, or upward flew,
As flies the foam before the advancing keel,