

From: Phoebe Cary, *Poems of Faith, Hope and Love* (New York: Hurd & Houghton, 1868) 83-84.

**JOHN BROWN**

Men silenced on his faithful lips  
Words of resistless truth and power;—  
Those words, reëchoing now, have made  
The gathering war-cry of the hour.

They thought to darken down in blood                   5  
The light of freedom's burning rays;  
The beacon-fires we tend to-day  
Were lit in that undying blaze.

They took the earthly prop and staff  
Out of an unresisting hand;                               10  
God came, and led him safely on,  
By ways they could not understand.

They knew not, when from his old eyes  
They shut the world for evermore,  
The ladder by which angels come                       15  
Rests firmly on the dungeon's floor.

They deemed no vision bright could cheer  
His stony couch and prison ward;  
He slept to dream of Heaven, and rose  
To build a Bethel to the Lord!                           20

They showed to his unshrinking gaze  
The "sentence" men have paled to see:  
He read God's writing of "reprieve,"  
And grant of endless liberty.

They tried to conquer and subdue                       25  
By marshaled power and bitter hate;  
The simple manhood of the man  
Was braver than an armèd state.

They hoped at last to make him feel  
The felon's shame, and felon's dread;                   30

And lo! the martyr's crown of joy  
Settled forever on his head!