

Source: Rose Terry Cooke, *Poems* (Boston: Ticknor & Fields, 1861) 180-181.

SAMSON AGONISTES

December 2, 1859.

You bound and made your sport of him, Philistia!
You set your sons at him to flout and jeer;
You loaded down his limbs with heavy fetters;
Your mildest mercy was a smiling sneer.

One man amidst a thousand who defied him— [5]
One man from whom his awful strength had fled,—
You brought him out to lash him with your vengeance,
Ten thousand curses on one hoary head!

You think his eyes are closed and blind forever, [10]
Because you seared them to this mortal day;
You draw a longer breath of exultation,
Because your conqueror's power has passed away.

Oh, fools! his arms are round your temple-pillars;
Oh, blind! his strength divine begins to wake;— [15]
Hark! the great roof-tree trembles from its centre,
Hark! how the rafters bend and swerve and shake!