

Source: (New York) *Independent* 69, no. 3216 (July 1910): 113.

## GOD'S ANGRY MAN

Charles Sheldon

Seeing his brothers scourged, enslaved, and bound,  
Beaten and broken for a tyrant's fame,  
Rearing vast pyramids, in ceaseless round  
Of endless toil, his anger flamed white flame.

That flame had rent the altar with its heat, [5]  
Had not God bid it smoulder forty years,  
Until the burning bush, at Moses's feet,  
Showed him God's passion for the people's tears.

Then he who slew in the white heat of youth, [10]  
Went forth to do the mighty deeds of God;  
His righteous anger burned no less, in truth.  
For now he smote with the Almighty's rod.

And out of anger for a brother's wrong,  
Grew a great nation and a mighty throne;  
And out of weakness, championed by the strong, [15]  
Israel from bondage came into its own.

Then, in the travail of the pregnant years,  
Another of God's angry men was born;  
He felt the bitter burning of the tears  
Of slaves whose groaning midnight had no morn. [20]

The prairie's stretch was freedom's road to him,  
Its soil was where injustice could not grow,  
Its wind blew voices from the stars to him.  
Calling upon his soul to strike his blow.

He struck his blow--all impotent it seemed, [25]  
And those for whom he struck toiled on in tears;  
He did not live to see the thing he dreamed,  
Men said his blow retarded freedom's years.

John Brown! Thy soul is marching boldly yet [30]  
Across the path of cold indifferent men.  
The world cannot and will not soon forget

That soul that counted not the cost again.

God give us angry men in every age,  
Men with indignant souls at sight of wrong,  
Men whose whole being glows with righteous rage, [35]  
Men who are strong for those who need the strong.

And pity those soft youth this nation rears!  
Who never strike a blow for human need!  
Those puny souls that live behind their fears,  
And grow more puny, fed on lust and greed. [40]