

The Voyagers on Gennesaret

Upon a fickle inland sea
A fragile bark sets sail
With canvas set, so fair and free
To catch the gentle gale.

Onward upon her course she went
Far o'er the rippling tide,
Till her crew's glances, shoreward sent
The destined port descried.

But lo! between them and the shore
Sudden, a storm came down,
They heard the distant billows roar,
And saw the tempest's frown.

'Twas vain to turn—nor help was near
That human power could lend;
Within their bosoms, hope and fear,
Did fitfully contend.

Nearer and nearer fiercely scowled
The storm cloud hurrying on;
Now angry blasts around them howled
And lightning's flashed anon.

As sea bird on the ocean's spray
From wave to wave is cast,
So they upon their watery way
Were swept before the blast.

Wildly each mounting billows crest
Was tossed in foam on high
As if the water's heaving breast
Aspired to reach the sky.

Then down into the deep abyss,
With headlong fury hurled,
As if to mock their feebleness
The restless surges curled.

Yet help was near, a heavenly form
In that mean galley lay
Whose power can curb the raging storm,
Whose will the waves obey.

Weary of scenes, where all around
In sinful guise appeared,
Where no ennobling sight or sound,
The saviour saw or heard;

There e'en upon that foaming sea
He found a nest, denied
Mid scenes of wealth and luxury
And glittering halls of pride.

The wandering fox might seek his lair
And there securely rest,
The winged creatures of the air
Could find a peaceful nest,

But ah! for him creation's Lord,
Mid all his hands had made,
No sheltering roof did earth afford
To rest his weary head.

Him they approach with accents meek
And many a suppliant word;
Their fears confessed, his aid they seek
And rouse their slumbering Lord.

“Lord save us; lo around us swell
“The billows vast and deep!
“Arise, for thou hast power to quell
“The storms which round us leap.”

With loving speed the Lord arose
And bade the sea be still;
The winds are hushed, the waves repose
Obedient to his will.

Then gladly o’er the conquered wave
Their joyous course they steer,
Praising the power which deigned to save
When death was hovering near.

Hence Christian learn when tossed and driven
O’er life’s tempestuous sea,
The saviour from his throne in Heaven
Can calm its storms for thee.

Though for thy soul sins storms contend
Set faith discomfit fear;
Ask thou his aid, thy heavenly friend
In every trial, is near.