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Elizabeth Barrett Browning

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Produced by Bill Tozier and Barbara Tozier.

[Illustration: HE GIVETH HIS BELOVED SLEEP]

"HE GIVETH HIS BELOVED SLEEP"

BY

ELIZABETH BARRETT BROWNING

WITH DESIGNS BY MISS L. B. HUMPHREY

ENGRAVED BY ANDREW

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"He Giveth his Beloved Sleep"

PSALM cxxvii. 2.

THE SLEEP

OF all the thoughts of God that are
Borne inward unto souls afar,
 Along the Psalmist's music deep,
Now tell me if that any is,
For gift or grace, surpassing this--
 'He giveth His beloved, sleep'!

What would we give to our beloved?
The hero's heart to be unmoved,
 The poet's star-tuned harp, to sweep,
The patriot's voice, to teach and rouse,
The monarch's crown, to light the brows?
 'He giveth His beloved sleep.'

[Illustration: Along the Psalmist's music deep]

What do we give to our beloved?
A little faith all undisproved,
 A little dust to overweep,
And bitter memories to make
The whole earth blasted for our sake.
 He giveth His beloved sleep.

[Illustration: A little dust to overweep]

"Sleep soft, beloved!" we sometimes say,
But have no tune to charm away
 Sad dreams that through the eyelids creep.
But never doleful dream again
Shall break the happy slumber when
 He giveth His beloved sleep.

[Illustration: Sad dreams that through the eyelids creep
 But never doleful dream again
 Shall break the happy slumber]

O earth, so full of dreary noises!
O men, with wailing in your voices!
 O delvèd gold, the wailers heap!
O strife, O curse, that o'er it fall!
God strikes a silence through you all,
 He giveth His beloved sleep.

[Illustration: Oh men with wailing in your voices]

His dew drops mutely on the hill;
His cloud above it saileth still,
 Though on its slope men sow and reap.
More softly than the dew is shed,
Or cloud is floated overhead,
 He giveth His beloved sleep.

[Illustration: Though on its slope men sow and reap]

Ay, men may wonder while they scan
A living, thinking, feeling man,
 Confirmed in such a rest to keep;
But angels say, and through the word
I think their happy smile is heard,--
 'He giveth His beloved sleep.'

[Illustration: And through the word
 I think their happy smile is heard]

For me, my heart that erst did go
Most like a tired child at a show,
That sees through tears the mummers leap,
Would now its wearied vision close,
Would childlike on His love repose,
Who giveth His beloved sleep.

[Illustration: Like a tired child at a show]

And, friends, dear friends,--when it shall be
That this low breath is gone from me,
And round my bier ye come to weep,
Let one, most loving of you all,
Say, "Not a tear must o'er her fall--
'He giveth His beloved sleep.'"

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