

THE HEBREW'S APPEAL,*

ON OCCASION OF THE LATE FEARFUL UKASE PROMULGATED BY THE
EMPEROR OF RUSSIA.

BY GRACE AGUILAR.

AWAKE! arise! ye friends of Israel's race,
The wail of thousands lingers on the air,
By heavy pinions borne, thro' realms of space,
'Till Israel shudd'ring, Israel's woe must bear;
The voice of suff'ring echoes to the skies,
And oh, not yet! one pitying heart replies.

List to the groan from manly bosoms rent,
The wilder sob from weaker spirits wrung,
The deep woe that hith in voice no vent,
Yet round the heart her deathly robe has flung,
And childish tears flow thick and fast like rain,
From eyes that never wept, and ne'er shall weep again.

Vain, vain, the mother's piteous shriek of woe,
Her dying infants clinging to her breast;
And age infirm, and youth, whose high hearts glow;
Vain, vain their cry for mercy on the oppress'd.
The Ukase has gone forth—a word, a breath,
And thousands are cast out, to exile and to death.

* The above poem was written nearly six months ago, when the Russian ukase was first made public, and sent to the only paper in England devoted to Jewish interests—the Voice of Jacob,—the writer wishing to prove that at least one female Jewish heart and voice were raised in an appeal for her afflicted brethren. The Editor of the V. of J. did not insert it, on the plea of having so much press of matter as to prevent giving it the required space. The Christian Lady's Magazine not only accepted and inserted it, but in bold and spirited prose appealed to her countrymen on the same subject. Still a Jewish paper is the natural channel for the public appearance of the poem, and therefore the writer sends it to the Occident, believing that though somewhat late, it will not there be disregarded.

Ay, death! for such is exile—fearful doom,
 From homes expell'd—yet still to Poland chain'd;
 'Till want and famine mind and life consume,
 And sorrow's poison'd chalice, all is drain'd.
 Oh God, that this should be! that one frail man
 Hath power to crush a nation 'neath his ban.

Will none arise! with outstretch'd hand to save!
 No prayer for pity, and for aid awake?
 Will SHE who gave to Liberty the slave,
 For God's own people not one effort make?
 Will SHE not rise once more, in mercy clad,
 And heal the bleeding heart, and Sorrow's sons make glad?

Will England sleep, when Justice bids her wake,
 And send her voice all thrillingly afar?
 Will England sleep, when her rebuke might shake
 With shame and terror, e'en the tyrant Czar,
 And 'neath the magic of her mild appeal,
 Move Russia's frozen soul for Israel to feel?

Oh England! thou hast call'd us to thy breast,
 And done to orphans all a mother's part,
 And given them peace, and liberty, and rest,
 And healing pour'd into the homeless heart;
 Then, oh once more, let Israel mercy claim,
 And suff'ring thousands bless our England's honour'd name.

And let *one* prayer from Hebrew hearths ascend
 To Israel's God, that HE may deign reply,
 And yet again His chosen race defend,
 And "have respect" once more "unto their cry,"
 And e'en from depths of darkness and despair,
 Give freedom to His own, and "all their burden bear."

For shall we sink, tho' dark our way and drear,
 And Hope hath found in misery a tomb?
 Though man be silent, Mercy hath no tear,
 And Love and Joy are wither'd 'neath the gloom?
 No! God is near to hear us while we crave,
 And HE will "bare His holy arm, to shield us and to save."

3d January, 1844.