Landing of the Pilgrim Fathers, The.

By Browning, Elizabeth Barrett .

The breaking waves dashed high

On a stern and rock-bound coast,

And the woods, against a stormy sky,

Their giant branches tost;

And the heavy night hung dark

The hills and water o'er,

When a band of exiles moored their bark

On the wild New England shore.

Not as the conqueror comes,

They, the true-hearted, came;

Not with the roll of the stirring drums,

And the trumpet that sings of fame;

Not as the flying come,

In silence and in fear, -

They shook the depths of the desert's gloom

With their hymns of lofty cheer.

Amidst the storm they sang,

And the stars heard and the sea;

And the sounding aisles of the dim woods rang

To the anthem of the free.

The ocean-eagle soared

From his nest by the white wave's foam,

And the rocking pines of the forest roared -

This was their welcome home!

There were men with hoary hair

Amidst that pilgrim band:

Why had they come to wither there,

Away from their childhood's land?

There was woman's fearless eye,

Lit by her deep love's truth;

There was manhood's brow serenely high,

And the fiery heart of youth.

What sought they thus afar?

Bright jewels of the mine?

The wealth of the seas? the spoils of war? -

They sought a faith's pure shrine!

Ay, call it holy ground,

The soil where first they trod!

They have left unstained what there they found -

Freedom to worship God!