

The Wife of Hasdrubal.

'Twas night, and a cry of availing arose  
From Carthage's hovels and princely halls;  
She had bowed that day to her Roman foes  
And knelt to receive their spurning blows  
Had cast the engines of War from her walls  
And begged that her sons might be Roman thralls  
Had plucked from the warrior's arm the shield  
And broken the spear he was wont to wield  
Had given the sword to the Roman's hand  
And bidden her sons defenceless stand,  
With the armor stripped from their manly limbs  
And naked left to a victor's whips.  
She had only asked that her halls and towers  
Her spacious streets, and her fruitful bowers  
Should remain, — the solace of thralldom's hours;  
That her sons and daughters might still reside  
As slaves, where their father fought and died.  
She would give to the Roman her power and fame  
She would brand herself with the mark of Shame  
She'd give up her birthright nor seek to be free  
She'd give up her Commerce, no more should the Sea  
Acknowledge her mistress, nor pour at her feet  
Its treasures untold, — no white swelling sheet  
The eyes of her merchants expectant should greet,  
Nor regular dip of the glittering oar,  
Be heard on the desolate Punic shore.  
She'd give the bright jewels her beauties that deck  
The hands of the vanishing legions to check

Each household its golden Penates she  
And deities plunder the shrines where they dwell;  
She'd give up her warriors, — her sons should not  
Gain strength on the charger, or sail at the oar  
Her banner in triumph to bear as of yore;  
She'd give up her maidens, — the young and the fair,  
Bright daughters of Tyre, whom the Sun's fervent glare  
Had rendered more lovely, — for Africa's warm air  
The full lip had given and dark waving hair,  
Should be the rich gem of Rome would but spare  
The city from pillage; — ay even her name  
She'd forfeit to rescue her beauty from flame.  
Misfortune so early the Queen City had crushed  
The voice of her heroes so long had been hushed  
The fires of her virtue so lowly had burned  
She begged for the life that would once have <sup>been granted,</sup>  
But ~~was~~ in vain she sought relief  
Until ~~she~~ before the Roman Chief  
Her sons regenerate had piled  
Their arms and armour, and she gazed  
Excitingly while sunset blazed  
Upon the burnished heap and smiled; —  
Then looked in scorn upon the disarmed wall  
And said "Go bid adieu to sumptuous halls  
And then in exile live; proud Carthage falls!"  
The gods decreed her downfall long ago  
And Cato muttered "est delenda Carthago."  
Woe to Carthage the proud and fair?  
Woe to Carthage defenceless and bare!

Ah well away the hearts of her warriors fail  
And the beauteous cheeks of her maidens pale.

The streets are filled with a murmuring crowd  
The strong man's head on his breast is bowed  
The mother looks round on the childish group  
Which she may not save from the spoiler's swoop  
And her grief bursts forth in a piercing wail  
Like the sea-bird's scream on the midnight-gale  
The maid folds her hands o'er her heaving breast  
And sighs in her grave with the dead to rest—  
O'er all there is sorrow,—the pale fair face  
The cry of despair, and the fond embrace  
The quivering lip and the flashing eye  
And the low-breathed curse of the passer-by—  
The heart-piercing wail of the new-made bride  
And the fierce death cry of the Luicite,  
Tell that hope is crushed down by overshadowing <sup>Woe</sup>  
And Carthage ~~submits~~ <sup>has fallen</sup> without e'en a blow  
Yet such is her anguish, not even a child  
Since twilight departed, in Carthage, has smiled.  
But what is that cry that comes ringing from far  
As shrill and as wild as the clarion of War?

- ② By whom is the signal of War displayed?  
① Who comes with a banner and naked blade?  
By the flowing robe, by the snowy breast  
That swells and falls in eath her parted vest,  
By the ebon hue of her flowing hair  
By the accents borne on the midnight air  
By her silken garb by her <sup>rich</sup> Tyrian shawl

By her buskin'd leg, 'tis a Punic an  
By the standard she bears, by the well known call  
'Tis Didenna - the bride of young Hasdrubal.

But a month has passed since the happy hours  
When her brow was crowned with Orange flowers  
When with music and dancing she gaily was led  
To the nuptial couch, - to a warrior's bed,

Now shrilly peals her battle cry  
Freemen rise! as freemen die  
Rise and man the leagured wall  
Behold the sign of Hasdrubal  
Behold the banner which of yore  
Such terror to the Romans bore  
Hast lost thine arms, - then use instead  
The weapons of the shuted dead  
Burst the towers and <sup>snatch</sup> ~~grasp~~ the shields  
Your fathers bore o'er bloody fields  
Your face a host! - had the scorpion less  
Lath not his venom'd sting distress?  
Aye gives he not a lingering death  
To him whose foot treeds out his breath?  
Warriors of Carthage! are ye few  
Or feeble that ye busy are  
To live as slaves on the sacred spot -  
Your hero sires by blood shed bought?  
Unfetter then your myriads slaves  
And bid them win themselves free graves  
Why do ye stay can ye not post  
Ten fold thier ranks against the legions host?

Do Carthage's warriors stand and weep  
Like frightened maids or trembling creep  
Along their noble city's street -  
Like guilty slaves who fear to meet  
The master's eye, or tremble bound  
Lashed howling from forbidden ground?  
Remember him who proudly stood  
Knee deep in streams of Roman blood  
Who gathered rings from stiffening hands  
Of Roman knights on Cannae's sands  
Remember him who fought so well  
That ruined realms his glory tell.  
Whom even Roman bards proclaim  
As worthy of immortal fame.  
Remember how Hispania's plains  
Were drenched with blood from Roman veins  
How oft her lord and covered mines  
Gave tribute to your city's shrines.  
Shout! and send it pealing far  
The war cry of brave Hamilcar!  
Are the walls crumbling? build instead  
A bulwark high of armoured dead!  
If Carthage, 'neath Rome's power must fall  
Die freemen at the breached wall!  
Dost fear stark famine? Rise and slay  
The old and weak, its curse to stay!  
Who would not die for Rome of Rome  
O fondness for his Fenice home?  
Carthage enslaved! It shall not be



Our city shall again be free  
And rule with proudly pride the Sea  
Or else the breath of Juno's flame  
Shall spoil her wealth, but save her fame  
Shall rescue from the Spoiler's hand  
The beauty of our sunny land,  
And who could wish a nobler pyre  
Than Carthage's palaces on fire!"

Prouded by her words the sorrowing crowd  
Responded in murmurs fierce and loud;  
And soon the street through which she passed  
Was thronged by myriads hurrying fast  
To join the standard which she bore  
And swell with shouts the wild uproar  
The Roman heard in his camp without  
The ring of the well known battle shout  
Yet feared he not the morrow's fight  
The arms of Carthage still lay in his sight.  
And when the morn <sup>came</sup> ~~showed~~ the proud Roman chief  
Of victory sure after conflict but brief  
Led forward his legions when forth from the gates  
Like the whelming tide which the guardian fates  
From the temple of Juno sent forth to destroy  
The barbarous hosts that before it display,  
The myriads of Carthage in weaponless might  
Half armed and half naked swept forth to the fight  
Like the ship on which barnacles thickly have clung  
Like the bull on whose hanches the giant wolf was springing  
The course of the iron clad legions was stayed

Amovment they roared, then broken dismayed,  
They fled from the bubble & despair had made strong  
And Vengeance had armed for the chastening of Weng,  
Who overthrew the camp and pillaged the train  
And shouted in triumph o'er myriads of slain.

Two years passed away and the proud Roman <sup>still,</sup>  
Was foiled by young Hasdrubal's valor and skill  
The artisan armoured the willing borders  
And the Gods of Carthage were forged into swords  
The locks of her maidens the courage had made  
Of the engines of war on her ramparts that played.  
Oh! they had wildly and fiercely striven  
'Gainst famine and foe, but the wall is given,  
Destruction comes, but where is he  
Who fought so long and so well to be free?  
Who foiled the power and skill of Rome  
To save from destruction his beautiful home?  
His spirit is crushed and he kneels in prayer  
That the slaughtering legions his life will spare.  
And where is his bride the young and the fair  
With the fearless look and the long black hair?  
She gave to the archers each glittering braid  
And the silken web which her bride robe made  
But bold is her look and bright is her eye  
As she stands on the roof of a temple high  
And waving above her a bright flaming torch  
She fires the gilt-roofing of that gallant porch.  
The flames wheel around her, she utters no cry

But waits like a martyr all calmly  
One moment the babe on her wild heaving breast  
More fondly and close to her bosom is prest  
And her voice floats again on the chill midnight <sup>gale</sup>  
As sad and as wild as a funeral wail.

I've nursed thee my boy with tenderest care  
And hoped that a warrior thou sometime wouldst <sup>be,</sup>  
The arms of thy country and strength might <sup>thine</sup>  
Our beautiful city from ruin's dark grave  
But the Roman has conquered, the city is lost  
Thy father apostate, and slaughtered our host  
But thou shalt not live, the vile slave of the  
Together from famine and shame we will go  
Farewell thou loved city since thou couldst not save  
Thy <sup>ruins</sup> shall furnish our ashes - a grave.  
Thy daughter ~~from~~ <sup>is</sup>

Read at the Lodge Room

of the I. O. O. F. - 1866

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From

CHAUTAQUA COUNTY, N.Y. HISTORICAL SOCIETY