Once to Every Man and Nation

James Russell Lowell, 1845

Thomas John Williams, 1890

Once to every man and nation, Comes the moment to decide,

Though the cause of evil pros per, Yet the truth alone is strong;

By the light of burning martyrs, Christ, Thy bleeding feet we track,

Then to side with truth is noble, When we share her wretched crust,

1. Once to every man and nation, Comes the moment to decide,
2. Then to side with truth is noble, When we share her wretched crust,
3. By the light of burning martyrs, Christ, Thy bleeding feet we track,
4. Though the cause of evil pros per, Yet the truth alone is strong;

In the strife of truth with false hood, For the good or evil side;
Ere her cause bring fame and profit, And 'tis prosperous to be just;
Toiling up new Calv'ries ever With the cross that turns not back;
Though her portion be the scaffold, And upon the throne be wrong;

Some great cause, some great decision, Offering each the bloom or blight,
Then it is the brave man chooses While the coward stands aside,
New occasions teach new duties, Time makes ancient good uncouth,
Yet that scaffold sways the future, And behind the dim unknown,

And the choice goes by forever, 'Twixt that darkness and that light.
Till the multitude make virtue Of the faith they had denied.
They must upward still and onward, Who would keep a breast of truth.
Standeth God within the shadow, Keep ing watch above His own.

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