

VIA DOLOROSA

'Twas in the darkness of Gethsemane,
A hallowed head was low in sorrow bowed,
A voice divine was raised in prayer aloud:
"O Father, that this cup may pass from Me."
But soon the savage mob in angry cry,
With rude hands seize the Saviour of the world,
While taunting jests and mocking jeers are hurled.
O frightful thought! A God condemned to die!

Upon His quivering flesh the hissing scourge
Is plied with cruel strength inspired by hate.
Oh marvel, that a God should tolerate
Such anguish, lowly man of sin to purge!
His sacred head in mockery is crowned,
And pierced with thorns, which form the coronet;
Upon His shoulders frail a cross is set,
Which bears His weakened body to the ground.

Beneath the cruel weight he staggers on,
While blows are rained on Him with savage zest.
What pangs must wrench His virgin mother's breast,
To witness that great agony of her Son!
The hill of Calvary reached, His form is laid
Upon the cross; we hear the ring of steel.
We shudder at the sound and seem to feel
The anguish caused by every stroke that's made.

The lofty cross is quickly raised on high,
And as He hangs, He pleads for me and you:
"Forgive them, for they know not what they do."
The sun is hid and darksome grows the sky.
Then midst the thunder's crash and rushing blast,
Deep darkness, rending earth, and lightning's fire,
Christ, crucified to save man from God's ire,
Bows down His head and calmly breathes His last.

—D. MacI., '32