

## “Oriflamme”

Jessie Fauset

“I can remember when I was a little, young girl, how my old mammy would sit out of doors in the evenings and look up at the stars and groan, and I would say, ‘Mammy, what makes you groan so?’ And she would say, ‘I am groaning to think of my poor children; they do not know where I be and I don’t know where they be. I look up at the stars and they look up at the stars!’”—*Sojourner Truth*.

I THINK I see her sitting bowed and black,  
Stricken and seared with slavery’s mortal scars,  
Reft of her children, lonely, anguished, yet  
Still looking at the stars.

Symbolic mother, we thy myriad sons,  
Pounding our stubborn hearts on Freedom’s bars,  
Clutching our birthright, fight with faces set,  
Still visioning the stars!