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THE  
POETICAL WORKS  
OF  
THOMAS AIRD

FOURTH EDITION

WILLIAM BLACKWOOD AND SONS  
EDINBURGH AND LONDON  
MDCCCLXIII

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P O E M S.



TO A YOUNG POET.

IN reverence an eternal boy,  
Hope sustain thee, love, and joy ;  
Duty, large of work and plan,  
Crown thee a consummate man !  
Soft and slow, soft and slow, . . .  
Ages come, and ages go.  
Dark curdlings ! Crash ! Convulsive climb  
Earth's Periods up to Eden's prime.  
Mark and tell the Type that springs  
Persistent through the wreck of things,—  
The Type of Form, to Reason's eye  
Test of Design in unity.  
The Boundless One, not to be missed  
Of man, became a mannerist.  
Deserts of fear ; the hills of wonder,  
Peaks of snow, and scalps of thunder ;  
The murk air strung with slanting rain,  
The creatures huddled on the plain ;  
And O the smile that Summer smiles  
On dimpling seas and sunny isles ;

And Beauty, in the dewy dells,  
 Moulding of light her flowery bells;  
 Songs of wheat, and purple glee,—  
 The Seasons minister to thee!  
 Night serve thee with her mystic gleams,  
 Sleep, and the swooning world of dreams!

Powers of darkness, powers of day,  
 All in this bit of kneaded clay!  
 Heart of man, O heart of man,  
 Centre of the sovereign plan,  
 Infinite of joy and wo,  
 Thee must the Bard profoundly know;—  
 Thee in life; and thee in death,  
 When sighs to Heaven the saintly breath,  
 And ghosts unlaïd, to haggard crime,  
 Start on the Hell-ward edge of time.

Poet, be this thy widening theme,—  
 Patriarch order; civic scheme;  
 Right; Custom the great magistrate;  
 Art, patient keen; Learning sedate;  
 Work, on his brows the burning sleet,  
 But Plenty's Horn poured at his feet;  
 Thrift, with her fringe of gladsome beauty  
 To the sober robe of duty;  
 Social loves, and corporate hates;  
 The curse of war; the curse of States  
 Unschooled, unknowing—beasts are they  
 Of burden, where not beasts of prey;  
 And, growing still in moral worth,  
 The lords of knowledge lords of earth;  
 He chief who makes, creative sage,  
 His day a great ancestral age,  
 O'er loins of kings, and ancient seeds,  
 The world-throned heir of his own deeds.

Far-visioned in ecstatic wonder,  
Sweep the worlds above and under;  
Zion so glad and beautiful,  
And Tophet's fierce emblazoned pool.  
Burst in larger song sublime,  
Persuasive to the end of time.

Plant of Renown, of bleeding leaf,  
Blossoming in the House of Grief,  
Be thou our Poet's crown of bay,  
And keep from him all death away!

## SONGS OF THE SEASONS.

### SONG THE FIRST.

HEARTS fail when Winter roars  
On the blown seas.

Red blood for pale ! Spring pours  
Green gladness through her luminous trees.

The bee has wet his happy horn.  
Cloudlet of the silver edges,  
Past thee, up, the lark he twinkles ;  
How he sings, as up he twinkles !  
Through the sedges,  
O'er the ledges,  
Bubbling, how the runnel tinkles ;  
Down away the runnel tinkles !  
Music of the Summer morn.

Joy from grange to city run !  
Lo ! Autumn forges in the sun  
Her spears, so rough of golden head,  
To pierce the hungry soul with bread.

## SONG THE SECOND.

Blue breathing Night, down from her styptick noon,  
Makes her young ice ; the pools all plated gleam.  
Bold speed defies her : down the dashing stream  
Flashes the shattered moon.

Cunning pipe of liquid sweetness !  
Who is blowing ? Spring is blowing.  
All the sullen gloom is going ;  
All the days are happy fleetness.

Mottled globe of seedy wool,  
Blow it round, and blow it full,—  
Blow the dandelion right !  
Puck, merry elf, behind it notes  
His fay of love come on apace ;  
He puffs the downy bubble in her face,  
To vex her with the wingèd motes :  
All by the charmed moon, all in the fairy night.

Morn on the moors ! she dips her foot divine  
In purple blooms and webs of beaded dew.  
How meek she combs, in ripples thin and fine,  
Her hair of cloud high out upon the blue !

## SONG THE THIRD.

Storm in his blackness forth  
Hangs on the suffering north.  
Wide go his wings, away he springs,  
Far back the tumult of his hair he flings,  
The winds are in his roaring wings.

Tearing through forests, making gulfs of night,  
Rushes the tyrannous Might.

The secret of the April bud  
Bursts to the dewy liquor sweet.  
Old men come forth to warm their blood,  
And chirp upon the sunny seat.

Black shadows sail. Lights flash in turn :  
What lustre on yon showery sea !  
On every leaf of every tree  
Drops of molten glory burn.

The Autumn eve, so warm and golden,  
Lies on the hamlet quaint and olden,  
Quaint and quiet. Crofts of wheat  
Strength and Youth are yonder reaping ;  
Age at her door, babes at her feet,  
Half is spinning, half is sleeping.

#### SONG THE FOURTH.

Drear, at the droop of day,  
The nettle-wands, all wintry bare,  
Sigh in our kirkyard old and lone !  
That bowing stranger gray,  
What seeks he there ?  
Sunk in the nettles, moss-o'ergrown,  
He finds a flat memorial stone.  
Kneeling, he picks the frozen moss away ;  
There be the lettered names :  
" My father ! " he exclaims ;  
" Mother, O mother ! " Many a tear  
Is dropping on the names so dear.



Floods of the thaws of night!  
Yon hills, how blear, in raw dun vapour stand.  
Ribbs of old snow, glazed bluely white,  
Indent the sodden land.

Look up ! those leafy openings through,  
What liquid gulfs of living blue !  
"Look up, O sunken face,"  
Quoth June in her sweet grace,  
"Drink my blue day and live, my day so balmy blue!"

Yon pine with blasted head,  
Stands in the moon so red,—  
Hung on the southern heath, so large and round and red

## SONG THE FIFTH.

Day far into the west is gone :  
Weary the Beggar wanders on,—  
On where the infant river gushes  
The dreary fruitless moorlands through,  
And o'er the necks o' the sighing rushes  
Will-o'-the-Wisp goes dancing blue.

Cloud on the hill,  
It comes down by the mill :  
The wheel, it is going ;  
The meal, it is snowing ;  
And the miller, good soul,  
Gives the Beggar his dole.

The moorland cloud is black with thunder,  
Old Bluegown's badge is gleaming under.

With tentative staff, high stepping slow,  
 Blind, face up, dog-led, see him go.  
 Thunder-gloom, to him there's none;  
 Down he sits and picks his bone.

Doggie, he,  
 (Head awry!  
 Watchful eye!

Muzzle leant on Master's knee,  
 Sharpening, twitching, farther leant!)  
 Knows for whom that bone is meant.

Hearts are large when Harvest comes :  
 Blithe the mealy Beggar hums.

#### SONG THE SIXTH.

Look up ! Yon field of blue  
 Broadcast with worlds is sown.

Use within use ! Look up, O Man, and own  
 Vast worlds are also light and spiritual thought for you.

"Sunny shower ! sunny shower !  
 'Twill not last half an hour !"

Clapping hands, Kitty forth, with her merry merry cry,  
 Crows the vaward of the year : and her sweet blue eye  
 Glimmers up, shimmers up to the sheen of the sky.

Hush ! from yon gulf of leaves the brooding dove  
 Breathes the soft crushings of her heart of love.  
 O the sweet dove of love !

The blinding day glares on the granite hill.  
 The very grasshopper is still.  
 Through yon white stones the sportsman slow  
 Crosses the gully waterless ;

Panting his dogs behind him go,  
With lolling tongues in dry distress.

## SONG THE SEVENTH.

Yon Alp, he lifts his snowy horn  
To catch the virgin rose of morn.

Clouds in towering tumult loom :  
Sunny onsets dash the gloom ;  
Bold burly March, he laughs to do it ;  
Yon showery drift, he whistles through it ;  
Breaks in wild glee the Rainbow's horns ;  
Hangs drops of glory on the points of thorns ;  
But, o'er yon sower on the slope,  
Breathes blessing through his thin white dust of hope.

Breezy dapplings to and fro,  
What a ferment o'er the meadow !  
O'er the billowy corn they go,  
Light and shadow, light and shadow.

Bearded leas embattled stand,  
Embattled with the hosts of bread.  
Famine has seen and fled.  
The sower's hand,  
It saves the land :  
High honour to the sower's hand !

## SONG THE EIGHTH.

Cape on the waves ! In sucking caves  
The seething pots of ocean boil :  
Good ship and true, they suck not you,  
Home plunging in your honest toil.

Up in yon sweet blue fluency of air,  
 Our mountain trees, greening of dewy light,  
     Stand in their prosperous height :  
 Finch, merle, and throstle pipe their morning quarrel there.

Summer secrets, here they be  
 Tangled deepest : Shy of view,  
 The woodman lorn holds, beast and bird, with you  
 The wild unwritten by-law, large and lax,—  
     Guild of the forest free.  
 Down in the sounding wood there goes his vehement axe.

Home, red with earth, the weary hind  
 Plods through the thistly stubbles wide.  
 Shrill birds hang wavering down the wind.  
 The miry hunters homeward ride.

#### SONG THE NINTH.

'Tis late and hoar. She's at her door :  
 O for her spouse to come in sight !  
 No form appears ; she harks, but hears  
 No foot abroad in all the night.  
 Start ! her crowding soul is full  
 Of Murder-Wood and Dead-Man's-Pool,—  
 Haunts to waylay him : Shuddering in,  
 To cheat her fear, she hastes to spin.  
 Sit she cannot : Heart-opprest,  
 (So thick the ghostly fancies come),  
 She'll wake her little ones and hear  
 Their voices in the night so drear ;  
 Yet pauses, loth to break their rest.  
 God send the husband and the father home !

Young day, so clear and bland !  
Earth in her dew, how fresh and fair !  
Far ocean lies  
To yonder skies,  
A floor of fine-compacted air.  
Forth we give thee,  
Back receive thee,  
Gladness of the sea and land.

Soft smiling through the showers,  
He makes the eyes of flowers.  
Milk of his blessing, Summer-sweet,  
Swells out God's covenant in the heart of wheat.  
Deep, he makes the silver vein ;  
Deep, he makes the stone of light,—  
A heritage from reign to reign,  
Of purest sparkle on the functional brow.  
Life hangs upon his sight.  
O Sun that Adam saw, I see thee now !

Wo for the fallow eyes !  
The troubled woods roar to the master winds :  
Drift of the leaves, it blinds  
The wildered day forlorn,—drift of the whirling leaves.

## SONG THE TENTH.

His wild penumbra dimly seen  
Through shattered glooms and scuds of sleety sheen,  
Bold from yonder Norland height  
Winter blows his windy horn.

Of sunny drops is April born,—  
Of sunny tremblings of the drops of light.

Type of the Love Supreme, yon infinite blue  
Takes rounded shape from you,  
Embracing shape for you,—  
From you, O earth, for you.

Scorn not the lowly patient power :  
Old Winter's root  
Is bud and shoot,  
Leaf and flower,  
And—lo ! the fruit:  
Heaven is the Harvest of our humblest hour.

## THE HOLY COTTAGE.

"COME near, my child!" the dying father said.  
Life's twilight dews lay heavy on his brow.  
How softly o'er him did that daughter bow!  
She wiped those dews away, she raised his drooping head.

He looked upon her with a long long look,  
Thinking of all her winning little ways,  
His only gladness from her infant days,  
Since God from them away the wife and mother took.

Oft to the moorland places he his child  
Led by the hand, or bore upon his back.  
The curlew's nest he showed her in their track,  
And leveret's dewy play upon the whinny wild.

The while he dug, his coat she quaintly dressed  
With flowers, aye peeping forth lest he might see  
The unfinished fancy; then how pleased when he,  
Much wondering, donned her work, when came his hour of  
rest!

Down sate she by him; and when hail or rain  
Crossed that high country with its streaming cloud,  
She nestled in his bosom o'er her bowed,  
Till through the whitening rack looked out the sun again.

And when his axe was in the echoing wood,  
Down its shy depths, looking behind her oft,  
She o'er the rotting ferns and fungi soft  
Thro' boughs and blinding leaves her bursting way pursued.

The dry twig, matted in the spear-like grass,  
Where fresh from morning's womb the orbèd dew  
Lies cold at noon, cracked as she stepped light through,  
Startling the cushat out close by the startled lass.

Her fluttering heart was ready then for fear:  
Through the far peeping glades she thought she saw  
Forms beckoning, luring her; the while with awe  
The air grew dark and dumb, listening for something drear.

The ferns were stirred, the leaves were shaken, rain  
Fell in big drops, and thunder muttered low;  
Back burst the flushed dishevelled girl, and O  
How glad was she to hear her father's axe again!

Blithe, sitting in the winter night, he made  
Or mended by the fire his garden gear;  
She with her mates, their faces glancing clear  
From shade to ruddy light, quick flitting round him played.

And aye some sly young thing, in rosy joyance,  
Looked up between his knees, where she was hid;  
Humming he worked till she was found, then chid,  
But in a way that just lured back the dear annoyance.

Up grew the virgin in her blooming beauty,  
Filling her father's ordered house with grace.  
And ever o'er the Word she bowed her face,  
Binding her days and nights in one continuous duty.



When Sabbath came, she plucked him mint and thyme,  
And led him forth, what hour from farms around  
By stile, and sunny croft, and meadow ground,  
The particoloured folk came to the bell's sweet chime.

The simple people, gathered by the sod  
Of the new grave, or by the dial-stone,  
Made way, and blessed her as she led him on  
With short and tottering steps into the House of God.

And holy was their Sabbath afternoon,  
The sunlight falling on that father's head  
Through their small western casement, as he read  
Much to his child of worlds which he must visit soon.

And if, his hand upon the Book still laid,  
His spectacles upraised upon his brow,  
Frail nature slept in him, soft going now  
She screened the sunny pane, those dear old eyes to shade.

Then sitting in their garden-plot, they saw  
With what delicious clearness the far height  
Seemed coming near, and slips of falling light  
Lay on green moorland spot and soft illumined shaw.

Turned to the sunny hills where he was nursed,  
The old man told his child of bloody times,  
Marked by the mossy stone of half-sunk rhymes;  
And in those hills he saw her sainted mother first.

"I see thy mother now! I see her stand  
Waiting for me, and smiling holy sweet;  
The robe of white is flowing to her feet;  
And O our good Lord Christ, He holds her by the hand!

“ Farewell, my orphan lamb! To leave thee thus  
Is death to me indeed! Yet fear not thou!  
On the Good Shepherd I do cast thee now:  
’Tis but a little while, and thou shalt come to us.

“ O yes! no fear! home to us in the skies  
His Everlasting arms will carry thee.  
Couldst thou thy mother see, as I do see!  
My child!” He said, and died. His daughter closed his  
eyes.

## FRANK SYLVAN.

### FITTE THE FIRST.

SING, woodland Muse, Frank Sylvan, brave old buck!  
In nankeens, he, white stockings, waistcoat white,  
Green coat, and linen of the amplest cut,  
White as the snow, tied by a ribbon black  
Around the swelling apple of his throat,  
While broad of brim a white hat tops the man,  
Forth sallies, white-haired, rosy cock of health,  
To meet old Winter on the morning hill.  
Hail, let it drive, he cares not—be it caught  
Even in the thickets of his eyebrows shag,  
There let it melt at leisure; he disdains  
To raise his gloveless hand to brush away  
The sleet that sparkles on his glowing cheek:  
'Tis but refreshment. Lifting up his face,  
With nostrils broad and large, the vigorous hairs  
Down growing thence, he snuffs the Norland blast,  
Clear, fresh, and free, rejoicing in the cold.

But more he loves, when on a gurdy morn  
The surly wind has roused the curly deep,  
And o'er the Eastern height he smells the sea,  
To take the headland bluff: seaward he stands,  
Sniffing the salt white spray, his own bluff face  
All red and pickled with the German brine.

Loose, large, and flowing to his convex point,  
Our hero's ruffles, lo! they bear a brooch,  
Fast by his heart, with Charles the Martyr's hair.  
An ancestor of Frank's fought well for Charles  
Through all his wars; and, on that eve of doom,  
Kneeling he wept upon his Sovereign's knee:  
The meek King called his child Elizabeth,  
And made the Princess with her scissors cut  
A small lock from his neck:—"Be it to thee,  
My friend and brother, a memorial slight,  
But best in its simplicity to one  
Pure of self-seeking—a memorial slight  
Of all that thou hast done for England's crown,  
And this poor family." Thus the Martyr said,  
Giving that token. And his servant took,  
Kissed the gray hair, and pressed it to his heart.  
A stout heart wears it still, a loyal heart and true.

A jolly bachelor Frank, in Sylvan Lodge,  
Bosomed in woods, he keeps his easy state:  
A squire of good broad acres, his old house  
Is strong of beef, brown bread, and home-brewed ale;  
And at his buttery-hatch the wandering poor  
Are aye regaled, and sent upon their way.  
His country life has kept his salient points  
Unblunted, red his cheek and fresh his heart;  
While rambles far through wild peculiar tribes  
Have made him largely tolerant, and lent  
A humorous twinkle to his keen gray eye.  
All picturesque varieties of man,  
All oddities of being, starting out  
In bold relief from life's strange canvass, find  
Grace in his eyes; but wo to them that dare  
Abuse discretion, for like any lynx  
He looks them through and through, and, hot of blood,

Snorts in his ire, and drives them from his gate—  
His gate still open to the modest poor!

For, generous as himself, his little niece,  
Who rules his house with many opening keys,  
Bears out his heart and hand—"Brown Molly" she  
From her complexion; but her clear brown face  
Was cut with Beauty's chisel, clean and fine  
In every feature; fairy-like, her form  
Is grace itself; but O her true young heart  
Is more than beauty, and is more than grace.

## FITTE THE SECOND.

O now the summer woods! O now the joy  
To haunt their tangled depths, with curious eye  
Watching the wild folk of the leafy world,  
From beetledom below to the high flight  
Of shooting doves that shave the liquid air!  
Such pastime has been Frank's, since first, a boy,  
When lit the rising sun with level rays  
The light green glimmering of the barley braird,  
Empearled with dew, till all the trembling drops  
Like sapphires glowed, he wondered at the hare  
Hirpling therein, and sitting oft on end  
With strange suspicious gestures—can it be  
Old Eppie Tait, the witch? and wondering saw  
The horse-hair stirring in the shallow po  
Left in the rut of the unmended road,   ur  
After warm rains by night—will it become  
A lamprey, as they say? and wondering found  
The shrew-mouse lying with its entrails out,  
On the green path, where late at eve he passed  
And saw it not: what killed it?—was't the owl  
By night who pounced it for a common mouse,

And, out of temper at her own mistake,  
Tore it to death, but scornéd to taste a shrew?

Upspringing with the sun, Frank, every morn,  
As every night, reads to his gathered house  
The solemn service of the English Church,  
Dear to his heart—a worship fitly framed  
Betwixt the sensuous and emotional.  
His stout old-fashioned breakfast o'er, he takes  
His business room, and fits himself to speak  
Of roads and bridges with his neighbour lairds;  
Then forth into his garden, counsel there  
To hold with the old gardener, or with ear  
Patient attend his manifold complaints  
Of birds unthinned, the bullfinch worst of all,  
Whose cursèd beak—what can the fellow mean?  
For worms he seeks not, nor one blossom eats—  
Plays such wild havock with the apple buds.  
“He’s a bad boy,” says Frank, and whistles off  
Along the broad green walk, close-shaven, and paved  
With soft moss like a carpet; and the maze  
Of pleachèd walks, and alleys green o’erarched,  
By holly bowers, and dials old and quaint,  
Pacing he threads—for all the place, unlike  
Your modern garden cut to the bare quick,  
Is kept unshorn, a place of coy retreat.  
Up then he gets into the old ash-tree,  
To see the <sup>hous</sup>ing owlets in their hole,  
And sl<sup>ow</sup>ly <sup>in</sup> them; or in his pendulous swing  
High sitting, moving to and fro, enjoy  
The visitations of the flitting birds,  
And all the cool refreshment of the leaves,  
Rustling and breathing, with a dewy smell,  
And all the glimmerings of the greening light.

Then deep he dives into the pathless woods,

And holds communion with the creatures there,  
 A numerous people ; for in all his bounds,  
 Protected by his humour or his love,  
 Easy they lead their unmolested lives.  
 So delicate his ear, he can detect  
 The faintest impulse that affects the tone  
 Of beast or bird, as circumstances change :  
 Has not the rook a harvest cry ?—a slight  
 Percussive breathing through her usual note,  
 Somewhat analogous to the Irish brogue ?—  
 A chuckle ? that's too strong ; we'll call it, then,  
 The halitus of a spirit crowding through  
 Her fuller voice, like thanks for God's good corn ?  
 Is this a fancy, or is this a fact ?

Frank's pencil catches, quick of comic gust,  
 Queer things where'er he goes—the curly imp  
 Cocked on the donkey's rump, or whirled right o'er  
 Its lowered ears into the attempted ford ;  
 The camps of gipsies, and old beggars' heads.  
 Nor does he chuckle not when he has caught  
 A Latin scholar on unwonted steed ;  
 His heels turned closely in, his toes wide out ;  
 His trousers ruffled up unto his knees ;  
 His coat-tails pinned before him, to escape  
 The dusty hair of Rosinante's ribs ;  
 And, ever as he rises in his trot  
 With slow and solemn risings, the far-off  
 Horizon seen, a lucid interval,  
 Betwixt the saddle and his seat of honour.

And on goes Frank, and sees from many a point  
 The trees he planted in his youth fulfil  
 The picturesque design—the Scotch firs high  
 On gravelly ridge (best soil for them) to show  
 Their flaky foliage on the Eastern light,

Or in the embosomed wood with dark relief  
Set off the lightness of the general green ;  
And sycamores far off, a depth, a world  
Of sultry languor in their summer heads.  
But here the river bounds his woodland realm.  
Steep his own bank of trees, yet steeper far  
The opposing hill high up with hanging woods.  
The cushat, startled from her ivied tree,  
Comes clapping out above him, down right o'er  
The river takes, and, folding her smooth wings,  
Shoots like an arrow up the woody face  
Of yon high steep, and o'er it bears away,—  
The loveliest feat in all the flight of birds.  
But O the rarer charm, when yon green face  
Is all astir with winds unheard so high,  
Waving and swaying all, this way and that,  
Opening and closing, intertwined, evolved,  
With gestures all of love, low bowings, risings,  
Kissings, slow courtesies, and tufted nods,  
All flexible graces multitudinous !  
O many a time, and long hours at a time,  
Has Sylvan lain upon his sunny shore,  
Rapt, more than gazing on the pictured show,  
Silent though all in motion, till his soul,  
Drowsed with the very fulness of the beauty,  
Slumbered and saw not through the glimmering eye.

The farthest walk in his domain has brought  
Frank to "The Plague Mount." Gray Tradition tells  
That here the last struck of the spotted pest  
Was buried far from men. Upon its top  
Are sombre trees, and in the trees a seat ;  
And on the seat aye Sylvan rests a while,  
With changeful musings o'er life's darker things.  
A half-sunk boulder on the Mount is called



"The Siller Stone." In popular legend, lies  
A hoard of gold beneath it. Daring men  
Have tried to dig it out ; but aye a storm  
Of lightning red, and thunder black with wrath,  
Bursts, scares and drives them from the unfinished work.  
Deepening the awe of the enchanted Mount,  
A burn comes down a low and lonely glen,  
And sleeps into a pool at its green feet,  
Silent, profound, and black, "The Fairy Pool."  
Seven boys, once bathing in the twilight there,  
Were spirited away, and ne'er again  
Came back to earth. Seven girls once playing there,  
As home they passed from school, on the frail ice,  
Went down together in the charmed pool :  
But they were found, and, on a weeping day,  
Their virgin bodies in one grave were laid.  
Here grows the earth-nut, with its slim green stalk,  
Flat crowned with flowery white. The Mount's one side  
Is soft with moss and broken earth, and there  
Bare digging fingers may achieve its nuts.  
But, tempted though he be, the schoolboy ne'er  
Invades the Genius of the awe-guarded ground,  
Alone. In knots the imps have sometimes dared  
The desperate deed ; but terror all the while  
Disturbs their trembling fingers, as they trace  
The tender white of the descending stalk  
Down through the ground, which hardens as they dig,  
And breaks the thread that guides them to the prize :  
And so they lose it. If by chance they reach  
The knobbed nut, they break with their thumb-nail,  
And peel the foul brown film of rind away  
To the pure white, and taste it soft and frush.  
They chew—they swallow not—they spit it out  
With sputtering haste : 'tis earthy ! 'tis the rank

And rotten flavour of the buried Plague !  
Awe has them still—they gather close—they look  
Into each other's faces—they behold  
Strange meanings there—one fear infects the whole—  
Breathless they break away, nor dare to turn  
And look behind them to the ghostly Mount.

Homeward by other paths, Frank never fails,  
With hat in hand, and reverence as of love,  
To drink and rest at sweet St Mary's Well.  
Cold, still, and glassy deep, a grassy brow  
O'ershading it, here lies the virgin well.  
Frost never films it, ne'er the Dog-Star drinks  
Its liquid brimming lower. Self-relieved,  
By soft green dimples in its yielding lip,  
The trembling fulness breaks, and, slipping o'er,  
Cold bubbles through the grass; the infant spilth  
Assumes a voice, and, gathering as it goes,  
A runnel makes : how beautiful the green  
Translucent lymph, crisp curling, purling o'er  
The floating duckweed, lapsingly away !

His woodland walk accomplished, Sylvan lays  
His right leg o'er his shelty, for a round  
Of friendly visits of a summer day.  
Thigh, leg, and toe turned round and in, the big  
Toe-ball just resting on the stirrup, the heel  
Depressed, and almost reaching to the ground,  
Erect he sits on Donald ; shaggy he,  
Long-tailed, long-maned, and tossing, as he moves,  
The hair redundant o'er his fairy face,  
Whence fitfully his glowing eyes look out.  
And many a little dog, and many a large,  
With sleek-licked swirls upon their glossy coats,  
Attend the march, and round the master play.

The good old Scottish Gentlewoman, first,

Who, faithful to the good old way, still spins,  
And speaks the good old Scotch, the classic tongue  
Not of a province, but an ancient realm,  
Frank visits. Next, the rough old Commodore,  
Who from his castellated cabin high  
Telegraphs, with the system of his flags,  
The valley far ; of many a tough old fight  
The tough old remnant he, shattered and worn,  
White "at the main : " but o'er a sea of grog  
Ascending, reigns the Dog-star in his nose.

Next comes the Manse : And forth with Sylvan walks  
The good old Pastor, shaking oft the head  
Over the changes of our modern day.  
The railway most he fears, spoiling our green  
Sequestered valleys with its raw red scaurs,  
And long dry banks of rubbish, spoiling more  
Our picturesque simplicities of life,  
Old points of character, old points of faith,  
With social innovations manifold.  
" Beautiful vale ! Vale of my Flock ! " he sighs,  
" Fear not the Winter, thou ; fear rather, thou,  
The Mammon who would drive his railway train,  
With whistle shrieking in its lust of gold,  
Through the sweet music of thy Sabbath bells !  
Let him not in ; O keep the Demon out,  
For there's no reverence in his golden hoof !  
Give him but gradients to his mind, he'd drive  
His trading rail right o'er the inhibited top  
Of Sinai, through its awful sanctities,  
As if they were the cheap amenities  
Of some suburban villa : Keep him out ! "

Frank takes the Nabob next : Him oft he finds  
Standing beneath a tree : hours at a time,  
With sour mahogany face against the day,

There will he stand. Cross-grained to all his folk,  
They hold his conscience, not his liver, wrong :  
An Indian prince he murdered for his gold—  
So runs the whisper—horror-haunted thus,  
Dark are his days, by night he dares not sleep  
Without seven lighted candles round his bed.  
Old Frank, of course, at all such nonsense laughs ;  
And him the Nabob loves, flinging himself  
With full abandonment, as if for help,  
On the broad nature of the healthy man :  
And Sylvan cheers him up, and he is cheered ;  
But sinks relapsing when his friend is gone.

Thus hairy Donald, with short dibbling trot,  
Bears his blithe master round from place to place.  
Old Grayford last he visits : Him he finds  
A-field ; his right hand with a hedgebill armed ;  
His left laid down upon his swelling loin,  
The palm turned out, the curved arm forming thus  
The handle of the Lairdly Dignity.  
Gray spats, white stockings, and a long gray coat,  
Invest old Nimrod ; on his head is set  
His small black hunting-cap of many a field—  
Beneath its front his keen eye twinkles out,  
Behind descends his venerable queue :  
Tall, thin, and gray, walks the old man erect.  
Due greetings o'er, Laird Grayford lays his hand  
On Donald's mane, and by our hero stalks,  
And has him round to look at hedge and drain,  
And all his plantings :—"Here's a clump—this way—  
Put in last Autumn, it seems getting up ?  
What think you, eh ? In thirty years or so,  
'Twill be a nice thing ; and by then I'll be  
Pretty well buffed."—Old Nimrod's seventy now !  
And much he growls of beggars, much of boys,

And tinkers, in defiance of the Act,  
Pasturing their donkeys by the sides of roads ;  
And aye he sniffs, with nostril scornful thin,  
At self-dubbed captains with their fishing-rods,  
Who summer-haunt the village by the Hall,  
And rob the ancient lordship of respect.  
“ Whom have we next ? ” keen looking out, demands  
The jealous Laird, as o’er the knoll he spies  
A waving rod : “ One o’ your captains, eh ?  
Of course : A man can’t toss his glove up now,  
But down it comes on a captain—Let’s this way.”

But Frank must home, and dine, and be prepared  
Service to do with Moll ; for old and young,  
His neighbours round, from village and from farm  
Invited, hold this night upon the lawn  
The Annual Strawberry Feast of Sylvan Lodge.

#### FITTE THE THIRD.

Take, sportive Health, your tasselled horn and blow,  
What time the breezes of the Autumnal hill  
Lift your light locks of youth, and scatter them  
In tangled beauty round your glowing face ;  
Call up old Sylvan to the mountain-side.

Pleasant to Sylvan when with summer come  
The twittering swallow and the shrilling swift ;  
Yet pleasanter, in Autumn’s bracing air,  
The hills of gorcocks and the hills of deer.  
But O the exhilaration when the furze,  
Beneath the high hoar wood, is all astir  
With fox-hound tails, just seen above the whins,  
Cocked, curled, and crowding in one ferment thick.  
Before one tongue, prelusive of the scent,  
Has broken out, the experienced hunter knows,

By a fine sense instinctive, all's right now ;  
And scarce restraining his impatient steed,  
Fire-quick in consciousness of every move,  
Pulls down his cap, and buttons up his coat.  
One sure old beagle gives a deep-mouthed note,  
A second—third—the pack : Away, away  
Bursts through the echoing woods the storm of chase !  
Old Frank is there ; with natural, healthy heart,  
A daring huntress, Molly too is there.

When the last apple, yellowing into white,  
Gleams in the leaves, Frank through the coloured woods  
Saunters ; an amateur in rustic staves,  
His vigilant shaping eye detects at once,  
Though rough, half sunk in moss, the well-curved head  
To the tall upward stalk, smooth-skinned and straight,  
Or gnared with knots and knobs, with twists and crooks  
Grotesque, and full of quaint, queer character ;  
Forth then he draws his vigorous pruning-knife,  
And adds another to the cudgel-sheaf  
Which garnishes the lobby of his Lodge.

The air begins to nip : The plane-tree, first  
With soft crimped leaf to burst the honey-glue  
Of Spring's brown swelling bud—as well the boy  
Knows, bent on whistles, when the sap is up,  
And the moist bark comes peeling cleanly off—  
Is first to shed her leaves ; down drop they now,  
Dullest of sere, embossed with spots of black,  
And foul feet tread them in the miry paths.  
Cheer by his evening fire ! How Frank enjoys  
The Sanctum of his books ! Byronic glooms  
Have no place there, nor felons of romance,  
Heroes of hemp, the glories of the gallows ;  
But all the Saxon old simplicities.  
And chief the Fathers of the English Church,

Of holy majesty and sweet composure,  
Engage him, lifting up his heart's desire  
To the good land of order, peace, and rest.

Clear-minded hence, up with the morn is Frank.  
Gambol his dogs around him ; deep he wades  
The rustling leaves of the October woods,  
On through the crushed brown ferns of the high slope,  
To look through the clear air : he loves to see  
The varied faces of our Scottish hills.  
Here grassiest green is one, with darker stripes  
Where waters ooze away ; one mottled there  
With black-brown heather and with verdant spots ;  
A third, where lies the thin soil on the rock,  
Swells smooth and round, but dun its juiceless grass ;  
A herbless fourth's gray o'er with rocky stones,  
Where thorn-trees old, and doddered ashes grow,  
And rowans anchored in fantastic rifts :  
High o'er its head the circling raven sails.

At penny weddings, christenings, fairs, and kirns,  
Our humorist prompts the rustic holiday.  
The passing bell for village patriarch,  
For simple maiden, or for thoughtful boy,  
Smites on his ready heart ; and forth he helps  
To bear them to the dust. But oft-times, too,  
Age-callous men, in coats of rustiest black,  
With big horn buttons, generations old,  
Trembling and fumbling in their eager greed,  
All through the plate of service-bread to find  
The largest bits, and smacking their thin jaws  
O'er the red solemn wine ; then, deaf and loud,  
Clattering their gossip through the measured tread  
On to the churchyard slow, has made old Frank  
Snuff hard, repressing scarce his angry snort,  
And lag behind the irreverent company.

Scotland, with all thy worth, irreverent thou,  
In solemn things irreverent ; reverent less  
Of Beauty, loving not the Beautiful !  
Yes, tell it to her shame, no statue fair,  
For admiration placed in open view,  
No monumental work, but her rude sons  
Deface it forthwith : France or Italy  
Knows no such savagery, nor any land.  
What can it mean ? Is it our soul of sect,  
Which looks on all such beauties of man's Art  
As vanities, not unallied to sin ?  
Did not God make the Rainbow, coarse-grained soul ?  
His hands did they not bending fashion it ?  
Is that a vanity, is that a sin ?  
I, Beauty, dwell with him who made green earth,  
The pictured seasons, and the hosts of heaven.

Mellow the frosty noon : The yellow sun  
Eats out the fire in filmy ashes white ;  
Who cares a doit ?—not Frank : the old chap, be sure,  
With all his dogs is cheerily abroad.  
Yon sliding boys, how blithe ! O happier day  
Than wet home-prisoned days, when, sick of slates,  
And books, and toys, they take their listless stand  
At the dull window, and their noses squeeze,  
Flattened till they be white, against the pane  
Washed by the streaming, weltering drench without !  
If hen, high lifting her unwilling feet,  
Run dripping by ; or random waddling duck,  
Half swimming, slabber, with her bill engulfed,  
Through the green pool ; or snouted sow upturn  
The reeking dunghill,—better sight than this  
Their vacant eye may hope not, as they stand  
And idly look into the dim drear day.

The boy can swim ! By day he thinks, by night



He dreams of swimming. Prone upon the sward,  
Or snuglier lying in the clover field,  
Sucking the honeyed flowers, even there the pride  
Of conscious power comes o'er him, out he strikes  
With hands and feet, unmindful how the grass  
Or clover leaves green-stain his corduroys.  
Each summer day, three times at least he takes  
The gravelly pool, and wriggles to make way,  
Till short and feeble grow his plunging strokes,  
Quick, quicker sinks his head, his panting breath  
Scarce puffs the lipping water from his mouth,  
And his teeth chatter and his nails be blue.  
Behold him now! bent forward on his hams  
Beside the burn; his hands he pushes out,  
In swimming fashion, from below his nose,  
And seems to meditate the unfrozen depth.  
O no, he'll not jump in; but pleased he sees  
How he could stem it, and with eager heart  
Longs for the coming of the summer sun.

But lo! the old mill: Down to it hies our imp,  
Following the dam. The outer wheel still black,  
Though sleeked with gleety green, and candied o'er  
With ice, is doing duty. In he goes  
By the wide two-leaved door; all round he looks  
Throughout the dusty atmosphere, but sees  
No miller there. The mealy cobwebs shake  
Along the wall, a squeaking rat comes out,  
And sits and looks at him with steadfast eye.  
He hears the grinding's smothered sound, a sound  
Lonelier than silence: Memory summons up  
The "Thirlstane Pedlar" murdered in a mill,  
And buried there: The "Meal-cap Miller," too,  
In "God's Revenge on Murther" bloody-famed,  
Comes o'er his spirit. Add to this the fear

Of human seizure, for he meditates  
A boyish multure: Stepping stealthily  
On tiptoe, looking round, he ventures on ;  
Thrusts both his hands into the oatmeal heap,  
Warm from the millstones ; and, in double dread  
Of living millers and of murdered pedlars,  
Flies with his booty, licking all the way.

Homeward returning by the upland path,  
Old Sylvan stands and listens: Through the meek  
Still day, from far-off places comes the long,  
Smooth, level booming of the channel-stones.  
Roar goes a stone adown some nearer rink ;  
Right, left it strikes: triumphant shouts proclaim  
A last great shot has revolutionised  
The crowded tee. Down in the valley, lo!  
The broom-armed knights upon their gleaming board.  
Such rural sports beguile the winter day.

But good old Christmas comes, and holds its state  
In Sylvan Lodge, as in the antique time.  
And Captain Mavor's there from Eastern lands,  
And all is merry cheer and holy joy.  
Frank was his father's friend, and, ere he died,  
Was named by him the guardian of the boy ;  
And through long conflicts of disputed rights  
He bore his ward triumphantly, and sent  
Young George to India, an accomplished youth,  
To be a soldier there: But, ere he went,  
With Molly Sylvan he had vows exchanged ;  
And she, and none but she, shall be his wife.  
Prudent, and valiant in the field, he rose ;  
And Aliwal and bloody Sobraon  
Fulfilled the promise of his earlier years.  
" Come to your window, Lilla Zal, and see  
Those blue-eyed islanders, lords of the earth,"

Thus said a dark-eyed damsel of Lahore  
To her young sister. And they stood and saw  
That little company ride glorious in,  
Sublime in their considerate modesty,  
And empires stricken by a band so small.  
And much they wondered at the fair-haired men,  
As they rode by; but Mavor's beauteous youth  
Drew forth the murmurs of their glad surprise.  
Proud day was that to all those British men;  
But Mavor now is happier where he is,  
With old Frank Sylvan and his nut-brown maid.

Labour, Art, Worship, Love, these make man's life:  
How sweet to spend it here! Beautiful dale,  
What time the virgin favour of the Spring  
Bursts in young lilies, they are first in thee;  
Thine lavish Summer lush of luminous green,  
And Autumn glad upon thy golden crofts.  
Let Winter come: on January morn,  
Down your long reach, how soul-inspiring,  
Far in the frosty yellow of the East,  
To see the flaming horses of the Sun  
Come galloping up on the untrodden year!  
If storm-flaws more prevail, hail, crusted snows,  
And blue-white thaws upon the spotty hills,  
With dun swollen floods, they pass and hurt thee not;  
They but enlarge, with sympathetic change,  
The thoughtful issues of thy dwellers' hearts.  
Here, happy thus, far from the scarlet sins,  
From bribes, from violent ways, the anxious mart  
Of money-changers, and the strife of tongues,  
Fearing no harm of plague, no evil star  
Bearded with wrath, his spirit finely touched  
To life's true harmonies, old Sylvan dwells,  
Deep in the bosom of his native dale.

Muse, thou'rt a Prophetess as well as Muse;  
Lift up the corner of Time's veil :—Behold !  
Light fairy forms, the Genii of the wood,  
The dappled mountain, and the running stream,  
Are strewing favours on the old man's grave,  
While many a little bird his requiem sings.  
George Mavor Sylvan dwells, in thoughtful peace,  
With Mary Sylvan in old Sylvan Lodge.

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## THE CHAMPION.

HOPE, with eyes of sunny seed,  
Smile thee on to power and deed,

Champion, who the sword dost draw  
For Order, Liberty, and Law.

O'er the heads of foes advance,  
Victor, lord of maintenance.

Work the work. From blood abhorred  
Turn the face, and sheathe the sword,

Patriot, with the temperate eyes,  
Set to Reason's harmonies.

Reverence on thy coming wait,  
Princes meet thee in the gate !

## AN EVENING WALK.

THE Patriarch mild, who mused at evening-tide,  
Saw blessings come : they who with ordered feet  
Go forth like him, their blessings too shall meet,—  
Beauty, and Grace, and Peace, harmonious side by side ;

Whether the down purpled with thyme they tread,  
Woodland, or marge of brook, or pathway sweet  
By the grave rustling of the heavy wheat,  
Singing to thankful souls the song of coming bread.

The restless whitethroat warbles through the copse ;  
High sits the thrush and pipes the tree upon ;  
Cloud-flushed the west, a sunny shower comes on ;  
Up goes the twinkling lark through the clear slanting drops.

In straight stiff lines sweet Nature will not run :  
The lark comes down—mute now, wings closed, no check,  
Sheer down he drops ; but back he curves his neck,  
Look, too, he curves his fall just ere his nest be won.

Here stands The Suffering Elm : in days of yore  
Three martyrs hung upon its bending bough ;  
Its sympathetic side, from then till now  
Weeping itself away, drops from that issuing sore.

Dryads, and Hamadryads; bloody groans  
Bubbling for vent, when twigs are torn away  
In haunted groves; incessant, night and day,  
Gnarled in the knotted oak, the pent-up spirit's moans;

And yonder trembling aspen, never still,  
Since of its wood the rueful Cross was made,—  
All these, incarnated by Fancy's aid,  
Are but extended Man, in life, and heart, and will.

Your eye still shifting to the setting sun,  
The diamond drops upon the glistening thorns  
Are topazes and emeralds by turns;  
Twinkling they shake, and aye they tremble into one.

Clouds press the sinking orb: he strikes a mist  
Of showery purple on the forest-tops,  
The western meadows, and the skirting slopes;  
Down comes the stream, a lapse of living amethyst.

We tread on legends all this storied land:  
Dull flows yon ferry through the mountains black  
With pinewood galleries far withdrawing back;  
Man's heart is also there, and dwarfs those summits grand:

The virgin martyrs, half the ferry o'er,  
By ruthless men were plunged into the tide,  
Singing their holy psalm; away it died,  
Bubbling in death. The moon a blood-red sorrow wore.

And aye, they tell, when wan and all forlorn  
Sickening she looks upon our world of wrong,  
And would be gone for ever, far along  
The mournful ferry dim that dying psalm is borne.

Yon peasant swarth, his day of labour done,  
Pipes at his cottage door; his wife sits by,  
Dancing their baby to the minstrelsy :  
To temperate gladness they their sacred right have won.

Rest after toil, sweet healing after pain ;  
Repent, and so be loved, O stubborn-iced—  
The Tishbite girt severe runs before Christ :  
Such is the double law complete to mortal men.

Yon lordly pine bends his complying head  
To eve's soft breath, and the stupendous cloud  
Shifts silently : Man's world is fitliest bowed  
By power when gently used : Force not, love thou instead.

One cool green gleam on yonder woodland high,  
And Day retires; gray Twilight folds with dew  
The hooded flowers; in gulfs of darkening blue  
The starry worlds come out to Contemplation's eye.

Home now to sleep. No part in all man's frame  
But has its double uses, firm to keep,  
Help this, round that, and beautify; of sleep,  
Complex of sweet designs, how finely 'tis the same.

Touched with the solemn harmonies of night,  
Down do we lie, our spirits to repair,  
And, fresh ourselves, make morning fresh and fair;  
Sleep too our Father gave to soften death's affright :

In sleep we lapse and lose ourselves away,  
And thus each night our death do we rehearse.  
O, at the last, may we the oblivion pierce  
Of death, as aye of sleep, and rise unto the day.

## THE

### DEVIL'S DREAM ON MOUNT AKSBECK.

BEYOND the north where Ural hills from polar tempests run,  
A glow went forth at midnight hour as of unwonted sun ;  
Upon the north at midnight hour a mighty noise was heard,  
As if with all his trampling waves the Ocean were unbarred ;  
And high a grizzly Terror hung, upstarting from below,  
Like fiery arrow shot aloft from some unmeasured bow.

'Twas not the obedient Seraph's form that burns before the  
Throne,  
Whose feathers are the pointed flames that tremble to be gone :  
With twists of faded glory mixed, grim shadows wove his wing ;  
An aspect like the hurrying storm proclaimed the Infernal King.  
And up he went, from native night, or holy sufferance given,  
As if to strike the starry boss of the high and vaulted heaven.

Aloft he turned in middle air like falcon for his prey,  
And bowed to all the winds of heaven as if to flee away ;  
Till broke a cloud—a phantom host, like glimpses of a dream,  
Sowing the Syrian wilderness with many a restless gleam :  
He knew the flowing chivalry, the swart and turbaned train,  
That far had pushed the Moslem faith, and peopled well his  
reign :



With stooping pinion that outflew the Prophet's wingèd steed,  
In pride throughout the desert bounds he led the phantom  
speed ;

But prouder yet he turned alone and stood on Tabor hill,  
With scorn as if the Arab swords had little helped his will :  
With scorn he looked to west away, and left their train to die,  
Like a thing that had awaked to life from the gleaming of his  
eye.

What hill is like to Tabor hill in beauty and in fame ?  
There in the sad days of His flesh o'er Christ a glory came ;  
And light outflowed Him like a sea, and raised His shining  
brow ;  
And the Voice went forth that bade all worlds to God's  
Beloved bow.  
One thought of this came o'er the Fiend, and raised his  
startled form ;  
And up he drew his swelling skirts as if to meet the storm.

With wing that stripped the dewes and birds from off the  
boughs of night,  
Down over Tabor's trees he whirled his fierce distempered flight ;  
And westward o'er the shadowy earth he tracked his earnest way,  
Till o'er him shone the utmost stars that hem the skirts of day ;  
Then higher 'neath the sun he flew above all mortal ken,  
Yet looked what he might see on earth to raise his pride again.

He saw a form of Africa low sitting in the dust ;  
The feet were chained, and sorrow thrilled throughout the  
sable bust.

The idol, and the idol's priest he hailed upon the earth,  
And every slavery that brings wild passions to the birth.  
All forms of human wickedness were pillars of his fame,  
All sounds of human misery his kingdom's loud acclaim.

Exulting o'er the rounded earth again he rode with Night,  
Till, sailing o'er the untrodden top of Aksbeck high and white,  
He closed at once his weary wings, and touched the shining  
hill ;

For less his flight was easy strength than proud unconquered  
will :

For sin had dulled his native strength, and spoilt the holy law  
Of impulse whence the Archangel forms their earnest being  
draw.

And sin had drunk his brightness, since his Heavenly days  
went by :

Shadows of care and sorrow dwelt in his proud immortal eye ;  
Like little sparry pools that glimpse midst murk and haggard  
rocks,

Quick fitful gleams came o'er his cheek black with the thunder-  
strokes ;

Like coast of lurid darkness were his forehead's shade and light,  
Lit by some far volcanic fire, and strewed with wrecks of night.

Like hovering bird that fears the snare, or like the startled  
Sleep

That ne'er its couch on eyelids of blood-guilty men will keep,  
His ruffled form that trembled much, his swarthy soles unblest,  
As if impatient to be gone, still hovering could not rest ;

Still looking up unto the moon clear set above his head,  
Like mineral hill where gold grows ripe, sore gleams his fore-  
head shed.

Winds rose : from 'neath his settling feet were driven great  
drifts of snow ;

Like hoary hair from off his head did white clouds streaming go ;  
The gulfy pinewoods far beneath roared surging like a sea ;  
From out their lairs the striding wolves came howling awfully.

But now upon an ice-glazed rock, severely blue, he leant,  
His spirit by the storm composed that round about him went.

In nature's Joy he felt fresh night blow on his fiery scars ;  
In proud Regret he fought anew his early hapless wars ;  
From human misery lately seen, his Malice yet would draw  
A hope to blast one plan of God, and check sweet Mercy's law ;  
An endless line of future years was stern Despair's control :  
And deep these master Passions wove the tempest of his soul.

O for the form in Heaven that bore the morn upon his brow !  
Now, run to worse than mortal dross, that Lucifer must bow.  
And o'er him rose, from Passions' strife, like spray-cloud from  
the deep,  
A slumber ; not the Cherub's soft and gauzy veil of sleep,  
But like noon's breathless thunder-cloud, of sultry smothered  
gleam,  
And God was still against his soul to plague him with a dream.

In vision he was borne away, where Lethe's slippery wave  
Creeps like a black and shining snake into a silent cave,—  
A place of still and pictured life : its roof was ebon air,  
And blasted as with dim eclipse the sun and moon were there :  
It seemed the grave of man's lost world—of Beauty caught by  
blight.  
The Dreamer knew the work he marred, and felt a Fiend's  
delight.

The lofty cedar on the hills by viewless storms was swung,  
And high the thunder-fires of heaven among its branches hung ;  
In drowsy heaps of feathers sunk, all fowls that fly were there,  
Their heads for ever 'neath their wings, no more to rise in air ;  
From woods the forms of lions glared, and hasty tigers broke ;  
The harnessed steed lay in his pains, the heifer 'neath the yoke.

All creatures once of earth are there, all sealed with Death's  
pale seal

On Lethe's shore : dull sliding by her sleepy waters steal.

O'er cities of imperial name, and styled of endless sway,

The silent river slowly creeps, and licks them all away.

This is the place of God's First Wrath—the mute creation's fall—

Earth marred—the woes of lower life—oblivion over all.

Small joy to him that marred our world ! for he is hurried on,  
Made, even in dreams, to dread that place where yet he boasts  
his throne :

Through portals driven, a horrid pile of grim and hollow bars,  
Wherein clear spirits of tinctured life career in prisoned wars,  
Down on the Second Lake he's bowed, where final fate is  
wrought,

In meshes of eternal fire, o'er beings of moral thought.

Vast rose (the Dreamer knew his Throne) a rock of mineral glow,  
Its tortured summit hid in smoke, from out the gulf below,  
Whose fretted surf of gleaming waves still broke against its sides,  
Serpents of Sorrow, spun from out the lashings of those tides,  
Sprung disengaged, and darted up that damnèd cliff amain,  
Their bellies skinned with glossy fire : But none came down  
again.

Far off, upon the fire-burnt coast, some naked beings stood ;  
And o'er them, like a stream of mist, the Wrath was seen to  
brood.

At half-way distance stood, with head beneath his trembling  
wing,

An Angel shape, intent to shield his special suffering.

And nearer, as if overhead, were voices heard to break ;

Yet were they cries of souls that lived beneath the weltering  
Lake.

And ever, as with grizzly gleam the crested waves came on,  
Up rose a melancholy form with short impatient moan,  
Whose eyes like living jewels shone, clear-purgèd by the flame;  
And sore the salted fires had washed the thin immortal frame;  
And backward, in sore agony, the Being stripped its locks,  
As a maiden in her beauty's pride her clasped tresses strokes.

High tumbling hills of glossy ore reeled in the yellow smoke,  
As shaded round the uneasy land their sultry summits broke.  
Above them lightnings to and fro ran crossing evermore,  
Till, like a red bewildered map, the skies were scribbled o'er.  
High in the unseen cupola o'er all were ever heard  
The mustering stores of Wrath that fast their coming forms  
prepared.

Wo, wo to him whose wickedness first dug this glaring pit!  
For this new terrors in his soul by God shall yet be lit.  
In vision still to plague his heart, the Fiend is stormed away,  
In dreadful emblem to behold what waits his future day;  
Away beyond the thundering bounds of that tremendous Lake,  
Through dim bewildered shadows which no living semblance  
take.

O'er soft and unsubstantial shades which towering visions seem,  
Through kingdoms of forlorn repose, went on the hurrying  
dream;  
Till down where feet of hills might be, he by a Lake was stayed  
Of still red fire—a molten plate of terror unallayed—  
A mirror where Jehovah's Wrath, in majesty alone,  
Comes in the night of worlds to see its armour girded on.

The awful walls of shadows round might dusky mountains  
seem,  
But never holy light hath touched an outline with its gleam;

'Tis but the eye's bewildered sense that fain would rest on form,  
And make night's thick blind presence to created shapes conform.  
No stone is moved on mountain here by creeping creature  
crossed ;

No lonely harper comes to harp upon this fiery coast.

Here all is solemn idleness : no music here, no jars,  
Where Silence guards the coast, e'er thrill her everlasting bars,  
No sun here shines on wanton isles ; but o'er the burning sheet  
A rim of restless halo shakes, which marks the internal heat ;  
As, in the days of beauteous earth, we see with dazzled sight  
The red and setting sun o'erflow with rings of welling light.

O ! here in dread abeyance lurks of uncreated things  
The Last Lake of God's Wrath, where He his first great Enemy  
brings.

Deep in the bosom of the gulf the Fiend was made to stay,  
Till, as it seemed, ten thousand years had o'er him rolled away :  
In dreams he had extended life to bear the fiery space ;  
But all was passive, dull, and stern within his dwelling-place.

O for a blast of tenfold ire to rouse the giant surge,  
Him from that flat fixed lethargy impetuously to urge !  
Let him but rise, but ride upon the tempest-crested wave  
Of fire enridged tumultuously, each angry thing he'd brave !  
The strokes of Wrath—thick let them fall ! a speed so glorious  
dread

Would bear him through ; the clinging pains would strip from  
off his head.

At last, from out the barren womb of many thousand years,  
A sound as of the green-leaved earth his thirsty spirit cheers ;  
And O a presence soft and cool came o'er his burning dream,  
A form of beauty clad about with fair creation's beam ;

A low sweet voice was in his ear, thrilled through his inmost soul,  
And these the words that bowed his heart with softly sad control :—

“ No sister e'er hath been to thee with pearly eyes of love ;  
No mother e'er hath wept for thee, an outcast from above ;  
No hand hath come from out the cloud to wash thy scarrèd face ;  
No voice to bid thee lie in peace, the noblest of thy race :  
But bow thee to the God of Love, and all shall yet be well,  
And yet in days of holy peace and love thy soul shall dwell.

“ And thou shalt dwell 'midst leaves and rills far from this torrid heat,  
And I with streams of cooling milk will bathe thy blistered feet ;  
And when the troubled tears shall start to think of all the past,  
My mouth shall haste to kiss them off, and chase thy sorrows fast ;  
And thou shalt walk in soft white light with kings and priests abroad,  
And thou shalt summer high in bliss upon the hills of God.”

So spake the unknown Cherub's voice, of sweet affection full,  
And dewy lips the dreamer kissed till his lava breast was cool.  
In dread revulsion woke the Fiend, as from a mighty blow,  
And sprung a moment on his wing his wonted strength to know ;  
Like ghosts that bend and glare on dark and scattered shores of night,  
So turned he to each point of heaven to know his dream aright.

The vision of this Last Stern Lake, O how it plagued his soul,  
Type of that dull eternity which on him soon must roll,

When plans and issues all must cease which earlier care beguiled,  
And never era more shall be a landmark on the wild:  
Nor failure nor success is there, nor busy hope nor fame,  
But passive fixed endurance, all eternal and the same.

So knew the Fiend, and fain would he down to oblivion go;  
But back from fear his spirit proud, recoiling like a bow,  
Sprung. O'er his head he saw the heavens upstay'd bright  
and high;

The planets, undisturbed by him, were shining in the sky;  
The silent magnanimity of Nature and her God  
With anguish smote his haughty soul, and sent his Hell abroad.

His pride would have the works of God to show the signs of  
fear,

And flying Angels to and fro to watch his dread career;  
But all was calm: He felt night's dew upon his sultry wing,  
And gnashed at the impartial laws of Nature's mighty King;  
Above control, or show of hate, they no exception made,  
But gave him dew, like aged thorn, or little grassy blade.

Terrible, like the mustering manes of the cold and curly sea,  
So grew his eye's enridged gleams; and doubt and danger flee:  
Like veteran band's grim valour slow, that moves to avenge  
its chief,

Up slowly drew the Fiend his form, that shook with proud  
relief:

And he will upward go, and pluck the windows of high Heaven,  
And stir their calm insulting peace, though tenfold Hell be  
given.

Quick as the levin, whose blue forks lick up the life of man,  
Aloft he sprung, and through his wings the piercing north-  
wind ran;



Till, like a glimmering lamp that's lit in lazar-house by night,  
To see what mean the sick man's cries, and set his bed aright,  
Which in the damp and sickly air the sputtering shadows mar,  
So gathered darkness high the Fiend, till swallowed like a star.

What judgment from the tempted Heavens shall on his head  
go forth?

Down headlong through the firmament he fell upon the north.

The stars are up untroubled all in the lofty fields of air:

The will of God's enough, without His red right arm made bare.

'Twas He that gave the Fiend a space, to prove him still the  
same;

Then bade wild Hell, with hideous laugh, be stirred her prey  
to claim.

## THE RIVER.

INFANT of the weeping hills,  
Nursling of the springs and rills,  
Growing River, flowing ever,  
Wimpling, dimpling, staying never,—  
Lisping, gurgling, ever going,  
Lipping, slipping, ever flowing,  
Toying round the polished stone,  
Kiss the sedge and journey on.  
Here's a creek where bubbles come,  
Whirling make your ball of foam.  
There's a nook so deep and cool,  
Sleep into a glassy pool.  
Breaking, gushing,  
Downward rushing,  
Narrowing green against the bank,  
Where the alders grow in rank,—  
Thence recoiling,  
Outward boiling,  
Fret, in rough shingly shallows wide,  
Your difficult way to yonder side.  
Thence away, aye away,  
Bickering down the sunny day,  
In the Sea, in yonder West,  
Lose yourself, and be at rest.

Thus from darkness weeping out,  
Flows our infant Life away,  
Murmuring now the checks about,  
Singing now in onward play ;  
Deepening, whirling,  
Darkly swirling,  
Downward sucked in eddying coves,  
Boiling with tumultuous loves ;  
Widening o'er the worldly sands ;  
Kissing full the cultured lands ;  
Dim with trouble, glory-lit,  
Heaven still bending over it ;  
Changing still, yet ever going,  
Onward, downward ever flowing.

O to be a boy once more,  
Curly-headed, sitting singing  
Midst a thousand flowerets springing,  
In the sunny days of yore,  
In the sunny world remote,  
With feelings opening in their dew,  
And fairy wonders ever new,  
And all the budding quicks of thought !  
O to be a boy, yet be  
From all my early follies free !  
But were I skilled in prudent lore,  
The boy were then a boy no more.

Short our threescore years and ten,  
Yet who would live them o'er again ?  
All life's good, ere they be flown,  
We have felt, and we have known.  
More than mortal were our fear,  
If doomed to dwell for ever here.

Yet O, from age to age, that we  
Might rise a day old earth to see !

Mountains, high with nodding firs,  
O'er you the clouded crystal stirs,  
Fresh as of old, how fresh and sweet!  
And here the flowerets at my feet.  
Daisy, daisy, wet with dew,  
And all ye little bells of blue,  
I know you all; thee, clover bloom,  
Thee the fern, and thee the broom:  
And still the leaves and breezes mingle  
With twinklings in the forest dingle.  
O through all wildering worlds I'd know  
My own dear place of long ago.  
Pleased would the yearning spirit then  
The doings learn of living men,  
The rise and fall of realms and kings,  
And O a thousand homely things.  
Deeper our care considerate  
To know of earth's diviner state:  
How speeds the Church, with horns of light,  
To push and pierce the Heathen night?  
What promise of the coming day,  
When Sin and Pain shall pass away,  
And, under Love's perpetual prime,  
Joy light the waving wings of Time?

## THE CHRISTIAN BRIDE

### PART FIRST.

YOUNG Torthil sits below the woody steep  
Of Apennine, beneath a spreading oak.  
His downcast eye a stern abstraction keeps;  
Dawn not for him with purple stains has broke,  
Nor sunshine filled the world: the captive's yoke  
Is on his heart—bright things are not for him.  
The cloudy day, the high-winged tempest's shock  
Would more delight him, with unbounded limb  
Swift o'er far Morven's hills, throughout her forests dim.

Who knows not Torthil from Ausonia's bound  
Of Alps Helvetian to her southern heel?  
Now homeward musing o'er the vast profound,  
The fisher sees him by the ocean kneel;  
Now o'er the mountains with impetuous zeal  
He strikes the tusky monster with his spear;  
The chamois leaps, the bird in airy wheel  
Screams to his piercing arrow: far and near,  
Scorning a life in Rome, he takes the wild severe.

There Torthil sits. Up looking now he sees  
A damsel reading, shaded from the heat,

Beautiful, walking in the myrtle trees  
On yonder bank, forth now in sunlight sweet,  
Now glimmering back into the shy retreat  
Of twilight green. But hark! adown the vale  
A tumult comes, the wild boar gallops fleet,  
Two dogs close track him grinning to assail.  
Far echoes tell the pack are on some other trail.

Fled has the damsel. Torthil's o'er the brook.  
Behind she hears the panting brute advance,  
Nearer, and nearer still; she turns to look—  
O terror! joy! her eye's bewildered trance  
With death, with safety is filled up at once:  
The monster's sidelong, half upturning head  
Is gnarled to strike, his bared tusks backward glance  
To gather fury for his onset dread,  
To unseam her tender limb—bold Torthil's thrust has sped.

But ah! he stumbles from his forceful blow;  
The beast transfixed, disdaining yet to fly,  
Has bowed his levelled head, and, ploughing low  
As if to pass his rising enemy,  
With tearing side-stroke rips his spouting thigh;  
Then forward staggers, darkly crushed to fall;  
But bites his fiery wound ere he will die,  
Snaps with his teeth that shaft of deadly gall,  
And grinds with foam and blood the sputtered splinters  
small.

Turned to the rescued maid, along the brow  
Of Torthil lightens a heroic smile;  
Till, o'er his drained benumbed limb forced to bow,  
To earth succumbs he, gazing yet the while  
On her whose presence can his pains beguile.

But she for him her silken vesture tears,  
Binds his stanch'd wound with pity's gentlest wile;  
Cold sprinklings then from out the stream she bears,  
Refreshes his sick face, his fainting strength repairs.

"And spare," he said, "for me those wistful fears.  
Wonder divine! thee in a dream of yore  
Twice did I see—mine own! Not years, long years,  
Could make me know, could make me love thee more.  
My heart's last blood I'd give thee o'er and o'er!  
I would but have thee know me should I die:  
Afar I come from Caledonia's shore,  
Torthil my name, a chieftain there was I;  
A captive next—nay, sent thy safety thus to buy.

"I am a savage; but in thy sweet sight  
To live, would make me gentle soon, and wise.  
Would thou couldst love me!" With impassioned might  
He strove, nor vainly, from the ground to rise.  
The light was thickened in his heavy eyes;  
He fell, yet falling kissed her dear young feet.  
Alone the fainting Caledonian lies,  
The maid in haste has sought the wood's retreat;  
But soon she reappears with new assistance meet.

A reverend father and a female old  
Come to her guidance, and the youth upraise;  
His drooping head the virgin's hands uphold:  
Borne o'er the rivulet, through the woodland maze,  
Where many a path the uncertain foot betrays,  
A cave withdrawn into the mountain's side,  
Received them from the forest's puzzling ways.  
There Father Hippo healing bands supplied;  
And there, till he wax well, young Torthil shall abide.

But oft Roscrana came, that princess good,  
Niece of Zenobia, Tadmor's famous Queen,  
Who, since Aurelian had her throne subdued,  
With honour placed in Italy had been.  
A huntress, she her summer dwelling green  
Chose near the central mountains of the land.  
Fair daughters round her graced the sylvan scene ;  
But she, and they, a haughty sister band,  
Roscrana's meekness scorned, and ruled her with high  
hand.

Yet more divided from her kindred blood,  
Roscrana's heart confessed our holy faith ;  
Nursed by a Christian Jewess, and imbued  
With early love for Him of Nazareth,  
She to His Cross will cling unto the death.  
The sovereign knowledge fain would she declare  
To her proud kin, but still they shunned her path ;  
Then sought she solace in the woods, and there  
She found the cave proscribed of that old Christian pair.

They o'er the Syrian orphan, as their child,  
Rejoiced, that dear faith mutually confessed.  
More than a daughter, she their fears beguiled,  
She brought them food, she watched their aged rest,  
Fit garments wrought by her their bodies dressed.  
For this, the scrolls of the Eternal Word  
Given by those saints, she hid beneath her vest,  
Till to the night, to shady walks restored,  
She drew them forth and read of her incarnate Lord.

Within the cavern of those Christians laid,  
With plants of healing gathered from the hill,  
Was Torthil cured by that Palmyran maid,  
O more to love her for her gentle skill.



And soon he blessed those days of wounded ill,  
For aye young pity trembles into love ;  
Lord of her heart is he and virgin will.  
And aye to him of Jesus from above  
She reads, or in the cave, or walking through the grove.

Sequestered they in love's unworldly dream,  
In haunts of beauty lose the lapsing hours.  
Forth by the lake, down by the living stream,  
They dip their footsteps in the dewy flowers.  
The glad birds twinkle from their morning bowers.  
Noon's sultry silence on the forest broods.  
Eve flushes soft: clear glance the sunny showers:  
The mountains smile with all their hanging woods:  
Lustre in all the vales, lustre on all the floods!

The stock-dove's voice, sweet intermittent bird,  
That aye the shadow of the hawk's wing fears,  
Crushed in the depth of leaves, and faintly heard,  
Moaning of love, the twilight hour endears  
To the young lovers. Lo! the Moon appears;  
Beauty and Peace lead on the silver Queen;  
The forests, brightening silently, she clears;  
She walks the mountains; o'er the polished sheen  
Of dimpling rivers far her sliding feet are seen.

Another eve: turned to the lord of day,  
"So sinks," said Torthil, "the immortal flame.  
I too go down: back takes he on his way  
His retrospect; if I should do the same,  
Pride overthrown, youth crushed, the baffled aim,  
Defeat, and exile from my native shore,  
Are my memorials—felt by me, for shame  
Was never in my father's house; yet sore  
Though be my pangs for these, my country plagues me more.

“For me her youth into the battle’s waste  
She poured, she perished at my sole command.  
Was this not much? Am I not all disgraced?  
The exulting rivers of my native land,  
These are not they—a captive here I stand.  
Why fell I not? Yea, farther hear my shame:—  
Lady, I chose to stoop beneath their band  
Which binds me by the honour of my name,  
Since slain not here in Rome, my freedom ne’er to claim,

“Ne’er to attempt return. O, I might say,  
My very wish that shame to uncreate  
Forbade my death, throughout the slavish day  
Of circumstances bade me tamely wait  
Some better morn of fortune or of fate.  
What then? Unbounded blame is still my due  
For you betrothed to my forlorn estate.  
’Tis time to question thus myself for you,—  
What hope contrive, sweet maid, what plan shall I pursue?

“This I might do—O, I no more can live  
For thee to see me in my slavery!—  
Yes, I will do it—I will go—will give  
My life again from vows to be set free;  
They gall me so! His slave I will not be;  
I’ll go, I’ll brave him on his Roman throne.  
Ha! first I’ll promise to mine enemy  
Long years of service in his battles done;  
For thee with power fulfilled, he’ll let me then be gone.

“Then home with me to Morven shalt thou go,  
And be a daughter to my mother there.  
There forth I’ll lead thee by the hand, and show  
The green translucent brine, when mermaids rare

Sing on the rocks and comb their slippery hair;  
The bliss of morn, clear wells, and forests green;  
The pure suffusion of the evening air,  
When dipped in delicate lights far hills are seen.  
To thee high bards shall chant each dawn, each solemn e'en.

"Ha! idle visions these! Why am I here?  
Sweet Lady, come with me unto our cave;  
Then home I'll guide thee. Ere next noon appear,  
Aurelian hears me; wise, and just, and brave,  
He'll grant the death or freedom that I crave.  
O not in vain last night in dreams did come  
To me my mother, pale as from the grave;  
Yet smiled the vested image from her home  
O'er the wan waters far, over the travelled foam."

Within the cave they wait the evening star.  
But came Zenobia, beautifully keen;  
Behind her thronging entered men of war;  
A Jewish dwarf, misshapen, ugly, lean,  
Who long her servant in the East had been,  
Led on the party: he, of Christ the foe,  
Had learned Roscrana's faith, had brought his Queen  
Her doubtful haunt, her friends proscribed to know.  
O'erpowered now must they all before Aurelian go.

Yea, worse than vain was Torthil's manly haste  
His name to tell, his passion to declare;  
Vain priestly Hippo's act, before them placed,  
To wed Roscrana to her Torthil there.  
Joy then be with them, a divided pair!  
The Imperial lady with a deadly smile  
Swore (for the Cæsar ne'er denies her prayer)  
A dungeon's chains shall Torthil have the while,  
Roscrana banished be to some far foreign isle.

Aurelian ratified the stern decree ;  
But yielded this to Torthil young and brave,—  
That his dear wife, since banished she must be,  
Should go to Morven o'er the western wave,  
To soothe his mother drooping to the grave ;  
A widow she, and he far from her ta'en,  
Her only son, to be a captive slave.  
But Hippo and his wife their freedom gain,  
To enhance Zenobia's wrath against that youthful twain.

## PART SECOND.

In Morven's woody land, Roscrana kissed  
Her Torthil's mother at her tale amazed ;  
Then lowly bowed the virgin to be blest :  
" My far-come daughter ! " Cathla said, and raised,  
And still with wonder on the lady gazed,  
" If thou indeed art Torthil's chosen bride ;  
Yea, well that forehead's beauty undebased  
Beseems the scion of a Prince's side :  
Worthy art thou to be my Torthil's spouse of pride.

" Thou from the dowried kingdoms of the East,  
To lands of poor but of heroic men  
Art come ; yet court nor Oriental feast  
Will make thy sweet soul scorn our humblest den.  
But when great wars befall, my daughter then-  
Shall bless the safety that wild Morven yields ;  
Then shall her sons, from mountain and from glen,  
Hang round about thee with their sounding shields :  
They for young Torthil's bride would fight a hundred fields."

Forth came the day-spring : forth with Cathla walked  
In sleepless love Roscrana from her door.

Before the gate a grizzly giant stalked,  
A rough dog gambolled on the grassy floor.  
Near stepped the former, this his play gave o'er.  
"Behold thy keepers," Cathla said, and smiled :  
"Here Rumal, Torthil's hound, feared of the boar ;  
There silent Erc, who knows each mountain wild :  
Where'er inclined to roam, they'll guard my Syrian  
child.

"One daughter Erc, young Oina-Morul, had,  
The white-armed gladdener of his heart and eyes ;  
She crossed a bridging tree, the torrent mad  
Devoured her beauty, stumbling from surprise.  
My Torthil sees her, down the bank he flies,  
He follows shooting through the crested wave,  
Green boiling gulf and dull black pool he tries ;  
Ah to his sight a filmy whiteness gave  
The virgin, only won to a more honoured grave.

"Erc loved my boy, he fought for him, he fell ;  
Healed by my care, his life from death was won  
To be my dragon and to guard me well :  
For you how gladly shall the same be done !  
Far to the peaks of mountains does he run,  
O'er lake below, o'er river, wood, and plain,  
He casts his eagle eye to ken my son ;  
He hies to the wild margin of the main,  
To look for the white ships—for Torthil back again."

On mountain-tops when morning lights appear,  
When silent dewdrops through the eve distil,  
Or by the rising moon, or Hesper clear,  
Or when the gusts of gloomier twilight fill  
Old creaking thorn upon the stony hill,

Erc, brave and modest, was Roscrana's guide,  
The shaggy Rimal was beside him still ;  
With them the Princess every fear defied,  
As over Morven's land she loved to wander wide.

The great north-winds that on the pine-woods blow,  
And heave the ocean's elemental floor,  
Toss her dark locks that through them boldly go,  
Sublime her spirit with their stormy roar.  
Heroic land ! she loved thee more and more,  
Fair, but still roughening to her young surprise ;  
On heaths she met, and on the awful shore  
Majestic men who looked unto the skies,  
For never slavery bowed their unpolluted eyes.

And Cathla told her of her father-land,  
The deeds of Fingal, his illustrious race,  
The songs of Ossian, the bards' priestly band,  
The ghosts of heroes, and their dwelling-place :  
They oft, when laid within the desert's space  
Their sons have slept beneath the moon's wan beams  
By the gray stone benumbed, before them trace  
Events to come, vouchsafing them in dreams  
Prefiguring gestures stern, soft monitory gleams.

But sad are they that want the funeral-song ;  
Their spirits mount not to the airy hall  
Of eddying winds, for ever rolled along  
By weedy lakes within their misty pall  
Of signs she told, of showers of blood that fall  
To gifted eyes, the Druid's shuddering grove,  
The twangs of death that in the harp-strings call,  
The attendant Genii on the maids they love ;  
And of the Culdees told in many a rocky cove.

And much she loved to hear Roscrana tell  
Of all the wonders of the early East.  
But who are they that in those caverns dwell ?  
Each hoary Culdee is a Christian priest.  
Roscrana knew them, nor the Princess ceased  
Till, more than eloquent, till, saintly bold,  
Of Christ, and of her love for Him increased  
In this her exile—nay, her home—she told ;  
Till Cathla wept glad tears, won to The Living Fold.

“Awake, my Christian child !”—by this sweet name  
Cathla now named her, as for Torthil’s sake  
She ever sleepless, when the morning came,  
Longed for Roscrana—“My true daughter, wake !  
Forth let us go and walk by bower and brake.  
Alas ! in tears those eyes of beauty swim :  
Thee far from me thy nightly visions take,  
Far to thy buried mother, far to him  
Thy princely sire who sleeps in Tadmor’s aisles so dim.

“Or when thy spirit, winged with ghostly dreams,  
Flies through the pale dominions of the night,  
Thou meet’st thy Torthil by the midnight gleams.  
Thou wak’st, and I alone am in thy sight.  
Oft wilt thou sigh when comes the morrow bright ;  
Long wilt thou look unto the East by day  
(There were the kingdoms of thy young delight),  
Weeping to feel thyself too far away,  
Doomed with thy father’s dust not even thy dust to lay.

“Weep not, my child ! True daughter unto me !  
Marvellous blessing to my end of days !  
Christ send our Torthil home to us that he  
May learn the truth, may learn the Eternal ways !

Then, if redeemed, shall we not be thy praise,  
Immortal Creature ! who hast given us up  
To dwell with God, His glory to upraise ?  
Perish the Druid's fable ! the true cup  
Of life alone is theirs who with the Lamb shall sup."

And aye with Cathla forth that daughter went,  
Grief-silent Eric and Rimal still behind ;  
Their steps they to the blameless people bent,  
Dwelling upon the mountains unconfined,  
With peace the broken spirit to upbind,  
Want from the poor and sickness to repel.  
So meek their Torthil's wife, so sweetly kind,  
Gray fathers bade their daughters thus excel,  
The mothers called her good, the virgins loved her  
well.

Too much by Swarno loved, impure of heart,  
Her Torthil's foe, he tempted her with sighs ;  
But true her faith, and vain the chieftain's art,  
He with his friend in every enterprise,  
The red Gurthullin, did a plot devise :—  
Near grows a struggle with the Roman foe  
(Succumb shall Morven, or shall greater rise),  
The battle o'er, abroad while stragglers go,  
They'll watch, they'll bear her off, and none their guilt  
shall know.

Yea, chastely modest, boldly innocent,  
Ne'er has she hinted Swarno's love impure ;  
Hence ne'er her friends shall guess the way she went :—  
" But ha ! old dragon Erc must we secure ;  
Chained must he be, our scheme were else unsure :  
Thus be it done,—upon the battle-eve



Him to our nearest fortalice we'll lure;  
Rumal his dog we'll slay, and him we'll leave  
There fettered till we teach the damsel not to grieve."

## PART THIRD.

Forth Cathla went, Roscrana by her side.  
But now they heard—the air was all so still—  
Trumpet and horn beyond the mountains wide.  
The shouts of battle, as they climb the hill,  
With hope and fear their panting bosoms fill.  
Yon valley now! Their eyes how eager bent!  
O day of safety, or of endless ill!  
There toils the war of peoples fiercely pent,  
O'erstified, staggering, swayed, with rifts of havoc rent.

The numerous weight of her Imperial foes  
O'erbears at length and crushes Morven back,  
Eastward away her fainting battle goes;  
Their closer forms the o'ermastered horse unslack,  
They flee, the skirting mountains wide they track;  
The abandoned chariots with unmanaged steeds  
Roll mad about, and tear the harrowed rack  
Of infantry that to the sheer scythe bleeds,  
Wrapping the cloyed wheels round with torn limbs as with  
weeds.

But lo yon Champion! on he brings anew  
The mountain men. The Romans unsustained  
Are whelmed in turn. How terrible and true,  
The bloody push of Morven is maintained!  
Back-rattling chariots have the flight disdained;  
They roll around the outskirts of the fight,

Which onward struggles through the field regained.  
But o'er them falls the thundercloud, like night,  
Down on the battle falls, and hides it from the sight.

"Lean on me, mother, to the Culdee's rock,"  
Roscrana said, "not distant by the wave,  
For friendly shelter from the stormy shock.  
By moon, or dawnlight, issuing from his cave,  
Our noble wounded let us help to save.  
Would Erc were here thee in his arms to bear!  
Why has he left us thus? Not he, though brave,  
Rolled back the battle: No: that Champion's air  
None but a Prince could show: be sure a Prince was  
there."

They reached the cell. O'erwearied with the day,  
Within an inner cavern Cathla slept.  
Before the embers as reclined he lay,  
The bliss of slumber o'er the Culdee crept.  
Alone her vigil young Roscrana kept;  
That Champion still in her recurring thought,  
She generous tears of admiration wept.  
But now the storm was lulled or heard remote;  
Forth by the crescent moon the freshening air she sought.

Rough men have seized her: through the forest's skirt  
They bear her off. Casting red light before,  
What tumult comes? Forth bursts, with shapes begirt;  
A stately savage on the woody floor:  
'Tis Erc! aloft his pinioned arms he bore,  
Unheld to keep them from that galling throng;  
Blazed his wild hair; his bleeding loins were sore  
With hanging dogs, deep dragged by him along;  
Torch-bearing serfs behind strike at the giant strong.

Still on the encumbered warrior draws his trail  
Of death and danger to the Princess near ;  
Her arms to him, to him her face so pale  
Imploring stretched, mighty for one so dear  
He turns, he sweeps obstruction from his rear ;  
Bounding he comes ; and round Gurthullin's throat,  
Who chiefly holds her, wraps his chains severe ;  
Then wide apart and high his wrists he shot,  
And hanged the uplifted wretch, who now his prey forgot.

With starting eyeballs, and self-bitten tongue,  
Erc to the ground has dashed the caitiff base.  
He snatched the maid ; as to his neck she clung,  
A smile of daring lit his fire-scarred face.  
With her he waded through the thickening chase,  
Still dashing off the war that on him hung ;  
Then down he set her ; in the embattled place  
There as she stood, away from her he flung  
Her circling foes, around so lion-like he sprung.

Before her now o'erwhelmed he's on his knee,  
Yet fighting still ; a near horn blew a blast ;  
Forth leapt a haughty figure, followed he  
By swift retainers, round his glance he cast,  
He saw Roscrana and he seized her fast.  
Upsprung, with power indignantly renewed,  
Old Erc, a groan from out his large heart passed  
To see the maid by Swarno's grasp subdued ;  
Staggering he clutched the chief who bore her through the  
wood.

A trumpet blows behind. They turn to see  
That coming party whether friends or foes.

Them has Roscrana seen—'tis he! 'tis he!  
The chosen hero of that day she knows:  
A valiant band around their leader close:  
Salvation's near:—"Save! save me, helper true!  
Prince Torthil's wife am I; this Swarno knows,  
You here he"—"But will I not rescue you,  
My own good Syrian wife?" And forth her Torthil flew.

Quick with his blade away has Swarno shorn  
His black curls griped by Erc; down on the ground  
He set the maid behind him; bold of scorn  
And hate he met his foeman with a bound.  
Steel they to steel now face each other round,  
Lit by the torches; Swarno quits him well,  
But Torthil's thrusts his strength and skill confound:  
That stroke shall hew him down—ha! stumbling fell  
The youth, and o'er him rose fierce Swarno's sword and yell.

Down—ne'er he smote: Erc, sunk with wounds, has crept,  
And pulled him backward from his lifted blow,  
Struggling to earth; then on his breast he leapt,  
And choked with grappling hands the throttled foe;  
Recovered Torthil guards old Erc below;  
Dread dins the mingled conflict of the rest;  
But Swarno slain, his men soon vanquished go.  
With danger past, and present joy oppressed,  
Roscrana, left unhurt, faints on her husband's breast.

With oaken leaves fresh dripping from the rain  
Her brow he sprinkles, and she soon revives.  
"Joy! joy!" she said, "my hero is not slain!  
But where is Erc, the saviour of our lives?"  
Near borne he comes; if dying, he derives  
Solace from friends so many and so dear:

Each gallant youth to share the burden strives  
Of him who trained them to the bow and spear,  
They carry him like sons, the brave old man they  
cheer.

“Heroic creature! To the cave away,”  
Roscrana murmured, “of the Culdee John;  
There rests my Torthil’s mother, since to-day  
She saw the great deed of her son unknown:  
Sweetly she sleeps upon the rushes strewn;  
But sweeter far shall her awaking be.  
My Torthil, come! Soft bear the old man on,  
The hermit’s rocky fastness soon we’ll see;  
There, ever-faithful Erc, shalt thou be healed by me.”

Nor in her thankful joy did she refrain,  
But stooping down the old Barbarian kissed;  
His heart’s best fire, unquenched by fear or pain,  
Sprung to his eye, dimmed now with grateful mist;  
With clapping hands her love he mutely blessed.  
“Now swiftly, gently on with him,” she said;  
“Deeply though hurt, greatly though needing rest,  
His frame’s yet full of life; and watchful aid  
Shall heal him soon in John’s mild sanctuary laid.”

“Come then, my Syrian, to our mother fast,”  
Her Torthil said, “and fear for me no more:  
Here am I with you all your own at last,  
My limbs unfettered, and my exile o’er.  
Nor I dishonoured left the Italian shore:  
Aurelian slain, my friend just Tacitus  
Imperial sate, and loosed my bondage sore;  
Ennobling freedom has he given to us.  
I came; our battle fled, and back I won it thus.

“ A grateful vassal of that Swarno slain,  
Whose only daughter was to health restored,  
And taught God’s Word by thee, and who again  
Was taught by her the heart-renewing Word,  
Heard of this plot against thee by his lord,  
And helped from Swarno’s dungeon Erc the brave,  
Then left for aye the master he abhorred,  
And sought me when the fight was o’er, and gave  
Hints how to mar the plot—my own dear wife to save.

“ O how I hasted, hasting still the more,  
When I was told that serfs and dogs of blood  
Were after Erc, whose flight was known before  
He gained the safe recesses of the wood.  
Directed well, and glorying in thy good,  
Nor dogs nor serfs could stay his strong career;  
Though manacled, though felly thus pursued,  
He sped to trace, to reach, to save thee here.  
And I have found thee too: So be thou of good cheer!

“ Nor fear thy holy lessons have been vain:  
Blest be my dungeon’s leisure to retrace  
Thy words of life again and yet again,  
Blent in my heart with the remembered grace  
Which more than beautified thy saintly face.  
Thy faith exalted thus I’ve loved and tried.”  
But now they reached the Culdee’s dwelling-place.  
A mother’s heart, a son’s was satisfied.  
Then turned their mingled love to Torthil’s Christian Bride

## BYRON.

[These somewhat juvenile lines were written on hearing  
of the death of the Poet.]

A SUNBURST of heaven  
Smote that Mountain of Wonder,  
With its summit all riven  
In the ranges of thunder:  
The seat of the mighty,  
The bards of old name;  
How glad and how bright aye,  
Ensphered in their fame!  
How he flashed on his track,  
How he flew up the slope,  
That Shape! He looked back  
From the terrible top.  
One throb in his lip  
Told of peril and toil;  
But the smile lighted up,  
Which no passion can spoil,  
Through the tear in his eye  
Of indignant appeal,  
That a pinion so high  
Might his spirit reveal.

Up in heaven's clear portals  
His summit he had ;  
'Mid the highest immortals  
He sat, and was glad.  
Triumphant, entranced,  
Rose his bosom in swell ;  
And the visions advanced  
To the might of his spell.  
The setting sun flushed  
On Old Greece, like a crown ;  
And the white temples blushed  
On her hills of renown.  
The palm-lands were flooded  
In the moons of the east ;  
But the myrtles were blooded,  
The vultures had feast.  
From the bow they stepped down  
Of the heavens, when brightest ;  
From the cataract's crown,  
Where its spray is the lightest ;  
From the bubbles of storms,  
Sun-tinted, their birth ;  
Young feminine forms  
All light on our earth.  
But each young bosom breaking,  
With love was o'er-drunk :  
All clasping and shrieking  
They came and they sunk.  
Show the foul blots of Hell,  
Let the visions increase—  
But he dashed the wild spell  
With a cry for Old Greece.  
How started each bard  
Of her ancient renown,



And each forehead was scarred  
With a slave-quelling frown.  
O'er their harps then each look  
Bowed indignant in tears ;  
And their locks fiercely shook,  
The dread vintage of years.  
And the tempest arose  
Of old war-cries again,  
Insulting her foes  
At each break in the strain.  
And they hailed the young Bard  
In each pause of that flow,  
As the battle was heard  
In the valley below ;  
As proudly he swelled  
In his warrior form,  
The red spear he held  
Waving sway to the storm.  
And aye his black lyre  
In moments he took,  
And its chord-rows of fire  
With agony shook ;  
Wild, thrilling, O Greece,  
Thou lost star of our morn,  
That the long cloud may cease,  
And thy beauty return.  
How wished ! since thy name  
Can yet kindle such strains :  
From his dark harp they came,  
Like the bursting of chains.  
Give the tyrants no breath !  
Smite again ! Smite again !—  
But a quick shriek of death  
Rent the war-song in twain.

## BELSHAZZAR'S FEAST.

THE lights of joy at midnight hour  
Were up in ancient Babylon.  
Beauty and Pleasure, Pride and Power,  
Were gathered round Belshazzar's Throne.  
In farther halls the dance went on,  
A pomp of circling peers was nigh;  
Yet sate the King as if alone,  
In boding gloom, he knew not why.

That midnight hour, forth came a Hand  
And wrote along the darkened wall.  
In fiery rows the letters stand,  
And flaming out the King appal.  
From round him, like a garment, fall  
The princely heads, awed to the earth.  
The Horror runs from hall to hall,  
Devouring up the distant mirth.

When twice the King with manlier brow  
A glance of those dread letters took,  
Their bickering lightnings seemed to bow,  
And court his steady scanning look.

But who their calm control might brook?  
Deep, deeper sunk the Monarch's head.  
Again the lines careering shook,  
And blazed impatient to be read.

A pause like death! and far was heard  
The coming sound of stately feet:  
High prophet old, and mystic bard,  
Have left their nightly tranced seat:  
The bold young Queen has bid them meet,  
When men with fear were faint and dumb:  
Low murmurs glad their coming greet;  
The star-taught Chaldee sages come.

Their figured garments strangely shone,  
Far-smitten by that lustrous flame;  
With measured footsteps slowly on  
Through lanes of prostrate heads they came.  
Emboldened by the starry name,  
Thick-coming faces crowd the hall.  
The Monarch owned the Magi's fame,  
And pointed to the wall—the wall!

The seers of age the front resign,  
The younger have not dared to speak;  
The elements had there no sign,  
The wisdom of the stars was weak.  
Ire touched the Monarch's pallid cheek:  
"Hence!" cried he, "Prophets? Magi? Nay,  
Your boasted lore's an idle freak!"  
They bowed, and looked, and passed away.

"Sire!" said the Queen, "I've dared to call  
Another sage, of Judah's land."

Betwixt the Sovereign and the wall  
Behold the Prophet Daniel stand !  
He turned when he the lines had scanned,  
But silent stood, by sorrow bowed ;  
Till, at the King's renewed command,  
He read the words of God aloud :—

“ MENE ! Thy realm God-numbered is,  
And finished to its utmost bound.  
TEKEL ! Thou in the balances  
Art weighed, and thou art wanting found,  
PERES ! They come, the hosts renowned  
Of Medes and Persians, side by side ;  
(List, list afar the gathering sound !)  
And they thy kingdom shall divide.”

Seemed smote with dread the marble stone,  
As went the Prophet's footsteps slow ;  
That flame of judgment on him shone,  
And made him like an angel glow.  
And there was terror, trembling, wo,  
And there was wail for Babylon ;  
Sunk now in dumb surprise, for lo !  
Those letters from the wall are gone.

But ha ! a thousand thwarting cries  
Of multitudes confused and driven,  
Cry, “ From Euphrates' bed they rise,  
The warriors of an angry Heaven ! ”  
With coming shouts the Palace riven,  
Near, nearer crowds the danger bring.  
The Persian swords ! Nor space is given  
To guard and save that slaughtered King.

## THE SWALLOW.

THE little comer's coming, the comer o'er the sea,  
The comer of the summer, all the sunny days to be.  
How pleasant through the pleasant sleep thy early twitter heard,  
O swallow by the lattice ! Glad days be thy reward !

Thine be sweet morning with the bee that's out for honey-dew ;  
And glowing be the noontide for the grasshopper and you ;  
And mellow shine, o'er day's decline, the sun to light thee home !  
What can molest thy airy nest ? sleep till the morrow come.

The river blue that lapses through the valley hears thee sing,  
And murmurs much beneath the touch of thy light-dipping wing.  
The thunder-cloud, over us bowed, in deeper gloom is seen,  
When quick relieved it glances to thy bosom's silvery sheen.

The silent Power that brings thee back with leading-strings of  
love  
To haunts where first the summer sun fell on thee from above,  
Shall bind thee more to come aye to the music of our leaves,  
For here thy young, where thou hast sprung, shall glad thee in  
our eaves.

## MONKWOOD.

### PART FIRST.

"I've done my work: o'er belts and breadths of earth,  
Regions, and parallels, and wide degrees,  
I've hunted him: I've done him down to death:  
And his bones whiten in the wilderness.  
Come, Grip."

He said, and rose, that lean dark man,  
In umbered light, within his rocky cave,  
And fed his brindled hound with gobbets raw.  
The cloyed dog stretched and licked his bloody jaws,  
And couched anew, his muzzle to the hearth.  
Fresh logs the Master flung upon the fire,  
Sputtering with sap; down then he sate, and eyed  
The gulfy eddyings of the woolly smoke.

Far in the depths, rose on his shaping soul  
A beauteous girl, and she came dancing on  
Through the spring flowers before an antique hall,  
Shaking her cloud of curls: not lightlier,  
Translucent in the sunny dews of morn,  
Dances the leaflet on the topmost twig.  
And aye she smiled and nodded, coming near,  
Nodding to him and smiling. Forward far,  
As if to meet her, keen yet pleased of look,  
Bending he sate.

Sudden he rose, he paced  
The lurid cave; his eyes were balls of light;  
But, ever as he turned him in his range,  
Moister they gleamed:—"My sister, young and dear!  
Gold, name it not; nor gems, seed of the sun!  
All lustrous capable stones of mystery,  
All rarest things of unconceived cost,  
Take them all, all; give me my sister back,  
As once she was, clear in her virgin dew!  
What is she now?" He shuddered, down he sate,  
And sitting brooded on the troubled Past.

What finds he there? His ancient house decayed,  
His parents dead, his sister and himself  
Grew up together, and were knit in one.  
But proud from poverty, and all untrained  
To equal duties, regular, mild, and safe,  
Stern waxed young Monkwood: silently he spent  
His hot impatience in the hunted woods.  
To war he went. Betrayed, his sister fell;  
But hid her shame among the Magdalens.

Monkwood has learnt it on the eve of fight.  
Stern, still, wound up, he waited for that morn.  
The morning came: the battle broke: outflew  
His heart, uncoiling like a spring of steel:  
Far leapt he dashing down that bloody gulf,  
In terrible self-relief: a thousand deaths,  
Ten thousand deaths were there; with open breast  
He more than braved them all, he wooed them all,  
That dreadful doer; but they passed him by,  
And all unscathed with victory he stood.  
Now then for honours on his noted head!  
Away, away! farewell the pomp of war!  
Hope, joy, farewell! His jealous soul has ta'en  
His sister's blot, his family honour's blight,

Full on himself. Her he will see once more,  
Once, and no more; vengeance he'll do her then  
On her destroyer; then to home farewell—  
His father's home! the wolfish solitudes  
Of worlds afar, these be his fitting place,  
To die at once, or eat his heart away.

In penitential depths, self-punishing,  
His sister would not see him. In the Church  
Of Magdalens he waited: from behind  
The curtain of their sacred modesty,  
Where all unseen they worshipped, there arose  
The thankful song of the redeemed ones,  
Swelling and thrilling: O how Monkwood's soul  
Yearned to untwist the symphony, and catch  
His sister's separate voice! If in the low  
And wailing fall of the relapsing hymn  
Some heart-drawn lingering voice was left behind,  
How he did drink it in!—" 'Tis she, 'tis she!  
My lost, my found! I go, for I have heard,  
More far to me than all the songs of time,  
The uttered sorrow of thy contrite heart."

Now then for vengeance! for his natural man  
Was unsubdued: Sheer down on him who slew  
His sister's peace he bore: the villain fled,  
But he pursued: o'er belts and breadths of earth,  
Regions, and parallels, and wide degrees,  
He hunted him; he did him down to death;  
And his bones whiten in the wilderness.

His work of vengeance o'er, all moral hope  
Of life exhausted, from the ways of men  
Far vanished Monkwood in the Western world,  
A salvage hunter of the homeless woods,  
Lord of his cave, his rifle, and his dog.

Thus brooding sits he by his midnight fire,



His spirit ranging through that troubled Past.  
Balm, is there none ? The poppy, flower of fate,  
Turning its milky eye to the ebon Land  
Of Morpheus and of Dreams, grows round his cave,  
Sown by him there ; oft has it eased his heart,  
But aye the wo returns with added wo.  
What sunken lands forlorn, what sunless depths  
Of rifted rocks, and blocked obstruction jammed,  
Would he not search, if haply he might find  
The Waters of Forgetfulness, and drink,  
And wash his soul clean white of all the Past.

Lo ! now he slumbers, red with ember gleams,  
Couched on a spotted skin : The dreams come on :  
The hollow roaring of Eternity  
Is in his soul. What end of this despair ?  
Hope for him yet ! the Angel of the Cross,  
Who circles earth, on shores and desert isles,  
Along the tracks of solitary men,  
To sow the seed of light, has found him out,  
Has tried his stubborn heart with fear and hope :  
Waking, it yields not yet ; in dreams by night  
'Tis giving way. So let him dream ! from out  
That grisly struggle of his light and dark  
May grow the gladness of the perfect day.

## PART SECOND.

Pride, wrath, revenge, the passions of his blood,  
All dead ; repentant o'er the pondered past,  
And summing up the actions of the day,  
Sits Father Monkwood by his evening fire.

Changed long ago, his worse than wasted youth  
Filled him with sorrow ; guided to the Cross.

He took its priestly training, and went forth  
To give the solace which himself had found.  
Strong-grained of good, as he had been of ill,  
No danger daunted him, no trial stayed.  
Lean with endeavour, through the Western world,  
On to its outer rim, by watered plains,  
And thankless sands; the stony drought of hills,  
Glared down upon; plague-rotten swamps; the dusk  
Of swarming forests; on by capes of ice  
Horned to the floods; snow-wildered lands, far lands  
Glimmering away into the skirts of time,  
Lost at the Pole; all places, wheresoe'er  
Were human hearts to suffer and to die,  
There still was he with the immortal help.

Nor yet content with individual aims,  
Widening of soul, with large prophetic eye,  
He fixed the cradle of the coming Age  
By fruitful rivers, measuring out for Man  
The axe-doomed forests, and the virgin hills  
Of mineral womb, the mothers yet to be  
Of Iron Power, begot by Social Fire,  
And cities sleeping in the shapeless stone,  
All for the kingdom of the Lord of Life.

A sudden tempest tears the cracking night.  
Uprising firm and slow, stately in age,  
The Father from the entrance of his cave  
Looks out and eyes, self-lit by its own fires,  
Sucked through the mountain gorges of the West,  
The level havoc burst careering by.  
Calm turning in he couches him to sleep,  
Blessing the God who gives us in their change  
The ordered seasons, and the day and night:—  
Famine may waste, the blue spasmodic pest  
May ride the tainted winds, with rifts may heave

The central fires, tilting the lifted hills,  
And stony waves of movement undulate  
Throughout the rock-ribbed earth ; yet fear not, Man !  
Upheld for Jesus' sake, this frame of things  
Shall perish not until His own Great Day.  
Plead thou the Incarnate Plea, and meet that Day,  
Standing up calm before the Opened Books,  
Tried in the last resort of wondering worlds.

## NIGHT.

FROM sleepless work, and a ne'er setting sun,  
Imagination shrinking with affright,  
Turns with fresh thankfulness to thee, O Night.  
Come up the shaded East, silent, composing One!

She comes! A star upon her raven head,  
Moist poppies wreath her locks; solemnities  
Of meditative light are in her eyes,  
Downcast; and on her breast a sleeping babe is laid.

But Fancy bears her visionary train,  
All streaked, and freaked, and figured o'er with traces,  
Shimmerings, and glimmerings, shapes, uncertain faces,  
Dreams, nightmares, fays, and ghosts, all shadowy, vague,  
and vain.

Down the gulf-stream of worldly tendencies  
Yon cumbered Soul is yielding more and more,  
And feebler slanting to the duteous shore;  
Look down on him, O Night, with thy most spiritual eyes!

Quick with instinctive longings, from the might  
Of those just eyes, upraised he stems, right o'er,  
The sordid flood; he stands upon the shore;  
Handmaid of Faith and Hope, he blesses thee, O Night.

## TALES OF THE SIEGE OF JERUSALEM.

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### First Tale: Herodion and Azala.

#### PART I.

HIGH mission theirs and blest! the Prophets share  
Jehovah's mind, Jehovah's word they bear  
From land to land, to peoples and to kings,  
Borne fear-defying on the Spirit's wings.  
Then, then, they wait not through time's dull delay;  
Theirs the far vision of the unborn day,  
Long glories sleeping in their seed they scan,  
And taste the future joys ordained for Man.  
But bring the balance. Here the blood is spilt  
Of peopled kingdoms by o'erlording Guilt;  
There Pleasure yields but sorrows—O they be  
Too many for the good which earth must see.  
Hence joy is his o'erbalanced far by pain,  
Whose spirit kens the Future's coming train;  
Unblest by hope where certainty appears:  
And knowledge saddens through protracted years.  
For he is human still. Then scorn and hate  
Too oft the prophet's warning voice await,

From those for whom the awful charge he bears  
To instruct his spirit in their future cares;  
So keen their hate, he scarcely can repress  
Unhallowed joy at their ordained distress.  
If right his heart, yet his the growing wo  
Their ills increasing with their scorn to know;  
While new commissioned threats from God on high  
Still tell their worth who turn not but will die.  
And thus his large heart's but prerogative  
With deeper awe, with trembling still to live.

Those joys, how solemn, these majestic woes  
Beseem the forms that young Azala shows,  
Wrought of her needle round her fathers' halls;  
Their life, their type, their burden she recalls,  
As round she leads Herodion by the hand,  
And points them there, the prophets of the land.  
She, him to please, sprung of a prophet's line,  
And far in battle, wrought the bold design;  
Yea more she wishes now, great-hearted maid,  
Their patriot lessons on his spirit laid,  
As back to war he goes: Two orphans they,  
Who loved each other from their earliest day,  
And now betrothed; but both are self-denied,  
And Judah must be saved ere she will be his bride.  
No need to nerve his valour, if unbent  
By love he slack not: this she must prevent;  
And showed the prophets, that his soul might draw  
Strength from those forms august, strength from those heads  
of awe  
And lion faces: thus she strengthened him,  
That stag-eyed daughter of Jerusalem.

Lo! Judah's Shepherd-King: He bore with grace  
A golden harp: high looked his Heavenward face,  
Kindling to song divine. Behind him rose  
Mount Zion's pomp of beauty and repose.

Behold ! behold, uplifted through the air,  
 The swift Ezekiel by his lock of hair !  
 Near burned the Appearance undefinedly dread,  
 Whose hand put forth upraised him by the head.  
 Within its fierce reflection cast abroad,  
 The Prophet's forehead like a furnace glowed.  
 From terror half, half from his vehement mind,  
 His lurid hair impetuous streamed behind.

But lo ! young Daniel in the Den, the glare  
 Of lions round him in the twilight there.  
 Seemed some, as plunged they headlong to devour,  
 In difficult check caught by a viewless Power ;  
 Bowed their curbed necks, their wrenched heads subdued,  
 Half turned they hung in dreadful attitude.  
 Others bent slept ; but still their fronts were racked  
 With lust of blood, their forms were still unslacked,  
 As if at once their hungry rage had been  
 Drowned in deep sleep by that vast Power unseen.  
 The rest, with peace upon their massive brows,  
 Gaze on the Prophet as in prayer he bows.

Divine of beauty more young seers they saw,  
 And ancients laden with prophetic awe :  
 Bards they as well as prophets, forth in song  
 Their spirits rushed against the tops of Wrong.

Herodion went. Land of such men, for thee  
 The great Deliverer how he longed to be !

## PART II.

Slow o'er Herodion went the night and day,  
 As deeply wounded on his bed he lay.  
 Well had he fought to stop, while yet afar,  
 The growing triumphs of the Roman war ;  
 Well had he fought to stay the overthrow  
 Of Zion now beleaguered by the foe.

Wounded he fell ; but snatched from instant fate,  
His soldiers drew him from the embattled gate,  
And bore him home. Azala tends him there,  
And waits and watches with unwearied care.  
All this might yield a heart-appeasing thought,  
To bear him calmly through his present lot ;  
But his the fiery nature that could ill  
Endure an arm less active than his will.  
Electric blood, an energy of frame  
Beyond the stuff of mortals gave him fame  
Even when a boy ; a patriot spirit bore  
The bold young warrior on from shore to shore.  
But Rome came on ; and Zion's now the stage  
Whereon his loftier battles he must wage.  
How, when her gates were widely open flung,  
Forth like a panther of the wild he sprung,  
Far flinging back, as on the foe he leapt,  
The sable locks that o'er his shoulders swept,  
Redundant from beneath a hoop of gold  
Which, set with jewels, round his head was rolled !  
With glory came command : though young, he led  
A band of veterans, of their foes the dread,  
Gray men enseamed with scars from many a brunt ;  
And proud were they to have him in their front,  
Clashing their arms around him, shaking each  
His angry beard singed in the fiery breach.  
How thus, a patriot, and in honour's quest  
Fierce, could this wounded hero calmly rest ?  
Stern his pangs to think that feuds within  
His country tore with suicidal sin.  
But hark ! Half-raised, he listened to the fight,  
His soul commixed with the tumultuous night ;  
Far-plunging, grappling through the battle-tide,  
He gloried bearing down the Roman side ;



Till died the uproar suddenly, and shocked  
His spirit to a present sense that mocked  
The ideal toil, but left him, trembling yet,  
From off his brow to wipe no fancied sweat.

## II.

Day passed : Azala came not. Night came o'er him :  
An aged nurse, Josepha, stood before him.  
"What shall we do ?" exclaimed she, fear-subdued :  
"At noon Azala went to seek us food ;  
For bread and water hardly now we find,  
Though daily portions are to you assigned :  
Herself scarce eats, or seems frail bread to need ;  
Her own high thoughts her own dear body feed.  
A sword she took : I fear the worst : for you  
What quest would she not dare, so loving true ?  
She's not come home : the battle raged : this hour  
The Holy Hill is in the enemy's power ;  
I fear she's slain ; I've sought her far and wide,  
But found her not ; yet search must still be tried.  
O could you rise ! and quick ! for still this night  
The foe's grim pause but tells the ready fight.  
I fear you cannot ?" Up Herodion sprung,  
A hasty mantle o'er his vest he flung ;  
By fiery fever to his limbs was lent  
Unnatural strength : forth with the Nurse he went.

## III.

They sought Azala. All was strange repose,  
Like that which waits the Earthquake's coming throes ;  
For now the sword had cut its myriads down,  
And famine thinned the many-peopled town,

And scarce the feeble residue could meet,  
Or make be heard their voices in the street.  
But lo ! the wall : Lay all around the gate  
The slain unburied in their festering state ;  
In these thick times of blood all reverence fled,  
All hope, the living cared not for the dead.  
They sought, but found her not. Loud tumults rise,  
And ruddy wavings fire the midnight skies.  
Home slow they went : they climb the roof, faint, slow.  
The Temple burns ! O'er porch and portico  
They see the sheeted conflagration go.  
From sainted lattice, and from sacred door,  
The crooked fires with mingled warriors pour,  
Who seem the demons of the flame, as they  
With waving swords burst forth their writhing way.  
The red plague higher rides ; with close embrace  
Now twines around the Temple's central place,  
Whose golden spikes clear glitter in the light ;  
Now driven away as by the winds of night,  
Bellying it hangs in one wide-wafted blaze,  
With ragged darting tongues that lick a thousand ways.  
How dread below, with gleams, with darkness swept,  
Now fiercely clear, the frenzied Battle leapt !  
Shrill sprung the Nurse : she pointed to the street,  
There came Azala with impetuous feet ;  
Bleeding she came, yet boldly waved her brand,  
Morsels of bread were in her other hand.  
She saw Herodion ; with unnatural glee,  
" Fear not," she cried, " I'll bring the food for thee ;  
Through the strait days of siege and famine I  
Will bravely feed you till this wo be by :  
Come to the feast ! " But fainting on her side  
She sunk, and feebly on Herodion cried.  
Down rushed he, falling on her neck he lay :  
United thus in death they breathed their souls away.

## Second Tale : Othuriel.

## CANTO I.

## THE BATTLE.

FORTH comes the day : Othuriel through the land  
Of Judah southward leads that Roman band,  
To help Vespasian from the Jordan's mouth  
Fighting to Idumea on the south.  
Down the clear plains they go ; but lo ! afar  
The illumined coming of a host of war,  
Banners and flashing spears ! From side to side  
Sharpening its crescent horns, it barred the valley wide.  
Upraised, high forward o'er his charger bent,  
Throughout that host his eye Othuriel sent.  
He turned :—" On must we, soldiers, undismayed,  
Beyond those Jews Vespasian needs our aid ;  
And, ere yon sun be down into the west,  
In Judah's southern gardens shall we rest."

On went they : silent on his conscious steed,  
That trode on fire and minced his governed speed,  
Othuriel went—shocked to a sudden pause,  
Swart gleams his brow, intenser breath he draws,  
To see along yon front in warlike pride  
His foe peculiar, dark Manasseh, ride,  
His hated foe ; forth springing, down he led  
His Roman foot ; it pushed its columned head  
With quick short heaves against the Jews' array,  
Crashing it dipped into that iron bay ;

His widening horse dash out on either side:  
The kindling battle rages far and wide.

Along the mingled van with ranging speed  
Manasseh rode; leapt from his stricken steed  
Othuriel, trembled through his eager frame  
His heart absorbed as near his enemy came,  
His still sword hung upon his eye, with might  
Stamping he dared the Hebrew to the fight.  
Manasseh turned and said:—"I know thee, youth;  
I wronged thee much when I impeached thy truth;  
But I will give thee"—from his charger down  
He sprung—"a chance for vengeance and renown."  
"My welcome this!" Othuriel grimly spoke,  
And launched his heart upon a mighty stroke;  
But warding well unhurt the Hebrew stood,  
And still was proof against the blow renewed.  
He smote in turn with swiftest vehemence;  
His soul Othuriel threw into defence,  
Yet wounded deeply, bled. Ha! on his neck  
If fall that sheer-driven weapon without check!—  
Aside he swerves, is saved; his eye's bold gleam,  
Half smiling, darkens into wrath extreme;  
His foe has stumbled—o'er the Hebrew's head  
Uprising, rose his falchion; down it sped  
With might collected, unresisted main,  
And drove cold darkness through his cloven brain.

Staggering Othuriel stands, he clears his eye  
From dizzy notes to see his foeman die;  
Reeling he sinks: The yell is in his ears  
Of trampling squadrons; o'er his eye careers  
A storm of faces, in a moment dim:  
And all is blank and silent now to him.

## CANTO II.

## OTHURIEL'S INTERVIEW WITH JOANNA.

Othuriel wakes ; a glimmer shows him laid,  
But where he knows not, on a broidered bed.  
Came muffled feet ; before him stood in sight  
A child of lustrous beauty ; she a light  
Bore, shaded half, and half from him away  
Back held, his eyes to hurt not with the ray.  
“ Water ! ” he murmured ; she a draught supplied,  
Which struck cold healing through his thirsty side.  
Sweet food she brought him ; bowing o'er his bed,  
She salved his shoulder and his wounded head  
With balsams cool and bland ; refreshed he lies,  
His bosom swelling with delicious sighs.  
Pleased on him gazed the girl, then slid away.  
But back she came and nursed him day by day.

Othuriel, healed, to Titus northward goes ;  
His way, at first perplexed, a female shows,  
Veiled, sackcloth-clad ; she paused, her lifted veil  
Revealed Joanna beautiful but pale ;  
Northward she pointed : — “ Lo ! ” she said, “ thy way  
To Zion Hill throughout the autumnal day !  
On to Jerusalem straight ! there let thy hand,  
Red with thy country's blood, upsnatch a brand,  
Hurl the swift fire, her sainted citadel  
Strike, down her arches, down her Temple fell ;  
Then come before me, there declare at last  
Thou well in all hast justified the past ! ”

“ Be mine to follow to its utmost bound  
Thy scornful guidance, Zion to confound !  
If of my will, my power, you still demand  
A pledge—Manasseh perished by this hand :

Mine was the blow"—

“But mine to mourn the deed,  
For was he not a father in my need?  
For was not she—ah! now his widowed wife—  
More than a mother to my orphan life,  
Adopted as their own? With patriot haste  
He left Jerusalem where his power was placed  
Highest, disdaining power, that he might dwell  
In native Judah, and her enemies quell;  
And I, his daughter, there was doomed to see  
His manly body gashed by thee—O thee!”

“But hear me now! But I had savage cause!  
Who made me what I am from what I was?  
Did I not faithful fight? I loved thee: loved  
By thee, how burned my heart to be approved  
In greater wars, to win a name of pride,  
That I might put it on my virgin bride!  
Judge me, just maid! Hell and her Powers of Shame  
Sent forth a scum of lies to blast my name:  
They called me traitor! Ha! against me rose  
Manasseh, foremost of my envious foes;  
He led that host of lies: Faction and Hate  
Our Council ruled, and drove me from the State:  
They drove me forth! On the first mountain's brow  
I knelt against them, and I vowed a vow;  
To Rome I sped; I sought and found a friend  
In Titus, power unto my wrath to lend;  
Fired him with lust of fame; beyond my oath,  
Jerusalem razed shall glorify us both.”

Othuriel thus. Joanna deeply sighed,  
But with heroic dignity replied:—  
“Too late I heard thy wrongs. But be we just  
First to thy noble enemy in the dust:  
I traced the plot; thou by a rival mean  
Trauded, Manasseh only rash had been;

Without reserve the injustice he confessed,  
Straight to the Council went, and there thy name redressed.

Still grant thee harshly used—and wert thou not?—  
Must then thy sacred country be forgot?  
Patience magnanimous, the lofty right  
To serve that country in her own despite,  
O silent deeds, why do you not with these  
Thy foes best vanquish, best thy spirit please?  
What then? Nay, try it, tremble, and declare  
Such wrath as thine but finds its triumphs air:  
Walk o'er Jerusalem's waste, and where are they  
Who wronged thee so upon a former day?  
They (grant that waste) in whose peculiar eyes  
Thou long'st the proud avenger to arise,  
To stand, to point their wretchedness, to win  
Their meek repentance for their former sin?  
Ha! they have fallen for Zion, well have they  
Their faults redeemed; what more can vengeance say?  
This, this alone:—additional to the guilt  
That thou thy people's hallowed blood hast spilt,  
The empty glory's thine, to stand redressed  
Before that people which is now at best  
A mere abstraction, since the men are gone  
Whom thou wouldst have for wrongs to thee atone."

"But thou shalt see it; doubly shall I be  
Avenged, they stricken, and thou saved by me,  
Saved, honoured, loved: when I have quelled their pride,  
How will I glory in my virgin bride!"

"Manasseh fell in fight; his wife with me,  
Maromne, sought him; there he lay by thee;  
We bore him thence: You lived, I saw and bade  
You to a home be secretly conveyed;  
'Twas done; instructed by my cautious care,  
Her daughter Tamar was thy handmaid there.

So saved by us, our land you'll first o'erthrow,  
Then come with offers to insult our wo?  
No, no! why think it? Let me speak aright,  
Nor do thee wrong—O never will you fight  
Against your parents' God, ne'er lift unblest  
Your hand against your country sore distress!  
Turn; help her—help us all; her hero be:  
Win loftiest vengeance—make her think of thee,  
Sue thy forgiveness, love thee; be her boast,  
Her young deliverer, in thyself a host!  
O can you not? O can you not, indeed?  
Now is your time, for now our day of need."

Impassioned thus, she to Othuriel raised  
Her dear young eyes; imploringly she gazed.  
But downward looking, oft his hand he passed  
Along his forehead darkly overcast.  
"'Tis o'er: to speak not of my vow," he said,  
"The trust of Titus must with truth be paid;  
And then the issue of that battle-field  
(At length by Tamar to my quest revealed)—  
My men cut off—my perfect overthrow—  
Forbids me now my purpose to forego:  
Yes—yes"—long paused he; looking round, he sees  
Joanna far retiring through the trees.  
Be it so, then! Anew with fiercer threat,  
His face against Jerusalem was set.

### CANTO III.

#### THE ASSAULT BY NIGHT.

Still is the eve on high Jerusalem's walls,  
Save lonely sentinel heard at intervals,



As he with psalms of Judah's prosperous day,  
And holy anthems, whiles his watch away.

Lo! by the moon's uncertain struggling light,  
Come dusky masses glimpsing through the night,  
Of Romans drawn from their suburban rest  
To gain a new wall, of the first possest.  
While in the south Othuriel wounded lay,  
Vespasian rose to the Imperial sway;  
And Titus well his promise can redeem  
Against these walls to urge his vengeful scheme.  
Othuriel joined him, healed; ere rolled the year  
They compassed Zion—they are sternly here!  
They mount their engines softly; nor they seem  
To wake the City from its weary dream.  
But hark! it sleeps not: ha! behold yon line  
Of kindling fires along its ramparts shine.  
Dusk figures throng the wall; ere you can say  
When, whence they rose, behind a thick array  
On every tower, o'er every battlement,  
With nimble gestures their bold heads present.

Loud bursts the night: o'erhead huge javelins go  
From catapults, their stones balistas throw,  
By stones and javelins met; red balls expire,  
And blazing arrows trail their arching fire.  
More safe the Romans in the shade below,  
Too well their lights above the swarthy Hebrews show;  
Yet still, as high and far the wall is swept,  
New hordes upstarting to the fray have leapt.  
But now the Ram in dreadful poise is hung,  
Beneath its shed at first 'tis gently swung;  
Huzza! at once its brawny men back strain  
Madly, and drive it on the walls amain;  
They thunder-smitten throb. With every stroke  
An answering yell from the defenders broke;

Down came their crashing stones. On either flank  
The Ram is aided by a stationed rank,  
With slings and bows to clear away the foe  
Above, and guard its battering play below.  
But vain the arrows of these galling wings,  
Nor boots the dread precision of their slings;  
Though stricken thousands fall, new faces grim  
Upspringing umbered crowd the City's brim,  
Which spills its valour wild; in either hand  
A blazing torch, in every mouth a brand,  
Down leap the Jews, fast to the penthouse cling,  
And all around their flames to fire the engine fling;  
Till by the Roman archers placed aloof,  
Transfixed, writhing they roll from off the roof,  
And leave the Ram its last just blow to reach,  
To drive its dull head through the dusty breach.

Stern pause the Romans: sternly stands within  
That breach a wall of Hebrews chin by chin;  
Their spears intensely ready, waiting still  
Their eyes' concentrated lightnings to fulfil,  
Blent with the darkness of immortal hate,  
As looking down unwinking they dilate.

Dread silence hangs: the moving of a head—  
A foot advanced—the twinkling of a lid  
Has burst the entranced pause; the mutual front  
Has met, is swayed in one commingled brunt,  
Is locked, is cloyed, is calm in the excess  
Of might and hatred in one glutted stress.  
Slowly it loosens; from that cramping shock  
Men's hearts can breathe, and wide the fight is broke,  
And wild and high the shouts of battle rise,  
And trumpets blow along the rending skies.

Far foremost fought Othuriel; from the van  
Swerving he dashed, upward he widely ran

To pierce their flank, to turn and drive the foe  
Down on the waste that met them from below.  
Joanna stood before him ! Kneeling down,  
He prayed to guard her from that fated town.  
But, "No," she said ; "whate'er Maromne's fate,  
'Tis mine, as mine has been her good estate.  
Would she be saved by thee ? Would she by night  
Secure her safety by a stealthy flight,  
Last of the Maccabees, whose duty high  
She deems with straitened Judah is to die,  
Where she can do no more ; at least to show  
A brave example, fearing not the foe ?  
But yet for her I dare not now refrain  
Thy pity—no, thy gratitude to gain :  
Say, wilt thou help us ? Swear : you swear ? 'tis well.  
So now my purpose let me briefly tell :—  
Maromne came to Zion ; short her stay  
Designed, we hoped her back from day to day.  
But sickness seized her, well its work was done  
Where sad bereavement had the waste begun.  
I heard and came : behind the tainted air  
Caused leave her daughter to a Nurse's care.  
God raised her up ; her home she'll see once more,  
And Tamar's presence shall her health restore.  
But now you sieged us. Fearing ne'er that you  
Jehovah's sainted dwelling could subdue ;  
Yet, trouble-weakened, many a terror wild,  
She could not hide, came o'er her for her child.  
For this I've sought thee oft, I've found thee now ;  
Up to Jerusalem bring her daughter thou.  
Start not, you've promised ; dear your handmaid she,  
And great the hazard, yet she brought must be :  
For her Maromne pines. My signet here,  
Be this your pledge to calm Nurse Esther's fear.

You know our home in Judah. Then, when high,  
Two nights from this, the moon is in the sky,  
Smite thou our northern gate ; I waiting there  
Will glad receive the damsel from your care :  
Maromne's name beloved, our men for it  
Even thee in honoured safety would admit,"  
She said and turned ; he downward fought his way,  
Till coming midnight closed the doubtful fray.

## CANTO IV.

## OTHURIEL BRINGS TAMAR TO JERUSALEM.

Othuriel south, by Salem's eastern side,  
Went ; frequent fires above a light supplied.  
Slowly he rode along the ghastly plain  
Blood-soaked, and heaped with corpses of the slain  
Cast from the walls ; the wounded, too, were there,  
And thickened with their groans the burdened air.  
His snorting charger swerved as oft, beneath,  
Some trampled wretch howled forth his curse of death ;  
Or wing of blood-cloyed vulture from the dead  
Rose heavy up and flapped around his head ;  
Or lazy dog, whose muddy gloating eye  
Shone in the red light, with a startled cry  
Was frightened off : behind, the loathsome beast  
Came slinking back to its polluted feast.  
As burned the brighter fires, he there beheld  
The brows of infants, and the forms of eld,  
Strong men, and youths untimely cut away ;  
And there the virgin in her beauty lay.

He trode a stiller and a darker space ;  
Then neared a high and fiercely-lighted place,

Thick set with crosses: bodies hung thereon  
Of captive Jews, whose writhing faces shone  
Turned to the wall, by Titus lifted there  
To storm the City with their dying glare,  
With terror day and night to strike the town,  
To beat the hearts of the defenders down.  
Downcast his eyes, his spirit awe-subdued,  
Othuriel went into that painful wood.  
Shrill neighed his horse, with cries the brooding air  
Was startled: "Water! water!" was each prayer.  
Slowly he passed. Heroic murmurs drew  
Aloft his eye: a warrior hung in view;  
Perfect of beauty seemed his head sublime,  
With power were clothed his limbs in manhood's prime,  
Toward Zion fixed; down looking by his side,  
As paused the rider, thus he faintly cried:—  
"Ho! Jew or Roman, if thy heart is great,  
To me the issue of this day you'll state.  
On yon delightful wall, so cool and high,  
The watchman paces o'er my weary eye;  
I've cried to him to tell me of the war,  
But ne'er he seems to hear me from afar.  
Thou son of milky woman, grant my prayer;  
O tell me, tell me how my brethren fare!"  
Came pain's quick cords; his curves convulsive throw  
His bosom forward, like a bended bow,  
Drawn; jerking back his loins the dull tree beat;  
Thick rains the bloody sorrow from his feet.  
Othuriel longed the struggling soul to cheer;  
Yet paused, his own voice daring not to hear  
In such a place, by sufferings sanctified  
More than hushed temples where great gods abide;  
And mute he gazed upon that lofty face  
Chastised with pain and sorrow for a space.

But hark ! far blowing their defiance shrill,  
The silver trumpets of the Holy Hill !  
From off the countenance of the crucified  
Pangs passed away, came on a gleam of pride ;  
Upstretched he rose, his gathered might was racked  
With noble toils till all his sinews cracked ;  
His face was beautified, with joy was fired ;  
And with a shout he gloriously expired.

Uprose the eastern moon : by silvered floods,  
And mountains bearded with old hoary woods,  
There clear the vales, here dark, Othuriel rode,  
And silent vineyards now by man untrode.  
Undriven away he saw the foxes young  
Tear down the vintage that neglected hung ;  
Such dread for Zion, hemmed with Roman lines,  
Had struck the careless keepers of the vines.

Morn broke : by many a fountain fair to see  
He went, and many a patriarchal tree ;  
O'er the green swelling loins of summer hills,  
Down the fresh valleys which the sun now fills,  
There tumbling waters clean, to morning's beams  
Here far uncurled the lapse of glassy streams,  
With bordering trees delectable ; in haste  
He trode the extended skirts of Tekoah's waste,  
High Hebron on the west ; and south, between,  
He rode through Judah's pastures broad and green.

Down went the day : he found at evening-tide  
Young Tamar weeping by old Esther's side.  
She rose, she knew him ; he his mission tells ;  
Joanna's ring each lingering doubt dispels,  
Pledge of his truth : they knew, they kissed it. "So,"  
Exclaimed the Nurse, "thou too from me must go,  
Tamar, O child ! My young lamb of the fold,  
Who goest to troubles and to fears untold,

What shall I say ? The Everlasting arms  
Be round about thee in the last alarms !  
Yet stay, I have a sacred ring ; 'twill prove,  
If no defence, a token of my love."

"Nay then," Othuriel said, "of virtue tried,  
Around her neck shall be an amulet tied.  
Here, since a child, I've worn it on my breast ;  
Nor seldom doubtless me the charm has blest,  
From ills has kept me : Surely me it laid,  
When wounded, here beneath sweet Tamar's aid ;  
For this it shall be hers." From off his own  
Unloosed, the chain round Tamar's neck was thrown.

"Ha ! what ?" cried Esther, as she saw and seized  
The hanging charm, and kissed it strangely pleased ;  
"It is—ah ! who art thou ? declare thy name—  
Well should I know it !—'tis, it is the same !  
These woven words ! My brother—ah ! more dear  
For his wild lore that filled my heart with fear—  
From Memphis brought it : in an old dim fane  
A youthful priestess wrought the mystic chain ;  
Dipped in the Nile, in a divine lagoon,  
Bleached in the pale eye of the Egyptian moon,  
'Twas cleared ; then was it with the sacred blood  
Of the ibis spotted, and the spell was good.  
Ere far he went, my brother's wizard hand  
Cast round Manasseh's son the enchanted band,  
Maromne's first-born son ; for gracious they  
Had kept me with them since their nuptial day.  
But vain their love for me, and vain that spell  
To stay the mighty evil which befell ;  
Lost was that son, and I, alas ! to blame.  
But speak : say where, when, whence to thee it came ?"

"Woman of Judah, then, it hung around  
My neck, when me a Galilean found,

A child exposed; he reared me as his own,  
But dying told me of my birth unknown.  
Ah me! what thing of horror and of dread  
Is this which now is coming on my head?  
I see it all! Woman, you spoke of one—  
Of—of—Manasseh? Am I then his son?  
Tamar! my sister! my sweet sister dear!  
Yet stay one moment till the whole be clear.”

Before him bowed, the Nurse with eager hands  
Unbinds his sandal; passively he stands.  
“The scar,” she murmured, “if I find it here!”  
She found, she kissed it, dropping many a tear.  
Slow rising pale, “My son!” she said, “’twere meet  
That ne’er I rose, but died upon thy feet;  
For mine the blame. I saw thy father’s spear  
Fall on that infant foot—an omen drear!  
O was it not? for scarcely wert thou healed,  
When forth I took thee to the harvest field;  
Homeward returning, in the noontide hour,  
With thee I slumbered in a leafy bower:  
I waked, but thou wert gone; all search was vain;  
Through long long years we saw thee ne’er again.  
Hope came at last: An aged kinsman sought  
Your father’s house, by want and sickness brought;  
Death came, your mother soothed him; forth at last  
To her the burden of his soul he cast:—  
‘Fair was thy youth, Maromne; far above  
The maids of Judah thee my son did love,  
Mine only one; but favour you denied;  
He rushed to battle, and for you he died.  
Vengeance be mine! I saw your first-born creep  
Before a bower, his Nurse was there asleep;  
Upsnatched I bore him far, with gentle care  
I laid him down’—he died, nor told her where.



Hope sunk anew, for still the quest was vain.  
Would, would thy sire had seen thee once again !  
Come from his lofty battles, how he smiled  
To take thee to him, a heroic child !  
How joyed his little warrior thee to call,  
His bloody lance bestriding through the hall !  
Then on his knee he set thee, by thy side  
Joanna, meant to be thy future bride.  
But thou wert lost. Jehovah called away  
His other children in their early day.  
Nobly at last he fell."

"By whom ? by whom ?"

Othuriel cried : "Who struck him to the tomb ?  
There's the right hand that did it ! bloody hand,  
Which all that love for me could not withstand !  
O I to do it ! I to smite him dead,  
Lifting my hand against that sacred head !  
My foe—my father !" hoarsely thus he cried.  
How shrieked his little sister terrified !  
He glanced upon her in his stern distress,  
And up he snatched her with a fierce caress ;  
But softening kissed her forehead :—"Fear me not,  
My sweet young sister ! dread though be my lot,  
I'll be thy brother aye. When night is past,  
I'll bear thee with me to our mother fast.  
Sleep thou the while." He said, in anguish sore  
Groaning, he bowed his forehead to the floor ;  
There, left alone, his sorrows had their way,  
As through the dark hours in the dust he lay.

## II.

Uprose the morn : how shall Othuriel dare  
His sister Tamar to that siege to bear ?

Shuddering he paused, he strove to make her know  
The whelming danger, but she prayed to go,  
With tears she pleaded; his the hope that yet  
His Roman favour them all safe might set,  
He took, he bore her quickly by the way  
He came, and rode till the decline of day.  
His steed, aloof from the beleaguered towers  
Of Zion, fastened 'midst neglected bowers,  
He sought ripe fruits for Tamar; by his side  
He made her sit throughout the evening-tide;  
Close to his bosom gently drew her head,  
Till slumber came and sealed each silken lid;  
Then bowed his cheek to hers with love so deep,  
And hid her face that she might longer sleep.

## III.

High walks the midnight moon: wide opening go  
The gates of Zion to Othuriel's blow,  
Struck by his sounding spear; Joanna there  
Forth stands to take young Tamar from his care.  
But entering with them through a stern array  
Of jealous guards he dared his onward way,  
Jealous but silent all; till, as he passed,  
They closed behind him and the gates made fast,  
With crowding murmurs. But he heard them not,  
Far other things are in his eager thought;  
For, homeward with Joanna as he goes,  
The tokens of his parentage he shows.  
How dares he go? he thinks not, heeds not, he,  
All else forgot, his mother's face must see.  
His sister leads him home; remote from all,  
He waits his mother in a silent hall.  
She came:—"My son!" He met her dear embrace,  
And long he sobbed and wept upon her face.

Down then he knelt:—"My mother! let me go  
And ask great Rome to hold thee not a foe,  
To save you all, if you your son would give  
One chance with gleams of happiness to live.  
This be my purpose; though, all else forgot,  
To see my mother was my only thought.  
But more than sorrow shall my coming be,  
O dread my going, if I save not thee.  
Swift let me go, thus save you; then for aye  
With you in native Judah will I stay."

"Behold," she said, "my late-won soldier, here  
Thy father's shield, his helmet and his spear,  
Who living now had been a full-orbed name—  
Start not, my son, he died but lives in fame.  
His great example, for our country's sake,  
Thee the fulfiller of his deeds must make.  
Joanna told me something, but my ear  
Alone the tokens of my son could hear.  
What though, your birth unknown, for Rome you  
fought;

No blame was yours, yours was no traitor's thought.  
Known now your birth, Rome has no claim on you;  
A Jew must do the duties of a Jew.  
For this, my boy, I nursed thee on my knees,  
In days gone by, beneath our native trees.  
Thee forth I'll lead all gloriously; come then,  
Put on the harness of our mighty men.  
Why look'st thou so? O wherefore, if not free  
To fight for Zion, art thou come to me?"

"Thou wife—ah! widow—of the man I slew!  
(I say not mother, I'm no son to you;  
Though pangs take hold on me, and sore affright  
To call you else) what shall I do this night?  
'Twas I that slew him. O but let me say  
Had nature blest me in my early day,

Had I been reared upon thy sacred knee,  
(O let me name that name so dear to me!)  
My mother, ever mine! then had I ne'er  
By such a deed been linked unto despair.  
I knew him not. But what shall quell the shame  
That still remains? Apostate is my name.  
My birth unknown I plead not, up I grew  
In all the nurture of a warrior Jew:  
This land was mine; yet darkly did I go  
And swear with Rome to lay Jerusalem low,  
Because my father in the Sanhedrim  
(My foe, I since have learned, misleading him)  
Denounced me as a traitor: from their gate  
Forth was I driven by Envy and by Hate.  
Dread was my oath! that oath must I pursue,  
And with high hand do what I have to do.  
Yet see me kneel—O help me to contrive  
Some surest way to save thy house alive:  
Let not my oath another parent cost;  
O let me, let me not be wholly lost!"

He said, and knelt. His mother's gone: he heard  
The turning bolt: he finds himself in ward.  
Then came lean men, and chained him. He was led  
Down to a vault: a lamp was overhead.  
There to a pillar of black gopher-wood  
Brought near, a fettered prisoner he stood.

## CANTO V.

## OTHURIEL A PRISONER.

Weeks o'er Othuriel went; in silent haste  
For him each morn was bread by Tamar placed.

But now a book his sweet young sister brought,  
And smiled to him as down she sate remote :  
Beneath the scented lamp that lit the place,  
Low o'er the opened scroll she bowed her face ;  
With silver voice, with childhood's reverent awe,  
She read the wonders of Jehovah's law.  
Each night she did the same : he questioned ne'er  
Why thus she came—he knew the loving care  
Which sent her thus—but silent leant his head  
Against his pillar as she nightly read,  
With looks to her of love ineffable,  
As down the light upon her countenance fell,  
Down on the holy page ; and listening hung  
To hear her softly-modulated tongue.  
And O how swelled his bosom at the sight  
Of that sweet child struck through with hunger's blight,  
Yet there each night with smiles for him that he  
Might fear his God, might thus her brother truly be !

## II.

Day passed, nor Tamar came : at dead of night,  
With famine dark, his mother stood in sight ;  
Yet still her brow a grace majestic wore,  
Seen by the lamp that in her hand she bore.  
In slumber feigned he kept his lowly bed  
Which near his pillar Tamar's love had spread,  
As stealthy came she, placed him food, and threw  
One glance on him, then hurriedly withdrew.  
Swift gleaming back she turned ; a space she stood,  
Her eyes the while seemed bent upon his food,  
Fiercely they shone ; in nature's awful stress,  
Down shaken fell in many a streaming tress  
Her long black hair, concealing half her face ;  
But back she flung it with a savage grace,

Forth sprung and seized the bread:—"Ah! wo is me,"  
Upstarting cried her son, "that this should be!  
My mother! O my mother! thy sore want  
Is more to me than pains extravagant."

She shrunk with startled pride, with sudden check  
Shrieking she turned, she sunk upon his neck,  
With passionate vehemence kissed him, sobbing lay  
Within his arms, and there she swooned away.

With holy care Othuriel held her head  
Till, soon reviving, faint to him she said:—

"My son has vanquished me! 'tis now confest  
Beyond them all I love him far the best.

My lost! my dearly found! come near my heart  
And tell me all, for thou in trouble art.

Speak to thy mother! well thou canst not be,  
But ill indeed! Yea, I have ruined thee,  
Have kept thee here, have ruined thee: the foe  
The cause of thy desertion shall not know,  
Shall find, shall slay thee. O forgive! forgive!

My soul desired to have thee near me live:

How could I let thee go? Yea more, from this  
I thought that you the enlarged remorse would miss  
Of that dread vow fulfilled, and chained you thus  
From pangs to keep you, warring not on us.

Have I done wrong, my son? But if you deemed  
Me harsh and cruel, such I only seemed:

I was not so to thee; for dear thou wert,  
Thou first-born of my body and my heart,  
And dear thou art! Old kingdoms may remove,  
But I will love thee with eternal love!

Ha! this is vain; but I will go this hour,  
And fight to save you from their vengeful power."

She said, nor looked as he implored, but threw  
Far back her hair, and glanced from out his view.

## III.

Othuriel strove, but still he strove in vain,  
To bow his pillar and to burst his chain.  
Joanna came, and in her hand a sword :—  
“ ’Tis now your hour, to be from thrall restored :  
This key,” she said, “ I’ve managed this to gain,  
Lest aught should threat you ; it unlocks your chain.  
Our Temple’s burnt ! Bent on our Upper Town,  
Hark ! how the Romans beat our last defences down !  
High streams upon our palace to the breeze  
The glorious banner of the Maccabees,  
Raised by your mother ; forth she rushed :—‘ This night,’  
She cried, ‘ I’ll save you, for you all I’ll fight.’  
Haste—follow—win her back ; this danger past,  
Your Roman power may shield us all at last.  
This sword—your father’s—take. You’re free : away ! ”  
Silent he snatched the sword, and sprung unto the fray.

## CANTO VI.

## THE DEATH AND BURIAL OF MAROMNE AND JOANNA.

Loud tumults rend the night ; the loudest drew  
Othuriel northward : thither fast he flew ;  
Yet pausing oft as came behind him cries,  
And waftings met him from the kindled skies.  
There oft he saw in some sequestered nook  
A famished mortal eat with hurried look,  
The very joy of whose possession foiled  
Itself with jealous fears to be despoiled ;  
He ne’er unslacking o’er his chance supply  
The gaunt and strict-drawn wolf within his eye.

Here blackened forms, a visionary throng,  
With noiseless feet came flittingly along ;  
In eager silence glaring some retreat,  
Some feebly chatter in the lonely street.  
But lo, the wall embattled ! High and far  
Maromne's spear led on the Hebrew war.  
Othuriel saw, and swift to her he sprung,  
Nor vainly ; back a foe from her he flung,  
Who leapt to seize her ; he enraged his spear  
Struck out ; Maromne with a shriek of fear  
Before her son her shielding bosom cast,  
And far that weapon through her body passed.  
Othuriel raised her ; back the Jews were driven,  
The Romans knew him now, and space to him was given  
To gaze in tearless silence on her face,  
As blanching death came over it apace ;  
Yet there her love, his sorrow to beguile,  
Kept up a pale and melancholy smile :—  
“ My very dear young son ! I see thee yet,  
And loath my eyes from thee in death to set !  
In happier days, and earlier to me won,  
Would I had known thee, O my son ! my son ! ”  
She paused exhausted ; aye, as aye grew dim  
Her eye, she cleared it still to look on him.  
Convulsive shudders passed throughout her frame,  
And o'er her face an awful sorrow came :—  
“ Joanna ! Tamar ! ” cried she : “ Night of fear !  
Away, my son ! we must not both be here.  
Lord, let me up ! lift up my painful side,  
That in the rock my children I may hide,  
Till Thy great indignation be o'erpast,  
Descending on us to consume us fast !  
Lord God of Abraham ! shall mean kingdoms buy  
My lovely children ? help ! I must not die ! ”



But she is dead. Othuriel closed her eyes ;  
And lifting carried through tumultuous cries  
Her body homeward, dipping still his feet  
In blood clear glittering on the flaming street.  
Captives he passed, young men and virgin bands,  
Far to be driven to strange and cruel lands,  
A huddled throng : scarce glutted Strength and Rage  
Could thrust their cloyed blades thro' encumbering Age.  
When foes he met, his dead one down he laid,  
O'er her he stood, fiercely he waved his blade ;  
Aloof they passed, he raised his sacred load,  
And soon again Maromne's chambers trode.  
There on a bed he laid her ; swift he traced  
His mother's rooms deserted, silent, waste ;  
He calls on Tamar, on Joanna calls,  
But hears alone the echo of the halls.  
He sought that vault where, many a night and day,  
His own dear mother's prisoner he lay ;  
There by the lamp still burning, lo ! 'tis she,  
His own Joanna kneeling on her knee,  
But pale as death ; her left hand back entwined  
In Tamar's hair, who shrinking sits behind,  
Her right upstays her leaning on a spear :  
Ah ! blood is welling from that side so dear,  
Down o'er her snowy vesture far it streams.  
But still her eye with angry beauty gleams,  
Fixed on that slaughtered Roman whom her lance  
Pierced doubtless first to stay his base advance.  
Slow went Othuriel near ; the virgin raised  
Her eyes, and strangely, keenly, on him gazed  
One moment ; shrieking in her gladness, she  
Sprung, stretched her arms in death with him to be,  
Fell, ere he met her, o'er that soldier's head ;  
He rushed, he raised his young Joanna—dead.

A grief so stern as his no tears supplied,  
He bore and laid her by his mother's side ;  
Tamar went with him, her he held a space  
Upraised to look upon their mother's face :—  
“ You know her, Tamar ? She to us has been  
A dearer mother than wide earth has seen,  
But she is gone from us ; yet better far  
That she is dead in these sore days of war.  
Weep not, my sister lamb, of thee I'll take  
Great care, and love thee greatly for her sake :  
I am thy brother, come with me !” He led  
The stumbling child, and from the chamber sped ;  
Nor, by the very greatness of the ill  
Awed, much she wept, but clung unto him still.  
The roof he sought ; high streaming in the breeze,  
He saw the banner of the Maccabees ;  
Down quick he tore its lettered flag ; he sought,  
By Tamar led, a sepulchre remote  
Behind the house ; away its stone he rolled,  
And spread within that standard's silken fold ;  
Then forth he brought his dead ones from that room,  
And side by side he laid them in the tomb ;  
And round their holy heads and round their feet,  
With gentlest care he wrapped the embroidered sheet ;  
Rolled back the stone to guard their long long rest ;  
Upsnatched his sister, to his swelling breast  
Strained ; kissed her forehead, and her face bedewed  
With silent tears still checked but still renewed ;  
Then strove in vain his sobbings to repress,  
That she might fear not from his great distress :  
The while he bore her in his arms away,  
And came to Titus ere the rising day.

## CANTO VII.

## THE END OF OTHURIEL.

"No, princely Titus ! On my head amain  
Just Heaven exhaust the armoury of pain !"  
Othuriel said, as down a valley they  
From wasted Zion far pursued their way,  
Leading their steeds ; young Tamar went between ;  
Far on before a Roman host was seen.  
'So dread my sin, 'tis nought that I repent  
My country's fall ; mine must be punishment :  
'Tis now begun. But let me not forget  
For all thy gracious thoughts my mighty debt.  
Kings hate their traitor instruments, and this  
The more when they have helped them not amiss ;  
But not so thou : a nobler rule is thine,  
Still work for me, and safety to design,  
And hope. Though stern must be my future lot,  
My heart shall keep the mitigating thought,  
That through my rash dark treason thou hast seen  
A better nature, and my friend hast been.  
I thank thee, generous Cæsar, but my vow  
Is wholly finished, and I leave thee now.  
Whither to roam, where resting must be met  
My plague of memory, I have fixed not yet.  
Would I were in the deserts, to be borne  
Fleet o'er a hundred hill-tops through the morn,  
To drive the tempest of the chase, to slay  
The wild boar only at the fall of day,  
When sleep should catch me dropping from my toil,  
And dreams alone have time my peace to spoil !  
Or give me war—O give me boundless strife ;  
Let me be swift and silent all my life !

But ha ! this damsel—for her tender sake,  
My worthless life in keeping I must take.  
For her I've lingered till your host you drew  
From ruined Salem, to be safe with you,  
My convoy hither. But for me you stay  
Too long conversing thus, your troops are on away.  
Farewell, heroic man ! yon hills afar,  
And these the plains of Judah free from war,  
Will yield me safety now," Othuriel said.  
But see ! outbursting from a neighbouring shade  
Of trees, six mounted Jews ; their bearing shows  
They know and will not spare their country's foes.  
Stern, swift they came. Sprung with a startled bound  
Othuriel's charger, wheeling round and round.  
Upsnatching Tamar, to his readier steed  
The Cæsar leapt, and pushed him to his speed.  
Othuriel follows ; dashing as he went,  
A gleaming javelin by a Jew was sent ;  
Whizzing it overtakes him in its track,  
Ha ! deep it quivers buried in his back.  
Caught with dread check, round writhed Othuriel struck,  
With clutching hand that weapon forth to pluck ;  
Yet kept his seat, and, urging his career,  
Pursued yon Hebrew with his levelled spear,  
Who followed Titus ; well his speed maintained,  
He neared him fast as on the Prince he gained,  
Ground his clenched teeth, his lance transfixing thrust,  
And hurled the Jew down headlong to the dust.  
Down too he reeled ; yet rising, staggering, he  
Leant on his spear that Tamar he might he might see.  
Back gallops Titus in his friendly fear.  
But hark, those other horsemen coming near !  
" They come, they come ! why, Roman, dare you stay ?"  
Othuriel cried, " Save her ! away, away !

Hold but thy hand aloft, a princely sign  
To keep my Tamar as if she were thine,  
Thy sister or thy daughter; and till death,  
Let no man draw her from her father's faith.  
Thanks, lifted hand! high token! Now then, flee!  
Ride! ere I die, her safety let me see!  
The God of Jacob help you, and help her!  
I see you, sister, would I with you were!  
But I am hurt, I cannot go with you;  
Yet long I'll look"—Away his Tamar flew:  
And sore the pangs that his young bosom rent,  
And much he waved his hand, as on she went;  
As still he heard her name him o'er and o'er,  
And cry for him, and shriekingly implore  
That he would come to her; as turned and bent  
To him, to him, o'er Titus' neck she leant,  
Yearning for him, her arms outstretched in air  
In blent confusion with her floating hair;  
As died her voice, her looks from him for aye;  
As fast and far he saw her borne away.  
But soon the parting grief that him subdued,  
Was swallowed up by anxious fear renewed;  
For lo! those Hebrews still pursuit maintain,  
And chance may give them what speed cannot gain.  
Heavy with death he staggered; aye the more  
He leant upon the spear which scarcely him upbore;  
And still from thickening mists his eye he cleared  
To see his sister saved; still faint to Titus cheered.  
Joy! joy! he sees the Cæsar far before  
His following foes; they pause, the chase is o'er!  
Tamar is saved! Othuriel, satisfied,  
Sprung, clapped his hands, and falling, calmly died.

## FANCY.

THUNDER-PALLS through gorges trailing,  
In their skirts the raven sailing ;  
Slanting shafts of showery light  
Striking all the woodlands bright,  
Green and bright, our Summer loves :  
And all her woodlands moan with doves.

Purple spirts, and golden sheaves !

But ah October's faded eves !  
Trooping down the barren shore,  
The lapwings wheel their veering flight  
The sandy ferry o'er and o'er,  
Now they're black, and now they're white ;  
Hoarser brawl the wind-curled rills ;  
From out yon gap in the far hills  
The hail-blast drifting white and slow  
(How the fir-wood glooms below !)  
Seems to come on, but thin and rare  
Disperses as it hangs in air.

- November clouds on every moor,  
All the hills they drench and steep,  
Dun sodden hills of blackened sheep ;

Torrents leaping, downward sweeping,  
All the rotten woodlands dripping,  
Mercy house the wandering poor!

O'er curdled floods, and hills of snow  
Moon-glazed, the North's keen nostrils blow.

Lo! April's coming corn exhaled to sight,  
A dewy dust of thin green light.

In my winter corner musing,  
Fancy thus her finger using,  
Cunning finger, dipt in glooms,  
Dews of light, and coloured blooms,  
Gives me, round her pictured hall,  
Touches of the seasons all.  
Tricksy Fancy, well she knows  
What clouds to every scene she owes,  
And shapes and tints them as she will;  
Rose-skirted on the mountains hoary,  
Torn to shreds of hurrying rack,  
Ranged in the north and battlemented black,  
White flock of zenith, or with stormy glory  
Tumbling tumultuous o'er the western hills.

Ruddier deep the embers glowing,  
Rarer things is Fancy showing:  
Sun-spilt in earth's embowelled night,  
Drops of distilled and filtered light,  
Compact to lucid stone, to shine  
On emblematic breasts divine;  
Green floating twilights, Shapes, the caves  
Of eldest Mystery 'neath the waves;  
Upward, onward, limitless,  
Foaming with worlds, heaven's blue abyss:

And Fancy still my minister,  
I with all the worlds confer.

Mirth for Man her berry crushes ;  
Love her cestus, wove of blushes,  
Froth of the sea, quick bloom of fire,  
Tremors, and sighs, and sweet desire,  
Wears all for Man : How soft they stand  
In witching grace from Fancy's hand !

Spirits of moral calm and storm,  
All the ideal tribes, so shy  
And complex to the Sage's eye,  
'Tis Fancy gives them living form.  
She shapes the elemental powers,  
Sylphs, and ouphes, and elves of flowers ;  
Faded ghosts of old renown,  
By tops and turrets tumbling down ;  
Eyes of dragons spitting flame ;  
Hags of the night, and all the race  
That hate and fear the Sign of Grace,  
Vague phantoms drear without a name.

List, O list the sweet-lipped Sages.  
I hear the Song of world-wide compass sung.  
I hear the Prophet's tongue  
Come sounding down the ages :  
Kings and their scattered levies fly  
The accusing angel of his eye.

Spiritual in the depth of time,  
Vivid rise the heads sublime :  
Large of front, with luminous eyes,  
The lords of thought and purpose rise ;



The men-compellers, chief and sage,  
Who shaped the world from age to age.  
"Put thy shoes from off thy feet,  
Reverent stand, and reverent greet,"  
Fancy whispers, "dare to scan  
The awful head of God in Man."  
And to the wondering inner eye,  
The Man of Sorrows passes by.

Every form, and every show,  
All above, and all below ;  
With these renewed and re-combined,  
Fancy feeds the widening mind.

## TO THE MEMORY OF A CITY PASTOR.

HIS soul was truth severe: The shafts of day  
Strike through the vague delusions of the night;  
So, arrowy keen was his assault of light,  
The idols of the den, to pierce them, pierce and slay.

No Fatherhood is in the Pantheist's God,—  
Eyeless, impersonal thing: From out the wild  
Diffusion strange our living Father smiled,  
As from the Pastor's lips our plea of Sonship glowed.

"Go! coward sneerer at thy parent's vow,  
Who held thee up; at least be scornful bold:  
Dark cite thy Pagan Club; drops deadly cold  
From rue and nightshade take, wash, disbaptise thy brow!"

Yet O how tolerant of the modest doubt,  
Peace to the soul, peace to the struggling soul,  
He loved to breathe! Clear slips of gladness stole  
Down through the rents of gloom, and cast the phantoms  
out.

"Fear thou no more! God never made in whim  
An organ but for use: our yearning hope  
Of Heaven hereafter, like our hand, has scope  
To grasp the thing which is; that Heaven is thus no dream.

“ Shall He who made us with a wish and trust  
And power to know our Maker more and more,  
Be faithless to Himself who in our core  
Still keeps the hope He put, and cheat us all with dust ?

“ How terrible, should God extinguish Man,  
Were all our race to lift one gathered cry,—  
‘ Father, hast Thou deceived us ! ’ God Most High,  
So challenged, were not God ; doubt not His Deathless Plan.

“ ’Tis Life, my friend ! For this God’s blood was paid.  
Strange Word ! Yet stranger that a soul like thee,  
God-stamped, should die, than that Incarnate He  
Should suit Himself to dwell with sons so nobly made.”

Come down, thou purple Pride ! He storms thee down,  
That Son of Thunder. More, through Him above,  
Whose shield was patience, and whose spear was love,  
His is a war to lift meek Virtue to her crown.

Years, grief and years, drink up the lustrous eye ;  
The sunny curls are thin, white, sapless hairs :  
Peace ! aged one, to thee Christ’s servant bears  
Pledge of the surer prime—life with thy Lord on high.

Down the blind alley, up the festering stair,  
Wan creatures, ground by hunger from their den  
(Hunger, lean mainspring of the world of men),  
Took from him help and hope back to their nightly lair.

Daughters of Sin ; remnants of men, their faces  
Ploughed and cross-ploughed by Pain, gnarled, weather-  
stained  
With grim old cruelties, and blood-engrained,—  
Half rose to meet his eye down in their dying places.

All pests, all plagues he faced. The midnight cry  
Of dwellings wrapt in webs of roaring flame  
Roused him to help. Poor son of scaffold shame,  
Out on the rueful verge, he taught thee how to die.

Children of Night, O his immortal strife,  
With tears and blood to wash you white of beauty,  
Divinely white! For power to do his duty  
More did he pray to God than for eternal life.

How bursts from heart to heart, great soul and true,  
Thy passionate thought; bold, as the terrors loom,  
To dash with sunny tumult all the gloom,  
Yet high of solemn charge! Friend of mankind, adieu!

## A SUMMER DAY.

### Morning.

GRAY brindled dawn comes up before the sun.  
There's health, there's moral healing in the hour  
So naked clear, so dewy, dewy cool.

O curse of sleeplessness ! Haggard and pale,  
The tyrant Nero, see him from his bed  
Wandering about, haunting the long dim halls,  
And silent stairs, at midnight, startled oft  
At his own footsteps, like a guilty thing,  
Sharp turning round aghast. The palace sleeps,  
And all the city sleeps, all save its lord.  
Then looks he to the windows of the east,  
Wearily watching for the morning light,  
Which comes not at his will. Down on his bed  
He flings himself again. His eyeballs ache ;  
His temples throb ; his pillow's hot and hard ;  
And through his dried brain thoughts and feelings drift  
Tumultuous, unrestrained, carrying his soul  
On the high fever's surge. The imperial world  
For one short dewy hour of healing sleep !  
Worlds cannot buy the blessing. Up he reels,  
And staggers forth. Slow-coming day at length  
Has found him thus. Its busy forms of life,

Its turms, its senators, its gorgeous guests,  
Bowling in homage from barbaric isles,  
To him are phantoms: Through its ghastly light  
Wildered he lives. To feel and be assured  
He yet has hold on being, with the drugs  
Of monstrous pleasures, cruelty and lust,  
He drugs his spirit; ever longing still  
For the soft hour of eve, if sleep may come  
After another day has worn him out.  
But images of black, bed-fellows strange,  
Lie down with him; drawing his curtain back,  
Unearthly shapes, and unimagined faces,  
Look in upon him, near down on his eyes,  
Nearer and nearer still, till they are forced  
To wink beneath the infliction, like a weight  
Of actual pressure, solid, heavy, felt.  
But winking hard, a thousand coloured motes  
Begin to dance confused, and central stars,  
And spots of light, welling and widening out  
In rings concentric, peopling all the blind  
Black vacancy before his burning balls.  
But soon they change to leering antic shapes,  
And dread-suggesting fiends. Dim, far away,  
Long dripping corpses, swaying in the waves,  
Slowly cast up, arise; gashed, gory throats,  
And headless trunks of men, are nearer seen,  
And every form of tragic butchery—  
The myriad victims of his power abused  
By sea and land. To give their hideousness  
Due light, a ceiling of clear molten fire,  
Figured with sprawling imps, begins to glow  
Hot overhead, casting a brazen light  
Down on the murdered crew. All bent on him,  
Near, nearer still, they swarm, they crowd, they press;

And round and round, and through and through the rout,  
The naked Pleasures, knit with Demons, dance.

But up from innocent sleep, how fresh to meet  
The glistening morn, over the smoking lawn  
Spangled, by briery balks, and brambled lanes,  
Where blows the dog-rose, and the honeysuckle  
Hangs o'er the heavy hedge its trailing sheaf  
Of stems and leaves, tendrils and clasping rings,  
Cold dews, and bugle blooms, and honey smells,  
And wild bees swinging as they murmur there.  
The speckled thrush, startled from off the thorn,  
Shakes down the crystal drops. With spurring haste,  
The rabbit scuds across the grassy path ;  
Pauses a moment, with its form and ears  
Arrect to listen ; then, with glimpse of white,  
Springs through the hedge into the ferny brake.  
Or taste the freshness of the pastoral hills  
On such a morn : Light scarfs of thinning mist  
In graceful lingerings round their shoulders hang ;  
New-washed and white, the sheep go nibbling up  
The high green slopes ; a hundred gurgling rills,  
Sparkling with foam-bells, to your very heart  
Send their delicious coolness ; hark ! again,  
The cuckoo somewhere in the sunny skirts  
Of yonder patch of the old natural woods ;  
Sudden with iron croak, clear o'er the gray  
Summit, o'erhanging you, with levelled flight,  
The raven shoots into the deep blue air.

Lo ! in the confluence of the mountain glens,  
The small gray ruin of an ancient kirk ;  
Our first Reformed, so faithful reverence tells.  
There stands it, and will stand, till Time's slow tooth

Nibble it all away; for it is fenced  
With awe, and ghostly fears, the abuse of awe  
In simple minds: Strange judgments, so they say,  
Have fallen on those who once or twice have dared  
To lay their hands upon its holy stones  
For secular uses, and remove the bell.  
Such faith has Scotland in her Burning Bush!  
Bush of the wilderness! see how the flames  
Bicker and burn around it; but the Spirit  
Blows gracious by, and the dear little Bush,  
The desert Bush, in every freshened leaf  
Uncurled, unsinged in every flowery bud,  
Fragrant with Heavenly dew, and dropping balsams  
Good for the hurt soul's healing, waves and rustles,  
Even in the very heart of the red burning,  
In livelier green and fairer blossoming.

Earth sends her soft warm incense up to Heaven;  
The birds their matins sing. Joining the hymn,  
The tremulous voice of psalms from human lips  
Is heard in the free air. You wonder where,  
And who the worshippers. Behold them now,  
Low seated by the burn; an old gray man,  
His head uncovered, and the Book of Life  
Spread on his knee, and by his side his spouse,  
Aged and lowly, beggars by their garb,  
With frail cracked voices, yet with hearts attuned  
To the immortal harmonies of faith,  
And hope, and love, in the green wilderness  
Praising the Lord their God—a touching sight!  
High in the Heavenly House not made with hands,  
The archangels sing, angels, and saints in white,  
Striking their golden harps before the Throne;  
But, in the pauses of the symphony,



A voice comes up from earth, the simple psalm  
Of those old beggars, heard by the Ear of God  
With more acceptance than hosannahs pealed  
Through all the hosts of blissful jubilee.

Her nest is here: But ah! the cunning thing,  
See where our White-throat, like the partridge, feigns  
A broken wing, thick fluttering o'er the ground,  
And tumbling oft, to draw you from her brood  
Within the bush. Now that's a lie, my birdie!  
Your wing's not broken; but we'll grant you this,—  
The lie's a white one, white as your own throat.  
Yet how should He who is the Truth itself,  
And prompts all instinct, plant in you deceit,  
And make you act it, even to save your young?  
The whole creation groans for Man, for sin,  
And death its consequence: We're changed to you  
In our relations, birdie; as a part  
Of that primeval ill, we rob your nest.  
To meet this change perhaps, high Heaven itself  
Permitting moral wrong, instinctive guile  
Has thus been lent to your instinctive love;  
And your deceit is our reflected sin.  
The more we wonder at this curious warp  
From truth, the more we see the o'erruling law  
Of natural love in all things, which will be  
A fraud in instinct, rather than a flaw  
In care parental. O how gracious good,  
That all the generations, as they rise,  
Of living things, are not sustained by one  
Great abstract fiat of Benevolence;  
But by a thousand separate forms of love,  
All tremblingly alive! The human heart,  
With all its conduits, and its channel-pipes,

Warm, flowing, full, quiveringly keen and strong  
In all its tendrils and its bloody threads;  
The wallowing, belching monsters of the deep,  
Down to the filmiest people of the leaf,  
Are all God's nurses, and draw out the breast,  
Or brood for Him. O what a system thus  
Of active love, of every shape and kind,  
Has been created, from the Heart of Heaven  
Extended, multiplied, personified  
In living forms throughout the Universe !

In life's first glee, and first untutored grace,  
With raven tresses, and with glancing eyes,  
How beautiful those children, lustrous dark,  
Pulling the kingcups in the flowery meadow !  
Born of an Indian mother : She by night,  
An orphan damsel on her native hills,  
Looked down the Khyber Pass, with pity touched  
For the brave strangers who lay slain in heaps,  
Low in that fatal fold and pen of death.  
Sorrow had taught her mercy : Forth she went  
With simple cordials from her lonely cot,  
If she might help to save some wounded foe.  
By cavern went she, and tall ice-glazed rock,  
Casting its spectral shadow on the snow,  
Beneath the hard blue moon. Save her own feet  
Crushing the starry spangles of the frost,  
Sound there was none on all the silent hills ;  
And silence filled the valley of the dead.  
Down went the maid aslant. A cliff's recess  
Gave forth a living form. A wounded youth,  
One unit relic of that thick battue,  
Escaping death, and mastering his deep hurt,  
From out the bloody Pass had climbed thus far

The mountain side, and rested there a while.  
The virgin near, up rose he heavily,  
Staggered into the light, and stood before her,  
Bowling for help. She gave him sweet spiced milk,  
And led him to her home, and hid him there  
Months, till pursuit was o'er, and he was healed,  
And from her mountains he could safely go.  
But grateful Walter loved the Affghan girl,  
And would not go without her: They had taught  
Each other language: Will she go with him  
To the Isles of the West, and be his wife?  
Nor less she loved the fair-haired islander,  
And softly answered, Yes. And she is now  
His Christian wife, wondering and loving much  
In this mild land, honoured and loved by all;  
With such a grace of glad humility  
She does her duties. And, to crown her joy  
Of holy wedded life, her God has given her  
Those beauteous children, with the laughing voices,  
Pulling the kingcups in the flowery meadow.

Our walk is o'er. But let us see our bees,  
Before we turn into our ivied porch.  
The little honey-folk, how wise are they!  
Their polity, their industry, their work,  
The help they take from man, and what they give  
Of fragrant nectar, sea-green, clear, and sweet,  
Invest them almost with the dignity  
Of human neighbourhood, without the intrusion.  
Coming and going, what a hum and stir!  
The dewy morn they love, the sunny day,  
Softened with showery drops, liquoring the flowers  
In every vein and eye. But when the heavens  
Grow cloudy, and the quick-engendered blasts

Darken and whiten as they skiff along  
The mountain-tops, till all the nearer air,  
Seized with the gloom, is turbid, dense, and cold,  
Back from their far-off foraging the bees,  
In myriads, saddened into small black motes,  
Strike through the troubled air, sharp past your head,  
And almost hitting you, their lines of flight  
Converging, thickening as they draw near home;  
So much they fear the storms, so much they love  
The safety of their straw-built citadels.

### Noon.

At times a bird slides through the glossy air,  
O'er the enamelled woodlands; but no chirp  
Of song is heard: all's dumb and panting heat.  
How waste and idle are yon river sands,  
Far-stretching white! The stream is almost shrunk  
Down to the green gleet of its slippery stones;  
And in it stand the cows, switching their tails,  
With circling drops, and ruminating slow.  
A hermit glutton on a sodded root,  
Fish-gorged, his head and bill sunk to his breast,  
The lean blue heron stands, and there will stand  
Motionless all the long dull afternoon.

But the old woods are near, with grateful glooms,  
Dells, silent grottoes, and cold sunken wells;  
There rest on mossy seats, and be refreshed:  
Thankful you toil not, at this blazing hour,  
Beneath the Dog-star in some sandy lane  
Of the strait sea-coast town, pent closely in  
With walls of fiery brick, their tops stuck o'er

With broken pointed glass, and danders hot  
Fencing their feet, with sparse ears of wild barley  
Parched, dun, and dead amongst them; o'er your head  
The smoke of potteries, and the foundry vent  
Sending its quivering exhalation up—  
Heat more than smoke; to aggravate the whole,  
The sweltering, smothering, suffocating whole,  
The oppressive sense upon your heart of man's  
Worst dwellings round you—smells of stinking fish;  
Torn dingy shirts, half washed, flea-spotted still,  
Hung out on bending strings at broken windows;  
Hunger, and fear, and pale disordered faces,  
Lies, drunken strife, strokes, cries, and new-coined oaths,  
All hot and rough from the red mint of Hell.

Lo! with her screwed tail cocked aloft in air,  
The cottar's cow comes scampering clumsily.  
Her, sorely cupped and leeches, the clegs have stung  
From her propriety; and hoisting high  
Her standard of distress, this way she comes  
Cantering unwieldily, her heavy udder,  
Dropping out milk, swinging from side to side.  
Pathetic sight! so long have we been used  
To see the solemn tenor of her life,  
From calfhood to her present reverend age  
Of wrinkled front, scored horns, and hollow back,—  
Tenor unbroken, save when once or twice  
A pool of frothy blood before the smithy  
Has made her snuff, snort, paw, and toss her head,  
Wheel round and round, and slaving bellow mad:  
That blood the cadger's horse, seized with the bots,  
When he on cobwebbed clover, raw and cold,  
Had supped, gave spouting, spinning from his neck,  
Beneath the blacksmith's mallet and his fleam.

Is this the cow, at home so patient o'er  
The cool sobriety of cabbage leaves,  
Hoarse cropped for her at morn, when the night-drops  
Lie like big diamonds in the freshened stock,—  
Drops broken, running, scattered, but again  
Conglobed like quicksilver, until they fall  
Shaken to earth? Is this the milky mother,  
That long has given to thankful squeezing hands,  
With such an air of steady usefulness,  
The children's streaming food—twelve pints a-day;  
And with her butter, and her cheese, and cans  
Of white-green whey, has bought the grocery goods,  
Snuff and tobacco? O the affecting sight!  
Help, help, ye shades, the venerable brute!  
But gradually subsiding to a trot,  
She takes the river for her cooling stand.  
Ah! Crummie, you have stolen this scampering march  
Upon the little cowherd. Far are heard  
The opening roarings of his wondering fear,  
Loading the noontide air. Three other friends  
Had he to feed, besides the family cow.  
Twin cushats young, the yellow hair now sparse  
In their thick gathering plumage, nestling lie  
Within his bonnet; they can snap, and strike  
With the raised wing; grown vigorous thus, they need  
A larger dinner of provided peas.  
Nor less his hawk, shrill-screaming as it shakes  
Its wings for food, must have the knotted worms  
From moist cold beds below the unwholesome stone,  
Which never has been raised—if he be quick  
To raise it, and can seize them ere they slink  
Into their holes, or, when half in, can draw them,  
With a long, steady, gentle, equal pull,  
Tenacious though they be, and tender stretched

Till every rib seems ready to give way,  
Unbroken out in all their slippery length.  
These now he wandered seeking, for the ground  
Was parched, and they the surface all had left:  
And many a stone he raised, but nothing saw,  
Save insect eggs, and shells of beetles' wings,  
Slaters, cocoons, and yellow centipedes.  
Thus was he drawn away. When he came back,  
His cow was gone. Dismayed, he looked all round.  
At last he saw, far-off on the horizon,  
Her hoisted tail. He seized his birds and ran,  
Following the tail, and as he ran he roared.  
Lo! yonder comes he, roaring, red-hot-faced.

The world is flooded with the dazzling day.  
We take the woods. Couched in their checkered skirts,  
Below an elm we lie. A sylvan stream  
Is sleeping by us in a cold still pool,  
Within whose glassy depth the little fishes  
Hang, as in crystal air. Freckled with gleams,  
'Neath yonder hazelly bank which roofs it o'er  
With roots and moss, it slides and slips away.  
Here a rayed spot of light, intensely clear,  
Strikes our eye through the leaves; a sunbeam there  
Comes slanting in between the mossy trunks  
Of the green trees, and misty shimmering falls  
With a long slope down on the glossy ferns:  
Light filmy flies athwart it brightening shoot,  
Or dance and hover in the motty ray.

We love the umbrageous Elm. Its well-crimped leaf,  
Serrated, fresh, and rough as a cow's tongue,  
Is healthy, natural, and cooling, far  
Beyond the famous bay, glazed, glittering hard,

As liquored o'er with some metallic wash.  
Thus pleased, laid back, up through the elm we look:  
What life the little Creeper of the Tree  
To leafdom lends! See how the antic bird,  
Her bosom to the bark, goes round away  
Behind the trunk, but quaintly reappears  
Through a rough cleft above, with busy bill  
Picking her lunch; and now among the leaves  
Our birdie goes, bright glimmering in the green  
And yellow light that fills the tender tree.

Low o'er the burnie bends the drooping Birch.  
Fair tree! though tattered be its vest of white,  
No fairer twinkles in the dewy glade.  
Sweet is its scented breath, the wild deer loves  
To snuff and browse about the budding spray.  
Wandering the woods, the truant schoolboy spies  
The thick excrescence of its matted sprigs,  
And hopes the cushat's nest: soft steals he near.  
Ah what a cheat! But if the tree be old,  
He finds the fungous corkwood in its clefts,  
And with his knife he fashions him a ball.  
Next peels he off a bit of bark, and splits  
With his thumb-nail the many-coated rind  
To the last outer thinness; then he holds  
The silky shivering film between his lips,  
And pipes and whistles, mimicking the thrush.  
Nor less the Beauty of our natural woods  
Is useful too. What time the housewife's pinn  
(O cheerless change that stopped the birring wheel!)  
Whirled glimmering round before the evening fire,  
'Twas birchen aye. And when our tough-heeled shoes  
Have stood the tear and wear of stony hills  
Beyond our hope, we bless the birchen pegs.



In Norway o'er the foam, their crackling fires  
Are fed with bark of birch, and there they thatch  
Their simple houses with its pliant twigs.  
At home, the virtues of our civic besoms  
Confess the birch. The Master of the School  
Is now "abroad:" O may he never miss,  
Wander where'er he will, the birchen glen;  
But cut the immemorial ferula,  
To lay in pickle for rebellious imps,  
And whip to worth the boyhood of the land!

The Queen can make a Duke, but cannot make  
One of the forest's old Aristocrats.  
Behold yon Oak! what glory in his bole,  
His boughs, his branches, his broad frondent head!  
The ancient Nobleman! Not She who rules  
The kingdoms, many-isled, on which the sun  
Never goes down, with all the investiture  
Of garters, coronets, scutcheons, swords, and stars,  
Could make him there at once. Patrician! Nay,  
King of the Woods, his independent realm!  
Whate'er his titled name, there let him stand,  
Fit emblem of our British Constitution,  
Full constituted in the rooted Past,  
With powers, and forces, and accommodations,  
The growth of ages, not an act or work!  
Beyond this emblem of old dignity,  
And far beyond the associated thought  
Of "Hearts of Oak," that mightiest incarnation  
Of human power that earth has ever seen—  
As when we launched our Nelson, and he went  
Thundering around the world, driving the foe,  
With all their banded hosts, from hemisphere  
To hemisphere, before him by the terror

Of his tremendous name, but overtook,  
And thunder-smote them down, swept from the seas—  
Beyond all this, the reverend Oak takes back  
The heart to elder days of holy awe.  
Such oaks are they, the hoariest of their race,  
Round Lochwood Tower, the Johnstone's ancient seat.  
Bowed down with very age, and rough all o'er  
With scurfy moss, and parasitic hair,  
They look as if no lively little bird  
Durst hop upon their spirit-awing heads.  
But solemn visions swarm on every bough,  
Of Druid doings in the dusk of old.

When lours the thunder-cloud, and all the trees  
Stand black and still, with what a trump profound  
The wild bee wanders by ! But here he is,  
Hoarse murmuring in the foxglove's weighed-down  
bell.

How summer-glad ! but when the frost-edged days  
Of later autumn come, they'll find him hang  
In torpid stupor on the purple knot.  
Man robs him too. The boys have found his door,  
And delve him out : he issues : ragweed they  
Ply, fearing him, but yet on honey bent,  
And beat him down, and follow to his bike.  
They seize the yellower and the cleaner comb,  
But drop it quick, when squeezing it they find  
Nought there but milky maggots ; then they pick  
And suck the darker bits, soiled of the earth,  
Wild-bitter-flavoured in their luscious strength.  
The mower in the meadow ruffles up  
The foggie's nest, a ball of soft dry fog :  
With what an acrid, angry, pent-up buzz  
Swarming it stirs ! but when the yellow bees

Are all dislodged, and spin their airy rings  
Away, away, the bright clean honey's his.

Ah ! there's Miss Kitty Wren, with her cocked tail,  
Cocked like a cooper's thumb. Miss Kitty goes  
In 'neath the bank, and then comes out again  
By some queer hole. Thus all the day she plies  
Her quest from hedge to bank, scarce ever seen  
Flying above your head in open air.  
Unsmitten by the heat where now she is,  
She strikes into her song—Miss Kitty's song !  
(We never think of male in Kitty's case.)  
Short is the song, not varied, yet not dull,  
So liquid clear of pipe she opens it,  
And, with increasing vigour to the end,  
Goes through it quite : Thus all the year she sings,  
Except in frost, the spunky little bird !  
On mossy stump of thorn her curious nest  
Is often built, a twig drawn over it,  
To bind it firm ; but more she loves the roof  
Of sylvan cave o'erarched, where the green twilight  
Glimmers with golden light, and foxgloves stand,  
Tall, purple-faced, her goodly Beef-eaters,  
To guard and dignify her entrance gate.  
But how, Miss Wren, in your small crowded house,  
(Your pardon ! we must call you Mrs now)  
Do you contrive to feed your dozen young,  
And give them all fair play ? Come, tell us, too,  
What means the Bachelor's Nest ? Bold goes her  
pipe,  
And Kit the clever cocks her saucier tail.

But here comes Robin. In our boyish days,  
We thought him Kitty's husband. He, like her,

Sings all the year ; but she is not his wife.  
Look how the knowing fellow turns the head  
This way and that, peeping from out the leaves  
With curious art, and still comes hopping near.  
Strong in his individual character,  
His full black eye, short neck, and waistcoat red,  
His pipe mellifluous, and pugnacious pride,  
Darting to strike intruders from his beat,  
His love of man is still his leading type.  
The starved hedge-sparrow haunts the moistened sink,  
On gurdy winter days, the bitter wind  
Ruffling her back, showing the bluer down  
Beneath her feathers freckled brown above,  
But ne'er she ventures nearer where man dwells ;  
With sidelong look, bold Robin takes our floor.  
And when, as now, we rest us in the depth  
Of leafy woods, he's with us in a trice.  
Such is the genius of red-breasted Robin.

What makes the Owl abroad at such an hour ?  
'Tis not canonical for one whose walk  
And conversation is on Wisdom's shoulder  
Staid, in the meditations of the night.  
Look at him ! Sunny motes are in his eyes ;  
And yet he makes his dazed and doubtful way  
Out of the wood, full into glaring noon.  
Worse wildered there, what can he do but wheel  
In blind, short, aimless, awkward circlings round,  
Lest he should bump his head against a tree ?  
Puck, to your spiriting here ! yonder's a sheaf  
Of sunbeams piercing through the thinner leaves ;  
Pluck thee the sharpest of the cluster, get  
Behind Sir Oracle, and prick him back  
Home to his ivied cell, admonished thence

To budge not, till the little mouse of night  
Creeps from her hole, and fissles through the grass.

Along the shingly shallows of the burn,  
The smallest bird that walks, and does not hop,  
How fast yon Wagtail runs; its little feet  
Quick as a mouse's! Thus its shaking tail  
Is kept in even balance, poised and straight.  
With hopping movements 'twould not harmonise,  
But wagging inconveniently more,  
Mar way when off the wing: How well contrived  
Such congruous motions of the feet and tail!  
Aloft in air, each chirrup keeping time  
With each successive undulation long,  
The wagtail flies, a pleasant summer bird.

With all the thick short rowing of her wings,  
The Magpie makes slow way. But her glib tongue  
Goes chattering fast enough: in yonder fir,  
The summer solstice cannot keep her mute.  
Ominous pie! the peasant sees it tear  
With mad extravagant bill his cottage thatch,  
And fears for death within; the schoolboy, forth  
On morning errand, counts with eager awe  
The sidelong pies high hopping o'er his road,  
And learns the fortunes of the coming time.

Sweet lore was yours, O Bewick, with that eye  
So keen, yet quiet, for the Beautiful,  
And for the Droll—that eye so loving large!  
The fame of Wilson in the wilderness  
Shall still be green, while the white Dove of Day  
Flies through the heavens, chased by the Raven, Night.  
How joys the enthusiast Audubon to catch

And fix the creatures of the solitudes  
In pictured play, the play of tameless life,  
Wanton and freakish free, their sallies tart,  
Their secret gestures, and the wild escapes  
From out their eyes; watching how Nature works  
Her fine frugalities of means, even there  
Where all is lavish freedom, finer still,  
The compensations of her processes,  
Throughout their whole economy of life.  
Sweet study! O for one long summer day  
With Audubon in the far Western woods!

We leave the shade, and take the open fields,  
Winding our way by immemorial paths,  
So soft and green, the poor man's privilege:  
May jealous freedom ever keep them free!  
Such is the sultry dimness of the day,  
The eye sees nothing clear. But now it rests  
On yonder sable patch—ah! yes, a band  
Of mourners gathered in the churchyard ground.  
The black solemnity in such a day  
Of light and life, O how unnatural!  
But who goes dust to dust? A matron ripe  
In years and grace at once for death and Heaven.  
Wed, widowed, and a mother, in one year,  
She dwelt in peace, love-nourishing her child.  
Mild and sedate, upgrew the old-fashioned boy;  
And went to church with her, a little man  
In garb and gravity: you would have smiled  
To see him coming in. She lifted him  
Up to his seat beside her, drew him near,  
And took his hand in hers. There as he sate,  
Oft looked she down to see if he was sleeping;  
And drowsy half, half in the languor soft

Of innocent trust and aimless piety,  
The child looked up into his mother's face.  
And she looked down into his eyes, and saw  
The neighbouring window in their pupil balls,  
With all its panes, reflected small but clear;  
And gave his hand soft pressure with her hand,  
Still shifting, trying still to be more soft.  
God took him from her. Holy still of heart,  
She dwelt alone, and changed not. Trouble ne'er  
To neighbours gave she, but she helped them all.  
And when she died, her grave-clothes, there they were,  
Made by her own preparing heart and hand,  
And neatly folded in an antique chest:  
Not even a pin was wanting, where, to dress  
Her body with due care, a pin should be;  
And every pin was stuck in its own place.  
Nor was all this from any hard mistrust  
Of human love, for she the charities  
Took with glad heart; but from a strength of mind  
Which stood equipped in every point for death,  
And loving order, loved it to the end.

The mourners all are gone: How lonely still  
The churchyard now! Here in their simple graves  
The generations of the hamlet sleep;  
All grassy simple, save that, here and there,  
Love-planted flowerets deck the lowly sod.  
Fond love, we scorn thee not: to bring the bud  
Of living beauty from the ashes dear,  
Be still thine artless emblematic war  
Against the dull dishonours of the grave.  
Bloom then, ye little flowers, and sweetly smell;  
Draw up the heart's dust in your flushing hues  
And odorous breath, and give it to the bee,

And give it to the air, circling to go  
From life to life, through all that living flux  
Of interchange which makes this wondrous world.  
Go where it will, the dear dust is not lost;  
Found it will be in its own place and form,  
On that great day, the Resurrection Day.

### Eveing.

Those shouts proclaim the village school is out.  
This way and that, the children break in groups;  
Some by the sunny stile, and meadow path,  
Slow sauntering homeward; others to the burn  
Bounding, beneath the stones, and roots, and banks,  
With stealthy hand to catch the spotted trout,  
Or stab the eel, or slip their noose of hair  
Over the bearded loach, and jerk him out.  
Here on his donkey, slow as any snail  
At morn from the far farm, but, homeward now,  
Willing and fast, an urchin blithe and bold  
Comes scampering on: His face is to the tail  
In fun grotesque; stooping, with both his hands  
He holds the hairy rump; his kicking feet  
Go walloping; his empty flask of tin,  
Which bore his noon of milk, quiver of life,  
And not of death, high-bounding on his back,  
Rattles the while. With many a whoop behind,  
Scouring the dusty road with their bare feet,  
In wicked glee, a squad of fellow-imps  
Come on with thistles and with nettle-wands,  
Pursuingly, intent to goad and vex  
The long-eared cuddy: He, the cuddy, lays  
His long ears back upon his neck, his head



Lowered the while, and out behind him flings  
High his indignant heels, at once to keep  
That hurly-burly of tormentors off,  
And rid his back of that insulting rider.

Unconscious boyhood! O the perils near  
Of luring pleasures! In the evening shade,  
Drowsy reclining, in my dream I saw  
A comely youth, with wanton flowing curls,  
Chase down the sunlit vale a glittering flight  
Of wingèd creatures, some like birds, and some  
Like butterflies, and moths of marvellous size  
And beauty, purple-ruffed, and spotted rich  
With velvet tippets, and their wings like flame.  
Onward they drew him to a coming cloud,  
With skirts of vapoury gold, but steaming dense  
And dark behind, close gathering from the ground;  
And on and in he went, in heedless chase.  
Straightway those skirts curled inward, and became  
Part of the gloom: Compacted, solid, black,  
It has him in, and it will keep him there.  
The cloud stood still a space, as if to give  
Time for the acting of some doom within,  
Ominous, silent, grim. It moved again,  
Tumultuous stirred, and broke in seams and flaws,  
And gave me glimpses of its inner womb:  
Outdarting forkèd tongues, and brazen fins,  
Blue web-winged vampire-bats, and harpy faces,  
And dragon crests, and vulture heads obscene,  
I there beheld: Fierce were their levelled looks,  
As if inflicted on some victim. Who  
That victim was I saw not. But are these  
The painted Pleasures which that youth pursued  
Adown the vale? How cruel changed! But what

And where is he? Is he their victim there?  
Heavy the cloud went passing by. From out  
Its further end I saw that young man come,  
Worn and dejected; specks and spots of dirt  
Were on his face, and round his sunken eyes;  
Hollow his cheeks, lean were his bony brows;  
And lank and clammy were the locks that once  
Played curling round his neck: The passions there  
Have done their work on him. With trembling limbs,  
And stumbling as he went, he sate him down,  
With folded arms, upon a sombre hill,  
Apart from men, and from his father's house,  
That wept for him; and, sitting there, he looked  
With heavy-laden eyes down on the ground.  
But the night fell, and hid him from my view.

Desolate he who with his means abridged,  
Yet proud as poor, dwells in a narrow flank  
Of his ancestral house, gloomily vast  
Beyond his need! The chambers of disuse  
Seem haunted all: mysterious laden airs  
Move the dim tapestries drearily; and Shapes  
Spectral at hollow midnight beckoning glide  
Down the far corridors, and faint away.  
Such yonder mansion in the darksome wood;  
And such its master—useless to his kind,  
Souring out life on his unsocial bile.

Here dwells a Sage of Song. Far went he down  
On the great waters; lands whose dust is fire,  
The hills of leopards, and the caves of wrong,  
He feared them not: he saw the ways of men:  
Wide grew his heart. Serenely here he dwells.  
For him all Power puts on its rarest power,

All Grace its inner grace. The gleaming north,  
Where Winter forges in his cloudy shop  
His bolts of ice and casts his monster bergs,  
Hangs in his chambered eye; how glad for him,  
Spring fills with dewy light her lily cup!  
Beyond its uses vast, the swelling sea  
With liquid lustre rounds the shining globe:  
For him does Beauty thus consummate Use.  
Night's hoary shapes for him, and baleful blots;  
Doom; and the Skeleton Death, at whose lean back  
Lie the decayed nations of the grave;  
Sweet pity tremulous through love's glistening tear,  
Promise, and dayspring, and immortal youth!  
"The coral worms how small; yet, each to each,  
How mighty they to lay the founded moles  
And stretching ribs of goodly isles to be,  
The seats of man! I too am but a worm;  
Yet if I turn my own peculiar heart  
To one harmonious truth, helping therewith  
That vast formation up to Heaven whereon  
Virtue shall keep her everlasting seat,  
Not all in vain has been my measured life."  
Thus holds the Sage communion with his soul.

In yonder sheltered nook of nibbled sward,  
Beside the wood, a gipsy band are camped;  
And there they'll sleep the summer night away.  
By stealthy holes, their ragged tawny brood  
Creep through the hedges, in their pilfering quest  
Of sticks and pales, to make their evening fire.  
Untutored things, scarce brought beneath the laws  
And meek provisions of this ancient State!  
Yet, is it wise, with wealth and power like hers,  
To let so many of her sons grow up

In untaught darkness and consecutive vice ?  
True, we are jealous free, and hate constraint,  
And every cognisance o'er private life ;  
Yet, not to name a higher principle,  
'Twere but an institute of wise police,  
That every child, neglected of its own,  
State-claimed should be, State-seized, and taught, and  
trained

To social duty and to Christian life.  
Our liberties have limits manifold ;  
So let the National Will, which makes restraint  
Part of its freedom, oft the soundest part,  
Power-arm the State to do the large design.  
This work achieved at home, with what a right  
To hope the blessing should we then go forth,  
Pushing into the dark of Heathen worlds  
The crystal frontiers of the invading Light,  
The Gospel Light ! The glad submitting Earth  
Would cry, Behold, their own land is a land  
Of perfect living light—how beautiful  
Upon the mountains are their blessed feet !

Through yonder meadow comes the milkmaid's song,  
Clear, but not blithe, a melancholy chaunt,  
With dying falls monotonous ; for youth  
Affects the dark and sad : Her ditty tells  
Of captive lorn, or broken-hearted maid,  
Left of her lover, but in dream thrice dreamt  
Warned of his fate, when, with his fellow-crew  
Of ghastly sailors on benighted seas,  
He clings to some black, wet, and slippery rock,  
Soon to be washed away ; what time their ship,  
Driven on the whirlpool's wheel, is sent below,  
And ground upon the millstones of the sea.

The song has ceased. Up the dim elmy lane  
The damsel comes. But at its leafy mouth  
The one dear lad has watched her entering in,  
And with her now comes softly side by side.  
But oft he plucks a leaf from off the hedge,  
For lack of words, in bashful love sincere ;  
Till, in his innocent freedom bolder grown,  
He crops a dewy gowan from the path,  
And greatly daring flings it at her cheek.  
Close o'er the pair, along the green arcade,  
Now hid, now seen against the evening sky,  
The wavering, circling, sudden-wheeling bat  
Plays little Cupid, blind enough for this,  
And fitly fickle in his flights to be  
The very Boy-god's self. Where'er may lie  
The power of arrows with the golden tips,  
That silent lad is smit, nor less that girl  
Is cleft of heart: be this the token true:—  
Next Sabbath morn, when o'er the pasture hills  
Barefoot she comes to Church, with Bible wrapped  
In clean white napkin, and the sprig of mint  
And southernwood laid duly in the leaves,  
And down she sits beside the burn to wash  
Her feet, and don her stockings and her shoes,  
Before she come unto the House of Prayer,  
With all her reverence of the Day, she'll cast  
(Forgive the simple thing !) her eye askance  
Into the mirror of the glassy pool,  
And give her ringlets the last taking touch,  
For him who flung the gowan at her cheek  
In that soft twilight of the elmy lane.

Pensive the setting day, whether, as now,  
Cloudless it fades away, or far is seen,

In long and level parallels of light,  
Purple and liquid yellow, barred with clouds,  
Far in the twilight West, seen through some deep  
Embrownèd grove of venerable trees,  
Whose pillared stems, apart, but regular,  
Stand off against the sky: In such a grove,  
At such an hour, permitted eyes might see  
Angels, majestic Shapes, walking the earth,  
Holding mild converse for the good of man.

Day melts into the West, another flake  
Of sweet blue Time into the Eternal Past.

## THE CAPTIVE OF FEZ.

### CANTO I.

#### THE PRISON.

O'ER golden Fez the summer sun is shining,  
But not for Julian, there in durance pining.  
Why thus in durance he, to whom life's spring  
Was promised joy, descended of a King ?  
Upgrew his stately youth ; up with it grew  
His soul enlarged, heroic, gentle, true,  
And won the honour and the love of all  
Within his father's Court of Portugal.  
Forth then rejoicing in his early might  
He rode, against the sultry hosts to fight  
Of Fez, led on by black Zemberbo, far  
Flashing abroad his thunder-lights of war.  
O'er desert hills, and many cloudy lands,  
Battling he rode, and o'er a world of sands,  
The bold young Prince ! He galled the Afric horde ;  
He won the garland for his virgin sword ;  
A world-wide name he'll win. Ah fatal hour !  
A Captive now he's in Zemberbo's power :  
Sent to the Fezzan Court, with special care  
Zemberbo bade be light his bondage there ;  
His honour pledged that thence he should not flee,  
He in the Palace otherwise was free.

But Geraldine he saw. To Abusade,  
The King of Fez, was born the beauteous maid;  
Born of an English mother, who had been  
Raised from a slave to be the Fezzan Queen.  
Her, though a playful child, that mother well  
Trained up like England's women to excel,  
To hold the holy Jesus far above  
The Arab Prophet, and his Cross to love.  
That mother died. 'Twas laid on Geraldine  
At once her sportive girlhood to resign  
For a grave weight of cares, to be a mother  
To her young sisters and her infant brother,  
And make them Christians: for the King had vowed  
Unto his dying wife that this should be allowed.  
Nor by the Fezzan Court unfelt had been,  
The English manners of its honoured Queen,  
That jealous law to soften which inthralls  
Untrusted woman in sequestered halls.  
Hence Julian saw the Princess, unproved:  
He saw and loved, and told her that he loved;  
And, heart to heart, he won her gentle sigh  
In thrall inglorious that his youth should lie.

But came a sterner thrall. To darkness now,  
And dungeon fetters he is doomed to bow.  
So wills Zenone—wild peculiar maid!  
Her princely sire was slain by Abusade,  
Who vengeful wrapped in one devouring roar  
Of fire his palace on the Italian shore.  
Perished all else within; from out the flame  
Alone, unscathed, the child Zenone came.  
Saved by the King, he bore her o'er the sea  
To Fez, his own adopted child to be;  
And chastely reared within his Court was she.  
But other passions in her heart she nursed,  
Of hate and vengeance, yet on him to burst.



Great was her spirit ; though retired she dwelt,  
Wide o'er the Fezzan realm her power was felt,  
From daring counsels : for it gratified  
Her soul capacious, and her native pride,  
To rule ; but more because it gave her power  
Of wider wrath against her vengeful hour.  
Thus walked she queenlike ; for the Monarch still,  
Soothed by her harp, indulged her passionate will,  
And gave her sway, the more because he found  
With large success her counsels had been crowned.  
She met, she loved young Julian ; chaste yet bold,  
Flushing in tears, her love for him she told,  
Deliverance promised, waived her mighty pride,  
And sought to flee with him, and sought to be his  
    bride.

How from the Captive's just refusal burned  
The Syren's heart, to equal anger turned !  
Chains then for him ! And he was chained and thrown  
Down to a dungeon ; nor the thing was known  
Save by the King, who yielded his assent  
To this, Zenone's ready argument :—  
“ What though Zemberbo speeds not to retake  
Shore-guarding Ceuta, still have we a stake ;  
His honoured Captive shall in ward remain,  
Menaced with death, till we our town regain :  
His father holds, and back to us will give  
The place, how gladly, that his son may live.  
Meanwhile our Court his durance must not learn,  
So shall we shun to rouse Zemberbo stern.”  
To enlarge her vengeance in the Captive's ill,  
Or still the purpose of her love fulfil,  
That he to her, whom he had dared to spurn,  
All humbly yet might be constrained to turn,  
The instructed jailer, with a well assumed  
Reluctance, told him that his bonds were doomed

By Geraldine, to calm the jealous pride  
Of a young native prince, who sought her for his  
bride.

O, is it so? He fought against his chains,  
Till worn, and sick, and sunk in fiery pains,  
'Twas left him but, with nature's last endeavour,  
To wade and struggle through delirious fever,  
Where strength is worst disease, where manhood high  
Is only fiercer than the mummery  
Of palsied age, its laughter and lament,  
Is but a dotage more magnificent.  
No hand was there to wipe his forehead damp,  
No care, no love, to trim life's fainting lamp;  
Yet, helped by nature, from his bed of pain  
He rose, but feebly, to his floor again.  
From mood to mood revulsive, feeling less,  
And brooding more, he sunk to listlessness,  
Deeming all glory gone, all hope a lie,  
All life itself one dull infirmity:  
And heaven was dark, and to his spirit's tone  
Even God seemed weary on his boundless throne.

## II.

Thus Julian pines in durance. Now has run  
The yearly circuit since he saw the sun;  
And, from his softening jailer, this is all  
He yet has won to mitigate his thrall,  
That, nightly passing from his low mid place,  
One hour his steps should have a freer space  
In a wide room with grated bars, that so  
Heaven's breath on his young head might freshly blow.  
'Twas now his privileged hour; with weary pain  
He paced the chamber, dragging still his chain.

But hark! near coming through the stilly night  
A mandolin: how sweet its touches light!  
He bent to hear it: well that lay he knew,  
Since oft he breathed it forth, slow sauntering through  
The Palace gardens, in the twilight dim,  
Till Geraldine had learned it thus from him;  
Since twice, as paused his song, entranced he stood  
To hear it softly back to him renewed  
From her high lattice: well he knew that lay;  
No time shall blot it from his heart away!

It ceased; he started; in the moonlight clear,  
Outside his window, stands a lady near.  
'Tis Geraldine! softly he named her name,  
And to his words this gentle answer came:—  
“Thou good young Prince, O is it thou! The grace  
Of life they shame, who keep thee in this place  
Forlorn and fettered thus. Say, Captive one,  
Can aught to succour thee by me be done?”

“Why, I might wish these idle days were by;  
Might wish,” he said, “again to see the sky  
Wide o’er the world: The seasons in their range,  
That come and go with sweet dividual change,  
My home of early days, my friends of fame,  
The camp, the field, the glory of a name,  
Still haunt my heart. Yet joy, all hope, all power  
Are undesired; yea death be mine this hour,  
If thou hast doomed me thus! They tell me, maid,  
By thee, O thee, in fetters here I’m laid.  
My soul! can it be so? Shall man believe  
She comes in mockery thus to see me grieve?”

“No, no!” she answered. “But my heart, not clear  
From other blame, deserves thy thought severe.  
For I did wrong thee, deeming, till to-day,  
That thou hadst broke thy faith, and fled away.

They told me so, but O it ne'er was so;  
Unstained thy honour, spotless as the snow.  
And now, young Knight, need I declare that I  
Ne'er doomed, ne'er wished thee thus abased to lie?  
O no, indeed! To-day, my faithful slave  
First heard of this: the news to me he gave:  
Thy prison found, 'twas mine that lay to try,  
To probe these depths of dull captivity;  
To let thee know thou wert not all forgot,  
Nor all uncared for in thy lonely lot;  
To make thee hope that friends were planning for thee,  
And yet again to freedom might restore thee."

"This, this is to be free; and I am free!"

The Captive murmured: "ne'er the hard decree  
That chained me thus, dear virgin, came from thee!  
Yon Moon in heaven how many hearts have blest,  
As on she journeys meekly to the west!  
She lights the white ships o'er untravelled seas,  
She soothes the little birds upon the trees,  
And cheers the creatures of the solitudes,  
And leads the lovers through the glimmering woods,  
And gives to weary hearts unworldly calm,  
When slumber comes not with its wonted balm:  
But not yon Moon in heaven, without a stain,  
To watchful sailors o'er the trackless main,  
To little birds, to desert beasts of night,  
To lovers hasting by her glimpsing light,  
To hearts oppressed, is, as thou art to me,  
Maid with the dovelike eyes, whose grace of love I  
see!"

"Farewell, young Sir! From out this living grave,"  
The Princess whispered, "thee I'll try to save.  
Farewell, and fear not!" Geraldine is gone;  
Slowly the Captive turns, and feels he is alone.

## III.

Up Julian starts from slumber's broken spell,  
At midnight—there's a vision in his cell!  
Up from his pallet starts he: Who is she  
Before him standing, beautiful to see?  
Who but Zenone, in her silken dress  
Of virgin white, and in her loveliness  
Rarest of all those young enchantresses,  
Witches of lure, wondrous, magnificent,  
Whose glory for a plague midst men is sent!  
"I come," she said, "to lift thee to the day,  
So thou wilt take me from this realm away,  
Far to some wild free land! A bark for thee,  
With white sails set upon the curly sea!  
Heaven's winds, her snowy pinions how they strain!  
And who but I to lead thee o'er the main;  
My spirit bent to have some palmy isle  
Where thou shalt reign, and I thy Queen the while?  
There shall my knowledge rare thy valour aid,  
And double homage shall to thee be paid.  
O'er the blue waves each morn canoes shall bring,  
From isles around, rich presents for their King:  
Peacocks, bright shells, and sweet bread from the  
tree,  
From painted tribes thy morning gifts shall be.  
Consent to this! If not, here must thou lie  
Long years; if doomed not instantly to die."  
"Lady," the Captive said, "thy hope is vain;  
My love's another's, and must aye remain."  
At this, with cold and clear composure said,  
How flashed the startled beauty of the maid!  
She paced the cell, she stood:—"Thou shalt not live,  
To her—I name her not—to her thy heart to give.

Mine shalt thou be, or nothing. From this hour  
I deal with thee, for thou art in my power."

She said, and ruffled with an angry light  
From out the cell, and vanished from his sight.

## CANTO II.

### THE PROVOKED REBEL.

What though the failing arm of Abusade  
Has laid aside his battle-leading blade;  
Yet still he glories in his wars, that still  
To flashing victory turn his kingly will.  
On Afric's north sea-border, and the coast  
Of fronting Europe, gleams his dusky host,  
Led by Zemberbo who still quells the bands  
Of Portugal, and menaces her lands.  
Thus in his palace of illumined halls  
The Monarch sits, and for Zenone calls,  
To see her flush beside her harp, and hear  
Her intermingled song, so soft and clear,  
To win his soul throughout the pleasing coil  
Of varied thought without the mental toil;  
For this the double joy that music gives,  
To soothe the soul whilst it intensely lives.  
She comes, but sits remote: See the young witch  
Lean to her harp! O creature rare and rich!  
Dark as the Night, but beautiful as Day,  
Beautiful, lustrous dark! Wrath and Dismay  
Stormed in the chords, and wailed: to fury rose  
The tragic vengeance, thick with stabbing blows.

The King looked up ; severe, concentrated,  
Seemed coming near the creature's angry head.  
Surprised he rose. But from Zemberbo came  
A slave, prompt audience for that Chief to claim.

Zenone heard, and from the chamber went ;  
For well she guessed Zemberbo's discontent,  
And would not bar it in its wrathful vent.  
'Twas she who brought him thus. For when she  
knew

That Geraldine was striving to undo  
Her Captive's fetters, and to this had pressed  
The Monarch, not unmoved by the request,  
Alarmed she started : what must she do now ?  
The King may Julian's freedom thus allow ;  
May still within his Palace let him live ;  
Nay, Geraldine to be his wife may give,  
From Portugal by friendship to regain  
What arms and threats of death have sought in vain :  
For still the King, so well Zenone still  
The matter managed with deceptive skill,  
Thought Julian's sire was tried, but would not yield  
Shore-ruling Ceuta up, his son from death to shield :  
And thus Zenone by her arts had gained,  
That still the Captive in her power remained.  
But what must she do now ? In secret sent,  
Her hasty message to Zemberbo went  
Of Julian's thrall : and much the King it blamed,  
That doubly daring he Zemberbo shamed ;  
First, that from dungeon chains he did not spare  
That Captive, heedless of Zemberbo's prayer  
To treat him kindly ; next that private terms  
He tried for Ceuta, and Zemberbo's arms  
Doubting insulted thus. Zenone well  
Knew the fierce heart on which her message fell :

He'll come, he'll brave his King, away he'll go  
At once a rebel, and at once a foe ;  
The Captive with him. Geraldine shall ne'er,  
Where she has failed, the wedding garment wear ;  
No more shall see her Knight. Zenone's hour  
Of vengeance comes, as comes Zemberbo's power,  
Rebellious, fierce, triumphant. Well shall she  
Second his arms: Eased shall her bosom be,  
Eased of that King ; and all his house she'll whelm,  
And all his black and unbaptised realm.

## II.

Entered Zemberbo, as the Monarch lent,  
From hid reluctance, or from free consent,  
Permission ; wrath was on his forehead high,  
Glancing like copper ; from his kindled eye  
Came out fierce question like a bickering sword ;  
And thus he stayed not for his Sovereign's word :—  
“ Prince Julian lies immured ?—they tell me so !  
I did not send him to endure this wo ;  
Sire, I did send him, in my battles ta'en,  
In Fez an honoured Captive to remain,  
Declared my kinsman, bone and blood of mine,  
And far-descended of the Prophet's line.  
Yet, kin forgot, be chains, be pains for him,  
Let dropping dungeons rot him, limb by limb ;  
So thou, high King of Fez, wilt deign to show  
My wish not scorned, but him a traitor foe.”

“ Sir Chieftain,” said the Monarch, “ deign to bow  
The dark defiance of that servant brow !  
Then haply we'll remind thee of thy boast  
To win that town which rules our northern coast,  
Held by the foe. Beyond thy promised date,  
That Captive Prince was kept in princely state.



Thy boast was vain ; it pleased us then to try  
If Ceuta him from chains and death might buy.  
Not bought, he dies : 'twere well he died this hour,  
Just to remind thee of our sovereign power."

He said, and clapped his hands ; a giant band  
Of negroes come, and round Zemberbo stand.  
Yet dauntless stood the Chief, and eyed his King,  
Then proudly turned and scanned the sable ring :  
Towering he rose as o'er the warlike brunt ;  
And darker grew his high embattled front ;  
And flashed his eye, as brings the steely dint  
Red seeds of fire from the deformed flint.  
"Me menace not," hoarse whispered he, "proud King ;  
A thousand hearts are ready forth to spring,  
To turn my death to vengeance : ere I came  
From out my camp that Captive boy to claim  
(For in the distant battle I had heard  
Myself despised in him thus doomed to ward),  
In my great Captains' hearts I breathed my fear,  
And won their oath to avenge me injured here,  
To avenge that Captive too. But, Sire, no more  
Of this ; still let me battle on the shore ;  
With fiercest wars I've warred to take that town,  
And, trust me, I shall yet restore it to thy Crown.  
Around it, flashing down the coast, of all  
Bravest, careers the King of Portugal,  
With vigour like the eagle's youth renewed,  
Has baffled me awhile, yet shall he be subdued.  
Deign, Sire, still send me to the embattled line ;  
Thine be the conquests, but that Captive mine."  
Zemberbo thus. Pausing the Monarch sate :  
He longed to close with scorn the bold debate,  
But feared a foe in one so stern and great ;  
So, feigning frankness in his voice and eye,  
Thus to his rankling heart he gave the lie :—

“Why, what a jest is here! our Man of might  
Deigning to pray us for one Captive Knight,—  
The Man of our right hand, the Man whose name  
To Fez is safety, and to Fez is fame!  
Go to thy palace, Chief; the Captive there  
Shall come to thee, released: those chains had ne’er  
Been put upon him, had we deemed that he  
Was honoured farther in thy thoughts to be.  
Rest thee the night, come back to us at morn,  
One day thy presence must our Court adorn;  
Then haste to war, and take the wished-for town;  
And be thou still the glory of our Crown.”

## III.

Soft slumbers now, delivered from his thrall,  
The Captive Julian in Zemberbo’s hall.  
O’er sea and land far roams he in his dreams,  
By the blue rushing of his native streams;  
Hears the glad din of boys at early play  
On Lisbon’s streets, and evening roundelay,  
To whose blithe spiriting the olive maids  
Of Tagus dance beneath the chestnut shades.

Slowly Zemberbo entered; drawing near  
The sleeping youth, he touched him with his spear.  
Upstartd Julian; then with loud command  
Zemberbo called, and brought a sable band.  
“Guards,” said the Chieftain, “bind this youth—But  
hold!  
What mean these cries without? By Allah! they are  
bold!  
Again? What ho! my arms! Each man his blade!  
Bela, look forth and say what means the mad parade.”

## IV.

Thus they within. Meanwhile a mob without  
Around Zemberbo's palace fiercely shout,  
Roused by Zenone's arts: she caused the thing  
Be done, as if commissioned by the King,  
Who feared the Chief, a traitor: and she made  
The rabble roar, as if they lent their aid  
Unto their King. All this was done that so  
Zemberbo's heart might to rebellion grow.  
Thus rage the populace: o'er the swarthy host,  
Swayed to and fro, the fiery brands are tossed.  
"Allah be praised! the traitor-den's aloof  
From other homes; up with them to the roof,  
Up with your torches! So! The King has doomed  
The rebel thus to be with fire consumed."  
Such was the cry: And many a brand was flung,  
And seized the palace with its flaming tongue.  
"Down with the traitor!" yell they, as they spy  
Zemberbo glaring from his lattice high:  
Terrible glaring out, from side to side  
Far stretching he looked out. "Down with him!"  
cried  
A thousand voices. Back the Chieftain sprung.  
Below, his doors were widely open flung.  
Borne through the entrance crowding numbers press;  
But turned the foremost from a stern redress,  
Back screaming turned, rolled back the fickle wave,  
And to the light their hideous quittance gave:  
Eyes gashed across, bones of the brow laid bare,  
Noseless and earless heads the work declare  
Of swords within: Fast fled the suffering brood  
Howling, and as they howled their mouths were filled  
with blood.

Scarce conscious, sympathetic, back dismayed  
That sea of umbered visages was swayed.  
Save! save! for lo! forth flashing, coming on,  
Like Eblis darkly from his blazing throne,  
Strides stern Zemberbo, drives the human rack,  
His sable globe of warriors at his back  
Round Julian, onward to the central square  
Of Fez: their haughty station shall be there.  
And round the Captive firmly, mutely stood  
The warrior troop, and faced the multitude:  
For rallying, circling, wavering, serrated  
With hollowed far-retiring flaws of dread  
And bold abutments of vindictive rage,  
Anew the mob their warfare 'gan to wage.  
In dark concentric orbit round his band  
Slow stalked Zemberbo, scimitar in hand;  
Slow, sternly silent: with his front of war  
He faced his foes, and kept them faint and far.

Thus passed the hours till, bravely kept at bay,  
The angry rout began to melt away.  
Raising his sword, the Chieftain waved it round,  
Then stooped, and with it wrote upon the ground  
(His aspect lightening with a savage glee,  
Like stormy sunburst on the darkened sea)  
Short notes of desolation—war, blood, fire,  
Captivity to child, to wife, to sire.  
“So be ye read at morn, and on to noon,”  
He said, “my lessons, to be bettered soon!  
We thank thee, Abusade, for hearts resolved,  
And work, half dreamt of, on our swords devolved!  
Guards, do our wish: be prompt: the dawning hour  
Must see us far beyond the tyrant's power.”

Ere ceased the Chief, his sable men had bound  
The Captive's eyes, and borne him from the ground.

## CANTO III.

## MOTHER AND SON.

The Captive's eyes are freed. A corridor  
Has brought the party to a guarded door,  
Guarded by eunuch slaves. But hark! within  
A lady singing to her mandolin:

Swell the soul's bursts, the sweet relapses die.  
Moved was the swarthy Chieftain to a sigh.  
His nod won prompt admittance: by the hand  
He took the Captive from his pausing band,  
And led him in. Alone a lady sate,  
Of faded beauty, darkly delicate;  
Downcast her eyes; upon her hand she leant  
Her cheek of sorrow: for the song was spent.

"Zara!" the Chieftain said, "dear sister-twin!  
Heed'st thou not me? Must I no welcome win?"

How started she! how to her brother sprung she,  
Naming his name! how to his bosom clung she!  
Soft to her couch he led her by the hand,  
There made her sit, and there her face he fondly scanned.  
"Ay, look at me," she said; "long years have done their part,  
And the deep shares of grief have ploughed this brow and  
heart.

But grief nor years have hurt my love for thee,  
Nor thou severe—O how severe to me!  
No, no, indeed! I'll call thee not severe!  
Come to this heart, my brother ever dear!  
O thou twin-being of my life! can I  
Forget thy love for me so pure and high,  
In our young days? Our kindred early lost,  
Mine all thou wert, and in thyself a host!

All later sorrows, lo! they're past away,  
For thou art come to live with me for aye."

"No," said Zemberbo: "Not for Fez alone  
Have been my battles, to maintain the throne:  
I've fought for thee, for thee I still must fight,  
To win a dawn o'er thy dishonoured night."

"'Twere kinder far," the Lady sighed, "if thou  
One little message from me wouldst allow:  
Tell but my son his mother pines in thrall,  
And win his visit to this lonely hall.  
Yes, yes, my brother, you will bring my son,  
Never to leave till my days be done;  
And not by me, but Allah's power, made wise,  
He'll join us in the Prophet's Paradise.

"But let me not be selfish: stands not there  
A wounded captive, by thy special care  
Brought me to heal? Come near," she softly said,  
Turning to Julian; "can I give thee aid?  
Thou weep'st: Ah yes! thy mother dwells afar,  
And little sisters ask thee back from war;  
Gay vests they sew for thee, much-loved; and still  
To look for thee they climb the green cleft hill,  
From morn to noon they look, they watch for thee  
Till gleams the sweet moon through the chestnut-tree.  
But weep not: Allah bless my balms for pain,  
And thou shalt see thy mother's home again!"

Why wept young Julian? He could only tell  
Not for himself his tears, but for that Lady, fell;  
Since first her look, her voice, had made him start,  
And waked a thousand memories in his heart.

"His mother's home is here; lo! he's the same,  
And none but he, that from thy body came:  
Look to him, Zara; know'st thou not thy son?  
But to our Prophet's faith he must be won."

Zemberbo thus. Forth springing, she made bare  
The Captive's neck; she found, she kissed it there,  
The mark, remembered long. Her hand she laid  
Soft on his shoulder, and his face surveyed.  
Faint in her joy she murmured:—"O my son!  
My long-lost child, but now my dear found one!  
Thou'rt come at last to bid my griefs be o'er,  
And live with me, and never leave me more?  
But O these rags, what mean they? must I, too,  
Of sorrows ask, and sufferings borne by you?  
But they are past. Sit here, my boy, and see  
The better fortune I had shaped for thee!"

She said, and, having led him to a seat,  
Unrolled a silken web before his feet,  
Wrought with fine needlework, and showed thereon  
—Her smile the while appealing to her son—  
A gallant warrior in a princely garb,  
Before ten thousand bounding on his barb.  
High looked his eye and far, as doth a king's,  
Who proudly home his conquering army brings.  
He in the van: behind, his thousands came;  
Instinct each soldier with his leader's fame,  
Beyond his own, with double ardour trode;  
Wide flung the uplifted spears their sheen abroad;  
Shone banners terrible; and trumpets high  
The whole attempered with dread harmony.  
One spirit ruled the whole: So prompt to dare,  
The wingèd triumph seemed to rise in air.  
But blind to all beside, to him alone  
That mother pointed in the van who shone.  
And lo! the wonders of a mother's heart,  
Which to her hand could thus her love impart—  
So hoarded well—so lost not through the tide  
Of long, long years—so to her work supplied:

True to the dear and unforgotten face,  
Her long-lost boy's, her soul had known to trace  
The beauteous copy from his childhood fair;  
And Julian smiled so see his features there.  
Nor less she smiled through tears of conscious joy,  
And scanned his face:—"Twere true, my princely boy,  
But for vile cares which mar thee, and which we  
Ne'er thought entitled in our work to be;  
From which alone we failed thy face to know,  
And, if not told, unclaimed had let thee go.  
Well hast thou done, my heart, well hast thou done!  
Say this for me, my unforgotten son!  
Declare for me! and in this thing behold  
A mother's love to work a dream of old!"

Why bursts not forth the Captive's heart to bless  
Such love entire? New fears his heart repress.  
There on the precious web he saw inwrought  
With love's device for him a perilous thought;  
His imaged form in Moslem robes was drest,  
A caftan blue flowed o'er his linen vest,  
And round his brow the turban's deep green fold  
The princely lineage of the Prophet told:  
So by this sign he feared his mother now  
Earnest would have him to the Prophet bow.  
Nor from that mother could his gloom be hid,  
And thus his fears unguessed she fondly chid:—  
"No more of this! Are not those dark days gone?  
And all thy sorrows vanished with my own?  
And now this hand, which wrought that cloth, must take  
Its pattern thence, and garments for thee make,—  
The turban first; O let me wreath it now  
Divinely green, my son, around thy brow!  
To thee, to me, one faith, one hope be given;  
And I'll not miss thee in the Prophet's Heaven!"



Dark waxed the Captive's face, as fixedly there  
He stood, nor answered to his mother's prayer ;  
Far turned his eye, as if he could not brook  
The silent pleading of a mother's look.  
Her, sudden trembling seized : Around she glanced,  
As if to see some danger new advanced ;  
Zemberbo's frowning brows her bosom fill  
With dread, and thus she wails the anticipated ill :—  
“ So then, my son must go, and I be left  
A desolate thing, how utterly bereft ! ”

“ True mother of my heart ! so lately found,”  
Exclaimed that son ; “ yet to this bosom bound  
By the true cords ! my mother ! look to me !  
How gladly, gladly would I live with thee !  
What shall I say ? what do ? For thy dear sake,  
All bonds, save of dishonour, would I take !  
For in my heart and soul I hold thee one  
To claim the noblest service of a son ! ”

“ Go on, Sir Youth ! Swear,” said Zemberbo, “ Swear  
By Allah she is worthy of all care.  
Were she the pure as once I knew her pure,  
High should she sit, nor darksome days endure ;  
Above ten crowns, a boast, a joy to me,  
Above all price my bosom's twin should be !  
For she was pure as Zemzem's holy spring !  
For she was beauteous as an angel's wing !  
How beautiful ! yet still more pure and good !  
My spirit's twin ! the sister of my blood !  
But for that she was pure, and is not now,  
The Prophet holds my high recorded vow,  
To do my vengeance on thy father-king  
Who dared to shame my Lilla Zara bring.  
Captived and wounded when a Prince he lay  
In Zemra's Palace : there his life away

Was ebbing fast ; but there my sister dwelt  
The while, and pity-for his youth she felt.  
Each precious bleeding rind, she knew its power,  
And every virtual plant, and every sovereign flower  
Beneath the moon ; and how to win them knew,  
On Atlas gathered in their nightly dew.  
And to their powers she joined a spell of might  
(The moon consenting, and the stars of night) ;  
And Allah blessed her work of sweet young ruth,  
And up from death she raised thy father's youth.  
Now what for Lilla Zara shall be done ?  
How shall he grateful be to his redeeming one ?  
He tempted her ; she fled with him by night,  
And in his kingdom showed her tarnished light.  
Well, style it love (omnipotent, they say) :  
What then ? You deem not his could pass away ?  
His father dead, 'twas his to mount the throne ;  
Now then we'll see him glad his faithful one to  
own !  
Dog in his heart, he sate thereon ; but she,  
How worthless now, no mate for him must be !  
Forsooth ! no doubt ! her glory he desired,  
But other queen his kingdom's wants required ;  
And thus, although my sister was his spouse,  
His priests of Rome dissolved his marriage vows,  
Divorcing them ; and thus it was decreed  
By policy that she must be a weed,  
Cast out and trampled down ! From Portugal  
I swept her hither to this sunless thrall,  
But missed her only boy : From blushing day  
Here have I kept her hid, here shall she stay  
Till with thy father's blood I wash her shame away.  
For Fez I fought, but for my sister more,  
To slay thy sire, or take him : for I swore,

Could I so take him living, to complete  
My vengeance, with his blood I'd wash her feet.  
Even should she die, embalmed unburied, she  
Shall wait the chance, washed with his blood to be.  
But now, for thee, Sir Captive:—Hither sent  
I meant to follow thee, my spirit bent  
To change thy faith, to keep thee dwelling here,  
Thy mother Zara in her bonds to cheer,  
Till I should do my vengeance; in my mind  
Respect for thee and power were then designed,  
Thy mother lifted with thee. But the King  
Thus far has turned my purpose on the wing,  
That I will smite him too who spurned my will,  
In thee thus fettered, and insults me still,  
And hunts my life: For this, from off his throne  
Down will I hurl him, and I'll sit thereon.  
Then, when my vengeance is fulfilled, with me  
High shall thy mother sit, and happy shall she be;  
Thou, for her sake, the man of my right hand,  
Honour shalt have, and place, and wide command.  
But mark, Sir Captive, this:—The Prophet's faith  
Here must thou take, or thou must die the death.  
Thy father's blood that's in thee must be spilt,  
Unless our Islam change its native guilt.  
Thy mother's blood that's in thee must not live,  
The lie degenerate to its font to give:  
What! shall the blood that's of the Prophet's seed,  
Maintain a traitor to the Prophet's creed?  
So for your father's, for your mother's sake,  
Perish you must, unless our faith you take.  
To business, now, Sir Youth; preamble long  
Has kept us here attendant on the tongue:  
Brief now: behold your mother: live or die:  
You know the terms: we wait for your reply."

“Now, now, dear mother, deem me not unkind,”  
The Captive said; “but bear it in thy mind,  
That I have loved thee with a soul which scorned  
The fears of death, not yielding to be turned  
To bribed apostacy—O tempting sin,  
The bribe thy presence, and my joy therein!  
Nor wilt thou change thy faith. But yet one Lord,  
Though differently by us on earth adored,  
May mildly judge us, to one Heaven may save  
Our souls, when we shall rise from out the grave.  
So hope, so bear thou up. Give her relief,  
Sweet Christ; I cannot live and look upon her grief!”

For see, for see the heart-convulsing strife  
Which threatens to rend that mother's frame of life!  
But quelled to trembling calmness was her tone,  
As thus she told her hope for ever gone:—  
“My son shall stay with me the waning night,  
And rest in slumber till the dawning light,  
One little hour: Ye dare not say me, No:  
And in the morning he will rise and go.”

“Ho, guards!” Zemberbo cried. They came and bound  
The Captive's eyes anew, and bore him from the ground.  
Then, O he felt, as he was borne away,  
His mother's clinging kiss, which drew his heart to stay.  
Torn from her grasp, he heard her struggling plaint,  
As sore bereaved she fought against restraint;  
How wished by him unheard! “Off! let me free!  
Save me, my boy! Come back! O come and be  
A young believer for thy mother's sake!  
Stay, stay, and teach me then thy faith to take,  
That I may come unto thy Paradise;  
My heart so longs to have thee in the skies!”

## II.

Forth borne, and onward through the breathing night,  
Freedom was given to Julian's limbs and sight.

Within the city wall the party stood,  
A stream in front, behind a scattered wood.  
The skirring moon flew on her shining track,  
And from her horn-tips tossed the wispy rack,  
Boring the West; o'er snowy Atlas high,  
Ranged through the clearness of the southern sky,  
With lengthened beams the stars told morn was nigh.  
"Disperse, disguise ye, shun that vengeful King,"  
Bespoke the Chief his guards; "you know the spring  
Beyond the northern wall? I'll wait you there:  
Steal through the various gates: Once more, Beware!  
Away! away! this youth shall be my care."

They went. Then turning to the Captive, said  
The Afric Chief, "I now must be obeyed.  
But mark me first—and hold thyself prepared—  
Still, for thy mother's sake thy life is spared:  
We give thee time to train thy wiser thought  
Her creed to take, and win her happier lot,  
Against what time ye two anew may meet,  
And thou must kneel a convert at her feet:  
O'er Fez we'll ride; in that victorious hour,  
At least we'll tempt thee with a larger power.  
So, come with me; beyond the tyrant's thrall  
This stream shall sweep us, issuing 'neath yon wall.  
But ha! what's this?" For glimpsing points of mail,  
Seen through the trees, his startled eyes assail.  
Armed guards came on:—"Yield to thy King; prepare,  
Sir Chief, thy bloody outrage to declare!"  
They cried. Forth flashed Zemberbo's scimitar,  
And on the foremost fell its edge of war

With sharing gash ; and through a second fast,  
And through a third, the shearing vengeance passed ;  
Still met the hemming foe with savage haste,  
And shed defiance far and killing waste.  
Like fire-scrolled parchments, shrunk his shag lips  
    round,  
Baring his ivory teeth that fiercely ground ;  
Heaved his wide nostril with disdainful ire ;  
Shook his black locks ; gleamed his great eye of fire ;  
Swept his unbaffled arm : with many a stride  
Far-shifting, sped his work from side to side,  
Till, pressed by numbers, in the stream he dashed,  
A moment sank, then rose, and fiercely flashed  
Above the breasted billows, highly waved  
His dripping sword, and thus the danger braved :—  
“ Caitiffs, we yet shall meet ! yea, tell your King,  
Of bloody sabres shall we presents bring.  
High on his turrets watching, let him see  
Our coming-on, which gloriously shall be  
By lights of burning towns—wild measuring line,  
O'er hill and valley shall it stretch and shine !  
Now for the lantern of yon imaged moon,  
To guide us forth : vengeance—we'll have it soon ! ”  
He said, and down into the waters went ;  
They gurgled round him, nor his re-ascent  
His watchful foes could see. But hark ! that shout  
Beyond the wall : the stream has borne him out.

## III.

And to his shout, thrice with his scimitar  
Zemberbo smote the wall, the earnest of his war.  
Yet not his soul indignant was content  
Till, fear-defying, to the gates he went,

And smote them too. Then northward, swift of foot,  
He ran, lest mounted foes were in pursuit;  
Rough hills in view, there he can hide a space  
From foes pursuing, and defy their chase.  
But lo! comes on a stranger on his barb,  
Through the dim dawn, of Moorish front and garb.  
Stood in his path Zemberbo, questioned high  
Of name and place, and claimed a prompt reply.  
"A friend to Fez; and tidings for the King,"  
The horseman said, "but death for thee we bring,  
If thus you dare our onward way to bar:  
Give place, and shun our weightier scimitar."  
"Friend to the tyrant? perish for that word!"  
Zemberbo cried, struck down the stranger's sword,  
Disarmed him, smote again, and hewed away  
His turbaned head, far rolling in the clay.  
Plunged the chafed charger; from the quivering trunk  
Forth spun the purple life-strings, ere it sunk;  
Nor sunk it yet, but sate a hideous sight,  
And still it held the reins with hands convulsed and white,  
Till, tumbled by the victor from its place,  
He sate instead, and urged his vehement pace.  
And on, fast, far he flew; nor scorned to bless  
The gallant steed, whose speed was only less  
Than his winged heart indignant: He caressed  
The tossing mane that swept his urging breast,  
And toyed with it in the fierce dallying play  
Of spirit burning for a boundless sway.  
But turning oft, the Fezzan towers he cursed.  
Up the steep ways he strained, down on the vales he burst,  
Devoured the plain, and swam the rapid stream,  
And shook its coldness from him like a dream.  
Uprose the sun; straight through a dower's ground  
The Chieftain rode, disdaining to go round;

Brushed down the crashing tents, nor stayed to hear  
The awakened sleepers with their cries of fear.  
Noon passed: eve came: he saw the rushing sea,  
In great accordance with his energy.  
Then by the tawny sands Zemberbo went,  
And reached his camp, and rested in his tent.

## CANTO IV.

## THE BATTLE.

Who sent those armèd men to seize or slaughter  
Zemberbo, scarce escaping by the water?  
The Monarch sent them. Reached by those alarms  
Of midnight outrage and Zemberbo's arms,  
Startled he stood. Zenone came and threw  
Over the whole her own convenient hue:  
Zemberbo (thus deceptive she explained),  
His heart still gloomy for his kinsman chained,  
With many a threat of his vindictive ire  
Had roused the loyal city; they with fire  
Had striven to burn him, that he ne'er might go  
To do his vengeance as a traitor foe;  
But they had failed. It gave the Monarch cheer  
Thus of his city's loyalty to hear;  
But still he feared the baited Chief; and still  
His rising wish was him at once to kill,  
Could it be done: The Monarch long revolved  
The growing purpose, and at length resolved:—  
“His death's our only safety; die this hour  
Zemberbo must, while yet he's in our power.”  
Zenone wished not this; not hers to slay  
The instrument of her avenging day,



Coming apace: She pled, but pled in vain  
To spare the Chief—the King will have him slain.  
At every gate and outlet of the town  
Prompt guards were placed to cut the rebel down,  
Nor let him pass. Found by that armed band,  
Zemberbo smote them till his weary hand  
Could smite no more; unequal to them all,  
Plunging he took the stream, and 'scaped beneath the wall.

## II.

Unfettered, scathless from that midnight fray,  
Back to the Palace Julian made his way;  
Zemberbo's plans rebellious be declared,  
And bade the Monarch be for war prepared.  
The war came on: So great Zemberbo's sway,  
He from their fealty drew his camp away.  
Yet well to be opposed; so many kings  
To his defence the Fezzan Monarch brings,  
So many chiefs, so many princes: They  
Zemberbo's power and traitorous array,  
A bad example, fearing, deem it now  
The time to check him, nor his growth allow.  
And Julian joins them: for his mother's sake,  
That her from darkness he to light may take,  
O how he longs Zemberbo's power to break!  
And for his father's, that the Chieftain's wrath  
No more may plague him and contrive his death!  
And for his Geraldine's not less, that she  
With ruined Fez may not a victim be!  
He sent his sire a message, stating all  
That had befallen him in his captive thrall;  
And praying him to watch the coming fight,  
And send a squadron of reservèd might,  
To turn the battle and Zemberbo smite;

But not himself to lead it on, that so  
Safe he might keep from his inveterate foe.  
Should they Zemberbo quell, to Portugal  
Her old demands shall be conceded all—  
So swear the Fezzan King; and Geraldine,  
Pledge of the friendly peace, O Julian, shall be thine.

## III.

"And fear not, weep not, Love!" thus fondly said  
The Captive's farewell to his Moorish maid,  
As in the sweetness of the twilight hour  
They sate together in a garden bower:  
'Twas ere he went to battle. "Down amain  
If we Zemberbo smite, to thee again  
I'll come; and I will take thee from this shore,  
Light of my life! the dark-blue waters o'er,  
To banks of beauty, where the Tagus roves  
Through the long summer of his orange groves.  
And when thou turn'st thee to the southern star,  
And think'st upon thy native home afar,  
Thou shalt not weep; I have thee by the hand,  
My heart is thine, my land shall be thy land.  
I feel, I feel my love's unbounded debt!  
May God forget me when I thee forget!"

"No, no," said Geraldine; "it must not be!  
Risk not the fight, come not again to me!  
My sisters, and my brother, who but I  
Must watch them for our mother in the sky?  
She bade me love them well, she bade me make them  
The lambs of Christ; how then can I forsake them?  
Yet in this hour I'll say it,—dear, O Youth,  
Art thou to me for thy heroic truth,

Far more than thrones, and crowns, and kingly brows!  
Sweet Prince, beyond what female grace allows,  
Think me not light and bold; but all my life  
I'd love to be thy true and faithful wife.  
It cannot be. But hark!" She softly said,  
And to her Julian bent her beauteous head.  
Was it to whisper? Or his cheek to touch  
With hers so soft? How little, yet how much!  
'Twas nature's holy kiss! No sooner paid,  
Than forth away she flitted through the shade.

## IV.

Uprose the sun: By Rasalema's side,  
The Fezzan river, moved in martial pride  
A mingled host from various realms, to stem  
Zemberbo's treason, and the diadem  
Maintain of Abusade: in rank and square  
Swarming they join, and for the march prepare.  
Loud blew a thousand trumpets; deep and high  
Was filled the compass of war's harmony,  
Attempered terrible: thrilling it shook  
The soldier's heart, and raised his daring look.  
Outflew a thousand banners. And the mass  
Of moving valour shook the valley pass  
With sounding tread. From the high walls behind  
Of Fez came shouts upon the morning wind;  
There myriads stood, and bade their army on  
To conquer for the city and the throne.  
So shall they conquer! How shall be subdued  
The embodied kingdoms' warlike multitude?  
Puffed yellow Copts are here, and soldiers brave  
From Nubian hill and Abyssinian cave.

The unshadowed lands, that hear each sultry noon  
The thunders 'yond the Mountains of the Moon,  
Have sent a few bold men ; but many a swarm  
Gives Negroland, scarce less the dusk and warm.  
Fierce kingdoms on the west to Ocean's brink,  
And they whose horses the far waters drink  
Of Syrian streams, have men enlisted here.  
The warlike Berbers from the hills more near  
Of crescent Atlas and the vales between,  
The blameless Shelluhs, and the aspects keen  
Of mountain Errifi, and Hea's wild castes,  
That scream like eagles on the lofty blasts,  
March on to battle. Lo ! the army's pride,  
The Hentets on their fine-haired horses ride ;  
With hordes unnumbered from the lesser states  
Of Atlas southward to the Land of Dates.  
From Tremecen, Azogue, Zenhagian, Hoar,  
And Heneti, brave tribes that hunt the boar  
Far in the gorges of the snowy hills,  
Whose glossy range its southern border fills,  
Or roam wild Angab's desert to the banks  
Of soft Moluya, fill the Fezzan ranks.  
Two days they marched ; the third beheld them stayed :  
Their fair encampment in a vale was made.  
Beyond it lay, a narrow pass between,  
A larger valley, and an equal scene  
Of martial pomp ; for there the traitor host  
Of dark Zemberbo kept their evening post,  
And hoped the coming morn. Not less possest  
Of hope, the Royal army took their rest.  
By heaven and earth ! it was a goodly sight  
To see their tents beneath the setting light,  
Encircling with their white pavilioned pale  
A little hill mid rising in the vale.

Cedars and palms, with sunlight in their tops,  
In leafy tiers grew up its gentle slopes.  
Green was its open head, there walked or sate  
The Captains and the Kings confederate.  
West through the vale delicious lay unrolled  
The lapse of rivers in their evening gold,  
While far along their sun-illumined banks  
Broke the quick restless gleam of warlike ranks.  
North, where the hills arose by soft degrees,  
Stood stately warriors in the myrtle trees,  
And fed their beauteous steeds. From east to south  
Armed files stood onward to the valley's mouth.  
From out the tents the while, and round the plain,  
Bold music burst defiance to maintain,  
And hope against the morrow's dawning hour.  
Nor the gay camp belied the inspiring power:  
From white-teethed tribes, that loitered on the grass,  
Loud laughter burst, fierce jests were heard to pass;  
Around the tents were poured the gorgeous throngs  
Of nations blent, with shouts and martial songs.  
Nor ceased the din as o'er the encampment wide  
Fell softly dark that eve of summer-tide.

## V.

Gray morn appeared. "My horse!" Zemberbo cried;  
And forth was brought, shrill-neighing in his pride,  
His battle-horse—from Araby a gift,  
White as the snows, and as the breezes swift:  
A chosen foal, on Yemen's barley fed,  
In size and beauty grew the desert-bred,  
Fit present for a King: his burnished chest,  
Branched o'er with veins, and muscles ne'er at rest,

Starts, throbs, and leaps with life ; his eyeballs glow ;  
Quick blasts of smoke his tender nostrils blow.  
The Chieftain sprung on him. The rolling drum  
Announced his signal that the hour was come  
His men should move : Trumpet and deep-smote  
gong

Quell to the draining march the closing throng.  
On through the short defile, compact and slow,  
Betwixt the vales, Zemberbo's squadrons go.  
Lo ! the King's host. The mutual armies seen,  
Fierce shouts arose, and claimed the space between.  
Paused not the rebel phalanx : On each hand  
Hung cloudy swarms, whence, ranging in a band,  
The stepping archers, with their pause compressed,  
Let loose the glancing arrows from their breast.  
Nor less from loyal bows the arrowy rain  
Dark on the advancing column fell amain,  
Advancing still : in crescent-shaped array,  
The Fezzan host in its embosomed bay  
Receives it deep ; but sharpens round away,  
Till curling to the column's flanks it turns,  
And turning bores them with its piercing horns.  
Yet onward still, still onward through the fight,  
That column pushed its firm continuous might,  
Till, widening out, it spread a breastwork far  
Across the plain, and mingled deep the war.

But where is Julian ? At the break of day  
Came on his father with a bold array,  
Brought by the message of his son ; but fear  
Disdaining for himself, himself is here  
Leading his warriors on, sooner to bar  
Zemberbo's rise, and end a long-protracted war.  
O how rejoicing to his native band  
Did Julian leap ! His father, hand in hand

He'll fight with him! And, through that stormy day,  
They crossed Zemberbo in his fellest way.  
Faint toiled the staggering battle. Fresh and strong,  
A giant troop came dashing along,  
Grim set, reserved for this: Lo! bare of head,  
The black compacted turm Zemberbo led;  
Low couching, forward bent: and stern and still,  
His sword intensely waited on his will,  
Held pointed by his side. Across his path  
Resistance came, and eased his rigid wrath,  
Which bowed him corded down: How towering rose  
The mighty creature, and made shreds of foes;  
His face, as far he bounded to destroy,  
Bright with the sunshine of his warlike joy!  
He pointed to the thickest of the fight,  
There fought the King of Portugal, with might  
There Julian fought; deep plunged into the fray  
That sable corps, and cleared the crush away;  
Then, with the stress of numbers hemming round  
That King, they bore him from the embattled ground,  
And bore his son; but not one wounding blade  
Was dealt on them, for so Zemberbo bade:  
Thus Julian and his sire were captive made.  
Their capture smote with fear the Fezzan host;  
It paused, it wavered, turned, fled—all was lost.

## VI.

"O for our warriors back!" young Geraldine  
Stood on her Palace at the day's decline,  
And longing thus she sighed. Far looking forth,  
She saw a coming from the purple north.  
Behind in Fez a buzzing murmur rose,  
Like as of men presentient of their woes;

For there's a sharpness, not of ear or eye,  
Which tells to waiting realms of ruin nigh,  
A sense prophetic: not one fugitive  
Was yet come in the evil news to give;  
Yet seemed o'er Fez the air instinct with ills,  
Seemed running whispers over all her hills.  
To cries of fear they waxed, and crowds amain  
Stood on their roofs and looked unto the plain:  
There now they come, in straggling disarray,  
The weary relics of some fatal day:  
Far bends the rider o'er his staggering steed,  
And scarcely seems the expected walls to heed,  
Scarce lifts his feeble eyes: each man alone  
In deep unsocial stress of mind comes on.  
Forth going, thousands meet them; thousands wait  
To bid them welcome at each friendly gate;  
In anxious silence thousands look and long  
To find their kin in that returning throng.  
Absorbed in fear stood Geraldine, and viewed  
With dizzy eyes the thickening multitude.  
Night fell: she listened: swelling from afar  
Came music on, as of triumphant war.  
It ceased: how throbbed her bosom, half relieved  
To think her ear had haply been deceived!  
But O yon moving lights! and O the tread  
Of marching squadrons, deep, concentrated!  
And tinklings of the horse! Cries of command,  
Distinctly heard, proclaim the foe at hand,  
Heard round from post to post; the points of light  
Glance to and fro, and widen through the night;  
The solid tread is fused to swarming din  
Of men who nightly bivouac begin.  
"Zemberbo's camp! Ah me!" the damsel sighed,  
And to her chamber through the darkness hied.



## CANTO V.

## THE FIRE.

Behold Zenone, as she sits by night,  
All pale and pensive in her cloud of white !  
Her faithful eunuch came ; absorbed in thought,  
Her eyes she raised not, and she saw him not.  
But Melki bowed and kissed her silken feet,  
Raised back his withered brow her eye to meet,  
Then seized her hand. She started : " Slave ! " she said,  
" I know thee faithful, but I'm past thy aid.  
Why com'st thou, then ? Away ! I love thee not,  
And little have I done to raise thy luckless lot."

" Italian flower !" upstarting said the slave,  
" The land that gave thee birth to me my being gave !  
I'd have thee be a Queen magnificent !  
Like bow, to serve thee, is my spirit bent !  
To our own Italy we'll turn."

" No, no !"

Zenone sighed : " How could I thither go ?  
In that fair land first lightened on my eyes  
The suns of summer from the crystal skies.  
How fair and glad ! But glad to me no more !  
The ghosts would meet me on the dreary shore !  
I see the flames ! I hear my mother's cry !  
Is this a monstrous dream ? Where, what am I ?"  
She tore her hair and sobbed ; and through her frame,  
Like pangs immortal, fits of trembling came.

Low Melki knelt, and dared to take her hand :  
" Lady ! " he said, " rise, give me proud command !"

Up springs Zenone, haughty fire appears,  
Burns on her cheek, and drinks her glistening tears.

"Slave!" cried she, shuddering, stamping with her foot,  
 "Hast thou presumed? Be up—be gone—be mute!  
 Art thou a King riding on horses white,  
 That thou hast dared to bid me peace this night?  
 I cry thee mercy! ha! thou art my slave?  
 So, I have wronged thee! Give me to my grave;  
 Haste, win a right my softened heart to see,  
 Make thyself something by betraying me!  
 Why should I live? O let me die away!  
 Love, Pride, Ambition, Power, so perish they.  
 Even boasted Genius, Heaven-endowed to raise  
 The young religion of man's primal days,  
 When Virtue was an ardour, not a thing  
 To wait on Habit for a tutored wing,  
 By Passion maddened, worse than doomed to die,  
 How oft it turns its glory to a lie!  
 What then is life, if thus the goodliest fall?  
 Cease, my vexed soul, 'tis vain delusion all!"

"So give us active joys, nor let us waste  
 Our heart in dreams; but plan and do in haste!"  
 The eunuch said. Zenone answered this:—  
 "Ha! think'st thou, slave, that aught shall make me  
 miss

The only triumph that can be my bliss?  
 No: I shall come before a nation's eyes;  
 Fez, she may curse me, she shall ne'er despise.  
 I to her painted roll my name refuse,  
 Of spotted harlots in these silken stews;  
 Yet shall that name in Fez be ne'er forgot,  
 But stamp her annals with a burning blot.  
 Come on, Zemberbo, thou art linked with me;  
 Careering twins in vengeance shall we be!"

"He's come; he's here: our army snitten down,"  
 The eunuch said, "this night he'll shake our town;"

But strong, defended well, Morocco near  
In arms to thwart him in preventive fear,  
And aid our King, though doomed, yet still it may  
For many a moon stave off the evil day."

Up starts Zenone; o'er her countenance pass,  
In flamings like a chemist's kindled glass,  
The varying passions. Settled, pale, and still,  
A deadly whisper thus declared her will:—  
"My hour is come! We'll let Zemberbo in,  
And do the rest! Come on with me! No din!  
Tread softly, Child! Hark! of my mortal cup  
The King shall drink, 'twill dry his spirit up;  
Then to his roof let him be carried, there  
To win the coolness of the freer air;  
When round him there his children gathered be,  
My fire shall catch them, nor shall let them flee:  
My father's house and lineage to the flame  
He dared to give, I'll do for him the same.  
Far then we'll go. But come, my inner room  
Must better fit us for our work of doom."

She said, and going in her stern intent  
Locked up and pale, behind her Melki went.

## II.

O'er Fez triumphant, with embattled din  
Zemberbo rode: Zenone let him in,  
Through Melki's aid: His grizzly aspect gleamed,  
Far o'er his head his coal-black banner streamed.  
Forth rushed his ruffian hordes, all kindred ties  
Long distant wars had taught them to despise.  
What shouts afar! What shriekings of affright!  
And sound of steeds that galloped through the night!

Blaze followed blaze till, one unbroken glare,  
Wide o'er the city burned the midnight air.  
Chased by the gleam of swords, a wildered throng  
From street to street with shrieks were driven along,  
With wild back-streaming looks, unmarried maids,  
And mothers glaring through the umbered shades,  
With clasping babes, and crooked forms of eld  
That feebly plained, and by the younger held.  
Blood bubbling flowed, and every deed of shame  
Was done that links to Hell man's boasted name.

On rode Zemberbo to the central square  
Of Fez: The King of Portugal was there,  
Brought near his Julian; firm, in governed mood,  
Beside his sorrowing son the Monarch stood.  
"Why are you here, my father? Do you know  
The things prepared against you by that foe?"  
Thus Julian spake: "Dark Chieftain on thy steed,  
Say, can a gallant soldier have decreed  
A King like this should live with shackled arms?  
Why, do but honour to the old alarms  
Of mutual war, to him that aye was found  
A worthy foe, and let him stand unbound."

"No change of bonds," Zemberbo said, "he'll find,  
'Till the stark cordage of the grave shall bind  
His head, his heart; beyond the purple hour  
When o'er an Arab's feet his blood he'll pour.  
That hour is now at hand: No wish of mine  
E'er perished: Allah, be the glory thine!  
So learn, Sir Youth, to hold thee humble still,  
Nor rashly try to thwart my conquering will."

"By Heaven! you dare not then," the youth exclaimed,  
"So give the old anointed to be shamed!  
Am I not here? In me thy victim see,  
If for our blood thy soul must thirsty be.

He speaks, dear father, of my mother's feet;  
And O I fear his scheme he can complete!"

"Now, now," that father said, "'tis mine to press  
Thy heart, my child, for great forgiveness!  
Yet her I loved: I only was not bold,  
Against my people's wish, my marriage to uphold.  
So was she lost. And O a father's shame!  
Scarce have I dared to tell you of her name.  
Yet for her sake, methinks, my love for you  
Has been, if possible, above your due.  
I know my doom, the tyrant has explained;  
Yet trust I then his wrath shall be restrained,  
Nor farther work against thy youth, but break  
Thy galling fetters for thy mother's sake."

"Now is the crisis! now the last dread hour,"  
Zemberbo said, "to bend him to my power!  
For this, Sir King, I've led thee forth to meet  
Thy Captive son, that thou with him may'st treat,  
May'st change his faith, that him I here may make  
A prince and chieftain for his mother's sake.  
Much has he dared against me; yet I still,  
More than forgiving, shall these terms fulfil,  
So thou wilt change his creed. Else, sworn have I,  
A doom abides him sterner than to die."

"My son! my boy!" exclaimed the anguished King,  
"Sore, sore for thee these threats my bosom wring!  
Nought can I do for thee, save here declare  
Thy mother's virtues; high they were and rare:  
Her creed, if rightly by these virtues shown,  
The loftiest natures might not blush to own.  
Now this is all, my child: Thy noble pride  
Must teach the rest: O thou must now decide!"

"My father!" Julian said, "thy love for me  
Is broad, and deep, and pure as pure can be!

Fain wouldst thou have me saved; yet well I know  
Thy soul would have me ne'er my faith forego.  
Ne'er shall it be. O I have dared deny  
My mother's heart, and left her lone to die!  
Say now—'tis comè to this—well are we met,  
Ere go we each to pay his bloody debt."

"Give me, my son, the proud young martyr's kiss:  
Heed not those hints: Thy faith must be my bliss:"  
So said that father; and the princely youth  
Impressed the solemn kiss, his pledge of truth.  
High stood the King, and spake:—"Rise, Son of Heaven!  
Ride in thy chariot: terrible be it driven!  
Go forth—go down upon thy foes, and break  
The billow of thy wheels on Mahomet's neck!"

Dark, darker waxed Zemberbo; but he sate  
Silent, his sister's coming to await,  
By him commanded hither: Lives she yet?  
Or has her day of many sorrows set,  
Twice severed from her son? He raised his head,  
Startled; there came a litter for the dead.  
"Allah! my sister!" groaned the sable Chief,  
And ground his teeth to check his softer grief.  
Down from his charger springing, lowly bowed  
He met the body; 'neath a linen shroud  
Embalmed it lay. Brief question asked, he bade  
The litter near the captive King be stayed.  
Then, "Hear me, see me, judge me, Chiefs!" exclaimed  
Zemberbo, turning to his Captains famed:  
"I had a sister once; ye knew her shame,—  
Her hateful marriage, her dishonoured name:  
Stand forth who deem my wrath was then unmoved;  
Or—is there such?—that I her love approved;  
Or—where is he?—that vengeance I've forgot;  
Behold the triumph of my treasured thought:

Ne'er has it slept : My heart was only slow,  
The better to secure this deepest blow."  
He said, and turning with a mighty stride,  
Drove down into the captive Monarch's side  
His steel vindictive ; from their snowy sheet  
Baring his sister's fixed and bony feet,  
O'er them he held the faint sustained King,  
To rain his blood thereon, reeking from life's red  
spring.

"Ho ! double vengeance ! be the banner brought,  
Last from him ta'en !" And to Zemberbo's thought  
In wrath refining, and his stern command,  
The rustling flag was lowered to his hand ;  
He wiped her bloody feet with it, and drew  
The folds of linen over them anew.

O Julian, then ! A flash sprang o'er his eyes,  
As high he saw that eager weapon rise ;  
With short quick cry he turned him as it fell,  
And shrunk to hear it glut itself so well ;  
With panting breast, he saw the foe fulfil  
The fearful process of his vengeful will ;  
Till, by Zemberbo's grasp no more upstayed,  
The bleeding Monarch in the dust was laid.  
He sprung, he sprung, his father's hand to press,  
To kneel, to whisper, and his head to bless ;  
Till death-divided was their mutual kiss.  
He closed his father's eyes ; without a tear,  
Stately he stood in dignity severe.

Near bursts a sudden glare ! Through all its frame  
The Palace burns in one consuming flame.  
But see the lovely Fury ! Still the brand  
Which did the deed is in Zenone's hand.  
How shines the creature's face ! But to the ground  
A camel kneels ; she mounts it with a bound,

And rising, glimpsing flees ; behind her near,  
Through every peril, and through every fear,  
To go with her, each toil, each wo to brave,  
Another camel bears her eunuch slave.  
From land to land she went ; but frenzied Pain,  
Fell dog, pursued and overtook her brain,  
And bayed her down : Down into Etna's tide  
Of lava plunged she : this her dying pride,  
That the pure fire should be her burial-place,  
Nor her heart rot with man's ignoble race.

The Fezzan Palace burns. On every side  
The ragged web of flame is wafted wide ;  
Back drawn, it clings, it climbs, updarting oft  
Its far-thrust tongues that curl and lick aloft  
All round the roof, still curling inward. There  
The poisoned King is dying in his chair :  
Zenone's scheme. Young Geraldine is seen  
Bathing his brow, with many a kiss between.  
His other children—see the dear young band !  
Round him they hang, and hold him by the hand.  
Urged by the heat, they shrink, they hide their eyes,  
They press upon his breast their stifled cries.

One wrench, and Julian's free : One mighty bound  
Has borne him clear beyond that guarded ground.  
Yon lovely family from the fire he'll save,  
Or die with them in one devouring grave !  
He nears the Palace, dashing in he dares  
The flames—Christ help him now to climb the burning  
stairs !

A fearful pause ! O on the roof he springs,  
His arms around his Geraldine he flings,  
To bear her thence : one kiss upon her brow—  
The pillars crack, the blazing rafters bow,



Down goes the roof, the walls down inward go ;  
A smoking, smothered mass of ruin glares below !  
But where are they whom scarce the twinkling eye  
Has ceased to see upon that Palace high ?  
Whelmed in its wreck their mingled ashes lie.  
Disturb them not ! Of Julian only tell,  
He died with her whom he had loved so well.

## A WINTER DAY.

### Morning.

YON ridge of trees against the frosty east  
Of Morn, how thin, how fine, how spiritualised  
Their fringe of naked branches, and of twigs,  
Distinct, though multitudinous and small !  
Still rarified, they seem about to be  
Consumed to nothing in the candent glow  
Breathed up before the Sun. Lo ! in their stems  
His ruddy disc ; and now the rayless orb,  
Round and entire, is up, on the fixed eye  
Dilating, swimming with uncertain poise  
From side to side—a great red globe of fire.

Winnowing the high pure ether, go the rooks  
Down to the sea in intermittent trains,  
Far from their inland roost, on the flat merse  
To tear up tufts of grass for grubs below,  
With horny beaks to turn the droppings o'er  
Of pasturing kine, to search the rack of creeks,  
And stalking forage on the shelly shore.  
Sagacious birds ! what time the sun goes down  
With streaks and spots on his distempered face,  
High in the airy firmament, a troop

Of maddest revellers, see them wheeling round ;  
And oft with sidelong flight slant down the sky  
They go ; and oft with clanging wings, the one  
Depending as if broke, swooping they fall  
Near to the ground, then upward shoot again ;  
They scream, they mix, they thwart, they eddy round  
And round tumultuous, till all heaven is filled  
With a wild storm of birds ! By this they show  
Prescience of windy blasts. But when, as now,  
They take the morn afar, expect the day  
To close in beauty as it has begun.

Rains flood to-day ; the morrow's dawning gleam  
Shows us the rawish road all stricken o'er  
With lines, like crowfoot prints—the work by night  
Of half-constraining frost. On such a morn,  
Far in the reeking field, late ploughed, sore washed,  
The dazzled eye is caught with flashing points,  
Beyond the emblazoned stones of Samarcand.  
Admire them at a distance : trace them not ;  
Fragments of saucers, from the dunghill borne,  
And bottle necks are all the gems you'll find :  
So may mean men, like bits of delf or glass,  
Blaze on the world, 'neath Fortune's favouring light.  
Thus oft, through half our winter, damp and dry  
Alternate daily. But this frost is fixed,  
Deep gnarled of fang—so say the weather-wise.  
The earth was slowly dried ; the wild ducks oft,  
With short quick pinions, and long necks stretched out,  
Sped o'er our valley to the plashy springs  
That never freeze ; higher o'erhead, now seen  
On the pale sky, now lost against the cloud,  
Shifting their trailing figures of array,  
The wild geese cackled through the firmament,

Far going down upon the softer south :  
These be the tokens of a rigorous time.

Here rest The Twins. Here fell they, twins in death,  
As twins in birth, and in one grave were laid.  
Their widowed mother's only hope, upgrew  
The boys in beauty to her loving eye ;  
One fair, the other dark, but stately both,  
Like two young poplars by a river side.  
Force rose and slew our Covenanting men.  
Walter was firm ; but Vincent's rasher heart,  
Lured by an English damsel whom he loved,  
And who, for insult to her father's name,  
Abhorred the Covenant, took her Southern creed,  
And waxing hotter in the widening breach  
Betwixt his spirit and his former friends,  
Lifted his hand against his country's faith.  
His maid proved false ; she went, and left him lorn—  
O how forlorn ! Meanwhile for Walter's sake,  
The stout defier of their violent hands,  
The persecutors seized, and put to death  
His mother, sparing not her reverend age.  
She died, but dying blessed her Vincent too.  
On went the unequal war, still struggling on  
From hill to hill, from moor to blood-stained moor ;  
And Walter led the Covenanting strength.  
Where'er they went, high on the mountain-side,  
Above them still, oft through the hurrying mist  
Dim seen, a shrouded Form went as they went,  
Watched when they camped, with gestures and with cries  
Warning of danger, and oft saved their lives.  
What can the gray Shape be ? Is it a man,  
Or Angel sent to guard them in the wild ?  
Here burst the battle : Walter's weaker band

Was swayed, was crushed, was trampled o'er the field.  
Three foes bore Walter down ; before him leapt,  
To shield his life, that unknown Form, and took  
Their spears upon himself ; they pierced him through,  
And Walter fell beside him :—" For her sake,  
Her dear dear sake, within whose sacred womb  
We lay together, face to face, my brother,  
Put your arm o'er my neck." Thus Vincent said—  
For it was Vincent : side by side they lay,  
And Walter put his arm o'er Vincent's neck.  
A mother's love, O it has more than thews  
To throw the Wicked One : it wrestles down  
The Angel of the Covenant : it wins  
Her headlong son back from the doors of Hell.

Fieldfares and redwings on the dun-blanch'd leas,  
And flocks of finches from the stubbles bare,  
Still rise before you with thin glinting wings,  
As for yon upland through the fields you strike.  
'Tis gained. You see the icy cliff remote  
Gleam like an opal. Down on the far town  
Hangs, like some visible plague, a cloud of smoke,  
Steaming discoloured, dusk, but yellower edged ;  
And oft some window through its reeling skirts  
Red glances. Lo ! far off away, beyond  
The valley's northern bound, the tops of hills,  
Snowy, serene in spotless purity,  
Standing high up in the clear morning air.

### Noon and Afternoon.

Creep out and in, and shiver all the day.  
But take the country wide, conquer the cold,

And in your frost-fed flush of blood enjoy  
The glowing triumph of consummate health:  
Heart-cheering most, when shines the mid-day sun,  
Sweating the clammy brow of puckered frost  
In mellower spots, to tread the rustling skirts  
Of woods high hanging on the southern hill.

Stand on this height and listen. The broad noon  
How meekly quiet; yet how many a sound  
Distinct you catch—the cock from farm remote  
To answering farm; the house-dog's deep-mouthed bay;  
The petulant yaffle of the cottage cur;  
The nicking sound of the slow carrier's wheels,  
Far away heard; the children's nearer noise  
Of sliding sport; the faggot-felling axe;  
And, intermitting oft, from yonder grange  
The double flail: from out the barn-door, see,  
A thin light dust hangs in the yellow sun.  
That faint vibration far! back, levelled low,  
Yon smoky streamer!—'tis the railway train:  
'Tis near—'tis buried in the cut embanked,  
And hid from sight; but puffs of fat white smoke,  
Still onward onward spouting from the ground,  
Tell where it is—'tis out—'tis past—'tis gone!  
Down by the grange we turn. Forth lilting comes  
The farm-lass, driving from the byre her cows  
To water at the frosty reeking well,  
Farrow, ill-haired, and lean, but frisking mad,  
Topsy with freedom: through the shrilling air  
She twangs her ditty with a nasal twang.  
Lo! chanticleer, his yellow legs well spurred,  
Leads forth his dames along the strawy ways.  
He claps his wings; he strains his clarion throat,  
His blood-red comb inflamed with fiercer life,

And crows triumphant: Soul-distressing sound,  
When in the pent-up city, ill at ease,  
Your keen and nervous spirit cannot sleep,  
Hearing him nightly from some neighbouring court!  
Oft have we wished the gallinaceous tribe  
Had but one neck, and that were in our hands  
To twist and draw: the morrow's sun had risen  
Upon a cockless and a henless world.  
And yet the fellow there, so bold of blast  
To sound the morn, to summon Labour up,  
Is quite a social power: we'll let him live.  
How life-like now, for he has found a corn,  
He lowers and lifts his swelling breast and throat,  
And lowers again, with cluck peculiar; straight,  
Their necks outstretched, in rocking haste, wing-helped,  
His straggling dames come running all to him,  
In affectation of some hoped-for prize  
Great beyond measure; trulier in the pride  
Of loving wifehood. He, self-dignified  
That portions to his partlets thus he gives,  
All to himself denied, crows forth, and round  
Stalking in his uxorious majesty,  
His mincing toe-tips scarcely touch the earth.

The sun goes down the early afternoon,  
And soon will set. A rim of steaming haze  
Above the horizon, deeper in its dye  
Than the light orange of the general west,  
Receives his reddened orb. As through their glades  
Westward you go, a sifted dust of gold  
Fills all the fir-wood tops; ruddy below  
Their rough-barked stems; and aye the wings of birds  
Twink with illumination, as they flit  
From tree to tree across your startled eye.

That gray bowed man has seen a hundred years !  
With chips and splinters from the forest roots,  
To make his evening fire, he totters home,  
Shuffling the withered leaves. How wonderful,  
With pipes and valves so manifold and nice,  
Cords, bloody knots, and tangled threads of life,  
And membranes filmy fine, which plank us in  
From the great ocean of Eternity,  
Roaring around us, with incumbent weight  
In on us pressing,—O how wonderful  
This sherd of clay should stand a hundred years !  
Home goes the poor old man ; if home it be,  
Where once were wife and children, but where now  
Are want forlorn and ghosts of happy days.  
Yet well with thee, old man ! humble and frail  
In earthly eyes, yet on thy going out  
The angels look, and on thy coming in ;  
And trained by thee, not lost but gone before,  
Thy family wait to have thee in the skies.

Day fades. But more is left than ta'en away :  
The social eve, be Winter blest for this—  
Friend facing friend, mild speech, and poignant quick  
The sharp clear angles of the Attic salt.  
Then too the hour, the meditative hour,  
Dear to the Muse. Cast large the true seed-thought,  
O Son of Song : the seed-field of the world,  
Great field of function, dewed with tears and blood,  
Is quick of womb : sow : trust no grain will die ;  
Fit soil it ever finds, it roots, it grows  
Rough crops of action, arts, and schemes of life,  
Harvests of time, and garners in the Heavens.



## Evening.

'Tis now the silent night: the full-orbed moon  
Hangs in the depth of blue; scarce shine the stars,  
Drowned in her light; the valleys of the earth  
Are filled and flooded with a silver haze.

Of yonder heavens unscaled, so vast remote,  
What can Man know or tell? Their milky mists  
Of *nebulæ*, what be they? A luminous stuff,  
As Fancy thinks, to curdle into worlds,  
And systems yet to be? Nay, then, Man's art  
Daring, has pierced the secret; has resolved  
That luminous matter into stars distinct,  
Already formed, but powdering the abyss  
Of space with worlds so thick, they seemed, till now,  
A cloudy confluence of unfashioned light.

This Man has done—even this. Outdoing this,  
Did he not measure, by pure reach of thought,  
Those delicate disturbing influences,  
Put out like feelers, from the ethereal depths,  
Upon our system, by some unborn thing,  
As if for cognisance—yearning to be known,  
And seen of Man among the works of God,  
And praise its Maker in our human hearts?  
And Man, did he not tell, as long and far  
He felt it trembling on the soul-sent line  
Of his analysis, what it was, and name  
The place, and mass, and orbit of a star,  
And seize it dawning from the gulfs of space?

But not to drop the bold heaven-climber yet—  
Did not Man pluck the lightning from yon skies?  
Nay, yoke we not the subtle element  
In stated harness, like a visible drudge,  
To do our hests? Trembles from shore to shore,  
Under the bellies of the tumbling whales,  
Along the sightless bottom of the sea,  
The electric post with instantaneous news  
From State to State. The East and the far West  
Shall thus be knit by wonder-working Man,  
The southern summer and the lands of snow.  
Reverence thyself, O Man, and fear to shame  
Thy Godlike nature with debasing sin.

## WASH THE FEET OF POOR OLD AGE.

[A letter from Vienna of the 9th ult. says:—"Yesterday their Majesties, after taking the communion, according to a pious custom, washed the feet of twelve poor aged men, and of the same number of women. Amongst the men was one who was 107 years old. The Emperor and Empress conversed for a long time in the most affable manner with this old man."]

THOU, the King of kingdoms great,  
Thou, the Consort of his state,  
Ye have eaten Heavenly food,  
Jesus' body, Jesus' blood ;  
Hence His holy will to do,  
Strength and grace be given to you !  
Be the pledge of this, that crown,  
Sword, and sceptre ye lay down :  
Girt with Jesus' towel be,  
Bow the head and bend the knee :  
Best His warfare would ye wage ?  
Wash the feet of poor old Age.

Sitting twelve and twelve, behold  
Men and women poor and old ;  
Yet their looks are meekly high,  
For "The Twelve" they typify.  
Here the Austrian Cæsar bends,  
There his Empress condescends ;

Yet the honour mild they feel,  
As they bow and as they kneel,  
Washing, as the King of Kings  
(Heavenliest of His Heavenly things,  
In His earthly pilgrimage)  
Washed the feet of poor old Age.

Eldest on the stage of men,  
Far past our threescore years and ten,  
Nought in you but dignity  
Can those Royal children see,—  
Self-command, if passions keen;  
God's good keeping; age serene,  
Winning, as the setting day  
Wears the cognate morrow's ray,  
Gleams from lights beyond the grave,  
Lights to beautify and save:  
They with you in speech engage,  
As they wash the feet of Age.

Patriarch, tell the Cæsar, life,  
Even the calmest, is a strife;  
Even the longest, is a span:  
Pain and fear are born with man,  
Many tears and heavy sighing,  
(Still the sparks are upward flying!)  
All the days that thou hast seen,  
Few and evil have they been.  
Harp and truncheon, crook and crown,  
To the dust must all go down.  
Happiest they who, lowly sage,  
Wash the feet of poor old Age.

The agèd folk are rising slow,  
As the Princely Consorts go ;  
Leaning on their staves they rise,  
Peace and love are in their eyes,  
Shakes their hair in thin white slips,  
Murmured blessings move their lips :—  
From those Royal heads be far  
Treason, stratagem, and war !  
Earthquake miss them, plague, and pain ;  
Quiet honours crown their reign !  
Christ receive them from life's stage,  
For they washed the feet of Age !

May 1841.

## TO MONT BLANC.

BLANC! shall we say yon sun to thee comes down;  
Or goest thou up to him, formed to aspire  
To his red orb that stains thy snows with fire,  
And burns a thousand clouds to glory for thy crown?

Day's lingering blush upon thy brow still shed  
Shall cool to twilight's keen blue effluence,  
Ere, scaling now the glaciers' terrible fence  
Round thy congealèd loins, yon eagle reach thy head.

Each element of nature truest shines  
Round thee. The white unsteady clouds that stream  
From off thy forehead most ethereal seem,  
And the pale moon that high glazes thy savage pines.

Thine, waters great and small of glassiest wave:  
From out thy side the frozen-bearded spring  
Looks with clear eye, like hermit's, glittering,  
Touched by the moon's cold wand; below pure torrents rave.

And who shall dare thy awful skirts to tread,  
When in the tempest-robe thy form retires,  
Wrought of dark thunder and embroidered fires,  
And the sharp stars of night are keenest o'er thy head?

O not in vain has God built up thy height,  
Majestic parent of abstracted forms,  
Shaped from man's spirit by thy hurrying storms,  
Dread steeps, and silent snows, and clearnesses of light.

Lives there the man durst bear unto thy crown  
Of chastest cold, where never sun that shone  
Hurt the blue chair of Winter's icy throne,  
Feelings and thoughts impure, as in the thick gross  
town?

The snows of Innocence thy forehead blanch;  
Black Horror nods upon thy piney steep;  
And Danger, like a giant half asleep,  
And falling, leans upon thy falling avalanche.

Scarce has yon eagle reached thy summit hoar,  
Heaven-towering Blanc, with upward steady wing!—  
I leave thy presence; but, in wandering,  
I'll see thee oft afar o'er sea and circling shore.

# THE TRAGIC POEM OF WOLD.

## PERSONS.

HENRY IV.	PHILIP DE VALMA.
LORD WOLD.	MICHAEL ZEBRA.
LORD DUNLEY.	MOUNTNORRIS.
DR ROWTH.	MARTIN.
HASTINGS.	MORLEY.
SIR LIONEL CHAYR.	GORT.
SIR HUGH DE VALMA.	
THE DUCHESS OF WOLD.	BLANCHE.
LADY STAINES.	JANET MOUNTNORRIS.
LADY MERVYN.	RACHEL.
AFRA.	NURSE.

A CAPTAIN OF BESIEGERS, AN OFFICER, A GENTLEMAN, A HERALD,  
THE LOYAL HARPER, AN OLD SENESCHAL OF WOLD, THE KEEPER  
OF WOLD PRISON, A BAND OF YOUNG GIRLS, GUARDS, SOLDIERS,  
MESSENGERS, SERVANTS, &c.

*The Scenes are laid in the west of England, near the borders  
of Wales, and in the city of Bristol.*

TIME.—*The Reign of Richard II., and the beginning of  
the Reign of Henry IV.*

## ACT I.

SCENE I.—*The Mouth of a Cave, in the side of a rocky moun-  
tain. Wold Castle seen in the distance.*

AFRA, bearing a small black harp.

AFRA. Fear the thunder, House of Wold.  
Fear the love of enemies old.  
When she hands thy truncheon hold,  
Thou shalt perish, House of Wold.

So Merlin spake. Hear it, O house of Wold!  
Fear it, thou bloody and distressful House!



Orphan of Wales, I stand,  
 Afra, the kinless one; so stern and sheer  
 The black old Boar of Wold he trode us out,  
 What time he trampled down our ancient land.  
 But I shall see the vengeance! Years, long years,  
 To dwell with sifted winds in whistling caves,  
 To live upon the naked haggard edge  
 Of nature's last necessities, even this  
 Has been my joy of life! And round thee, Wold,  
 Winding the Curse, I walk: The tissue comes not  
 Out of my own frail brain: The Wizard spun it  
 From Fate's black head, standing far back away  
 In the timeless, worldless, infinite abyss,  
 Fixed, all alone. I walk around thee, Wold,  
 A seeming simple thing; but serried spears  
 Of rangèd men, nor walls of brass with towers  
 Of blue-ribbed steel, could better hem thee in,  
 Than does the coil of these poor naked feet,  
 Going around thee thus, shutting thee up  
 Close with the Doom: Not a child's innocent head  
 Of all Wold's house, not a mouse could get out.

[AFRA retires into her Cave, striking her harp vehemently.]

SCENE II.—*A Court in Wold Castle.*

MOUNTNORRIS and MARTIN.

MOUNT. Aught of Lord Wold?

MAR. Her Grace is forth to meet him.

Of course she would not own't; not she: Emotion  
 Is not in the Peerage: 'Tis a morning walk  
 With Dr Rowth, my family priest—that's all.

MOUNT. Great things he has done. But is the war quite o'er?

MAR. Why yes, we've cobbled up a peace with France.

This lets him breathe a space. But shrewd the tokens,  
He breathes not long.

MOUNT. What's wrong next?

MAR. What's not wrong?

Weak is our Second Richard, wroth the land  
Against his curled minions. Homeward look  
Angry the banished heads. If Wold's to prop  
The Throne as wont, the sooner he were come  
With great Sir Hugh, the better.

MOUNT. What Sir Hugh?

MAR. Who but De Valma? Know you not? Patroclus  
To our Achilles: Knighted by his patron  
Upon the field: Ballads he makes, they say,  
(And sings them, I suppose), on their own wars:  
Isn't that a friend worth having? So to Wold  
With Wold he comes.

MOUNT. Let's look to our array.

[Exit MOUNTNORRIS.

MAR. He fought, forsooth, with Madam's father in certain old  
wars; and so, when he's fit for nothing else, he's good enough  
for my Captain! Captain of the Guard of Wold! And I'm to  
do Lieutenant to him! Our Duchess and her son don't trust  
me. Am I to waste my heart on such people? Dunley shall  
be Wold first.

[Exit.

### SCENE III.—*The Terrace of Dunley Tower.*

LORD DUNLEY and MICHAEL ZEBRA.

DUN. Michael the Marvellous! Wold you know already,  
Even to her Grace's posset!

ZEB. Veil your eyes!

No mortal sops for her! Is not her porridge  
Made of star-dust and milk o' the Milky Way,

Brought down by Charles' Wain express for her,  
 With all the bravery of its harness on,  
 Cut out of light, with studs and buttons of glory,  
 All for her Grace—great She of Wold—Duchess  
 In her own right? The cloudy fringe of fable  
 To history's web's all flourished o'er with Wold!  
 Yonder's the sun, shear me a sheaf o' his rays  
 For rushes to Madam's feet: Queen Mab to strew them!  
 But now for Me the Marvellous:—All my spells  
 Are simply Martin—Martin's our man, my Lord:  
 I've fixed him ours: He scorns, and would throw up  
 His present place, but that he waits to see  
 Dunley the Lord of Wold.

DUN. Small chance there, Michael.

ZEB. Mervyn, say I, then Wold. Wed, first of all,  
 Your cousin Mervyn: who so fair as she?

DUN. My heart lies all that way, but Gloster's ghost  
 Stands in my path: he was her father's friend,  
 And I'm his murderer—so she thinks and says,  
 And spurns my suit; though I was but the doer  
 Of the King's will in that. And now, what boots it  
 That I'm next heir to Mervyn, after her?  
 She's young, she'll marry. As for Wold, there also  
 I'm next of kin; remote, 'tis true, yet heir,  
 Failing Lord Thomas. But he too may wed.  
 Even should he not, scarce is he middle-aged.

ZEB. Forty's the keystone of our arched span,  
 He's over that. As for love, name it not;  
 O no, nor marriage: He is not your man  
 For that soft sort of thing. Look how he turns  
 The sharp, quick, lively corners of human nature,  
 Like a mail-plated, jointless crocodile,  
 All in one lumbering piece. The pert Old Adam  
 Within us has enjoyed his peccadillo

Afresk at the end o' the dovecot, and is off  
Laughing and capering in his nimble eld,  
Ere stiff, slow Thomas of Wold can heave himself  
Round into view. Marry? Not he, indeed.  
He's maidenly modest too: he'd blush young red  
To have it named to him.

DUN.                        We'll give him work  
Weightier than blushing! He has thwarted me:  
I'll pay him back!

ZEB. To-day he's coming home  
From his French wars. We'll keep an eye on him,  
And see how he wears.

DUN. Let Martin have our favour. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE IV.—*The Terraced Roof of Mervyn Castle.*

*The LOYAL HARPER, a blind, white-haired old man, with a harp, is seen passing by a little way off, led by his daughter RACHEL. After them comes a band of young girls, dressed in white, and carrying baskets of flowers.*

*Enter* BLANCHE *hastily, followed by* LADY MERVYN *and her*  
*old* NURSE.

BLANCHE. Quick! here's our village welcome to Lord Wold: This way, and now, he's looked for to ride in.

LADY MER. A sweet device! it makes me glad to see it.

NURSE. Do watch the Silent Lord: see how he'll blush,  
Finding it all for him.

LADY MER.                    The Silent Lord?  
Ay, but his deeds, they speak.

NURSE. I to see Wold  
Welcomed at Mervyn gate!

LADY MER.                      Why not, good Nurse?



Her man-child thus—Thomas of Wold. And so  
 The old house still stands. O how that mother's heart  
 Was set on her grave boy—sad we may call him,  
 As if he had fed on the black milk of sorrow  
 Within her womb. In youth he dwelt apart,  
 Haunting the old woods with large white-breasted dogs.  
 And then he went to war—and who so great as he?  
 Fain would the Duchess see him wed, but he  
 Is shy as a virgin. Ay, the old prophecy  
 Is not for nothing: Wold has had its day.  
 How now, my Bird? Well, if there's not a tear  
 In my child's eye!

LADY MER. God bless them both!

BLANCHE. Amen!

LADY MER. How dark it grows!

BLANCHE. Look up.

LADY MER. 'Tis black as thunder.

NURSE. Let's in.

BLANCHE. List, list! back comes the Harper, harping.

[*The HARPER, led by RACHEL, passes back playing a welcome. The girls follow, singing the welcome.*]

LADY MER. See what a strange unearthly glistening's cast  
 Down on those white young children! And their song,  
 What a wild sweetness in't! Look now, they're strewing  
 Their flowers i' the way: Lord Wold must be at hand.  
 Under that ominous gleam, is it not like  
 Some spiritual vision? Hark! the hollow sound  
 Of coming hoofs in the grim hush: Two riders!

NURSE. That dark, staid, stately man's the Silent Lord.

BLANCHE. And who's the fair young Knight that rides with him?  
 Why, what a goodly pair! A plague, say I,  
 O' their old world quarrels! What have we to do  
 With gear like that, eh? Let's wave to the brave.

[BLANCHE waves her handkerchief.]

NURSE. But see, my child's too deep in her heart-gaze  
To wave with you. Well now, if I don't think  
She's riveted on Lord Thomas! Help you, Love,  
Why look at him so? He's too old for you.

LADY MER. In my heart's true sincerity, I pray  
Heaven give me such a husband!

NURSE. Father, you mean?  
What's yonder Grimness to your goodly cousin?

LADY MER. Well, well.

BLANCHE. 'Tis dreadful dark.

LADY MER. The good lord looks  
As if he did not like the pageantry;  
And yet so sweet is it, so simple kind,  
He can't be angry. No, see how he smiles  
Down on them now. [A thunderbolt comes out.

O what a blinding burst  
Of fire was there! Ah, mercy! Look! he's down!  
The thunderbolt has smote him—'tis Lord Thomas.  
Let's have him in. [Exeunt.

SCENE V.—*A Forest Walk near Wold Castle.*

*The DUCHESS OF WOLD and DR ROWTH.*

DUCH. Only one peal.

DR ROWTH. But what a peal!

DUCH. The bolt  
Struck i' the vale, methinks.

DR ROWTH. Where are those riders?  
They should be seen now coming up this way:  
They're tarrying long. Lord Wold was one of them,  
I'm sure of that.

DUCH. Here's some one in great haste:  
What can it be?

*Enter SIR HUGH DE VALMA.*

SIR HUGH. Madam, I take you for  
Her Grace of Wold?

DUCH. If you're Sir Hugh De Valma,  
Welcome to our poor Castle.

SIR HUGH. Let me tell  
The end of my errand first;—Lord Wold's hurt somewhat,  
But not severely: I do hope and think  
'Tis only very slightly; I may venture  
To assure your Grace of that. And yet the bolt  
Smote him to earth. It struck at Mervyn gate.

DUCH. The Thunder!

SIR HUGH. He's reviving. I've just left him  
In Mervyn, tended by the Lady Mervyn.

DUCH. In Mervyn!

SIR HUGH. Fearing the imperfect news  
Might magnify the matter, and distress you,  
I thought it best to come at once myself,  
And tell you the strict thing.

DUCH. 'Twas kindly done.

SIR HUGH. With your leave, Madam, I'll now back and join  
him.

We'll be here straight.

[*Exit SIR HUGH.*

DUCH. The Thunder!

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE VI.—*An Apartment in Mervyn Castle.*

LORD WOLD and LADY MERVYN.

LADY MER. Nay then, in the old times,  
Such strokes of visitation were held sacred:  
They fell on heads that the gods loved—none others.  
Be it so still of you!



WOLD.                      Gentlest of ladies,  
Do you say this of me? Here's a new thing:—  
Wold hurt, and laid in Mervyn; yet so pitied,  
So cared for, tended so, ay, and by one  
Whom he was taught to think his enemy!  
What should this mean?

LADY MER.                      O do not think me that!  
What should it mean but peace? Would I could stay  
The old vents of blood betwixt us, I would do it  
Even with my very heart!

WOLD.                      Your heart, you say?  
Be it so, then. Surely the God of Heaven,  
Thundering and lightening so, and bringing me  
So to your house, meant you to be my wife  
From this strange hour—you, and none else but you!  
Were I not up in years, and from my youth  
A man of blood, grave too, one not to be  
Loved of young virgins, by my soul I'd ask you  
To be my own true wife! You're the first woman  
I ever set my heart on. How you tremble!  
I fear you hate me now?

LADY MER.                      O no.

WOLD. By this chaste kiss, I take thee for my wife.

*[Kissing her.]*

How I do love thee!

LADY MER.                      Mine own lord and husband!

WOLD. I'll never change from thee! I've been a man  
Not of glad days, but I'll be glad in thee!  
O ever near me, ever with me,  
Thou, like the beautiful, meek, silent light,  
The all-moulding light, wilt go into the grain  
Of my dull nature, clearing it with new life,  
So spiritual and so gracious is thy presence!  
But now, to see my mother.

*[Exeunt.]*

SCENE VII.—*A Court at Dunley Tower.*

MICHAEL ZEBRA.

ZEB. Now then, we're ready for this hasty coming  
Of Richard and his train. But here's my Lord.  
What bent on next? He was restrained, they say,  
Austerely when a boy. I've known such cases,  
Where, the curb suddenly withdrawn, the youth,  
Defrauded hitherto of due delights,  
And losing self-respect from daring once  
To taste some lighter joy, unwisely classed,  
In teaching him, with things forbidden justly,  
And knowing no gradations, has at once,  
With a ferocity of liquorish relish,  
Unknown to those of looser bringing-up,  
Plunged into pleasure.

*Enter LORD DUNLEY.*

DUN. The game's up: She's Wold's;  
Woored, won, and all but wed—all in a thunder-clap.

ZEB. What means my Lord?

DUN. Simply, that he of Wold  
Home going fell, hurt by the lightning stroke,  
At Mervyn gate. The Lady had him in:  
She won his heart, he hers: they are betrothed.

ZEB. A jest! Who said so?

DUN. Only she herself,  
And frankly too. Hither to-night I pressed her  
To meet the King, and grace our feast, my suit  
Urging the while; when, with a serious sweetness,  
She said she owed it to herself and me  
To tell me at once she was the Lord Wold's bride.

ZEB. The end o' the world's upon us! I've just seen

That springald Chayr: What think you, good my Lord?  
He's in the metamorphoses! Last moon—  
A peck o' wild oats; to-day—unbonnet you  
To The Whole Duty of Man! So changed is he.  
Love for our Mervyn has transformed him thus.  
And here's my Silent Lord: O rare for Silence!  
If not just one o' your mere sheer war-clubs knotted  
And rude strength-gnarled, on whose outstanding knobs  
Pity might hang herself in her own garters;  
Yet who dreamt he could love! when lo! he melts,  
Woos, wins, all in a flash, as if said flash  
Had more than suppld our dull suitor's tongue,  
Wildering the maid's brain too.

DUN. Sooth be the saying!

Thunder bodes ill to Wold.

ZEB.                      Ourselves will do

The thunder that we need. Now then for Wold:—  
We'll end this love of his, so end his line:

For like your grave, deep, quiet men, he loves  
Once and no more. The lady—mark, my Lord—  
Is his betrothed; but she's not yet his wife,  
No, nor shall ever be.

DUN. Fix me but that!

ZEB. Thomas of Wold charged you with Gloster's murder  
In presence of his captains, and compelled you  
To leave the army?

DUN. 'S blood! why do you name it?

You had better tell me too, with twitting tongue,  
(And look for thanks), he—Wold—the man I hate,  
Has robbed me of my love!

ZEB. My Lord, that charge

Against you, was a charge against the King,  
A foul, disloyal charge. He called it murder;  
The King's a murderer then, for 'twas his will

And work you did, as any faithful subject  
Was bound to do. Mark now: our Sovereign Sire  
Comes here to-night. You know, my Lord, his wrath  
At hearing Gloster named?

DUN.

Well?

ZEB.

Hereford

Is looking homeward from his banishment,  
An angry man. Him the King fears. Sworn friend  
To Wold is he. Richard is jealous too  
Of Wold's great service, and can never wish him,  
Quarterming with Mervyn, to have more power still.  
My Lord of Dunley is his man for that.  
Let's draw all these converging points together,  
And knit them thus to our purpose:—When the King  
Is flushed with wine to-night, make bold, my Lord,  
Doing your duty as a right leal servant,  
To impeach Lord Wold with that disloyalty.  
I'll bear your Lordship out in't: I was present,  
And know it all—and more.

DUN. (*pacing the court.*) Could this be done!

ZEB. It can be—must be—shall be. Nay, this farther:—  
You're bound, my Lord, as Mervyn's last male head,  
Not to allow that wedding—not to allow  
Your orphan cousin, an unshielded girl,  
Unpractised, trusting all, to wed a traitor.  
By Nature's laws you are her guardian friend;  
Befriend her then.

DUN. I'll do it. To-night, you said?

ZEB. This very night: all at one heat. Our Liege,  
Wroth about Gloster, and made prompt, by hints,  
To awe proud Hereford, by keeping down  
And humbling Wold, will straightway summon him  
Into the presence: All this very night.  
We'll have another thunder-clap.

DUN.                         What then?

What will Wold say or do?

ZEB. Down with his gage,

Daring Lord Dunley. "Twill but aggravate

The King's displeasure: He hates gauntlets now.

It but remains to name Wold's punishment.

DUN. What should it be?

ZEB. Not one jot more than serves

Our purpose fully. But the King himself

Must seem to dictate, while we gently bend him

To what we wish. Say that Wold be confined

Within the limit of his own domain,

On pain of death to pass't. Doomed traitor he,

The King's command will give you yet your wife.

And Dunley shall be Mervyn. Thomas of Wold,

Struck thus, shall pine out of your way; and then,

Wold's large domain, mark me, her lodes of ore,

Quarries of slate, forests, and fishy rivers,

Her hills of sheep, green plains, and fruitful fens,

Far and wide, shall be yours. [Trumpets without.

Hark !

DUN. 'Tis the King.

Keep near me.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE VIII.—*A Chamber in Wold Castle.*

DUCHESS OF WOLD *and* LORD WOLD.

DUCH. Good-night, then.

WOLD. One word more:

That lightning flash has been my marriage torch.

DUCH. What means my Lord?

WOLD, I have betrothed the Daughter

Of Mervyn: She's my bride.

DUCH. You're hurt, my son?

WOLD. My mind is firm and clear. I could not sleep  
Under your sacred roof till I had told you.  
Ah! if you look on me so, I fear the night  
Suits my news better than the morn.

DUCH. Nay, then,  
Midnight's the time for it, the lawless midnight,  
When Day's safe covenants are all blotted out,  
And things unholy walk, and monstrous fears  
Lay siege to the soul of man. Thomas of Wold,  
What have you done?

WOLD. Quenched an old feud in peace,  
And holy wedded love.

DUCH. I wished thee wed;  
But be thy bride the worm, not she of Mervyn!  
Think of thy father's blood shed by her father:  
O it cries fie on thee! A love so rash,  
So disproportioned, so unnatural,  
Can't come to good!

WOLD. Here's a strange thing: I've won  
The best of maidens for my wife, and closed  
An old broil up, as God's law bids us do,  
The very law of reconciling love  
Which governs Heaven itself; and yet I've done amiss!

DUCH. What wouldn't I do, my son, to make thee happy!  
But this I'll never do,—I'll never speak  
To one of Mervyn's line; no, nor receive  
One of them in my house.

*Enter a Messenger.*

MESS. This from the King.

[*The Messenger gives a letter to LORD WOLD, and retires.*]

WOLD. Leave from your Grace to read.

[*LORD WOLD opens and reads the letter.*]

I'm summoned straight  
To Dunley Tower, where the King spends the night.  
Wherefore, is not set forth ; but the command  
Is absolute. Give me your blessing, mother,  
Lest I return not ; Troublous times are near ;  
The King may need me.

DUCH.                      This I'll say, my son,  
And bless thee for't:—For him, and for thy country,  
A great far doer hast thou been—great things  
Thou hast done, and yet will do!

WOLD. Now, then, good-night. [*Exeunt.*]

ACT II

SCENE I.—*The Mouth of Afra's Cave.*

AFRA, *striking her harp.*

AFRA. Cloud upon Wold, I see thee!  
Well done, thou bellying blackness! Leap on it,  
Vengeance, with thy fierce feet; tread down the gloom,  
Till it be dense—tread down the burdened gloom,  
Till it be solid black on the doomed towers  
And battlements: There let it rest! Be all,  
Under that cloud symbolic, utter death!  
Shall it not be? Ay, for the Prophet spake,  
He looked into the seed of time and spake;  
And from of old I, Afra, was ordained  
His living Utterance o'er the House of Wold.

Hark ! the Thunder-tongue hath knolled  
Judgment to the House of Wold.  
Mark ! the love of enemies old  
Folds in death the House of Wold.

[AFRA goes into her Cave.

SCENE II.—*The Aisle of Wold Church—lighted by a lamp*  
*Rows of coffins are seen standing on trestles. LORD WOLD*  
*is discovered sitting by a coffin.*

*Enter the DUCHESS OF WOLD.*

DUCH. Peace with the dead! All my life, morn and even,  
 I've fed thee, lamp of love, with mine own hand,  
 With odorous oil, and never let thee out.

*[The DUCHESS trims the lamp]*

My time draws to an end: Who'll do this duty  
 When I'm laid here, dust with our dust? No matter;  
 Dark or light, we'll lie still *(observing LORD WOLD dimly)*.

What thing art thou?

WOLD. That's the word! Not a man, no more a man!

DUCH. My Lord?

WOLD. Nay, thus:—

*[He writes with his forefinger in the dust under the lamp.]*

DUCH. "TRAITOR?"

WOLD. Am I that, Madam?

DUCH. What means all this, my Lord?

WOLD. Did I not go,

Last night, in a right spirit to serve my King?

His countenance, as I passed into the presence,

Was dark against me. On my knee I knelt,

But, as I knelt, I was denounced a Traitor.

DUCH. Wherefore? By whom?

WOLD. By Dunley. Gloster's blood

Hurt us in France, discrediting our arms:

He was the murderer: Off I drove him from us.

Hence his revenge. Our Liege's heart and ear

Are his. Made bold thereby, he dares to charge me

With slanderous and disloyal imputations

Upon the King himself, weakening his sway in France;



Nay, more, with actual treason in abetting  
The exiled Hereford (who was my friend  
In earlier days) in plotting rebel mischief  
Back on the English throne: Such was his charge  
Against me there and then. Ay, and our Sire  
Let the bought tongue of some cloak-brushing fellow  
Wag vouch against me.

DUCH. Back in Dunley's teeth  
You hurled the lie?

WOLD. What boots it that I did?  
My scorn, my gage, my lie-defying challenge  
Were very aggravations: Here am I  
An outcast Traitor! pent in Wold's domain,  
On pain of death to pass it!

DUCH. Did King Richard  
Pronounce that sentence?

WOLD. Yes. And out o' their wine  
Flushed faces rose against me, frowning against me  
As angry as their reeling drunkenness  
Would let them frown it: This was our King's Council!  
The Council of the Majesty of England!  
Convenient pocket tool, the King bears't with him  
Where'er he goes. I' their winking, lispig wrath,  
They ratified the sentence. Think of it!

DUCH. Be calm, my Lord.

WOLD. Calm, Madam! am I not?  
But yet I think of it. I sought me here  
Death's house, to get me patience from our dust;  
But O I think of it yet. This more, high Duchess:—  
What right have I to bring my own disgrace  
Within these honoured walls? What right had they  
To foist a branded Traitor on your house?  
Traitor? ay, that and more! a weakling scorned,—  
Packed by my King home to my mother's house,

As if I were a suckling, not a man  
That might be dangerous near him!

DUCH. 'Twas a credit  
Vouchsafed you rather, that you'd bow submiss  
To your Liege, like all your sires. Whate'er your doom,  
Just in itself or not, it stands our law  
Till it be cancelled.

WOLD. Well then, I have given him  
Space for reflection: I've reclaimed to him  
Through Hugh De Valma, who attests me blameless,  
And prays him still to grant me a just trial;  
At least to change my place of banishment,  
And not make Wold a prison-house for traitors.

*Enter MARTIN.*

MAR. Help! Help!

WOLD. What is't?

MAR. They've hanged Sir Hugh De Valma.

WOLD. Who has dared?

MAR. Richard. For yourself, my Lord,  
Went the young Knight to plead. The King, incensed  
At his presumption, sent out after him  
Six fellows masked to overtake, and hang him  
On the first tree. Two of them fell by his sword;  
But the rest beat him down, disarmed, and hanged him  
On the great tree called the King's Oak. And there  
He's hanging still.

WOLD. Touch him not! England's people  
Shall come and look at him there: In troops I'll bring them,  
To look at him there—boys, virgins, matrons, men:  
Good people all, look at him hanging there!  
The gallant youth, so tender and so true!  
My friend, and such a friend! Ay, and who fought  
For Richard so! Look at him hanging there!

The King's Oak, said you? A fit gallows, then:  
Ominous be it to kings!

DUCH. I won't believe  
King Richard did it. I'll to him straight myself,  
And learn the truth o't all.

MAR. Madam, he's off  
To Ireland in hot haste: He's needed there. [Exit MARTIN.

DUCH. He hang a young knight thus? Never!

WOLD. And when

This peopled isle have seen the horrible sight,  
I'll cut him down myself; ay, and I'll bury him  
Beneath the tree—The King's Oak, that's the word—  
I'll bury him there; and o'er his dust I'll put  
A monumental stone, and I'll inscribe it  
To all times with the record  
Of this most bloody and most tyrannous act:  
Bear witness if I don't, Ghosts of my Fathers!  
And bear me witness this,—if I avenge not  
His blood, perish my name, and may I never  
Lie with you here!

DUCH. Go from this holy place!

WOLD. Wrong-banished Hereford, I call thee home;  
King shalt thou be! Your towers, Duchess of Wold,  
See that you keep them well: 'tis in my vow  
That I do strike at them too: rest will I not  
Till ne'er one strength i' the land call Richard master.

DUCH. These coffins! dare you leave them, rebel-hearted?  
Hear me!—the curse of each and every one  
Of our far loyal line, that sleeps in them,  
My curse with theirs, be on your going! Go! [Exeunt.

SCENE III.—*A Court at Dunley Tower.**Enter LORD DUNLEY and ZEBRA, meeting.*

DUN. White nostril pants! You've done it?

ZEB. There he hangs!

DUN. Varlet! he come betwixt my King and me,  
Handling my name so!ZEB. 'Twas a devil, though,  
For fighting: Two of our fellows he struck dead,  
Ere we could master him. At last we noosed him,  
And tuck'd him up—hang there, Sir Hugh De Valma!  
You rose in France: In England too you've risen  
To this fair height! On the King's Oak we did it,  
By way o' poetic justice, for insulting  
His Sovereign so.*Enter a Servant. He gives letters to LORD DUNLEY, and  
retires. DUNLEY reads them.*DUN. Here's news! Wait me here, Zebra.  
The bearer, ho! [*Exit DUNLEY*]ZEB. Martin would take my hint:  
So then, if he has made Wold think Hugh's hanging  
Was Richard's work, wrenched from his King for ever  
Is that proud heart. And when our Liege has learnt,  
As learn we'll make him, how his men's rash zeal  
Dealt with Wold's friend, he'll feel all terms with Wold  
Closed. Thus they're foes for life. That's one point gained.*Re-enter LORD DUNLEY.*DUN. Here's Hereford back, and pushing for the Throne:  
The land's ablaze: Wold's out against the King.

ZEB. Wold out?

DUN. What think you now? Hot thanks he'll give us  
 For our device. An outer wheel is he,  
 Heavy, and black, and slow; but what a world  
 Of clattering powers within, annexed to him,  
 His slightest move sets on!

ZEB. We strike for Richard?

DUN. Our horses, there! yes, yes. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE IV.—*A Court in Wold Castle.*

*The DUCHESS OF WOLD and MOUNTNORRIS.*

DUCH. Those volunteers?

MOUNT. They're promised us by Chayr:  
 He's steel; they'll come.

DUCH. I trust they're not raw boys,  
 Unstiffened by deeds: mere gristles of service?

MOUNT. Yeomen,  
 Tried all and true, proud for the Old Boar's sake  
 To man these walls.

DUCH. Get them in. We'll be sieged.  
 What stores have we? Get more: lay them in large,  
 That we may hold it out. Would we had here  
 Our blind old Minstrel and his daughter Rachel.  
 I wished them in for safety; but the Harper  
 Preferred his forest cottage, thence to harp  
 From place to place: skilful is he to touch  
 The faithful popular heart. [*Exit MOUNTNORRIS.*]

*Enter DR ROWTH.*

How goes it, Father?

DR ROWTH. Ill for the King. Too well for Hereford:  
 He's Lancaster now, and will be more anon.



upon us. Cousin Mervyn's here, drawn hither to wait on her aunt, Lady Staines, who has been sick. The venerable Auntship hates Wold with all the old family hatred, wrinkled and envenomed by her own ninety years. Ours is she entire. Dunley might make something of that, but he can't be screwed up to the doing point. As for poor Richard, though he's at hand with twenty thousand men from Ireland, he'll melt away like a snail in the sun of Lancaster: He was not born to raise sieges. His style of reigning won't do: Everything's hollow—false—a Lie. The overblown bubble must burst; hence Revolution, which is just the crack of an exploded Lie. Were I Wold now (for he has been scurvily used), I'd away with this Kingship for ever: I'd have everything down to the old turnip-eating plainness of my own Roman grandfathers: No plaited folds of favour, crimped and goffered by Ceremony, should be left to hide minions and panders in: No curled, scented villain should live on the stark naked level of the iron shield to which I would bring down all things. But I must back to Dunley, and keep him up with hopes of the King. We must lacker our fronts with daring, and hold out. *[Exit.]*

*Enter PHILIP DE VALMA.*

PHIL. Hanged like a dog! My brother!  
Yonder old beggar now, crooked and palsied,  
Shaking all o'er with tatters, filth, and vermin,  
And blear with rheum, look at him how he jerks  
His red, raw, ulcerous, mortified pin of an arm,  
Out of its linen bandage, tetter-stained,  
Into the faces of the passers-by,  
Chiefly if pregnant women, to enforce  
Alms by disgust and fear: why he, and such as he,  
Why reptile things, the vilest and most loathed,  
Should be let live, ay, should be living now;  
And my poor brother should be done to death,

O he so beautiful, so brave, so good,  
 I see not why: can any tell me why?  
 But let me be a man: Where are we at?  
 Here I'm shut in, then; Thomas of Wold's without,  
 Out of my reach: ah me, should he escape me!  
 How oft I might have smote him! Nay, how oft  
 I've touched his naked sleeping throat, in token  
 I had him sure; and yet forbore, as if  
 I dallied in the luxury of my purpose!  
 Would I were near him now! I've been a fool.  
 What boots it that my mind still runs upon  
 The bloody footsteps of things done of old,  
 Back, and far back away,  
 Tracking them like a sleuth-hound, and I see  
 The grisly shadows of my ancestors  
 Waving me to revenge, and every night  
 My mother's pale and ineffectual ghost?  
 They've not yet stirred me up to do the deed.

*Re-enter ZEBRA.*

ZEB. De Valma here! Have you, by any chance,  
 Seen my Lord Dunley?

PHIL. Villain! O villain! [*Grappling him.*  
 If 'twas you did it! If you knew o't, even!

ZEB. Are you drunk? mad? or both? You've drugged  
 yourself  
 With some of your insane liquors, eh?  
 What would you, then? What mean you? Pray, don't gasp so,  
 Nor look so black i' the face. In Christian breath,  
 What is't?

PHIL. My brother! hanged!

ZEB. Soho! that's it?  
 Now then, stand off. What do you take me for?  
 Am I that villain, eh, damned beyond fire?



Here's my bare breast—strike, and strike home, De Valma,  
If you would kill your friend!

PHIL. Who did it, then?

ZEB. Wold.

PHIL. No: He loved the lad; He's forth to avenge him.

ZEB. All very pretty! True, he strung him not  
With his own hand——

PHIL. O!

ZEB. I forbear. But mark:—

Wold in a cowardly way sent your poor brother

To brave the King, fearing to go himself:

What call you that? Granted, it was a set

O' the King's own grooms, time-serving, meddling varlets,

Who, basely thinking it would please their master,

Followed and hanged Sir Hugh: That's not denied.

But who set on the mischief? Was't not Wold?

PHIL. I knew not this before. Have at him now!

ZEB Whom? Ah! I see. Philip, you don't love Wold?  
You meditate mischief there?

PHIL. How know you that?

ZEB. I've noted your strange eagerness around him.

But why not strike at once? Strike, and be done:

Be a man even in that; and not Wold's weasel.

Hanging for ever at his jugular vein.

Look! in the waving of a midnight curtain,

I'd do it thus—'tis done! But come now, tell me

Why you hate Wold. I hate him too. I'll help you.

PHIL. You shan't. He's all mine own.

ZEB. Ho, ho! you have

Monopoly there? Well, man, don't tremble so.

Don't look so eager jealous ; I'll not touch

Your Wold, I swear.

PHIL.                    My fathers were of Ireland,  
There warred and ruled the Boar of Wold—his sire

Had done't before him cruelly. He humbled  
Our house of fame—Darconnell's ancient house.  
My father, deepliest grieved to have led and lost  
His folk in vain for freedom—for the Boar  
Quelled them, and sunk their heads in blood and fire—  
Perished, self-slain. The stranger got our lands.  
My mother to her native Italy  
Fled with her boys, Hugh and myself; and there  
Heart-broken died she. We assumed her name.  
Up there we grew. In me revenge grew up  
Against Wold's house. Its state I learned, I learned  
How fought its son in France: to France I went,  
Taking young Hugh, and joined the English camp.  
I need not tell you how we found you there,  
Our fellow-townsmen, strong in English favour;  
Nor how, as my soul wished, good friends, through you,  
Fixed me Wold's surgeon—near his helpless sleep!  
For I was trained to healing. In his eye  
My brother Hugh got a young soldier's post.  
I might have smote Wold, might have drowned his heart  
With lethargies, or simply touched his lips  
With subtle drops—and let Death wipe his beard!  
But somehow 'twas too easy. More than this,  
Purely to kill him was not all I wished:  
I wished his heart to bear and feel the load  
Of retribution for ancestral crimes  
Coming down heavy on his life and house,  
With a long dark fall out of the times of old.  
My scheme was not full-shaped, when my poor Hugh  
Began to puzzle me in't: He knew it not;  
He knew not even the history of our house,  
So knew no cause to hate the Lord of Wold:  
I kept the matter hid from him; I took it  
All on myself, keeping his young soul clear.

Upspringing like a pyramid of flame,  
 How towered that soul in war! With zeal, with power,  
 With prowess all unparalleled, he Wold's life  
 Saved from a crush of foes bearing him down,  
 When mortal help seemed vain: Wold loved him thus:  
 And high of courtesy, plenteous of wit,  
 Music, and poetry, my brother grew  
 Closer and closer to the grave man's heart.  
 So what must I do now? Perplexed was I.  
 'Twas there and then you left us, following Dunley.  
 War ceased in France. To England came we. Hugh  
 Went with Lord Wold to Wold. Hither I turned  
 To see a noted sage. But O, what next?  
 I've heard it all! Zebra, I'm stricken sore!  
 I knew it would be thus! Aye in mine ear  
 Were voices crying, "Sweep thy house, prepare,  
 Death is thy Guest!" He perished so—my brother!  
 And Wold, he was the cause—I see it now—  
 For he exposed him rashly. But my heart  
 And hands are now made clear, and I can do it!  
 I'll do it now! Quick, let me forth to do it!

ZEB. Think of thy father, man, and cut his throat.  
 'Twill serve me too.

PHIL. You shall not have one jot  
 Of what I do: Round and entire, the thing  
 Belongs to our house alone.

ZEB. Well, see you do it,  
 And there an end. Come to me then, the King  
 Patron shall be to your Philosopher's Stone.

PHIL. Serve you the Court? I knew not this.

ZEB. How could you?  
 When not i' the stars, with dim-eyed bearded Magi;  
 Or not i' the molten pot; or not i' the bowl,  
 With transcendental wassailers sublime,—

Your down-weighed heart, like a deep-laden waggon,  
 Weighed down with old black things, moves groaning on,  
 Heavily, slowly, groaning on, i' the deep  
 And narrow ruts of your progenitors,  
 Ploughed up by their inveterate wheels of usage,  
 And never mended since. Do but use, man,  
 Thine eyes, and see what a brave world's around thee,  
 With men and women in't. But you don't hear me?

PHIL. God rest thee, my poor boy! Well, I must thank him  
 That he did hide thee in the gracious earth  
 From horny ravens and death-smelling vultures,  
 And creatures crying in the stony desert  
 To tear and eat: No hungry cruel thing  
 Mangled thy comely body. But thou'rt gone  
 From this dead heart of mine with all thy love!

ZEB. Now then for work: I'll let you out: Come on,  
 And as we go, I'll show you how Wold stands  
 In Dunley's way, therefore in yours: So you  
 Must take him off: All our plans thus go well.

PHIL. He shall die childless, and his house die with him.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE VI.—*The Camp of the Besiegers, before Bristol.*

LORD WOLD and HASTINGS.

WOLD. We've Dunley penned!

HAST. Now then for the assault!

WOLD. My bride's in the city. Back her troth I gave her,  
 When I became a rebel, and I prayed her  
 To weigh my fortunes well in their great change  
 Nor mix her life with mine; but her true heart  
 More than renewed the trust. So doubly dear,

Would she were safe! Dunley, at bay, twice wroth,  
May do her hurt: Yet surely not. How think you?  
He dares not do it?

HAST. Strike: Give him no time.

[*Exeunt. And the trumpets are heard sounding to the onset.*]

### SCENE VII.—*Outside the Walls of Bristol.*

*The assault is going on. DUNLEY with a party of salliers is fighting outside one of the open gates. WOLD is leading the attack against him; and seeing DUNLEY, he strikes men down right and left to get at him. DUNLEY, observing WOLD at hand, retreats within the gate, his men following him.*

WOLD. Turn thee, false knight!

[*WOLD and his men pursue the fugitives within the gate. A few minutes thereafter, WOLD is seen above on the walls, tearing down the standard of Richard, and hoisting that of Lancaster in its stead. His men shout from the walls.*]

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## ACT III.

### SCENE I.—*The Mouth of Afra's Cave.*

AFRA, *striking her harp.*

AFRA. Look out! The Princes ride, the armies forth  
In dreadful pageantry and far procession  
Shake the embattled land, all to work out  
The great Fulfilment.  
Wold's in my Ring of Doom. Mervyn, with all

The bleeding strings of her derivative life,  
 Has hold far back upon the loins of Kings,  
 Out of the which she came; but she's in too,  
     And so must die with Wold.

So sure are the weird words uttered o'er Wold,  
 Whoso is knit to him must die with Wold.  
     Stark and stern thy end shall be,  
     House of Pride and Cruelty!

[AFRA goes into her Cave.

SCENE II. — *Before the Gate of Bristol.*

LORD WOLD and HASTINGS, meeting.

HAST. So then the kingdom's Henry's?

WOLD.

All save Wold.

Wearing out siege, repelling all assaults,  
 Blowing defiance from her battlements,  
 My mother still holds out: Wizards, nor Thunder,  
 Nor Bloody Aspects in the House of Life,  
 Have power to shake her: even unto the death  
 She'll hold it out, so great is she of heart.

HAST. Dunley?

WOLD.

Not caught. How he escaped us here

When we took Bristol, by what postern hole,  
 In what disguise, I know not. Pausing ne'er  
 To draw my breath in the city we had won,  
 Out after him I rode. I've hunted him  
 Far and wide over Wales. I've missed him still.  
 He's to some den forlorn, I know not where.  
 There let him lurk and live—I mean, the while:  
 I'll find him yet. If not, this at least know we,  
 He'll plague the land no more.

HAST. What's our next move?

WOLD. Our troops are camped outside the city walls,  
And there we rest the night. At morn I take  
The Lady Mervyn home—on my own way  
To Wold, to strike it down; so runs the vow  
That I have vowed. Were but my mother saved,  
Were she but safe, down then I lay my arms,  
For I am sick of blood, and wed in peace  
My virgin wife. Come, let us see our camp.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.—*Dunley Tower.*

LORD DUNLEY and MICHAEL ZEBRA.

DUN. As if we were not mere life-loving vermin,  
Wold-hunted to our hole here, basely burrowing;  
And he at large the while—he, Wold—triumphant,  
Marrying my chosen one! Perdition! Come now,  
Word me no words, look me no confident looks,  
Till you're prepared to show me—can you show me  
How I may baulk that marriage?

ZEB. Yes.

DUN. So bragged you  
Of what the King would do when he came back  
From Ireland with his host: Where's that host now?  
Where's he himself? His twenty thousand men  
Are last year's snow. Himself lies fast in prison,  
Kingdomless, hopeless. Can we give him hope,  
We with our skulkers, our poor patch of serfs,  
Driven to our hiding here? Nay, Wold, be sure,  
Down on us whelming comes. What shall we do?  
Can Italy's subtlest soul answer me there?

ZEB. Stand at bay, then.

DUN.                                That's all? So you confess  
Your shifts are ended now?

ZEB. Good night, my Lord ;  
I'll do't, then.

DUN. Hang yourself?

ZEB. Bring Mervyn hither.  
Having her here, we have a hank o'er Wold,  
Should he with bold effrontery dare to siege us,  
Whilst his own mother's holding out hard by  
I' the self-same cause as we.

DUN.                                    Fine work for knights!

ZEB. We'll do it fitly.

DUN.                         How?

ZEB. Through Lady Staines.  
We'll make it simply seem that she has placed  
Her niece with you in these distracted times,  
As her next kinsman, to prevent that marriage  
With a marked traitor. Lady Mervyn's young,  
And there's the dignity of guardianship  
In what you do. But wouldn't you stay, my Lord,  
That wedding at all hazards?

DUN. Bring her ! [*Exeunt severally.*]

SCENE IV.—*A Court in Wold Castle.*

DUCHESS OF WOLD.

DUCH. The world of dreams, the disarrangèd world,  
 With all its huddled rack of fantasies,  
 And topsy-turvy troubles, cannot show us  
 Anything stranger than this actual day.  
 Richard deposed ; Hereford all but crowned ;  
 Through all the realm thick crops of jealousies,  
 Hatred, strife, blood, confusion ! Even the Faith



Has lost its hold of men : Pestilent teachers,  
 Of no succession, and unconsecrate,  
 Scorning the Church's statutory furrows,  
 Sow their opinions broadcast o'er the land,  
 With torment-pointed threatenings harrowing in  
 The wild strange seed, seed in its after harvest  
 To fill the Arch-enemy's garners.  
 What wonder that the sympathetic heavens,  
 Coping this isle of mischief and of sorrow,  
 Hood us with prodigies ?  
 Two suns were seen at once ; black dews have fallen ;  
 And warning voices have been heard i' the air ;  
 The comet's unblest beard hangs in our skies ;  
 The stars are quenched i' the glare of fiery meteors ;  
 The vestal moon, lawlessly red and fierce,  
 Reels as if drunk with blood : These signs portend  
 Worse things to hap ; for out of holes o' the earth  
 Come lean-faced prophets, never seen before,  
 And read them so, whispering of chance and change,  
 The fall and death of kings.

*Enter MOUNTNORRIS.*

You've managed to communicate with Chayr ?

MOUNT. Himself was here : down i' the trees we met,  
 West o' the Castle.

DUCH. Well ?

MOUNT. Mid-afternoon,  
 To-morrow, forth we sally, the besiegers  
 Dreaming of no such move ; Chayr hears our trumpets,  
 Down on them comes he too. We'll beat them off.

DUCH. One thorough rally here may yet re-act  
 Through all the land for Richard.

*[Exeunt.]*

SCENE V.—*A Rocky Glen in a Wood.* RACHEL, *gathering wild strawberries.*

*Enter* SIR LIONEL CHAYR, *disguised, and in great haste.*

CHAYR (*listening*). The enemy's after me still—what could have roused him? Ha! there's the cracking of dry twigs, too, at the head of the glen, before me. Some of them have got round upon me. Here's a natural cave of the rock, I'll bestow me here a while. But what have we now? (*observing RACHEL*). A woodland creature with her eye upon me. Come hither, damsel.

[*RACHEL advances to him. CHAYR takes her by the curls with both his hands.*

Look me full in the face—are you true?

RACH. I hope so.

CHAYR. Do you know me?

RACH. No.

CHAYR. I am Sir Lionel Chayr in disguise, one of King Richard's captains. The King's foes are out after me. My life is in your hand. You'll give me up to them for a price?

RACH. Trust me, gallant Sir, I would not do it.

CHAYR. What! not betray me in these times? You'll die young, then, such a rarity are you.

RACH. O no, I would not do it.

CHAYR. By your heart in your young face, No. I could trust you to the death. Here's some brush of ferns and ivy (*cutting them with his sword*). I'll into this caverned cliff, and you'll cover up the entrance neatly and naturally. Hold—don't smile, till I paint your face with these strawberries.

[*He takes strawberries from the girl's basket, and paints her face.*

Now, the impudent soldiery won't see how fair you are: The

better for you in these defenceless woods. Moreover, they'll take you for one weak of mind. Be so to them for the time, and parry their quest of me. Come back to me when they're fairly out o' the wood. Quick now, I hear them upon us. Cover me in, and then to your strawberry-gathering, with some simple song in your mouth.

[CHAYR *goes into the Cave*. RACHEL *covers the entrance of it*; and then retires out of sight, singing.

*Enter* SOLDIERS.

1ST SOLD. He came this way, surely.

2D SOLD. Look about among the rocks, here. He must be in some hole of hiding. Was it Chayr?

1ST SOLD. No doubt of it. He does all the difficult work himself. A straggler from our camp saw him part from old Mountnorris of the Castle, and gave the alarm. But here's one may help us. Hither, sweetheart.

*Enter* RACHEL *singing, with wild flowers in her hair.*

Ah! the poor thing's wits are gone. But she's woman enough to paint her face, and deck her hair: The simplest of the sex knows the virtue of that.

2D SOLD. Come, lass, you know that strawberries make your cheeks pretty; so you must know the value of white money. We're after one of King Henry's enemies. He's a young man in disguise, and came this way. Do now, show us where he is, and the Captain of the camp will fill your lap with crowns.

RACH. Pal-lal! Pal-lal!

2D SOLD. (*taking out a coin*). You know what that is?

RACH. (*proffering her basket of strawberries, with a smile*). Pal-lal! Pal-lal!

1ST SOLD. Very fair, my good wench.

2D SOLD. But won't do. Come. [*Exeunt the* SOLDIERS.

RACHEL *listens, and looks all around. She washes her face in a runnel, and takes the flowers out of her hair; and then strips the weeds off the mouth of the Cave.*

RACH. You may come forth. [CHAYR comes out.

CHAYR. I heard it all, maiden. You have saved my life. Ah! you have washed your face, I see. Nay, blush not; you are a woman, but a faithful one.

RACH. It became me to wait on the King's Captain gravely.

CHAYR. Who are you, damsel; so homely are your weeds, yet you answer so discreetly in these perverse times?

RACH. Thy handmaid, Rachel, is the daughter of the blind old Minstrel of Wold, who dwells in the skirts of the forest. True is he to his King, and has sung the deeds of Sir Lionel Chayr. They call him the Loyal Harper.

CHAYR. I've noted the gray harper. He has been  
A soldier in his youth—that I can see,  
The old fire's there, as he stands up and holds,  
Steady, his sightless orbs against the day,  
Snuffing the battle. Loyal songs, too, he,  
Self-risking, casts, precious seed, on the hard  
And stony ground of this rebellious age.  
Your King shall hear of you both.

RACH. You may go now.  
The God of Battles make you, heart and hand,  
Strong for the King!

[CHAYR takes off his bonnet to the girl, as she retires.

CHAYR. Amen, sweet child of virtue!

The benediction of the unworldly Heavens

Be on your good young head!

[*Exeunt severally.*

SCENE VI.—*Wold's Camp outside of Bristol.*

PHILIP DE VALMA.

PHIL. Heart of hare I! Wold lives. For aught I've done,  
I might be thankful for a rat to gnaw  
The veins o' his neck.

*Enter ZEBRA, disguised.*

ZEB. The very man I sought!  
But you've not cut his throat yet? Well, no matter:  
What serves't to take mere life? Were he dispatched,  
You'd feel yourself a naked desolate being,  
Wanting an object. Let's first kill his love,  
And wait the rest, after his heart has been  
Clean emptied out of joy: there's the thing for you!

PHIL. Show me the way o't, then: Give me the means,  
I'll take it from you now.

ZEB. For this I've sought thee,  
Disguised so 'neath night's hood. One point achieved,  
We pass from Richard's service to King Harry's.  
I'll manage that. Philip shall pass from Wold,  
And be the King's own man—his man of metals,  
Starcraft, and so forth.

PHIL. Mock not the awful power  
To read the stars, the figures on the face  
Of Fate's dark dial to the sons of men;  
To Wisdom's eyes foreshowing war and famine,  
Plague, storm, and earthquake, and each stress of time.

ZEB. A truce to the stars just now; save that we beg them  
To light us on our way, as we bear off  
Mervyn to Dunley.

PHIL. Ha?

ZEB. It must be done.

Or you and I are nothing. Can you show me Thomas of Wold's handwriting?

PHIL. Yes.

ZEB. I'll catch

The trick o't to a hair. The lady meant  
To start at morn for Mervyn, Wold himself  
Her guide and guard. Hark, boy, she starts to-night :  
You see it now ? We write her in Wold's name,  
Urging her forth to-night, here in his camp  
To wait the morn ; with reasons given why safety  
Demands this step, and why he—Wold himself—  
Can't go into the town to have her forth.  
You bear the note, second it, bring her out ;  
We pick her up, and straight with her to Dunley.

PHIL. I who have loved all truth, am I to do  
This practical lie?

ZEB. Ho ! ho ! you'd thither

(Pointing downward with his forefinger)

By only one of the Seven Deadly Sins ?  
None of the other coal-black long-tailed six,  
Foaming out tar, must yoke for you ? O no !  
Come, come, revenge ! The thing's no more a lie  
Than all your present smoothness round your victim.  
He's your own now—you've caught him by the heart.  
Aha ! you're panting thick. Come on, my bird :  
I have thee now. Let's to old Staines' house,  
And do it there. She's ours. I've been with her.  
She gives us leave to do whate'er we list ;  
What's more, she helps us in't, so we but stop  
Those hated nuptials. Lady Mervyn knows  
I'm here to-night : I've ta'en good care she know it.  
Means too I've found to make her fear a plot,  
This night in Bristol, hatched by Dunley's friends,

Whilst he himself with a fresh host is coming  
 Back on the city, bloody resolute  
 That Wold she wed not. Lady Staines has promised  
 To enforce these fears, and shape the way for us. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE VII.—*A Room in LADY STAINES' House in Bristol.*

LADY MERVYN *and* BLANCHE.

LADY MER. Zebra, Lord Dunley's man—what can it mean?—  
 Twice in our house has he been seen to-night.  
 With a fresh force Dunley's at hand, they say ;  
 And there's a plot to give him up the town,  
 This very night. My aunt being now restored,  
 Would we were hence !

BLANCHE. Those words of hers meant mischief.  
 We're in their net. Could we not go to-night ?

LADY MER. Soft ! Some one comes.

MORLEY *brings in* PHILIP DE VALMA.

PHIL. This from Lord Wold in haste.  
 [*Giving LADY MERVYN a letter, which she reads.*]

LADY MER. You know its purport ? You are named therein  
 For service here.

PHIL. To take you to his Lordship ?  
 Runs not the letter thus ? Dunley's at hand,  
 And Wold's close kept to be prepared for him :  
 Bad men are near you, Dunley's tools ; so must you  
 Straight to Wold's camp, there to abide till morn.  
 Home then he'll send you with a proper guard.  
 My office as physician to our men  
 In garrison here, and in the camp without,  
 Let's me free out and in ; thus was I chosen  
 To be your safest guide. Now, now ! Disguise.

LADY MER. This is Sir Hugh de Valma's brother, Blanche,  
That good young Knight of ours, so loved, so mourned ;  
We'll go with him.

PHIL. You loved him, did you ?  
Quickly, or not at all ! O not at all !

LADY MER. How so ?

PHIL. What did I say ? O yes—come, come.  
'Twas just a moment's fear some evil thing  
Might thwart us in't.

LADY MER. A minute, and we're ready.  
This way. You'll wait us at the garden gate.

PHIL. (*half inwardly*). O me, this night ! I shall be damned  
for this !  
She loved the lad ! [*Exeunt.*

SCENE VIII.—*The Market-Cross of a Village, ten or twelve miles  
east from Wold. The Loyal Harper's head is seen upon a  
pole, fast by the Cross.*

RACHEL sits below on the ground.

*Enter* SIR LIONEL CHAYR, *disguised.*

CHAYR. Look up to me, young maiden, 'tis my turn  
To help you if I can : I'm here to do it.

RACH. Sir Lionel Chayr ?

CHAYR. Ay. To this neighbourhood  
Business of moment drew me, and some hours  
Will keep me here. The Loyal Harper's end,  
Ta'en by the foe and butchered in cold blood,  
I learned it all, and your so faithful watch.  
In haste I seek you thus : how can I help you ?

RACH. All night I've sat here underneath his head,  
Keeping away from him the birds of air,



And cruel things irreverent. The dawn  
 Must be i' the east. All's quiet here (*rising*). No one  
 Is near us now. Spring up, if you would help me :  
 Mark for a moment the majestic frown  
 Of his high face upon rebellious England :  
 Then bring me down his head that I may take  
 And bury it by my mother.

[CHAYR *climbs up and with his sword cuts away the fastenings, and brings down the head, and gives it to RACHEL.*

Thank you, Sir.

CHAYR. Go: fear not thou, no man has power to touch thee.  
 [*Exeunt.*]

#### SCENE IX.—*A Court in Wold Castle.*

*The DUCHESS OF WOLD and MOUNTNORRIS.*

DUCH. Deal out the last o' the wine: bread for the push,  
 See the men get: Spare not; we'll have by sunset  
 Fresh stores, our gates being free. Yonder's the dawn  
 Curdling the east: go, take some rest, old man;  
 You're not just made of iron; 'twill prepare you  
 For what you've yet to do.

MOUNT. My gracious Lady,  
 I need no sleep.

DUCH. Trumpeters on the towers,  
 Morning defiance, blow it loud and long.  
 (*The trumpets blow defiance.*)

Let's round and see the posts. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE X.—*A Chamber in Lady Staines' House in Bristol.*

LADY STAINES *is seen sitting up in bed.*

LADY STAINES. Good Wold, you're angry; but we can't help that.

Spell we've not used against you, blast nor ban,  
Hot from the mystic synods of the night;  
Hags of strange seed, we've set not their weird hands  
To gather the wild gourds of sin and death,  
And shred them in your pot; wrath we've not drawn  
From evil stars to strike you: we've but done  
As prudent parents do. Would I could sleep! [*She lies down.*]

*Enter MORLEY.*

MOR. O Madam, where's the Lady Isabella?  
She can't be found.

LADY STAINES. Aha! Is the Wold there?  
Tell him from me,—To every wind of heaven,  
Haste, send ye out. The shores and ocean isles,  
Skirr ye them round. Thorough the city, too,  
See that ye search: Do it with lighted candles:  
Nothing but search! You've found her, then? Not yet.  
You'll find her, though, at last—ay, soon enough!  
Who's there?

MOR. Thy servant, Madam.

LADY STAINES. Put him out!  
I know he's here: Hence traitor!

MOR. No one's here,  
Save thine own servant Morley.

LADY STAINES. If I've sent her  
To Dunley Tower, to her good cousin's keeping,  
Who can say I've done wrong? Death, let me sleep!

MOR. That's the key now! Wold waits my coming forth,  
 I'll to him with it: the full plot it opens,  
 Which we so far had traced Philip the Leech  
 And Zebra in—dark twain! O now to save  
 That good young maid of Mervyn! [Exit MORLEY.]

SCENE XI.—*Before LADY STAINES' House in Bristol.*

HASTINGS, *waiting with an escort.*

*Enter LORD WOLD. MORLEY is seen retiring.*

WOLD. Bid sound the march.

HAST. Whither?

WOLD. To Wold: that first:

Come death or worse the while, I'll do my vow.

When Wold is fallen, then ho! for Dunley Tower.

My bride is there in her false cousin's hands,

Lured hence by some deep plot. Being there, she's in

The deadliest danger.

HAST. March!

[ *The trumpets blow, and they all march out.*

SCENE XII.—*The Camp of the Besiegers of Wold.*

CAPTAIN *of the Besiegers and an OFFICER.*

OFF. Wold Castle falls to-night?

CAP. I think it must.

OFF. Pity for the old Duchess, and her Captain,  
 So tough and true! They're of the right old breed.  
 Would they were on our side!

[*A trumpet blows from Wold Castle, another from a .  
 neighbouring wood.*



SCENE XIV.—*Inside the Gate of Wold Castle.*

*The DUCHESS OF WOLD, in armour, and with a sword in her hand, heading a small party of defence at the gate, is seen stretching out her arms toward the battle without.*

DUCH. The strength of angels ride upon your swords,  
Ye men of might; strike swift and far for Richard!

*Enter RACHEL with her Father's head in her hand.*

Whence, Rachel? and what's this?

RACH. Look at him, Madam!

Know you the face?

DUCH. Our Minstrel?

RACH. None but he! [*Kissing the dead face.*]

DUCH. How came he by this death?

RACH. We wandered east.

Your Harper harped: he stirred the people's hearts:

He sent them west to help Chayr's final push.

Too bold for his own safety, him the foe

Took, slew; and set his head upon a pole,

Fast by a market-cross. Brave Chayr by night

Came to me there, and took it down for me.

I bore it thence to bury it by my mother.

Passing your gates, I saw the fighters fight.

Free were the gates. I entered in. On you

England's last loyal hope main rests. Self-stout,

You need no buttress. Still this head I bring—

Look at it—I do hold it up to you—

Be nerved, be stouter still.

*Enter SIR LIONEL CHAYR and other Officers.*

CHAYR. All's right, your Grace:

The day is ours.

DUCH. Thanks to the Lord of Battles !  
 Welcome, brave Sirs ! At once to follow up  
 This stroke determine we : Sup here to-night,  
 And council hold.

CHAYR (*and the rest*). In duty and in love  
 We'll wait upon your Grace.

*Enter a Herald.*

HERALD. Madam, I come  
 In Henry's name, Henry the Fourth of England,  
 (For Richard's fallen, and lies in Pomfret Castle)  
 To summon your Grace : I summon you to surrender  
 This Castle of Wold to Henry your liege lord.

*Enter MOUNTNORRIS, MARTIN, and a party of soldiers,  
 bringing in LORD WOLD prisoner.*

DUCH. We're doomed to death, of course, if we our Castle  
 Surrender not—doomed like our murdered Minstrel ?  
 Hold up that bloody head, fatherless maiden.

[*RACHEL holds up her Father's head.*]

Look at it, Sirs ! 'tis our old Minstrel's head,  
 His murdered head. Through all my father's wars,  
 A man of men, he fought, heart-knit to Wold.  
 Him, white, blind, tuneful, Henry's ruffians butcher !  
 But I'll avenge him !

HERALD. Madam, I'm not charged  
 Touching your lives.

DUCH. Hence ! To thy so-called King  
 Bear our defiance : We defy thee, traitor,  
 Rebel, and regicide ! [*The Herald departs.*]

Ay, regicide ;  
 That too, be sure. Pontefract Castle, said he ?  
 Or said he Berkeley Castle ? Call it Berkeley,

And you scarce err. Go, and you'll see the ravens  
 Already there, smelling the blood of kings,  
 Hoarse croaking as they smell it, sailing low  
 Around the fated towers of Pontefract.  
 Berkeley rehearsed this Pontefract. O Sirs,  
 Edward the Second's woful tragedy  
 Is back on us afresh. Monstrous guilt thus,  
 Surer than common crime, self-propagates.  
 May Heaven strike in then, break, and stay at once  
 This rank succession of king-killing murders !  
 Stand forth, old man, what's this you bring us here ?

[To MOUNTNORRIS.

MOUNT. 'Twas not man's work to take him : Heaven's self  
 did it.

Terrible was his course ; but his horse fell—  
 Where, do you think ? On the sunk stone that marks,  
 In Mervyn's bounds, where his own father perished,  
 Stumbling it fell—even there ! Thus was he ta'en.

DUCH. Our Minstrel's blood cries out for vengeance first :  
 Vengeance we'll give him. More, far more, the plague  
 Of strange unnatural deeds (shame to our land !)  
 With sternest hand we'll stay it if we can.  
 Him there—rebellious traitor to his King,  
 Caught quick in the hot act—rebel to nature,  
 Warring against his mother's house and life—  
 Seize, bear to prison : on the morrow have him  
 Forth to our place of death ; there, where my sires  
 Did doom on traitors, let the traitor die.  
 Be it at noon. And, when the traitor dies,  
 Let the dead-bell of Wold toll out the tidings  
 Far and wide round, that every rebel's heart  
 May quail within him.

CHAYR (*kneeling*). Madam, hear me plead,  
 And hear these Captains with me : If we've done

Your Grace and our liege King some little service,  
Spare the Lord Wold: we crave it on our knees.

DUCH. No more of this. 'Tis sealed. What! would you see  
Our constituted England, pedigree'd old,  
Large of investiture, with chartered awe,  
Seat, jurisdiction, and prerogative,  
Levies and marts, unions and corporate guilds,  
Decline to individual savagery,  
And dig the waste for roots, that you do ask  
The evil thing not to be put away,  
And the curse out of her? Mountnorris, you  
We charge with this: take that doomed man to prison;  
And see him executed on the morrow,  
At noon precisely, as we've given the word,  
And as you'll answer for't. Hold! take this sword—  
My father's—be it the fit instrument:  
Its greatest service shall be last, to strike  
Wold's last son through the heart, being a traitor:  
And let some arm that fought with the Old Boar  
Strike the blow home to vindicate our house:  
Be this the manner of the execution.  
And when 'tis done, wipe not the sword, but hang it  
Bloody up in the armoury of Wold,  
To be a witness to all future times  
Of this just judgment. See it done.

MOUNT. (*receiving the sword*). I will.

CHAYR. Madam, one word before your Captain goes:  
I ask but this,—instruct him to permit me  
Entrance to-morrow, come what hour I may.

DUCH. Our gates are open to Sir Lionel Chayr,  
To come or go: bear that in mind, Mountnorris.

MOUNT. I will. Now then, Lord Wold.

[MOUNTNORRIS and Guards take out LORD WOLD.

DUCH. Our wounded first



Let's look to, then our dead. Keep near me, Rachel :  
The chosen of our host shall go with you,  
And bury that brave head, as your own heart  
Would have it done.

[*Exeunt.*

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ACT IV.

SCENE I.—*The Mouth of Afra's Cave.*

AFRA, *striking her harp.*

AFRA. Feuds, bloody vows, ill-omened love, revenge,  
Treason, rebellion, war, the staff of bread  
Broken in the land, echoes of falling thrones,  
Kings—Heard ye that? Wa! Wa!  
'Twas the dull stroke of the brain-smiting axe:  
See! see! they've staggered him—he's down—'tis Richard!  
Yon son, yon mother, wrestling in their blood,  
Behold them too! All this crowds thick upon us,  
That the great Wizard's word, forth against Wold,  
May have fulfilment. The Fulfilment's near.

[AFRA goes into her Cave.

SCENE II.—*A Banqueting Room in Wold Castle.*

*The DUCHESS OF WOLD and an old Seneschal.*

DUCH. Where are the guests? We called them to our council,  
As well as banquet.

SEN. Madam, I suspect  
They thought no congress would be here this night.

DUCH. They thought! What right had they? Must our  
 Throned State  
 Lose for a matter in one private house?  
 Fill me a cup. *[The Seneschal fills and presents it.*  
 To Richard's restoration!  
 Death to his foes! Shame to his coward friends!  
*[She touches the cup with her lips, and sets it down.*  
 Let's go. Let all these vessels stand. Lock up  
 This room for ever. The end comes. Nay, then,  
 Marshal me in Prophecy, Judgment, Doom:  
 There take your seats, ye Powers,  
 With Silence, and with Darkness, and the Ghosts  
 Of buried generations: Hold me here  
 Your undrawn table, since the mortal guests  
 Fear to come in! Let's hence. *[Exeunt.*

SCENE III.—*A Cell in Wold Prison.*

LORD WOLD.

*Enter the DUCHESS OF WOLD.*

As Priest of mine own house (for by the gate  
 Our holy Father fell), I offer you,  
 Being a dying man, our Church's rite  
 Of preparation.

WOLD (*kneeling*). On my knees I take it:  
 Proceed, in Jesu's name.

*[The DUCHESS reads the Service of Preparation.*

DUCH. Under just judgment,  
 Can I do aught for you, my Lord?

WOLD. No, Madam;  
 Unless you let me forth at your men's head,  
 To save my dear young wife from Dunley's hands:  
 He has her in his Tower.

DUCH.                   What! let you smite  
Richard's last bulwark?

WOLD.                   If you reason on't,  
O then I'll urge it. Dunley's o'er to Henry,  
Deserting Richard: Martin has been here  
To wring my soul in death, and told me all.

DUCH. False Dunley! I feared this: he would not help us.

WOLD. He too caused hang De Valma, and the blame  
On Richard laid. Ay, and he looks to Wold  
As his own heirdom now; nay more, my bride  
Holds as his own, having her in sore straits.  
Shall this be so? Shall he, the base, bear off  
Our ancient glories? Madam, shall it be?  
It rests with you.

DUCH.                   How so?

WOLD.                   Waiving all this,  
Hear my true plea:—O now for the dear sake  
Of one who has given her whole young heart and life,  
Her very self, so generously to me,  
A grave, dull man, and of a hostile house,  
By thy just soul, Madam, O let me out;  
Let me but set her life and honour safe,  
As if she were the simplest peasant's daughter!  
That's all I ask—I ask no more but that.

DUCH. It cannot be.

WOLD.                   Hear, by your family pride:—  
She raised me up, struck of the bolt of God:  
No thought of the old feud! no cold delay!  
She took me in, she tended me herself  
With Godlike pity in her gracious house,  
Me, your own son, her foe! O for one hour  
Of freedom for her sake! One little hour  
Would do it all. Madam, as you are proud,  
And scorn to owe your foes, you'll pay her back

Her generous service—save her life and honour,  
And, to fill up and magnify the quittance,  
Make me the instrument?

DUCH. The doom's pronounced.

WOLD. Touch not the doom: Let the doom stand. Stern  
quick

I'll do my work. Back here I'll be, and don  
These chains again, before the sun be up.  
The doom shall not be touched.

DUCH. What guarantee

Have I for this?

WOLD. I'm sure you'll ask no oath,  
If I but pledge my word.

DUCH. I meant not that.

But you may hold your blood cheap, and defraud  
The judgment here.

WOLD. Let me but forth; I'll be

As chary of my blood, as hitherto  
I've been unsparing o't: my life I'll guard  
As a most precious thing, not mine, but yours;  
I'll bring it back to you. Then, see how much  
Our mutual trust shall dignify the doom,—  
Making and showing it no quick rash act,  
But a calm sacrifice, due and full paid  
To Wold's fixed will. Words then be done: I die.

DUCH. Keeper, unlock: Lord Wold goes forth with me.

[*The Keeper unlocks the door, and they go out.*]

#### SCENE IV.—*A Room in Dunley Tower.*

LORD DUNLEY and MICHAEL ZEBRA.

ZEB. I've just seen Martin. 'Tis quite true. Thomas of  
Wold dies at noon to-morrow.

DUN. Why, then, we'll go to sleep.

ZEB. Ay, and have pleasant dreams. Yet is there a snake in our flowers. That fellow Chayr's an imp for zeal. He'll be round the earth ere a man can take his first sleep. I fear him more than all the rest of them. He has admittance to Wold Castle to-morrow, and is sure to bring some device for the pardon or rescue of Lord Thomas. Martin has let me up to all this.

DUN. Why not cut off his coming?

ZEB. Martin and I have made bold to provide for it. Gort is to be in the Long Wood before daybreak: He'll stop all such coming, I warrant him. To take off the edge of murder, and make the thing like a mere bit of the war of the time, he is to have two or three regular soldiers with him. We are not bound to know that Chayr comes alone: He is Harry the Fourth's enemy—that's all we know. And thus we can look the Sixth Commandment in the face.

DUN. Now that we're accepted of Henry, and have gathered again a good force in our camp, who'll venture to wag the tongue against us?

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE V.—*Another Chamber in Dunley Tower.*

LADY MERVYN and BLANCHE.

LADY MER. Poor child, your eyes are heavy, you must sleep. Go, Blanche, I'd rather be alone: 'Tis fitting I watch alone this one last night for him, Since he must die to-morrow—as they tell us. Would I were with him!

BLANCHE. Wake me, then, if aught Alarm you in the night.

LADY MER. They hold us here  
By violent constraint. Whate'er they mean

Of further mischief, this they cannot do,—  
They cannot turn my heart from Wold: Those hills  
Round us, whose spurs are in the central fire,  
Are not so steadfast as my virgin heart  
Is to my own good lord. When he is gone,  
For him I'll sit a widow all my days,  
My few remaining days. Good-night, sweet Blanche!  
[BLANCHE *retires into a side chamber.*  
Such is this life of ours: a glimmering light,  
Seen through the ribs of Death!

*Enter* LORD DUNLEY.

What would you, Sir!

DUN. Fear me not, cousin.

LADY MER.                      Cousin? dare you use  
That kindred name? Be it so, then! O be  
My kinsman still! I pray you, by the blood  
That flows betwixt us, let me forth, and straight,  
To see my lord—my own betrothèd husband!  
He's under doom of death; and every law,  
Divine and human, calls on me to see him  
In his last hours. You dare not say me, No.

[A trumpet and alarms without.

DUN. It must be Wold !

LADY MER.                      And he in prison? Ay,  
And doomed to death? Villain, you mean me wrong,  
Joining fraud thus to force? That voice! 'tis he!  
You're quailing now! Come quickly, good Lord Wold!

ZEBRA and PHILIP DE VALMA rush in on the one side, and  
BLANCHE on the other.

DUN. What is't?

ZEB. Wold.

DUN.            Guard the Tower. Myself will meet him

Down i' the camp. Mark:—Come he on to take  
Our Keep, I'm slain. Let ne'er this maid be his:  
Swear, Zebra.

ZEB. I do swear.

DUN. Guard the gate, then.

[*Exit DUNLEY, ZEBRA and PHILIP DE VALMA  
following him.*]

LADY MER. What see you, child?

BLANCHE (*looking out*). Tumults confused of men  
Fighting this way and that, driven through the light  
And through the darkness: what a stormy drift  
Of hurrying shapes!

LADY MER. (*looking out too*). But where's the Lord of Wold?  
He's here for me! O look!

BLANCHE. Yes, yes, 'tis he!  
How he makes way! What a majestic power!

LADY MER. My own true lord!

BLANCHE. Ah! he has disappeared.

LADY MER. He's at the gate! His men are at his back!

[*Nearer tumults are heard within the Tower.*]

What should we do? I fear that villain Zebra,  
Sworn o'er our lives. How near the tumult comes!  
Let's venture forth. What think you? Isn't it best?  
We may slip through. Could we but get beneath  
Wold's arm, we're safe. Let's try. We'll muffle us up.

[*Exeunt.*]

#### SCENE VI.—*The Inner Court of Dunley Tower.*

MOUNTNORRIS and a party are seen fighting against ZEBRA,  
PHILIP DE VALMA, and their men. PHILIP is made prisoner.  
MOUNTNORRIS presses hard upon ZEBRA. At this moment  
LADY MERVYN and BLANCHE, half disguised, try to slip  
past. ZEBRA, however, observes them.

ZEB. Not so fast, Madam.

[ZEBRA draws a small dagger from his waist, and aims a side blow at LADY MERVYN. MOUNTNORRIS intercepts it so far, but not before it wounds the lady slightly between the neck and shoulder.

PHIL. Wretch! for this you made me  
Anoint your blade?

[MOUNTNORRIS disarms ZEBRA, and the men of Wold seize the Italian from behind.

MOUNT. Down with the precious villains  
To some deep place o' the Keep. There guard them fast.  
Judgment shall have them. Let's support you, Lady,  
Back to your room. Lord Wold will join you straight.

[MOUNTNORRIS supports LADY MERVYN on the one side, and BLANCHE does so on the other.  
The wound's not deep, I think.

ZEB. (*as the Guards are taking him out with Philip*). No, but  
'twill do:

Here's a quack-salver knows a thing or twain;  
He'll tell you, if that blade but taste the blood,  
It drinks the whole heart up. [Exeunt severally.

SCENE VII.—*Before the Main Gate of Dunley Tower. Parties go fighting over the ground.*

*Enter LORD WOLD and LORD DUNLEY, meeting.*

WOLD. I have thee now!

DUN. My tongue is in my sword.

[*They fight. DUNLEY is transfixed, and falls.*

DUN. O! am I slain by thee! Zebra—remember——

[Dies.



*Enter MOUNTNORRIS.*

WOLD. Well met, my friend! How speed we? I have spent  
Too much o' my general care on this one point.

*[Pointing to Dunley's body.]*

MOUNT. They've fled. We've Dunley Tower. The Lady's  
there.

WOLD. Hold your men ready. We go back to Wold.  
Is yon the dawn?

MOUNT. Not yet. You're hurt, my Lord?  
You bleed so.

WOLD. Where? My arm? Why, what a gash!  
Come to this tent, and bind it up for me.  
I must not lose blood: I must run no risk  
Of not being back at Wold by break of day. *[Exeunt.]*

SCENE VIII.—*A Cell in Dunley Tower, lighted by a lamp.*

ZEBRA and PHILIP DE VALMA. DE VALMA *slumbering*  
*against the wall, ZEBRA pacing up and down the Cell.*

PHIL. *(starting up)*. Mercy! me, me!

ZEB. Why, what a frenzy's this?

PHIL. Zebra, is't thou? Is this the world of spirits  
That we are in?

ZEB. D'ye think to cheat yourself  
Out of a fact so literal as the gallows,  
And a hemp cord to hang thee by the throat?  
Is that a fact so vague as not to be  
Sharp known when come to?

PHIL. Ah! thou'rt Zebra still,  
And we are still on earth: these jeers are heard  
In the light upper time, and nowhere else.  
But what a change on you! you look like one  
Tight-drawn and earnest for some terrible feat.

ZEB. Say you so, man?

PHIL. In that confused world,  
Which I had swooned into, came a soft light,  
And shaped itself into my brother's face,  
Looking upon me with his candid eyes.  
I tried to kiss him, but I could not. Then  
The countenance waxed severe, and went from me  
Back into night away, evanishing  
In a thin haze of blood: So do I guess  
My brother's angry that I've done the things  
For which I'm here this night. I'm the last child  
Of a lost house! Me, the fell Dogs of Fate  
Have hunted from my cradle; and they'll bay me  
Down unto death, thrusting their very muzzles,  
Sharpened, drawn out with keenness, through the bars  
Of the Pale Gate, to catch at me; the glare  
Of penal fires within, or the soft gleam  
Of creatures clad in light, striking the while  
Out on their haggard jaws, gnashing to have me!  
Could I delve back into the dark of time,  
And see from what foul root, be it of incest,  
Or bloody banquet, or what else is ranker  
In the abuse of nature, this strange crop  
Of judgments has grown up against our race!

ZEB. Of course, you lay on Fate, that black old scape-goat,  
Your own heart-hunger after Thomas of Wold,  
Under whose thick tumultuous setting-on,  
Morn, noontide, night, you dogged his steps,  
Went where he went, still gazing on his face  
With eager look that seemed to ask an alms;  
But ah! could never strike—being carried past  
The sharp clear doing of the definite act,  
By the o'ercrowding and o'ermastering fulness  
Of the impulse that possessed you?

PHIL. Have I not struck? Have I not reached him wholly?  
Said you not so? If not, I'll do it yet.

ZEB. Our day for that is past.

PHIL. Is't so! Ah me!

Say you so utterly? Is there no way  
To flee from this? No hope? Would the dread moment  
Were past, or never came! What's the hour now?

ZEB. Dial nor clock is here, save thy pale face:

It goes to strike Despair. Let them come on,  
I'll laugh on their beards, and show them a neat trick.

PHIL. What's death to thee, who car'st for nought beyond  
The pang o' the moment? Pain with its keen feelers,  
Twigs of split nerves, and forkèd hairs of anguish,  
Being life's guardian, was not meant to be  
A trifling thing; but yet is it a trifle  
To blank obstruction, or that dread Hereafter  
For evil spirits. I was made to see,  
And tremble to the alarms of utmost nature,  
And——

ZEB. Need more of my gold? Is thy wine out?

[*A sound of turning bolts is heard.*

But hark, they come. My pretty Imp of Death,  
Have thou the start o' them!

[*ZEBRA takes a phial from his bosom, drinks it off, and falls dead. Guards come in and take out PHILIP DE VALMA.*

#### SCENE IX.—*A Chamber in Dunley Tower.*

LADY MERVYN *has fainted on a couch*, LORD WOLD and  
BLANCHE *are bending over her.*

*Enter Guards with PHILIP DE VALMA.*

WOLD. Few words and no reproaches: Look, De Valma,  
How fares it with this lady; you can tell us?

PHIL. She sleeps a deadly sleep: The wound is tainted.

WOLD. That we know. Zebra dealt it. But the poison  
Was got from you. Have you an antidote?

PHIL. Yes. Lord am I o'er all the powers I use.  
That tragic sleep, swooning away to death,  
I can unlock. But there's a mischief still:  
The poison's in the blood, there it has worked,  
But not long yet. Virtues have I to meet,  
Check it, and drive it out, if they be backed  
By hope and joy in the patient.

WOLD. Hope and joy—  
Good luck! But O let's try.

PHIL. No, Lord of Wold.  
I'm a man that fears death. And, for that lady,  
I wish her well; she liked, and mourned my brother.  
But die shall I, she too, ere thou be made  
Lord of the joy of wedded life and issue.

WOLD. Why this from thee? No matter. Let's to terms:—  
I'm a doomed man: I die at noon. To Wold  
You'll on with me, and help me by the way,  
If I should faint, for I am hurt; you'll see me  
Safe given over to my mother's hands  
For execution, see me die, and then  
Be free to go your way. Undo me now  
This venomous sleep.

PHIL. With my whole heart and soul!  
I thought your doom reversed. But you must die!  
Magnanimous though you be, I'll see you die!  
And in your hour of death I'll tell your soul  
Of Nemesis! But to my office here:—  
Wake, holy virgin!

WOLD. Hold! 'twere merciful  
To let her sleep till all is o'er with me.  
My widowed wife! Yet to her faith I owe it

To have her with me here all cognisant of  
My last extremity. Wake her.

PHIL. Maiden good,  
Glued in the numbing sleep, I thaw it thus,  
And let thee forth. Lady, come forth.

[PHILIP pours something from a phial into LADY  
MERVYN'S lips, and she revives.

LADY MER. Where am I?

WOLD. Fear not, I'm here.

LADY MER. Lord of my life, is't you?

O yes! I'm saved! But where's our enemy?

WOLD. He'll never hurt thee more. To Mervyn now  
I'll take thee home.

LADY MER. Now then, the evil days  
Are past, and we'll be glad!

[*Exeunt.*

## ACT V.

SCENE I.—*The Mouth of Afra's Cave.*

AFRA, *striking her harp.*

AFRA. Wo for them going down! I see them down,  
Far down the steep of shadows, to the dark  
And swift-flowing Ferry of Sorrows!

The hour is come!

[AFRA descends the mountain in haste.

SCENE II.—*A Room in Mervyn Castle.*

LORD WOLD and LADY MERVYN.

LADY MER. O yes, I'm better: Thank his powers of healing!  
Glad, active hope—well may it now be mine!—

Will do the rest, as the Leech says, and master  
The virulent venom.

WOLD.                               Yonder's the dawn now.  
I must be gone.

LADY MER.     Trust me, 'tis not the dawn.  
Rest till the morning break.

WOLD.                               Farewell, my Isabella;  
I'll soon get rest enough!

LADY MER.                       Say you this sadly?  
Ah me! What is't? There's something in your look!

WOLD. You're young, but just; and I must tell you all:—  
My life is forfeit; I go back to death;  
My mother let me forth to set you safe;  
But I'm her prisoner still, under death's seal:  
I die at noon: And I must back to Wold  
Ere the sun's up—such was the pledge I gave her.  
Now then, true heart!

LADY MER.                       Is it so, after all?  
I'll with you, then, and plead upon my knees.

WOLD. You cannot pass her gates: No child of Mervyn  
Will she let in.

LADY MER.     Ho, there! I'll get me rags;  
I'll be a beggar, and get in. Once in,  
I'll make her pardon you. Nay, speak me not;  
How can I live with this lethargic poison  
Still in my heart, unless I conquer it  
With hope and action? Said not the Leech so?  
And will you kill me, then? I'll go, I will.

WOLD. This is vain fondness, child.

LADY MER.                               You shall not go.  
I will not let you go. I'll call my guards.  
I'll keep you prisoner here: You have slain my cousin Dunley;  
I'll make you answer for't: Your mother shall not have you.  
Ho, there! Ah me!

WOLD. Look, yonder's the sun now

Thrusting his redness up the envious east.

I must be gone. Send me away, white soul,

I charge thee, now.

LADY MER. Ay, you must go. Go, then!

[LADY MERVYN bows her head, and hides her face  
with her hand, while LORD WOLD goes.

Is he gone? Blanche!

*Enter* BLANCHE.

Is he away? O yes.

[*They go to the window.*

Yonder he rides away in his old Roman faith!

The Leech is with him. Who's yon female form,

That runs before them with her loins girt up?

BLANCHE. 'Tis Afra of the Cave.

LADY MER. Yes, she it is.

Look how she strikes her harp! how her wild hair

Streams on the wind! She's like some Prophetess

Carried away on Judgment's whirlwind wings!

BLANCHE. They disappear down in the woody vale.

*Enter* RACHEL.

RACH. Out, Lady, with all your men to the Long Wood. That way comes Sir Lionel Chayr, before the hour of execution, bringing deliverance for the Lord of Wold. But evil men are in the wood to intercept and slay him, that Lord Wold may perish. With you it rests now to save them both!

LADY MER. How know you all this, Rachel?

RACH. From a dying man by our well, a trusted retainer of the Lord Dunley, wounded in that midnight struggle, and creeping home to his mother's house: He prayed me to give warning, and mar the wicked plot.

LADY MER. I'll lead my men myself, and guard Chayr through.

'Twill keep me alive. Nay, let me save great Wold,  
I'll die content: O joy, could I but do it!

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III.—*The Main Gate of Wold Castle. The DUCHESS OF WOLD is seen walking on the battlements.*

*Enter AFRA, running.*

AFRA. She-dragon, thou on high,  
Walking alone there, terrible, look down:  
Open your gates: He's here: Let in the man!

*Enter LORD WOLD and PHILIP DE VALMA.*

DUCH. My Lord, the sun is in the eastern trees.

WOLD. I'm here, my mother.

DUCH. You've done well. Come in.

[*The gate is opened by one of the Guards of Wold, and LORD WOLD and PHILIP DE VALMA go in.*]

AFRA. Let me in, too. I'll to the tops o' the towers,  
And look down on it all!

[*AFRA is admitted, and the gate is shut.*]

SCENE IV.—*The Long Wood—A Well.*

*Enter SIR LIONEL CHAYR. He lets his horse taste the water and breathe a little, himself resting the while on the brink of the Well.*

CHAYR. We're near it now! To save the good Lord Wold,  
And make that dear young one of Mervyn happy,  
What wouldn't I do! Would she had been my wife!  
Well, well, she has chosen better. God be thanked  
I've got thus far, and into day's safe light!  
The anxiety of my purpose makes me jealous



Of all I meet: Not a hind coming up,  
 However trudgingly, but seems full bent  
 To bar my way: Not even a market-girl,  
 But looks as if she'd brain me with her basket  
 Of butter and honey: The dull ox is a bull  
 To gore my horse, that I may not get on.  
 Where's the sun now? Would I could turn him back  
 One hour on Mercy's dial! But we'll do:  
 He's a stage short yet of his half-way house.  
 Come now, old Dickon, you must take me on.  
 One pull more, boy, and if your good limbs save  
 The Lord of Wold, we'll shoe you with gold shoes.  
 What's better for you, man, we'll make you free  
 O' the flowery meadows: ne'er another labour  
 Shall you be tasked to. Come.

*[As CHAYR is about to mount his horse, GORT and his men rush in, and attack him.]*

What's this, inasters mine? Oho! have at you, then!

*[They fight, and CHAYR is wounded deeply.]*

GORT. Take care, lads, here's a rescue at hand! Led on by an Amazon, too! Tip me an arrow into her, Piercely, by way of Cupid's bolt; and see you cleave the apple o' her heart. Quick, man, or we're undone! *[One of the party shoots out.]*

*Enter LADY MERVYN with an arrow sticking in her waist, her men with her.*

LADY MER. Strike home, friends. Heed not me. Save, save that Knight,  
 For he's on life or death!

*[LADY MERVYN's men attack GORT's party, and drive them out, after killing GORT himself.]*

CHAYR. O! are you hurt, dear Lady?  
 Let me draw forth this arrow from your side.

LADY MER. Let it alone, life might come out with it,

And I must not die yet: There's much to do.  
 Let's on to Wold. Have you deliverance?  
 What are our own cheap lives?—let's save Lord Wold!  
 Have you deliverance?

CHAYR. Yes.

LADY MER. You bleed so, youth,  
 I fear you'll ne'er reach Wold. Can I not on  
 Before, with what of respite or of pardon  
 You bring with you?

CHAYR. They would not let you in.  
 Come on with me. This mars us wofully.  
 Stand still, O sun!

[*Exeunt the whole party.*]

SCENE V.—*A Court in Wold Castle, before the Prison.*

LORD WOLD is brought out bare-headed by MOUNTNORRIS and  
 a party of soldiers, PHILIP DE VALMA with them.

MOUNT. The sun is touching noon. On to the place  
 Of execution. [A Dead March—the party file slowly out.]

SCENE VI.—*Outside the Gate of Wold Castle.*

Enter LADY MERVYN and CHAYR. LADY MERVYN's men  
 pause behind.

CHAYR. Here's water, I must drink! Guards there, you're  
 charged  
 To let me in; open the gate, this Lady  
 Will act for me: I'm faint. This letter, Madam,  
 Bear to her Grace: Quick, 'tis deliverance.  
 She'll yield to it. If not, plead, plead, yourself.  
 Lose not a moment more. Men, help her on.

[LADY MERVYN is admitted.  
 I'll follow—if I can. Merciful water!

[CHAYR sinks down at a spring and drinks.]

SCENE VII.—*An Apartment in Wold Castle.*

*The DUCHESS OF WOLD and JANET MOUNTNORRIS making grave-clothes.*

DUCH. (*rising*). His shroud is ready.

*Enter LADY MERVYN, and falls on her knees before the DUCHESS.*

LADY MER. Stay the execution!

This for your Grace! O read!

DUCH. The King's own seal!

[*The DUCHESS takes the letter from LADY MERVYN, opens the seal, and reads as follows:—"Cousin and Sister of Wold—By the premature grayness of this hair of ours, a lock of which is herewith sent thee, as the last token in our power of our affection for the most heroic and devoted of all our friends, we command thee to spare and love thy son, whom we forgive and purge of treason, and to let him marry the Lady Isabella of Mervyn. The gallant Sir Lionel Chayr bears this our message, and we commend him to your Grace.* RICHARD."

DUCH. Pledge how revered!

[*The DUCHESS puts the lock of hair in her bosom.*

LADY MER. O do you spare him, then?

He's out to execution.

DUCH. Hie thee, Janet,

With this my ring: Mountnorris knows it: Tell him  
The execution's stopped: Summon him hither.

[*The DUCHESS gives JANET her ring, and the damsel hastes out.*

Who are you that plead thus?

LADY MER. Fain would I say, Your Daughter!

DUCH. King Richard's will is law, the more since he's brought  
low.  
Rise, child.

[*The DUCHESS raises LADY MERVYN and kisses her.*]

LADY MER. My mother!

[*The Dead-bell of Wold tolls. A piercing  
cry is heard from JANET.*]

DUCH. (*dropping Richard's letter*). We're too late!

LADY MER.

No, no!

[*LADY MERVYN rushes out.*]

*The DUCHESS OF WOLD retires slowly.*

SCENE VIII.—*The Place of Execution in Wold.*

PHILIP DE VALMA, MOUNTNORRIS, and SOLDIERS. LORD  
WOLD is seen lying on the ground in his blood; a grim old  
soldier holding the bloody sword that transfixed him.

LADY MERVYN rushes in, and kneels by LORD WOLD's dead  
body.

LADY MER. Stay for me, my dear lord, I'm coming with you!  
[*Dies.*]

PHIL. (*aside*). Would I myself had smote him!  
Yet what a pair! goodlier was never laid  
Down with the worm! Both of them loved my brother;  
They should have lived for that. I think they should:  
There was no blood in that, no flavour of death.  
Might they but live! But 'twas not written so  
In the Old Dateless Book.

*Enter SIR LIONEL CHAYR, leaning on a spear.*

CHAYR. Is this the deliverance  
I struggled for to the death? O evil day!  
And she's there, too? Beautiful child of Mervyn,

I'll look at thee once more: 'Tis a sweet face!

Bear in these bodies. [A trumpet is heard at the gate.

Hold! [The trumpet blows again.

"Tis a bold note!

*Enter the* DUCHESS OF WOLD.

DUCH. What summoner's that?

CHAYR. 'Tis Henry's blast, methinks.

DUCH. Would that it were! we'd show him then—But first  
Take in that body.

CHAYR. O look, Madam—bodies.

DrCH. Bodies? How so?

CHAYR. Lord Wold, and his young bride.

She, too, is dead; slain, bringing help to him.

Angel of duty! Rarest of God's creatures

In this sore world of ours! The strength, the strength

Of a wife's love, determined not to die

Till she had done the very last for him.

That, and nought else but that, could have sustained her

Up to this moment, with that fatal arrow

Buried in her dear side: Wo worth the day!

Had I not been waylaid by evil men,

All had been well.

*The trumpet blows again at the gate.*

DUCH. Draw off, Mountnorris: Scorn them: Keep the gate.

We'll see the bodies in, then join you forthwith.

[MOUNTNORRIS *draws off his men.*

*More alarms.*

PHIL. (*aside*). 'Tis Henry: I'll to the gate: were he but in!

Would I could help him in! Dame Wold has struck

My heart's own prey, her son ; would I could conquer

His conqueror then, ending their house at once,

By letting Henry in! Darconnell thus  
 Would have his heel upon Wold's neck—for ever!  
 Shadows, dread Ones, be near me! [Exit PHILIP.]

*Louder alarms are heard.*

AFRA (*seen standing on the topmost tower*). Wo! wo! wo!

*A Soldier comes running in.*

SOLD. Treason! treason! treason!

DUCH. Out with it, sirrah.

SOLD. A force from the new King demanded entrance—

DUCH. And were denied?—defied?

SOLD. They're in then, Madam,

And masters here: Martin was by the gate,

And let them in.

DUCH. The traitor! bring him hither.

SOLD. Mountnorris slew him. One they called The Leech  
 Sprung on, and helped the opening of the gate;

Him too Mountnorris smote, and trampled down.

DUCH. What have we here?

*Enter HENRY IV., HASTINGS, and Captains.*

HENRY. Where's my renowned brother,  
 Thomas of Wold?

DUCH. What would you with the dead?

*[Pointing to the body.]*

HENRY. I am too late, then?—though I spurred to save him,  
 Being told by Hastings of his danger here  
 Within your cruel gripe.

DUCH. No, not too late  
 To take thy lesson from that stricken man:  
 Blood-stained Usurper, learn the Avenging Powers;  
 Nor dare to touch, with further hands of guilt,  
 King Richard's life!

HENRY. Woman of blood yourself,  
You do interpret me from your own heart.

CHAYR. Save him, then, good my Lord! Grim threatening  
faces  
Are round about him. I beheld them there,  
When I last night prayed for, and gained admittance  
To Pomfret Castle. On my knees I begged him  
To interpose, and get Lord Wold's life spared.  
Then when he took my borrowed sword, and sheared  
A lock with it from his head already gray,  
To send in his letter on with me to Wold—  
Token that he forgave with all his heart  
Lord Wold, his foeman, and would have him spared—  
He told me, smiling sweetly, he could wish  
That sword for his bed-fellow there. I craved to stay  
And guard his life. He pushed me out: "Spur, spur  
For Wold!" he said. But first he made me promise  
To stand to the death by his heroic sister,  
The faithful woman of Wold: His bosom heaved,  
As if 'twould burst, and tears ran down his cheeks,  
Speaking of all that she had done for him,  
Despite his own harsh usage of her house.  
My King! how kingly still!

*Enter a Gentleman in haste.*

GENT. Woful news, Madam!  
King Richard's murdered. Woful though it be,  
I thought it dutiful to post, that you,  
His last best friend in England's kingdom wide,  
Might know it straight.

HENRY. My soul abhors the deed:  
It makes me heavy sad.

[THE DUCHESS OF WOLD turns in silence, as if to depart.]

DUCH.

My King!—My Son!

*[She falls beside her son, kisses him, and dies.]*

CHAYR. Burst is that great true heart: Good-night to Wold.

*[KING HENRY and the rest bow their heads toward the Dead.]*AFRA (*on high*).—THE END OF WOLD!*[AFRA strikes her harp solemnly, and the Scene closes.]*



## THE YOUNG PHYSICIAN.

“WHAT woodland depths of soft blue filmy gloom!  
Up to your easel, truant! And we'll go  
Down by the Wells of Weary, and we'll watch  
Gloaming come on: How sweet the dewy dark,  
The lapse of waters gurgling by unseen,  
The sighing night-wind, and soft-swaying trees:  
In the soft-swaying trees sleep the peace-folded doves.  
Up, idle Hal! You smile, but shake the head?  
Lie, then, and list!” From fever's fiery gulf  
Redeemed he lay, pale, with a gentle smile.  
And wise to touch his sympathetic heart  
With lively promptings of the pictured year,  
And simple pleasure, softly to her lute  
The damsel sung: thus sung the sister-twin:—

Sport on the ice his ringing revel keeps:  
Curve he sweeps,  
Curve he sweeps,  
Harry, how his curve he sweeps!  
The tumult booms  
Through Echo's rooms,  
Confused among the craggy steeps.

Breezes blowing,  
Cloudland going,  
Airy cloudland opening, going,—  
Line how fine is Harry throwing,  
Throwing on the waters flowing!

Painter to Most Gracious Me,  
Dash it off so bold and free:—  
Love has crosses,  
How she tosses  
All her tangled locks about,  
All her taking graces out!  
Kate, with her airs of grand disdain,  
Makes hay at her neglecting swain.

Our ridges high take up the cry.  
Hal, down he leaps! The glen unshorn,  
Down it he sweeps with hound and horn:  
The muffled echoes down, far flying, dying, die.

Here be favours of the sun:  
Here the apple, red and yellow;  
Purple plum, with film of hoar;  
Pear, delicious cold of pore;  
Here the grape, divinely mellow.  
Taste we now: The Song is done.

Soothed by the Song, he slept. Long was the sleep,  
And deep of dewy healing. When he woke,  
His eye new-glistened from the fount of life.  
And from her own true heart, so thankful glad,  
The Young Physician had her fitting fee.

## MY MOTHER'S GRAVE.

O RISE, and sit in soft attire!  
Wait but to know my soul's desire!  
I'd call thee back to earthly days,  
To cheer thee in a thousand ways!  
Ask but this heart for monument,  
And mine shall be a large content!

A crown of brightest stars to thee!  
How did thy spirit wait for me,  
And nurse thy waning light, in faith  
That I would stand 'twixt thee and death!  
Then tarry on thy bowing shore,  
Till I have asked thy sorrows o'er!

I came not, and I cry to save  
Thy life from the forgetful grave  
One day, that I may well declare  
How I have thought of all thy care,  
And love thee more than I have done,  
And make thy days with gladness run.

I'd tell thee where my youth has been,  
Of perils past, of glories seen';  
I'd tell thee all my youth has done,  
And ask of things to choose and shun,  
And smile at all thy needless fears,  
But bow before thy solemn tears.

Come, walk with me, and see fair earth,  
And men's glad ways; and join their mirth!  
Ah me! is this a bitter jest?  
What right have I to break thy rest?  
Well hast thou done thy worldly task,  
Nothing hast thou of me to ask.

Men wonder till I pass away,  
They think not but of useless clay:  
Alas for Age, that this should be!  
But I have other thoughts of thee;  
And I would wade thy dusty grave,  
To kiss the head I cannot save.

O for life's power, that I might see  
Thy visage swelling to be free!  
Come near, O burst that earthy cloud,  
And meet me, meet me, lowly bowed!  
Alas! in corded stiffness pent,  
Darkly I guess thy lineament.

I might have lived, and thou on earth,  
And been to thee like stranger's birth,  
Mother; but now that thou art gone,  
I feel as in the world alone:  
The wind which lifts the streaming tree,  
The skies seem cold and strange to me:

I feel a hand untwist the chain  
Of all thy love, with shivering pain,  
From round my heart : This bosom's bare  
And less than wanted life is there.  
Ay, well indeed it may be so !  
And well for thee my tears may flow !

Because that I of thee was part,  
Made of the blood-drops of thy heart ;  
My birth I from thy body drew,  
And I upon thy bosom grew ;  
Thy life was set my life upon ;  
And I was thine, and not my own.

Because I know there is not one  
To think of me as thou hast done,  
From morn till star-light, year by year :  
For me thy smile repaid thy tear ;  
And fears for me, and no reproof,  
When once I dared to stand aloof !

My punishment, that I was far  
When God unloosed thy weary star !  
My name was in thy faintest breath,  
And I was in thy dream of death ;  
And well I know what raised thy head,  
When came the mourner's muffled tread !

Alas ! I cannot tell thee now  
I could not come to hold thy brow.  
And wealth is late, nor aught I've won  
Were worth to hear thee call thy son  
In that dark hour when bands remove,  
And none are named but names of love.

Alas for me, I missed that hour ;  
My hands for this shall miss their power !  
For thee, the sun, and dew, and rain,  
Shall ne'er unbind thy grave again,  
Nor let thee up the light to see,  
Nor let thee up to be with me !

Yet sweet thy rest from care and strife,  
And many pains that hurt thy life !  
Turn to thy God—and blame thy son—  
To give thee more than I have done :  
Thou God, with joy beyond all years,  
Fill up the channels of her tears !—

Thou car'st not now for soft attire,  
Yet wilt thou hear my soul's desire ;  
To earth I dare not call thee more,  
But speak from off thy awful shore :  
O ask this heart for monument,  
And mine shall be a large content !

FLOWERS  
OF  
THE OLD SCOTTISH THISTLE.

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*Flower the First: Maid Marion.*

Look in and fear not, yet with reverence look ;  
Silent and dark, but holy is the place :  
Enter the cave : Here lies Maid Marion's dust.  
An orphan only child, whose sire, the friend  
Of Wallace, fell, what time our Champion led  
The Fatherland unconquered to the stress  
Of that long wrestle for our future peace,  
She drew romantic daring from the time,  
And loved Sir William with a patriot love.

Dark days fell on our Man : his hunted head,  
A price thereon, lay in the caves of earth ;  
But he had prest her dying father's hand,  
In wordless answer to his murmured prayer,  
That he would be a guardian to his child.  
And was he not ? In all his darkest days,  
Betide what might, he to young Marion came,  
And cheered the orphan in her lonely home.  
Then drew he to this cave, not distant far,  
For foes were round about him, and the maid  
Brought food to him by night, and every morn,

A young-eyed sentinel o'er his going forth,  
 Hovering she guarded him from danger near.

But Treachery took him; and that stately head  
 Of golden locks redundant, that so oft  
 O'er War's wild surf, the day-star of our hope,  
 Fulgent for us had risen, was trailed in dust  
 Dishonoured to the death : Through all the throng  
 Of that vast city, and through all those guards,  
 Young Marion burst—she burst : low bowing down,  
 She took and she held up that sacred head,  
 To keep it from the dust, and kissed him oft ;  
 And no man had the power to trouble her.  
 She saw him die : she bore his latest breath  
 Shaped in a message to the Bruce ; though brief,  
 The seed and pregnant germ of Bannockburn,  
 And all the issues of that mighty day.

But sorrow now had touched the damsel's brain  
 To wildness, wandering o'er the Scottish hills.  
 And ever, when the annual eve came round  
 On which the Chieftain was betrayed, in calm  
 Or tempest, round the dwelling of Monteith,  
 Was heard the voice of her prophetic doom,  
 All through the night ; and oft his way she crossed ;  
 And oft she hung and hovered o'er his path,  
 Giving his blasted name to infamy,  
 The avenging spirit of all future time.  
 And round the land she went, with many a song  
 Of old heroic days rousing the youth  
 To arms ; nor vainly, for, where'er she went,  
 The people loved her reverently, for all  
 She did for Wallace, for her beauty rare,  
 Her ancient lineage and her lot forlorn :  
 The ploughman left his plough, the smith his forge,  
 Down came the plaided shepherd at her call,



Grave from the sabbath of the mountain-top,  
All to work out the great deliverance.

Bruce rose triumphant : Round his camps and fields  
Hung the wild lass, a Spirit of the war ;  
And aye when victory came, she clapped her hands,  
And cried aloud, " Wallace has done it all !"  
Then sought the wounded ; and, by day and night,  
Who like Maid Marion was their minister ?  
The beauteous maniac flitted through the field  
Of Bannockburn ; but, as the battle ceased,  
A random arrow pierced her virgin breast.  
They told the Bruce : down from his charger sprung  
The good King Robert, and his bloody brow  
Wiping, he bowed him o'er the dying maid,  
And pressed her hand, in token he would do  
Her last request—for now her soul was clear.  
" The work is finished !" with a smile she said,  
Then told her wish ; and, faithful to her wish,  
King Robert buried her within this cave,  
Where Wallace oft had laid his patriot head.

### *Flower the Second : Maude of Raventree.*

BEHOLD, behold, from out the shadowy Past  
Our Scottish fathers start ! They start, they come  
With onward eyes, around their lifted heads  
A troubled glory, as they fight and sing  
Their stormful way across the stage of time !

The only scion of an ancient stock,  
A playful child was Maude of Raventree.  
Her parents died. The dignity sedate

Of orphanhood, a law unto itself,  
 Fell on the sportive girl, a dignity  
 More than of ancestry ; and now she saw,  
 Sportive no more, in every sunny joy  
 Central a shadow stand, dark, yet to eyes  
 Thoughtful and true an Angel in the Sun.  
 And fair to look upon, and full of grace,  
 The virgin grew to perfect womanhood.

The Forest Chieftain, lion-hearted youth,  
 Swift as the roe, his eye the eagle's eye  
 That drinks the sun, has won Maude's heart and troth.  
 But ah ! he fell in battle as he swept  
 The Scottish Border of the English foe,  
 Chasing them south. Down on him closed her heart,  
 And loved no more, though many a gallant sought  
 The orphan heiress of old Raventree.

Long in her lonely house the widowed maid  
 Mourned for her knight, nor cared to see the sun.  
 A change came o'er her : the unpeopled moors  
 Were now her haunt, caves in the fretted shores,  
 Tops of the hills ; by sullen tarns she sate ;  
 She trode the dun-brown sheddings of the pine,  
 Far in the forest's central solitude ;  
 And held communion with the desert storms.  
 But strong and just of heart, the selfishness  
 Of sorrow left her ; by her liberal arts  
 Bloomed the wide valleys, for the poor she lived,  
 And blessings fell on Maude of Raventree.

Dark in its cloud of troubles vacant stood  
 The Scottish Throne : Edward of England strove  
 By fraud and force to seize it as his own.  
 The sorrow then of Maude's bereavement grew  
 Hate of the oppressor, and an active power  
 Sustaining Scotland. She the deeds had learnt

Of patriot heroes old, men whose great hearts  
 Come beating audibly down the centuries:  
 These were her ancestry of thought and act.  
 Behind her footsteps, wheresoe'er she trode  
 The faithful soil, upstarted men of war  
 Harnessed for battle. Patriot songs from her  
 The harpers took and harped them o'er the land,  
 Nerving the people's heart—for when disjoined  
 Jealous her nobles stood, her humbler sons  
 Held Scotland up. To help them went the wealth  
 Of Raventree; and all its vales were filled  
 With orphan children who had lost in war  
 Their fathers for their country: they in Maude  
 More than a parent found. And oft to her,  
 In their dark days, came Wallace and the Bruce  
 For refuge and for counsel; such a soul  
 Of largest wisdom filled her age revered.

Outflies the Orphan Banner at the gate  
 Of Raventree, adown the summer wind  
 Far floating black, wrought by her orphan girls  
 Of needlework, to Maude's designing mind,  
 With Scotland's old emblazonries, with sense  
 Of wrongs indignant tissued as they wrought,  
 With murmured blessings tissued, patriot prayers,  
 And patriot hopes, nor wanting orphan tears  
 Dropping to consecrate the burdened web—  
 Orphans of men who fell in Scotland's cause.  
 Outflies the Orphan Banner from Maude's hand,  
 Still stately in her venerable age,  
 Passed to a chosen youth, central of seven,  
 The standard-bearers of the Orphan Band,  
 A hundred youths in all, all orphans, all  
 Brought up by Raventree, a sable Band  
 For fathers slain. With lifted eyes, her hands

Outstretched in prayer, the mother of them all  
 Blesses the Banner; and an orphan choir  
 Of little ones, with voices clear and sweet,  
 Take up the blessing, singing as they bless  
 The Banner on:—With England's banded power  
 Edward the Second comes, to quell and crush  
 Scotland for ever: Banner, go thou on!  
 Bear up the Bruce, thou of devotion deep  
 Symbol peculiar, worth a thousand spears!  
 Lead thou his van—lead on the people—meet,  
 Defy the foe; fling blackness in his face,  
 Terror and death: and God be with the Right!  
 Down the long valley go the Orphan Band,  
 One heart, one solid tramp, one lifted whole,  
 Deliberate, black, to martial music set  
 Of indignation, and slow-breathed resolve;  
 And all the people bless them as they go.  
 Far down the vale the music dies away,  
 And far away the lessening Blackness dies.

Soft falls the summer eve on Raventree.  
 High on the tops, clear seen, of all the hills  
 The people stand and look; and in the vale  
 Old men in groups with wondering children stand;  
 Mothers the while, with infants in their arms,  
 Restless from house to house—for all day long  
 The buzzing rumour of The Battle fought  
 Has filled the valley: how the rumour came,  
 And what The Battle's issue, none can tell.  
 Before her waiting gate, serenely calm,  
 Sits Lady Maude. Dim are her eyes with age;  
 But damsels with her, one on either side,  
 Stand, looking down the vale with clear young eyes,  
 To ken some comer from the Scottish war.  
 Far in the sunny softness they descry

A Blackness shape itself: "They come, they come!"  
 The music comes, the Banner comes, the Band—  
 Ah! smaller now than when it went away.  
 And all the folk come running down the hills,  
 And round the Band the shouting people come.  
 On to the Lady's ear and heart the news  
 Is BANNOCKBURN. With Heavenward face she rose,  
 Silent a while, then stretched her arms and spake:—  
 "Great day for Scotland! Down the Unborn Time  
 I see arise the mighty tops of things,  
 Seed of our Day august! Around their heads  
 A liberal atmosphere, serenely glad,  
 Unhurt, not hurting, Scotland's men shall walk  
 With lifted faces to the end of time.  
 Joy for all this! Yet O far more than this,  
 Quelling the oppressor, raising up the opprest,  
 Down through all days our Bannockburn shall be  
 The watchword and the freedom of the world.  
 The Lord our God hath done it! For ourselves  
 Be special thanks: let us bow down and thank  
 The God of Battles and of Victory,  
 Him who hath saved our country—now our own!"  
 Saying, she kneels: before her, with her kneel,  
 Their conquering Banner lowered in the dust,  
 Her Orphan soldier-sons; down, young and old,  
 The people kneel; a mouth for all, she thanks  
 The God of Battles and of Victory,  
 Him who hath saved our country—now our own!  
 The Ascription o'er, the Priestly Woman bows  
 Still lower down—down to the earth she falls.  
 Her Orphan children raise her—she is dead.  
 And all the people wept for joy and grief.

## THE PROPHECY.

WINDS roar: the ragged clouds are torn:  
Glimmers the gibbous moon forlorn:  
Creak! creak! the irons groan:  
Look not up, hurry on!  
Dare you look? The Woman see,  
Low sitting by the baleful Tree—  
Tree, with its fruit of death abhorred,  
Not of the Gardens of the Lord!

### II.

One short year of wedded gladness,  
And Grizzel sits in widowed sadness;  
Lonely, and poor, and thoughtful she,  
Nursing her boy upon her knee.  
Late in the night, slow, without din,  
A stranger Hunchback Dwarf came in,  
Bare-headed, bearded, evil-faced,  
A leathern girdle round his waist,  
A tall staff in his bony hand,  
Nodding as from some weary land.  
On startled Grizzel's arm he laid  
His grasp; imperfect sounds he made,

And signs whereby he signified  
That there all night he would abide.  
It could not be: In every feature  
How swelled the dumb malignant creature,  
To be refused! With sudden check,  
Calm pointing to her infant's neck,  
As sleeping in her lap it lay,  
He shook his head and passed away.  
Next morn, in chalk upon her door,  
The Gallows-Tree her baby bore,  
With words to make the meaning clear  
Of that prophetic picture drear.  
Poor Grizzel saw it, shrunk, and pressed  
Her infant to her boding breast.

## III.

Hopeless waiting, listless wo,  
Did mortal man the Future know!  
What wouldn't that Mother give to be  
Purged of the clinging Prophecy!  
It works by night, it works by day,  
To take her peace of mind away.  
How o'er her boy she bends to trace  
The changes of his sleeping face!  
If motions from within torment  
The features, how her soul is rent;  
The infant passions these may be,  
Pledge of that rising Gallows-Tree!  
But dimpling, smiling, now he lightens;  
O how her hopeful spirit brightens!  
Down, down upon his neck she presses,  
With many a tear, her vehement kisses.

## IV.

In restless hope, in watchful fear,  
By urgent love, by awe severe,  
From threatened ill her son to save,  
No genial freedom Grizzel gave.  
A guardianship so jealous bent,  
He felt to be a punishment:  
Recoiling from the irksome sway,  
He learned to scorn and disobey:  
And thus from out the froward child  
Uppgrew the youth with passions wild.  
O that gloomy moorland wood!  
O that midnight deed of blood!  
He killed and buried there a maid  
Whom he had first to shame betrayed.  
Vengeance sped. His bones of guilt,  
Near where the innocent blood he spilt,  
Swinging in chains rot on their pole:  
Christ have mercy on his soul!  
Thus worked that Prophecy of ill  
Itself in sin and sorrow to fulfil.

## V.

Childless Grizzel, backward turning,  
O'er all the past her spirit yearning,  
O'er what she did, what left undone,  
To check, to guide, to save her son;  
In process still to calculate  
How to have stayed his evil fate,  
(O weary process, night and day!)  
Her wildered brain at last gives way.



The houseless moor, there now is she,  
A dweller with her son to be.  
Lean snuffing dogs she scares away,  
And from his eyes the birds of prey.  
With flowerets from the summer lea  
She garlands all his ghastly Tree.  
And aye she brings a ladder there,  
And climbs the Tree, and combs his hair.  
She sits below: full on her go  
Cutting scuds and whirls of snow;  
Morsels of ice, spit from the sky,  
In her gray locks unmelted lie;  
Swung in the elemental battles,  
The Skeleton above her rattles;  
Yet there the Word of God she'll read,  
So may her son still hear and heed!  
And morn and eve, in storm or calm,  
She sings for him a holy psalm.

## V I.

In her eyes a ghostly shimmer,  
By the wan moon's uncertain glimmer,  
With her last dregs of light forlorn  
Still sicklier in the gray of morn,  
From out the storms of midnight see  
The Woman of the rueful Tree!  
To the Tree she bows her head,  
Now she's dying—now she's dead.  
But lo! her hand is on The Book,  
And saintly is dead Grizzel's look.

## THE TRANSLATION OF BEAUTY.

SKIRTS of sunny-sifted showers!  
There the wild bee,  
How privileged he,  
Childe of the yellow belt and bands of jet,  
Sucking the nipples of the maiden flowers,  
All honey-wet!

Drops and darkness eastward borne,  
Glancingly go;  
Thereon the Bow  
Stands in the sea: from out the greening brine,  
The white gull twinkles in the violet horn,  
Bended divine.

Beauties of a summer day,  
How soon ye die!  
"Nay, through Man's eye  
Glad soul we grow; in soul translated on,  
We take our place, and live in praise for aye,  
Round the White Throne."

## RECOVERY FROM SICKNESS.

THE little boy lies still. Ruffings of leaves  
Give him their freshness ; swallows from the eaves  
Twitter their matins sweet ; and far away  
He lists the children at their whooping play.  
But here is she that wiped his forehead damp,  
And watched him, patient as a midnight lamp,  
His mother, ever dear : aye to his bed  
She comes to kiss him, and to pat his head.  
Feet slily soft ! who next ? Ah, well he knows ;  
And the young face looks in on his repose :  
His little sister. Much has she to tell  
Of hoarded wonders since he grew unwell ;  
And much to show, her frock so white and new,  
Her pictures—this for him, and that one too !  
Nodding she shakes the curlèd clouds of hair,  
Which darkly break upon her brow so fair ;  
And o'er him bowing, lets his fingers oft  
Pass o'er her tresses with their pressure soft.

But slowly now along the pathway green  
She leads him, dazzled by the sunny sheen.  
The light wind lifts his sadly-smoothèd hair  
Deliciously, he drinks the fluid air.  
The world is new, is fresh to him ; he sees  
Each little fly, each bird upon the trees :

O'er them the stirring trees, up looking they,  
The flecks of lustre on their faces play.  
How many children through yon meadow pass,  
Where lies the golden sunlight on the grass!  
Yon hill how clear, where shepherds sun themselves,  
Piping at ease upon its simple shelves!  
Here glossy woods, there wheaten uplands lie  
Beneath the harvest sun's broad yellow eye.  
Blithe reapers there beside the stooks are set;  
Here little gleaners at the gate are met,  
Spilling rich laughter from their thriftless eyes,  
Dark with the glory of the sultry skies.  
Proudly his sweet young sister leads him on,  
As if to show him like a trophy won;  
Then turns with him: The appointed walk is o'er;  
Their mother, smiling, meets them at the door.

# NEBUCHADNEZZAR.

## CANTO I.

### CYRA'S INTERVIEW WITH THE PROPHET EZEKIEL.

BEHOLD! to the high hills Ezekiel turns,  
To meet the visions of his God he burns.  
And well the shattered wilderness becomes  
The vehement Prophet that athwart it roams,  
Where rooted trees half hide, but not compose  
To grace the births of Nature's rudest throes,  
Imperfect, difficult, unreconciled:  
Blind moaning caverns, rocks abruptly piled  
Below, and herbless black peaks split asunder  
Aloft, the awful gateways of the thunder,  
Accord they not with him whose burdened eye  
Sees, through the rent of kingdoms great and high,  
Thick gleams of wrath divine, whose visions range  
Throughout the obstructed solitudes of change,  
Whose spirit stumbles midst the corner-stones  
Of realms disjointed and of broken thrones?

## II.

As on Ezekiel strode, he saw a maid  
Sit in the vale, and on a harp she played.  
Before her sate upon a rugged stone  
A form of man, with tangled locks o'ergrown,

Haggard, and dark, and wild ; of power and pride,  
A milk-white horse was pawing by his side.  
Near went the Prophet ; up that savage man  
Sprung, tossed his hair, and to the mountains ran ;  
O'er rocks and bushes bounding with him went,  
With startled mane, that steed magnificent.  
The minstrel rose ; when she Ezekiel saw,  
She laid her harp aside with modest awe ;  
In haste she came to meet him, named his name,  
And prayed his blessing with a reverent claim.  
" Maid, who art thou ? "

" Cyra, of Judah I. "

" Why dwelling here ? And who yon form on high,  
Chased by the mighty horse ? "

" Thou man of God,

Austere thy visions, so is thy abode :  
The stony mountains where old lions live,  
Dread paths to thee, to thee a dwelling give :  
Not in soft city, not in kingly dome  
Thy jealous soul will deign to make thy home ;  
So art thou seldom within Babylon's gate,  
And so hast heard not of her Monarch's fate,  
Forth driven by God to wander from his throne,  
Till seven appointed times be o'er him gone !  
Behold that King—him followed by yon steed,  
Doomed on the hills and in the wilds to feed !  
His head forlorn, in nature's naked eye,  
Is beat by all the changes of the sky ;  
He sees the morning star, and the wide noon,  
He sees the nightly ordinance of the moon,  
Sleep seldom his : The wild beast's in its den,  
But through the night must roam the King of men !  
Such was his sore extremity, till I——"

" So be abased—be stricken—worse than die,"

Exclaimed the Prophet, "who Jehovah's trust  
 Scorning, bow down our Zion to the dust!  
 So shall they be: Amazement shall lay bare  
 Her enemies' souls, and terror, and despair.  
 So has it been: Scarce Edom's name remains.  
 Soft Syria's loins are wrapped about with pains.  
 Tyre, where is she? The old haughty crocodile,  
 Is he not bridled on the shores of Nile?  
 On Ammon's head, on Moab's, Jehovah's doom  
 Has poured a midnight of unmelted gloom!  
 God is gone forth! Abroad His swift storms fly,  
 And strike the mystic birds from out the sky:  
 Soar proudly, burnished birds of Nineveh,  
 Home to the windows of your glory flee;  
 Ha! broke your wings, your trodden plumage rots—  
 The doves of Ashur lie among the pots!  
 For him! for yonder outcast—wo! and wo  
 Still more to him who thus has brought her low!—  
 Beneath her branchless palm must Judah sit,  
 Her widowed face with pens of sorrow writ,  
 And round her feet the fetters! But has he  
 Reaped glory hence? Earth's proud men, come and see!  
 At best a royal brute, he even without  
 The majesty of mischief roams about!  
 So let him——"

"Whelmed beneath Jehovah's ban,  
 'Tis ours to spare the much-enduring man.  
 Sore laid on us, his hand crushed down our State;  
 And great the blame, as our oppression great:  
 Yea, curse his pride of warlike youth; O! then  
 Still let me name him midst earth's noblest men.  
 But he was bowed, and, prostrate in his change,  
 Followed the wild ox in his boundless range,  
 And ate the grass; his head was wet with dew;

Like claws his nails, his hair like feathers grew.  
But I have helped him through his years of ill,  
And ne'er will leave him, but will love him still.  
Bless him, and curse him not!"

With anger shook  
The son of Buzi; tragic waxed his look;  
With vehement force, as if to meet the storm,  
He wrapped his rugged mantle round his form.  
"Look to me, damsel," cried he: "are not we  
Carried away by our iniquity?  
Shall then the soft desires of women rule  
Thy spirit still, and make thee play the fool?  
Because within his silken palaces  
He made thee dwell in love's delicious ease,  
Thou thought'st it good, and chased him to the hill  
In caves of rocks to play the harlot still?  
Lord God of Israel! shall we count it light  
So to be driven from Zion's holy height,  
Our princes captives made, our stately men  
Hewn down in battle, Thy dread courts a den;  
And scorning types without, and rites within  
Of penitence, conform to Heathen sin;  
No thought of our estate, no sigh for it,  
Degrading even the dust wherein we sit?  
Happy the slain ones of our people! blest  
Who fell in Zion's wars, and are at rest!  
Yea, happy they whose shoulders labour sore,  
With burdens peeled, or weary with the oar;  
For so their manly bodies are not broke  
With idle dalliance—slavery's heaviest yoke!  
Ye tall and goodly youths, your fate is worse,  
Your beauty more than burning is a curse;  
For ye must stand in palaces, soft slaves  
Of kings—your brethren lie in noble graves!—



Until your base shame for your origin  
Beyond your wanton masters makes you sin ;  
For ye upon the mountains, with desire  
Unholy, looking toward the Persian fire,  
Eat, not Jehovah-ward, forgetting Him,  
Forgot the gates of old Jerusalem !—  
Thou, too, thou maid of Judah, wo ! that thou  
Hast lived to be what I must deem thee now !”

He ceased. Like flames that burn the sacrifice  
With darting points, shone out the virgin's eyes ;  
Shook her black locks of youth ; drawn back she stood  
Dilating high in her indignant mood.  
She seized her harp, she swept the chords along,  
Forth burst a troubled and tumultuous song ;  
Till, purified from anger and from shame,  
Austere, severely solemn it became ;  
Yet dashed with leaping notes, as if to tell  
Jehovah mighty for His Israel.  
Soft gleamed the Prophet's eyes ; he knew that strain,  
Heard in the days of Salem's glorious reign,  
When Judah's maids in sacred bands advanced,  
With garlands crowned, and to the timbrel danced.  
And shone through glazing tears young Cyra's eyes,  
Her forehead now uplifted to the skies.  
Her harp she dropped ; her bosom greatly heaved,  
Till words burst forth, and thus her heart relieved :—  
“ Perish the song, the harp, the hand for aye ;  
Die the remembrance of our land away ;  
Ne'er be revived the praises of the Lord  
In the glad days of Zion's courts restored,  
If I——” again she sobbed and hid her face—  
“ If I have been the child of such disgrace !  
But ah ! forgive me, great Ezekiel,  
Thus to be angry I have done not well ;

For thine the spirit that for Israel's weal  
Burns with the fires of jealousy and zeal.  
O hear thy handmaid now! for I shall sleep  
In death, ere cease I for yon King to weep.  
In that dread night—his wars be judged by God!—  
When o'er our walls victoriously he rode,  
He saw me lie amidst the trampled mire,  
Which bloody glittered to the midnight fire;  
Sprung, snatched me from my mother's dead embrace,  
Ere the fierce war-steeds trode my infant face;  
Smiled on me; to his large mailed bosom pressed me;  
Home took me with him, with his love caressed me,  
There made me dwell, there gave to me a name,  
And to me there a father all became.

“Then—for my sacred origin I knew—  
Me, yet a child, Jehovah taught to view  
With scorn the Gentiles' sins; my opening days  
Taught, more than theirs, to love our people's ways.  
The Monarch smiled: nor sought he to subdue  
The spirit honoured whence my choice I drew;  
He gave me Hebrew teachers, them he charged  
To see my childhood with their lore enlarged,  
To compromise not in their captive place,  
But tell Jehovah's doings for our race,  
The ancient glories of our people tell,  
And in his Court like princes made them dwell.

“Nor heavier task was mine, than that the King  
A song of gladness made me often sing,  
To cheer his spirit; for Jehovah vexed him  
With nightly visions, and with dreams perplexed him.  
My harp I touched; when he was cheered, then I  
The mournful hymns of our captivity  
Did ne'er forget: magnanimous he smiled,  
And called me playfully an artful child;

Then was I bold, my prayer he heard with grace,  
And gravely promised to restore our race.  
God cast him out; I followed to the hills  
My more than father, to divide his ills :  
On summits high, and in the wastes his lair,  
I found him strange and brutish in despair ;  
But tried my harp, less savage soon he grew,  
And softly followed through the falling dew.  
Caves in yon rock, our mountain people there  
Had helped me first his dwelling to prepare ;  
There now less wild the food of men he finds,  
And lies through night unstricken by the winds.

“ In yonder hut a shepherd of our race  
For years has given me an abiding-place.  
His daughters love me as their sister ; they  
My simple service share with me by day,  
To feed the flocks. When men their labour leave,  
And past is now the milking-time of eve,  
I harp before his cave, down from the steep  
Comes the wild King, and couches him to sleep—  
O not to sleep ; with self-accusing blame,  
With madness wrestling, and with fitful shame.  
Sweet psalms I play him then, till in calm wo  
Lies his large heart ; then to our cot I go.

“ By Daniel's wise advice, his battle-steed  
Was brought beside him on the hills to feed ;  
His armour too was brought, before his eyes  
Nightly it gleams as on his bed he lies :  
Memorials these of his heroic days,  
To deeds of men again his soul to raise.  
Remembering hence his glory, more because  
The appointed season to a period draws,  
His heart with reason swells ; his ancient men  
Of counsel come to seek him in his den.

Taught by affliction, by our God restored,  
 Then will he free the people of the Lord.  
 'Joy ! joy for Zion !' let the captives sing.  
 Come thou with me, O come and bless the wandering  
     King."

"True child of Judah ! by the Spirit's might  
 Drawn to those hills, I wait the visioned night.  
 Just is thy gratitude. The God of peace  
 Raise up the King, and make our bondage cease !  
 My thought injurious turns to solemn praise ;  
 And if thou keep thy sweet unblemished days  
 In Heathen courts, and if thy gentle power  
 May for our people haste redemption's hour,  
 Praised shalt thou be in Israel's borders wide,  
 Yea, praised—be this thy just and awful pride—  
 In Heaven, where the great Sanctities abide."

So spake the Seer. Low bowing to be blest,  
 The Jewess knelt ; stooping her head he kissed,  
 Then turned away ; with sobbing joy o'ercome,  
 Thus well approved, the virgin sought her home.

## CANTO II.

### THE PLOT OF MERDAN AND NARSES.

High rides the summer moon : Away, how slow,  
 The lordly waters of Euphrates go !  
 But see ! a shadowy form from yonder rank  
 Of glimmering trees comes o'er the open bank.  
 Here Narses meets him :—"Merdan, you are late."  
 "Admit the toils that on my office wait,  
 And say, your purpose."

"Nay, 'tis mine to hear  
 What first you promised to my midnight ear."

Then Merdan spake :—" Our mutual hearts are known,  
Why pause we then ? Our theme be now the throne.  
Meet we not here on our appointed way,  
To learn from Chardees what the planets say,  
Who nightly standing on his glimpsing towers,  
With piercing ken looks through the starry hours ?  
Not rivals, twins are we in present sway ;  
What then ? 'tis based upon the passing day.  
Can we maintain it ? Merodach is weak :  
His father now those ancient servants seek :  
Reason returns : again he'll sit on high :  
And with our lives the Prince his own mean life will  
buy."

" Ha ! yes ; he knows his feebleness has failed  
To back our counsels : these shall be assailed :  
The blame of his misrule must we exhaust ;  
And, if we live, our power at least is past."

" His faith, nor might, to us can safety bring :  
Who trusts him hides his jewel in a sling.  
In heart he is a parricide, but still  
His weakness fears to justify his will.  
May such be trusted ? Not his innocence ;  
He must be guilty, for our hope is thence.  
'Tis ours to goad him on to such a length,  
That farthest crime alone may seem his strength."

" Say we at once the outcast Monarch slew,  
And crushed our fears ?"

" Nay, that his son must do ;  
So shall our knowledge of his guilt ensure  
Bribes for our silence, and our rule endure.  
Well, then, at once, he must insult his sire,  
That fears for life may perfect his desire,  
And thus complete the parricide. On high,  
Where vales embosomed in the mountains lie,

I know a place where comes the desert King  
Each noon his limbs beneath the shade to fling.  
Beside him feeds his battle-horse, that bore  
His youth triumphant on from shore to shore,  
A prince's gift, much loved : Near couched each night,  
Upsprings he neighing with the morning light,  
Awakes his lord, again goes forth with him  
To range the pastures till the twilight dim.

“ Now Parthian Chud's our friend, advanced by us  
To keep the royal hounds, he'll help us thus :—  
His tiger-dogs, from India's northern woods,  
Fell mountain climbers, glorying in the floods,  
Three previous days shall hunger, till arise  
Their bristly necks, and burn their laming eyes ;  
Then shall our Monarch hunt ; they, famine-clung,  
Shall sweep the barren hills with lolling tongue,  
Where no prey is, led thither on pretence  
That there 'twas seen—it since has wandered thence.  
Chud then, instructed, shall his Sovereign lure  
To nearer hills, as if it there were sure ;  
And in the noon shall he his beagles lead  
To where the wild King loiters with his steed.  
Behold them started ! Rush the kindled pack ;  
Not even unfeigned restraint could keep them back,  
So fiercely hunger pricks their headlong way,  
Against their instinct on the unwonted prey.  
Onward they drive : At once, perhaps—'tis well—  
The Ox-King falls before their crowding yell ;  
Nor bone, nor scalp, the bloody grass alone  
Next moment tells our fears with him are gone.  
If Chud from royal game can them restrain,  
At least on Zublon shall they go amain ;  
Or falls the horse, or flees but soon to fall.  
The mad King sees his son—has seen it all.

That son away pursues the storm of chase,  
And ne'er again dares see his father's face.  
What must he do? The rest has been explained:  
His sire must die: Our place is thus maintained."

"This more: Our King, when Prince, with bold desire  
Loved Cyra, heedless of his angry sire.  
When Heaven's decree against the latter sped,  
The Hebrew damsel from the Palace fled.  
But I have learned her haunt; far in the wild  
She dwells, a Jewish hind's adopted child,  
The embruted Monarch near; for hers the praise  
To love, to tend him through his humbled days.  
So let this maid be carried from her place,  
Say on the night of our appointed chase;  
Then, for I know our Sovereign loves her still,  
Shall she become the creature of his will.  
Then, in his hours of hope unfilial  
And mingled fear, shall we declare her thrall—  
Thus from the service of his father gained  
By force, and in his palace thus detained.  
So shall he feel again that father wronged;  
And dare be bold, to have his life prolonged."

"Our scheme is doubly one, how wisely blent!  
It but remains to push it to the event.  
This be in haste, for Persia's threatened war  
Against us hangs upon the east afar.  
The issue? Good our plan in any case.  
But now our King has leisure for the chase."

"Behold! the first faint shoots of morning light  
Breathe upward through the shadowy cone of night,  
Sickening the eastern stars: 'Tis now the time,  
Old Chardas waits us on his watch sublime;  
From him the signs celestial shall we know,  
Shape farther plans, and onward safely go."

## CANTO III.

## THE HUNT.

Before her cavern stands at evening-tide  
Cyra, her harp clear glittering by her side;  
Now for the King she looks far east away,  
And now she turns unto the setting day;  
She veils her dazzled face, her garments shine  
With molten gold, like angel robes divine,  
Touched by the sun, as large he stoops to rest  
Beyond the Assyrian kingdoms in the west.  
Eastward again she looked: she cleared her eye—  
Ha! yes, she sees come o'er yon mountain high  
A courser white; swift dogs are on his rear;  
Upcoming hunters on the hill appear.  
Can that be Zublon? From the mountain falls  
The chase now swallowed by the nearer vales,  
Perplexed and wide; again it comes in sight,  
And lo! 'tis Zublon sure that leads the flight.  
He takes the river, stems it with disdain,  
Paws the near shore, forth springs, comes on amain.  
The yielding dogs float down athwart the flood,  
Swarm on the bank, renew their yells for blood,  
Regain their track; inextricable, dense,  
With crowding heads they wedge their way intense.  
In fear majestic on the charger drew;  
White clouds of smoke his seething nostrils blew;  
Now streamed his tail on high, now swept the plain;  
Abroad were driven the terrors of his mane.  
He toiled, he strained, he neared the well-known maid,  
He saw his rock, turning he proudly neighed,  
Went reeking past, and rushed into his cave;  
And Cyra ran the gallant horse to save.



Quick dipped in oil, and lit, in either hand,  
Of gummy pine she bore a waving brand, -  
Forth held them, hasted to the entrance back,  
There met the brindled leaders of the pack,  
Scorched their dry tongues, and blinded them with fire,  
And still she kept them back, still forced them to retire.  
One minute more! impelled by crowding power  
And hungry rage, the damsel they'll devour.  
But here be mountain woodmen; they have heard  
The tumult, hasted, and the maid will guard,  
True to the King: with banded axes they  
Dashed off the dogs, and kept them still at bay,  
Till Chud the hunter came with smarting thong,  
And down the mountain lashed the yelling throng.

## CANTO IV.

## NEBUCHADNEZZAR'S CAVE.

The moon full-orbed came up the east, and shone  
Sweetly above the hills of Babylon:  
Forth went the virgin Cyra by her light,  
And wet her sandals in the dews of night,  
Oft pausing she to strike her harp's clear string,  
Through the still vales to lure the homeward King.  
Long hours she roamed, but ne'er her wild lord came;  
The keener heavens breathed chilly through her frame;  
Then back she slowly went, and, to divide  
The lonely hours, her scented fire supplied.  
Nor yet, her hope though fainting, did she leave  
Undone the filial duty of each eve;  
But mixed his bowls of milk and tempered wine,  
With drops infused, the pith of flowers divine,

In gentle wisdom that their healing dew  
In nightly sleep his spirit might renew.

## II.

A foot, a shadow came ; uprose the maid ;  
'Tis he !—forward she springs—is she afraid ?—  
Awed she draws back, she stands in mute surprise,  
To see that solemn light within his eyes—  
The strict concentrated check—the lucid reins  
Of reason, ruler o'er ecstatic pains.  
With silent love on Cyra long he gazed,  
Till came some quick sense of his life abased ;  
Gleamed his proud tears ; into his cave's recess  
He turned away in his sublime distress,  
As in pale Hades, midst dim-visions things,  
Stalk the proud shadows of forgotten kings.

## III.

Her lamp the maid replenished with the oil  
Of fragrant trees, to work a pleasing toil  
Of needlework. Too glad for this, she stood  
Entranced, till startled by a groan subdued.  
Noiseless her footsteps as the falling snows,  
With shaded lamp unto the King she goes ;  
Lets fall the shifting light by mild degrees,  
Till now the features of her lord she sees.  
He sleeps, yet brokenly ; those sultry gleams  
Betray a spirit toiling in his dreams.  
Forth Cyra hastes, but soon she reappears  
With mingled balms ; with these, and with her tears  
That dropped the while, she washed those dews away  
From off his forehead, till refreshed he lay ;

And kissed his cheek, and with a daughter's care  
Arranged the masses of his raven hair.

## IV.

Then sate the maid, unrolling, white as milk,  
Down from her knee a web of Persian silk,  
Flowered by her needle, as her shaping mind  
Thereon the King's young conquests had designed,—  
From Nile victorious to the glimmering North,  
Whose pictured form with keys of ice came forth;  
O'er Tyre triumphant, o'er Damascus, o'er  
Great kingdoms eastward to the Indian shore:  
All here portrayed in glory and in gloom,  
Rich as the work of an enchanted loom.  
Her heart a silent covenant had made,  
The finished gift before him should be laid  
That solemn day, when he should leave that den,  
Raised up by God again to govern men;  
That to his heart, his humbled sense, his awe  
Of Him who ruled him with a wondrous law—  
His fear from this—his joy, redeemed—his thought  
Of her who loved him, and that picture wrought,  
A lasting great memorial it might be,  
That Zion's captives he was bound to free.  
His reason comes, her half-wrought cloth demands  
The sleepless haste of her unwearied hands.

## V.

Forth came the King; his worn and awful face,  
On Cyra bent, began to melt apace  
To gleams—how tender! farther still subdued  
To mingled tears of more than gratitude.

Stung by some fierce remembrance, fiercely changed,  
With sudden strides throughout the cave he ranged;  
Like toil-caught lion of his prey bereaved,  
The mighty hinges of his bosom heaved;  
Wild flew his locks; and darkness o'er his face  
Settled, like night upon the desert place.  
But trembling came: he knelt with humbled brow,  
Solemn as when the ancient forests bow,  
Smote by the cardinal winds:—"I know Thee well,"  
Uprising, said he, "God of Israel!  
The bright stars are the dust beneath Thy feet!  
Vast ages dim not Thine essential seat!  
Yet these permitted eyes, did they not see  
Thy Glory in the furnace with the Three?  
An effluence, like a globe of crystal air,  
Was round about them: scathless was their hair.  
Beyond, the red and roaring haze but showed  
More beautiful these children of their God.  
A Fourth was with them: glowing were His feet  
As iron drawn from out the boiling heat!  
Was it not Thou? Brightness was Thy attire,  
Mild walking with them on the stones of fire!  
Under Thy dread permission, in Thy sight  
I rise a King; but I will reign aright.  
Though greatly wronged, to-day though galled my pride,  
Yet to my heart shall vengeance be denied.  
Yea, by their insults of this day extreme,  
My foes have chased my madness like a dream.  
Theirs no excuse; yet, by Thy grace upraised,  
To me Thy mercy shall by mine be praised:  
For I am humbled; ne'er shall be forgot  
Thy power which curbed me down to such a lot.  
O hear me now for her, this precious child,  
More than my daughter on the mountains wild!

For me her dear eyes faint: Great God of Heaven,  
Be health, be gladness to my Cyra given!  
Let her but live, that I to her may prove  
At least a father for her boundless love!"

He ceased. Young reverence her eyes abased;  
With trembling joy a cup to him she raised.  
He took the cup, with murmured love he blessed  
The virgin, drank, retired, and lay at rest;  
For she had spiced it with the sovereign flowers  
Of sleep, to soothe him through the midnight hours.

## VI.

There sits young Cyra! As her work is sped,  
Waves the redundant glory of her head,  
Her dark and heavy locks. O more than wife!  
O bold and lavish of thy generous life  
For him thy lord! What though, by cares subdued,  
Pale is thy cheek, O virgin greatly good,  
All fair art thou as the accomplished eve,  
Whose finished glories not a wish can leave;  
Yea, more than eve consummate, as her skies  
Where lurk the cognate morrow's glorious dyes:  
So wears thy youth still promise, still when won  
The perfect grace of every duty done!  
Yea, who can see thee in this holy hour,  
Nor deem thee guarded by supernal power?  
Nor deem he sees, of Watchers here divine,  
Incessant gleams around this cavern shine?  
Light speed thy task, young Cyra; happy be;  
Here angel wings are visitant for thee!  
But hush! but hark! ha! see—a stealthy shape!  
A second, third!—O how may she escape?

She starts—she's seized—she struggles—shrieks for aid,  
In vain; the King in charmed sleep is laid.  
Masked forms around her throng, with many a foot  
The emblazoned web of beauty they pollute.  
Even Zublon's help she craves in her dismay;  
But yielding, fainting, she is borne away.

## CANTO V.

## THE BATTLE.

Forth flames the day. From off his terrace high  
The King Chaldean, with a troubled eye,  
Long eastward looks; for lo! afar descried,  
Comes on the Persian war sun-glorified,  
To quell his throne. His nearer view commands  
The embattled might of Babylonian lands,  
In gorgeous ferment. From the city pour  
Fresh hosts continuous through the impatient hour:  
Their jostling chariots leap; the tide runs high  
With all the pomp of flowing chivalry,  
Arabian camels, and Niscean steeds  
Bearing a province of auxiliar Medes.  
Onward they scour; for westward o'er the plain  
The flower of Persian kingdoms draws its train,  
From where its world of waters Indus brings  
To Ocean, upward by his hoary springs,  
To where the Tartar's winking hordes look forth  
Over the snowy bastions of the North—  
An army great and terrible: Earth seems  
To be on fire beneath their brazen gleams.

## II.

Near waxed the fronting lines ; intensely keen  
They paused : stern was the silence them between.  
Loud blew the Persian trumpets, wide the heaven  
By one great shout from all their hosts was riven.  
Chaldea answered on the west. At once  
The Immortal Band of Persia's youth advance,  
Flanked by a cloudy stir on either side,  
Of swarming horse and archers opening wide.  
Came o'er each army, darkening like a shroud,  
The crossing texture of the arrowy cloud.  
Beneath, the vans were locked together grim,  
Were interfused the battle's ridges dim,  
There opening, closing here, till form gave way,  
Forgot the imposing beauty of array.

How gazed the King, intensely forward bowed,  
As thick and thicker grew the battle-cloud,  
Still darker waxed, now broke in lightened seams,  
Again devoured the momentary gleams !  
Forth rushed a western wind, backward it rolled  
The heavy battle's slow uplifted fold.  
O beauty terrible ! he saw afar  
The sultry ridges of the heaving war,  
Saw down long avenues of disarray  
The harsh-scythed chariots mow their levelled way.  
'Twas doubtful long, but now the struggle pressed  
With weight slow-whelming, gaining on the west ;  
Far back are swayed the wide Chaldean swarms,  
They bow, they faint before the Persian arms.  
But hark ! a mighty trumpet in the west !  
But lo ! a warrior for the combat drest  
In mail refulgent, on a milk-white steed,  
Comes dashing east with earth-devouring speed !

Started the Prince, pale grew his forehead, shook  
His knees, as stood he still constrained to look ;  
For, ha ! his father's form that champion showed,  
And plunging deep into the battle rode.  
Far waved his sway, stemmed the Chaldean rout,  
And changed their terror to a mighty shout,  
By thousand thousands on the turrets thronged,  
And lofty walls of Babylon prolonged.  
A sultrier ferment stirred the field : a band  
Thickened behind that arm of high command,  
As onward, eastward, with the whirlpool's might,  
It sucked the reflux of the scattered fight ;  
Till, with its full concentrated attack,  
It bore the centre of the Persians back.  
Nor this alone : in shouldered masses wide  
Their van was cleared away on either side.  
And deep was pushed that column unwithstood,  
And aye that waste collateral was renewed,  
Till eastward far the Babylonian host  
More than regained the ground which they had lost.  
Then reeled the Persian power ; it wavered, broke,  
Was forced, was whelmed in one commingled shock.  
Their camels fled, their Indian archers ceased,  
Their chariots rolled away into the east ;  
Far driven their host, consumed, like stubble sere  
Wide fired when withering east winds close the year.

## III.

The Prince his chamber sought : he bade with speed  
Narses and Merdan come, his counsellors of need.  
They came. " We task you not," he cried, " to say,  
Not even to guess that Victor of this day.



Slaves! slaves! we'll hear you not. This night at least,  
This one night more, we'll be a king and feast.  
Our Palace guards be doubled. Then when we  
Are flown with cups, and filled with midnight glee,  
Be Cyra brought; we'll make her drink old wine,  
Her heart to warm, to make her beauty shine:  
Long have we loved her; and, by Bel above!  
Ere morn shall we be happy in her love."

## CANTO VI.

## THE BANQUET.

Come to the Banquet! Lift your dazzled eyes,  
Survey the glory that before you lies!  
Far down yon avenue of fainting light,  
The dim dance swims away upon the sight.  
Behold the central feast! Behold the wine  
Around in brimming undulations shine,  
As shakes the joyous board! There Beauty sips  
The purple glimmer with her murmuring lips;  
For there the rose-crowned concubines are set,  
For there the nymphs of Babylon are met,  
Each one a princess: Their illumined eyes  
Glitter with laughter, glance with coy surprise;  
And aye the love-sick dulcimer is played,  
Till faintly languishes each melting maid.  
Here peaceful satraps quaff: their lordly breasts  
Built out with gladness, sit the chosen guests.  
And there the Prince: But oft he looks around,  
And seems to-listen for some coming sound.  
Fear in his heart; each bowl, each golden cup  
With blood, for wine, to him seems welling up,

Smote by the light of that branched candlestick:  
These Holy Vessels well may make him sick,  
Torn from Jehovah's Courts with impious hands,  
To light the unhallowed feasts of Heathen lands.

## II.

But see young Cyra brought by eunuch slaves,  
Pale, pale as are the dead within their graves,  
Yet beautiful, in vestments flowered and fair,  
With hasty garlands in her raven hair.  
Pleased are the nobles of the banquet; round  
Soft murmurs tell the favour she has found.  
'Gainst scorn and wrong her heart had high defence;  
Approval quelled her glowing innocence,  
And Cyra tore the roses from her head,  
In trembling haste her Jewish veil to shed.  
It was not there; but nature there supplied  
More than the wimple of a regal bride,  
How lovelier far! Her eager hand unbound  
Her hair dishevelled; far it fell around  
Her comely form, black as the ancient Night,  
And veiled the virgin from that insolent light.

Entranced in love, forgetting every fear,  
And flushed with wine, the reeling Prince drew near.  
"Thou chosen flower of Jewry, why so pale?"  
He cried. "Nay, look out from that envious veil.  
Give me thy soft hand, come drink wine with me,  
Cling to my love, my bosom's jewel be!"

Back Cyra stepped, her tresses back she threw;  
Their wavy beauty o'er her shoulders flew.  
But burned her eye intense, as far it looked,  
Nor check of terror intermediate brooked;

For in a moment the prophetic might,  
God-given, was hers, the seer's awful sight.  
Pale, fixedly rapt, concentrated, entranced  
She stood, one arm outstretched, one foot advanced ;  
Nor moved that foot, nor fell that arm disturbed,  
Not for a moment was her far glance curbed,  
As from her lips, o'erruled with Heavenly flame,  
The impetuous words that told the vision came:—  
“Cling to thy love? I see a haughtier bride  
Sent down from Heaven to clasp thy wedded side!  
O more than power, than majesty she brings,  
Drawn from the loins of old anointed Kings,  
To be her dower! Destruction is her name,  
With terror crowned, with sorrow and with shame!  
Her eyes of ravishment shall burn thee up!  
And Babylon shall drink her mingled cup!  
Weary thine idol-gods, old Babylon ;  
Yet tremble, tremble for thy glory gone!  
City of waters! not o'erflowing thee,  
Thy boasted streams shall yet thy ruin be!  
Look to thy rivers! Shod with crusted blood,  
The Persian mule—I see him on thy flood  
Walk with dry hoof! Ha! in thy hour of trust,  
He stamps thy golden palaces to dust,  
Which dims the bold winds of the wilderness  
One hour—Then, where art thou? And who shall guess  
Thy pomp? its place, even? Let the bittern harsh  
Give quaking answer from her sullen marsh ;  
From drier haunts, where doleful creatures dwell,  
Let tell the satyr, let the dragon tell!”

She ceased, she clasped her hands, nor yet withdrew  
Here eye centred in its piercing view.

“Nay,” said the Prince, “it ill befits those lips  
To talk of kingdoms’ and of thrones’ eclipse!

Rein now the lovely madness of those eyes,  
And see the bliss that near before thee lies.  
Thy harp? 'Twas fetched with thee from out the cave."  
—The Monarch nodded to a waiting slave,  
The harp was brought—"Now, strike one nuptial strain  
Of those that graced thy wisest Sovereign's reign:  
Sing a glad song of Solomon." She took  
Her harp inviolate, as with scorn she shook;  
Forth, burst on burst, her holy quarrel leapt  
'Gainst Zion's mockers, as the chords she swept.  
"Nay," cried the Prince, and interposed his hand,  
"Sweet Fury, stay; thy harp must be more bland.  
Give us—we'll teach thee." Back in sacred pride  
The Jewess shrunk. "It shall not be!" she cried.  
"Our people's woes—O Jacob's God, how long?—  
Have filled these chords with many a mournful song,  
Have sanctified them thus. Yea, for thy King,  
Thy father, too, how oft has thrilled each string,  
To soothe him in the lonely wilderness,  
By thee forgotten in his sore distress!  
But I did ne'er forget him! Thou bad son,  
My harp were tainted, touched by such a one,  
Ungrateful, daring in voluptuous rest,  
In the flowered garments of thy women drest,  
To shame the throne of such a father; yea,  
With dogs of chase to vex him in thy play!  
Ne'er shall thy finger touch one hallowed wire!"  
Mighty beyond herself, in holy ire  
She burst the chords, her harp asunder tore,  
And wildly strewed the fragments on the floor.  
In quick revulsion kneeling down she cast  
Her eyes to Heaven. Loud blew a trumpet blast.  
Up sprung she. Fear was in the Prince's eye;  
Yet, "To my chamber with her!" was his cry.

Slaves seized the maid; she shrieked; with effort strong,  
 O minutes, moments could she but prolong!  
 Hark! shouts and clashing swords!—"Help, God, ere I  
 Must——" is she saved? The doors wide bursting fly;  
 He comes sublime—'tis he! the King restored!  
 Faces and forms of war dread thronging guard their  
     lord.

## CANTO VII.

## THE DEATH OF CYRA.

"Majestic child of gratitude! this hour  
 I bid thee ask not half my realm for dower:  
 I dare not mock thy pure young soul; but say  
 How shall I honour—nought can thee repay?"  
 Thus spake the King to Cyra, as she stood  
 Before him trembling and with eyes subdued.  
 ('Twas on the morn which saw the Palace cleared,  
 The guilty quelled, the lawful Sovereign feared.)  
 "Why tremble, child? Uplift to me the face  
 That met me first with smiles of infant grace,  
 Then when I saw it lie, a priceless gem  
 Shining in blood, all pleased, upturned to them  
 Who trode around thee, and had scorned to bow  
 To save from crushing hoofs thy radiant brow.  
 I saw, O God! thy bloody hands in play  
 Grasp at the fetlocks in their perilous way;  
 I seized thee up, around my neck were thrown  
 Thy little arms, and thou becam'st mine own.  
 With pride I reigned in youth: In those high days  
 Thy harp was filled with Zion's sorrowing lays:  
 Yea, yet a child, sweet wisdom was thy dower;  
 Thou saw'st my pride, and sang'st Jehovah's power,

Who for His people stretched His darkened hand,  
And drove down wonders o'er the Egyptian land:  
The green curled heaps of the curbed sea for them  
The swift pursuing hosts of Pharaoh stem,  
Heaved on them, welching them; His Israel  
O'er lands of drought and deserts terrible  
He bore; before them went His cloud by day,  
By night His fiery pillar led the way:  
Such was thy anthem, such the argument,  
That I might fear, for Judah might relent.  
Dark dreams came o'er me; thy sweet soul refrained  
From plaintive hymns, that I might not be pained:  
O more than generous, delicately just  
To sorrow wert thou when I lay in dust!  
But I am raised to reason's awful peace;  
And ne'er to tell thy goodness will I cease.  
With songs the gifted bards of Babylon,  
With harps peculiar, shall thy praise make known.  
Aloft a golden tablet shall declare,  
In grateful lines, for me thy wondrous care,  
Reared on those mountains: Thee all lands shall know,  
And in thy presence queens shall softly go."

With tears of gratitude the virgin kissed  
The Monarch's hand, low kneeling to be blest.  
"Be just," she rising said, "be more than kind  
To me—let Zion's sufferings touch thy mind;  
Build up her walls, her Temple! Let thy hand  
Shield back our people to their ancient land!  
Would that the days were come, O would they were,  
When old, old men again shall be in her,  
Again forth leaning on their staves shall meet  
With cheerful voices in each sunny street,  
Shall count her towers, her later glories show,  
Shall tell the praise of one exalted foe!

Think not of me, my young life's waning fast:  
I feel it here. But O thy trouble's past!  
And now, my King, my father, in my hour  
Of death I'll claim of thee a daughter's dower:  
Thy love alone from tears has kept me free,  
When oft I've longed our sacred land to see;  
Ne'er shall I see it, but I'll make thee swear  
To take my body hence, and lay it there.  
And wilt thou not, as in thy days of need  
I've loved thee much? Thou wilt, thou wilt indeed!"

"I will not look; I'll hear thee not; nor speak,  
As if my Cyra were so faint and sick!  
Cold winds indeed have hurt thee in that den;  
But fear not, God will make thee well again.  
I'll talk of hope: 'Twere more to me than power,  
To have thee near me to my latest hour;  
Yet thee to honour, to myself severe,  
I'll haste to set thee in a loftier sphere.  
The prophet Daniel shares my council-board,  
Young, beauteous, wise, accepted of the Lord;  
Say, couldst thou love him? 'Twere a joy to me,  
In raising him esteemed, to honour thee.  
Then for his sake, for thine, would I restore  
Thy people, make Jerusalem as before,  
Make Daniel king; his spousal queen be thou,  
And round to thee I'll make the kingdoms bow."

"No, no!" she said: "Restore our ancient race,  
But let me die beholding still thy face!  
Forgive me, Abraham's God!" She said, and grasped  
And to her bosom passionately clasped  
His knees, and sunk: One quick convulsive thrill  
Throughout her body passed, and all was still.

## II.

He raised her up—O terror! O despair!  
He pressed her heart—no pulse is stirring there.  
Borne to a couch, he held that lovely head,  
And gazed upon her in his silent dread;  
By her unheeded now: No more she sees  
Her father and her king—O more to her than these!  
He started, called his slaves; but vain the aid  
Of man, he closed the eyelids of the maid;  
Then seized her lifeless hand: low bowing there,  
He hid his face among her long black hair;  
There lay through night, all silent in his woes;  
And rose not up until the morn arose.

## CANTO VIII.

## THE END OF NEBUCHADNEZZAR.

At morn the King arose: He bade be sought  
Embalmers taught in Egypt; they were brought.  
With linen pure and costly gums they dressed  
That virgin body for the grave's long rest.

## II.

Within an ivory coffin Cyra lay;  
Odorous lamps around her night and day  
Burned, shining on her with a sweet dim light;  
And there the Monarch fed his sorrowing sight.

Yet oft retired he, as he gave his leave  
To Salem's princes o'er the maid to grieve.  
Ezekiel heard and came; by Daniel's side  
Walking, the Brethren in the Furnace tried



Came too; they stood around their daughter dead,  
And lowly bowed was each majestic head.  
Then communed they of Judah's earlier day,  
Her prophet's vision, and her poet's lay,  
Her judges, priests, her mighty men who fought  
Jehovah's battles, and deliverance wrought;  
Forgetting not those women famed of old,  
For deeds beyond a woman's blood made bold.  
Of Cyra then they spake, great was their praise  
Of her endeavour Zion to upraise.  
Then bowing down, when they had ceased to speak,  
The son of Buzi kissed the virgin's cheek,  
Weeping the while. Forth from the place they go.  
Back comes the King in his peculiar wo.

Long years—even till his death—his heart would there  
Have kept her; but he rose from his despair;  
Recalled her wish; and, greatly self-denied,  
Ordained her body should not there abide,  
But to Judea—such her last command—  
Should go, should lie within her fathers' land.

Just to the dear departed one, he bade  
Be chariots yoked, and horsemen swift arrayed,  
At morn, a goodly escort, to convey  
The honoured dead from Babylon away.  
And in the tombs of Judah's princely race  
Shall gentle Cyra have her burial-place:  
Whate'er her birth, a praise with her she brings  
More than the blood of many thronèd kings.

They come! they take her thence! Silent, aloof,  
Stood the great King; then sought his Palace roof,  
And saw that convoy darkly haste away  
To Judah's land, beneath the western day.  
Soft music mourned the while. On turrets stood,  
On roofs and walls, the city's multitude,

All westward looking ; thousand thousands laid  
Their foreheads low for Cyra, honoured maid.  
As for the King, he tore his straitened vest,  
To ease the swelling trouble of his breast ;  
And watched that sable troop, till from his eyes,  
Far fused to mist, the swimming vision dies.

## III.

Down walked the grief-struck King ; but yet put on  
A governed wo, and sate upon his throne :  
His laws renewed, the glories of his State  
Arranged, with god-like majesty he sate.

## IV.

Remembering then his pledge by Cyra won,  
To raise her people up, the King bade this be done.  
But grief for her already had subdued  
His heart, relapsing to its mournful mood.  
Quick drooped his life : the same revolving year  
Saw Cyra die, and him upon his bier.  
Yet held in honour their united name  
Was Zion's helper, and deliverance came.

## GRANDMOTHER.

FAR through the snows of winter come  
To share his widowed Grannie's home,  
The Orphan Boy lays down his head  
Weary on his little bed.  
Oft looking out, with modest fear,  
He sees her anxious face severe,  
Late at her work, as if 'twere due  
To such a heavy burden new.  
Her lamp put out, the clothes are prest,  
How kindly, round his back and breast ;  
Her face to his, so loving meek,  
He feels a tear drop on his cheek.  
Sobbing, sobbing, all for joy,  
Sobbing lies the Orphan Boy :  
No more sorrow, no more fear,  
Such power is in that simple tear !

### II.

Her cottage drowned in roses, sitting  
Before it Grannam plies her knitting ;  
And, prosperous from their city life,  
Her Grandson near sits with his wife.  
Before them play their boy and girl,  
So fair with many a tangled curl,

Tumbling about, with laughing shout,  
As aye they find some floweret out.  
A race! they come; with Grannie lies  
To say who holds the richer prize.  
Her glasses wiped, with solemn air  
She ponders well, she judges fair.  
Judgment pronounced, the little chap,  
Back she lays him on her lap,  
And measures nice if still her knitting  
That stumpy leg be duly fitting.  
With family love, and family cheer,  
Tho Orphan pays his Grannie's tear.

## A FATHER'S CURSE:

A Dream,

IN FOUR VISIONS.

### VISION FIRST.

A WIDOWED father from the holy fount  
Of Christian sprinkling bore his first-born babe  
Home through the Sabbath noon. And aye his hand  
Arranged the garment in a lighter fold  
To overshadow that breathing face upturned,  
Yet let it freely drink the vital air.  
And oft scarce walked he in his gaze intent,  
    Which fed on his boy's face,  
    Come out of his own loins,  
    Formed in the painful side  
Of a dear mother—gone to barren dust.  
O the wet violets of those sleeping eyes,  
Which glisten through their silky fringed lids!  
Look to that dimpled smile! Look to those gums,  
How sweet they laugh! His little features change,  
To fear now fashioned in his baby dreams:  
With many a kiss and many a murmured word,  
Fain would that father chase away the shadow!

## THE VISION CONTINUED.

The Sabbath sun went down the western day.  
His sloping beam, mingled with coloured motes,  
Came through the leafy checkered lattice in,  
Passing into a little bed of peace,  
Where lay, in vestments white of innocence,  
That child of many vows; no ruder sound  
Than chirp of lonely sparrow in the thatch,  
Or fluttering wing of butterfly which beat  
The sunny pane, to break his slumber calm.  
Before him near, in that mild solemn light,  
Kneeling his father prayed.

## VISION SECOND.

The Bow was on the East:

One horn descending on a snow-white flock  
Of lambs at rest upon a sleek hill-side,  
The other showered its saffron and its blue  
Down on a band of young girls in the vale,  
Tossing their ringlets in their linkèd dance,  
Laughing and winking to the glimmering sheen:  
Through them and over them the glory fell,  
Into the emerald meadow bending inward.

Beneath its arch,  
Of beauty built, of promise, and of safety,  
I saw that father as a woodman go;  
And wide behind him ran his little boy.  
They reached a woody gallery of hills,  
And there that father felled the lofty trees,  
Whose rustling leaves shook down their twinkling drops,  
Wetting his clear axe, glittering in the sun.  
Perversely sate aloof, and turned away,

Nor gratified his parent with attention  
To what he did, with questions all between,  
That boy among the ferns, intently fixed,  
Plaiting a crown of rushes white and green.

He tore it with fierce glee.

He tore his flowerets, gathered as he came,  
Wildings of coloured summer, heeding ne'er  
The freaks and fancies in their spotted cups.  
The young outglancing arrows of his eye  
Were tipped with cruel pleasure, as he sprung  
With froward shoutings leaping through the wood,  
O'er shadows lying on the dewy grass,  
Hunting a dragon-fly with shivering wings.  
The wild-bees swinging in the bells of flowers,  
Sucking the honeyed seeds with murmurs hoarse,  
Were crushed to please him, for that fly escaped.  
The callow hedgelings chirping through the briar  
He caught, and tore their fluttering little wings;  
Then hied to where came down a sunless glade,  
Cold tinkling waters through the soft worn earth,  
Never sun-visited, but when was seen  
His green and yellow hair from out the west  
Thro' thinner trees, spun 'twixt the fresh broad leaves—  
But ne'er it warmed the ground, bare save where tufts  
Of trailing plants for ever wet and cold,  
And tender stools of slippery fungi grew:  
There in a sweet pellucid pool, that boy  
Drowned the young birds of summer one by one.

Back came he near his father,

Yet to him turned not; whistling, looking round  
To see what farther mischief he could do;  
Then laid him down and dug into the ground.

Oft turned to him the while

His father fondly looked: Heart-crowding thoughts

Of boyhood's growing wants, and coming youth,  
Strengthened a parent's loins: faint shall they not,  
Strong for his son shall be: forth shall he tread  
The summer slope, the winter's dun green hill  
Where melting hail is mingled with the grass,  
To strike the gnarled elbows of the oaks.  
Now, as he turned renewed unto his toil,  
His bosom swelled into the heavèd stroke.

The self-willed boy,  
Perversely angry that his father spake not,  
And holding in his heart a contest with him,  
Formed by himself, of coldness best sustained,  
Refrained no longer, but looked round in spite:  
He saw the sunbeam through the pillared trees  
Fall on his father's bald and polished head,  
Bowing and rising to the labouring axe;  
Mouth, eye, and finger mocked that father's head!

#### VISION THIRD.

There stood a ruined house!  
In days of other years, perchance, within  
Were beds of slumber, and the sacred hearth,  
Children, and joy, and sanctifying grief,  
A mother's lessons, and a father's prayers.  
Where's now that good economy of life?  
Scattered throughout the earth?  
Or has it burst its bounds,  
And left this broken outer shell,  
Swelling away into the eternal worlds?  
The pathway to the mantled well grows green;  
The swallow builds among the sooty rafters,  
Low flying out and in through the dashed window.



Throughout the livelong day  
No form of life comes here,  
Save now and then a beggar sauntering by  
The stumps, wool-tufted, of the old worn hedge,  
That scarcely marks where once a garden was:  
He, as he turns the crazy gate, and stops,  
Seeing all desolate, then comes away  
Muttering, seems cheerless sad  
Beyond his daily wants.  
No sound of feet  
Over that threshold now is heard,  
Save when on bleak October eve,  
The cold and cutting wind, which blows all through  
The hawthorn-bush, ruffling the blue hedge-sparrow,  
Shivers the little neat-herd boy beneath,  
Nestling to shun the rain  
That hits his flushed cheek with sore-driving drops,  
And forces him to seek those sheltering walls,  
Low running with bent head: But soon the awe  
Of things gone by, and the wood-eating worm—  
To him the death-tick—drives him forth again  
Beneath the scudding blast.  
There came an old man leaning on his staff,  
And bowing went into that ruined house:  
It was that father!  
This was the home to which he brought his bride:  
This was the home where his young wife had died:  
This was the home where he had reared his boy.  
Forth soon he came;  
And many tears fell from his aged eyes  
Down to the borders of his trembling garment.  
He saw a man of stately form approach,  
And slunk away, that he might meet him not;  
That man his son! He, from his early years,

Had wandered o'er the world in quest of gain.  
Much had he seen,—the smoky blaze of war,  
The tents of peace, the courts of ancient kings,  
Cities, and peoples strange; yet back he came  
Untouched by all the wide humanities,  
Narrow, and cold, and inconsiderate.  
Awe to command in eyes that saw him poor,  
He built, not distant from his native place,  
A costly dwelling. Hither, proud, not kind,  
He took his father from his cottage work.  
That cottage, now he nears it: there it stands,  
What but memorial of his mean descent?  
And lo! his father, tottering round its walls.  
Ha! shall the world still note and tell his birth?  
With haughty hand he swept those walls away.

## THE VISION CONTINUED.

An old old man sate near a lordly house,  
Trembling, not daring once to lift his eyes  
Even to the speckled linnet on the bush:  
    'Twas he—that father!  
Came sweeping silks, a haughty pair went past:  
That proud disdainful fellow is his son;  
And she who leans upon his arm, attired  
With impudence, his wife, whose wealth has made  
Him higher still, both heedless of their father.

## VISION FOURTH.

That father died neglected, and in death  
With struggling love were mingled bitter thoughts—  
    A Father's Curse.  
This, ere his head went down into the grave,

Dug in a corner where meek strangers lie,  
Had upward sprung, a messenger succinct,  
To trouble all the crystal range of Heaven,  
To call on Hell, to post o'er seas and lands,  
Nature to challenge in her last domain,

Not to let pass the accursed.

There came a voice—it cried,

“The Storms are ready.”

Forth flew into mid air that Father's form,  
No longer mean, a potentate of wrath,  
To rule the elements and set them on.

He called the Storms—they came ;

He pointed to his son :

There stood that son—no wife was with him now,  
No children pleaded for his naked head—  
Upon a broken hill, abrupt and strange,  
Under a sky which darkened to a twilight ;  
A huddled world of woods and waters crushed,  
Hung tumbling round him, earthquake-torn and jammed  
From Nature's difficult throes : cut off he stood  
From ways of men, from mercy, and from help,  
With chasms and ramparts inaccessible.

The tree-tops streaming toward his outcast head,  
Showed that the levelled winds smote sore on him ;  
Gaunt rampant monsters, half-drawn from the woods,  
Roared at him glaring ; downward on his eyes  
The haggard vulture was in act to swoop ;  
Rains beat on him, snows fell on him, hail struck him ;  
The forky jags of lightning from the cloud  
Played keen and quivering round him, faintly blue ;

And many thunders lifted up their voice :

All Nature was against him.

Out leapt a bolt,

And split the mount beneath his sinking feet.

O'er him his Father's form burnt fiercely red,  
Nearer and nearer still,  
Dislimned and fused into one sheeted blaze.  
From out it fell a bloody drizzled shower,  
Rained on that bad son's head descending fast,  
Terror thereon aghast—he's down ! he's gone !  
Darkness has swallowed up the scene convulsed.

# A MOTHER'S BLESSING:

## A Dramatic Poem.

### PERSONS.

ROTHMOND.

EDGAR.

ARTHUR.

FRIAR CLEMENT.

ORPAH.

EDITH.

A SHEPHERDESS.

ROBBERS.

A MAD WOMAN.

*Scenes laid in Scotland, before the Reformation.*

### ACT I.

#### SCENE I.—*Friar Clement's Cell.*

FRIAR CLEMENT. If I were young ; if thus I sought  
to train

My youth to duty, shielding it from cares,  
And from their possible blight, 'twere all unwise ;  
For comes exposure, then the tender-reared  
Is like the lithe dull sickly grass that grows  
'Midst thorns, without the knots and the short joints  
Of strength ; its shelter reft, livid it curls  
And dies if once the wrinkled east-wind blow.  
But I am old : I owe the world alone  
The example of a putting-off of cares.  
Yet not austere all, it may be done

With soothing foretastes, won from joy still mine  
 To feel the beauty of heaven-lighted earth.  
 Up in the sunny crystal air high hanging,  
 The mountain woods green glistening of the May;  
 The snowy cygnet by the borders dwelling  
 Of lucid waters; to the sight upheaving  
 Aye the fresh swelling sea; the pastoral hills  
 Dappled with shadows, as the cloudy heavens  
 Go bowing over them; day's dying glories,—  
 These all are mine; then hushed and decent eve,  
 Spirit-tempering stillness, or the sound of winds  
 Going among the high tops of the trees.  
 Then, with her moon forth comes the old solemn Night,  
 Or starry-studded in her dark apparel;  
 Then, blame unknown, and fear, stern soul-compellers,  
 Sweet is my sleep within unquestioned doors.  
 And thus the old man of God—such peace is won  
 From the dear healing of Christ's wounded side—  
 Keeping the eternal sabbath of the heart,  
 Creeps up the quiet unmolested hill  
 Of Contemplation to the high pure climes,  
 Where the cleansed creatures in white vestments walk,  
 With unimagined beauty on their faces.  
 O tenderly my duty let me do.

*[He advances to ARTHUR, lying asleep in a corner,  
 and wipes his brow.]*

Christ ease the trouble which lies very heavy  
 On the distressed hinges of that heart!

ARTHUR (*awaking*). Thou man of God, where is she?

FR. CL.

Who?

ARTH.

My sister.

Ha! dreams and mockery all! My poor drowned sister!

FR. CL. Your wounds wax well: a little farther rest,  
 And you shall rise repaired.

ARTH.

Ay; and cast off

The withered slough of my remembered being,  
 And forth come fresh and lubric as the spots  
 And slippery rings of the unsheathed tender serpent?  
 Shall sleep do this? Were I a thousand times  
 Dipped in the wholesome waters of the sea,  
 Could it do this? Or do you mean to give  
 The dull black wine of death, if that may do't?  
 Had I no sister had; were not my mother  
 A beggar going o'er the windy hills,  
 Fain for a piece of bread to stumble through  
 The sightless dark, or wandering by the stars,  
 I might be well perhaps. But—mock me not,  
 My soul is very sorrowful to death.

FR. CL. My dear young stranger—

ARTH.

Ha! that name upbraids me;

'Tis just that thou should'st know me, and thou shalt.

[*ARTHUR rises up and clothes himself with his mantle.*]

FR. CL. Nay then, what do you mean? Sure, not to go?

ARTH. I'm well. I go. But hear me ere I go.

Rothmond perhaps you know: hard by he dwells

In the stern pride of his ancestral towers.

My father Edgar was his eldest son.

He wed my mother of a gentle line,

But now brought low. Fierce was my grandsire's wrath,

And forth he kept them from his house and love;

Adopting as his heir his second son,

Last of his issue, to uphold his name.

Be it so, then! My father was a man

To make a worthy house unto himself.

Steady and bold forth went he to achieve

His fortune on the seas, leaving his wife

With his twin children, Edith and myself.

We heard of him no more: we mourned him lost.

Scant grew our means. Now then for me to do !  
The Western World was found : thither I'll go,  
Gold and renown I'll win : thither I went.  
We saw the boundless forests summer-swathed ;  
And the great rivers, call them issuing seas,  
With painted people on their idle shores.  
Our souls were up : we fought from land to land.  
Renown I won, and gold—gold for my mother's house.  
But now, ah me ! in my wild whirl of life,  
Caught by a love not wise, absorbed and blind,  
My duties were forgot ; mother and sister,  
To these I sent no tidings and no help :  
Nor—this I since have learned—had they received  
What in my just days I had sent to them.  
Loosened from love by a heart-wrenching shock,  
I hastened home ; our home was desolate :  
My sister had been sick ; my mother forth  
From poverty had been obliged to roam,  
Standing in narrow lanes to ask an alms,  
Weeping for me, and driven from haughty gates.  
Well, then, she is a beggar—that is settled ;  
Begging for my sick sister—all's right there.  
But where's that sister, then ? Forth by the river  
She's gone to seek new health : I sought her there.  
Far through the woody glade I saw her met  
By a dark youth : I knew him to be Hulin,  
The kinsman, far removed, of Rothmond's house ;  
But who, since Rothmond's second son was dead,  
And that son's son, had been by him adopted.  
I saw him turn and walk by Edith's side—  
Help, man of God ! she's gone ! the sudden fiend  
Has pushed her o'er the near precipitous bank.  
The interval was as a flashing dream,  
Till down the river's rock-tormented gulfs



Whirling I wrestled with their strangling strength—  
In vain; the flood had swept her to the sea,  
Ne'er to be found by me, though day and night  
I sought her body on the barren shore.

FR. CL. Can this be real? or is it but a thing  
Shaped from the surf of thy young brain o'erwrought?

ARTH. My eyes, and head, and heart grew cool and clear,  
Sheer onward bent. The villain fled away  
From swift instinctive terror of my quest;  
But it was deadly, deadly! Not high hills  
Dividing kingdoms, blistered worlds of sand,  
Rivers, nor fens, nor ocean many-voiced  
Betwixt us, shall divide us; through the pangs  
Of earthquake, through the twilight of eclipse,  
Wading through blood, through fire, shall I o'ertake him,  
Throughout the spinning reek of the high storms!  
Back to this region came he—I came back.  
Glory at last! we met: You know the rest?

FR. CL. Abroad one afternoon, I saw the winds  
Fall on the vexèd forest of old pines,  
Oft tearing up with all their cracking roots  
The enormous trees; the cloak-wrapped traveller,  
Dismounting, scudded down the blowing steep  
With his oft-rearing horse, and hasted on;  
A tear rose in the wild wind's eye; rains fell  
Flooding the world; I sought a sheltering tower  
Shattered with years and ruin, there I sate  
From its lorn windows looking far and wide.  
I saw two enemies meet; their swords are crossed;  
Starkly one falls; the other reels above him,  
Staggering recovers, plants his foot, stoops, lifts  
His fallen adversary, bears him on,  
Stands on the rock that overhangs the river,  
And from his breast dashes him over—down.

Ha! no, he has not followed; but he lies,  
Where he has fainted, o'er the cliff half-drawn.  
Thence I recovered you.

ARTH. But not so him,  
Destroyer of my sister! From these hands  
Heaved, the great waters whelmed him, they devoured  
him.

His head, his feet, are away to the deep sea,  
Rolling commingled: Ne'er his bones shall rest;  
Just Nature ne'er will let his little bones  
Repose in the sad clefts of the sea-caves:  
Them shall the under eddies hunt about,  
And bleach to nothing the mean relics!

FR. CL. Nay,  
This vengeful pride—

ARTH. My pride is at an end.  
Yea, from this night, this hour, I swear to you,  
In foul attire—my punishment and penance—  
Laying upon me what my mother bore,  
To wander forth in life's distressful ways,  
As she has wandered, till I find her out  
Living, or learn on what dull bed she died.  
I owe thee this, my mother; I have been  
Heedless of thee too long, avenging Edith.

FR. CL. Fain would I bid thee fear not for thy mother,  
Fain say it cannot be she begs her bread;  
But since we dare not mark with bounds precise  
The chastening discipline of Heavenly love,  
I will but say I have at least a hope  
Of good reserved for her, even in this world,  
Whate'er her present lot—a hope derived  
From the consummate beauty of her life,  
But more especially from her filial youth,  
Which won with such solemnities of awe,

So laid, so pressed, so sealed upon her head,

A MOTHER'S BLESSING.

ARTH. Did you know her then?

FR. CL. Yes. In an eastern dale, where then I dwelt,  
There did I see thy mother Orpah first.

'Twas on a summer eve: a shower had fallen;  
Forth flushed the yellow sun; hedges and trees  
Twinkled with drops of light; again abroad,  
The noisy children waded in the gill  
And shallow pools; the birds sang in the leaves;  
And cocks crowed lightly from the reeking farms.

Forth from her cottage came an old blind woman,  
Whose hoary hair, smooth parted on her brow,  
Was like the blossom of the almond tree.

Her right hand leant upon a staff, her left  
Was on a fair girl's shoulder: with slow steps  
Measured, the damsel led her to a seat  
Beside a small white dial on the green;  
And there they sate in the illumined eve.

But aye the maiden rose, seeing some flower  
Moist gleaming in the grass, simple but sweet,  
And gathered it, and brought it to her mother  
That she might smell it—for she was her mother.  
The violet for its smell, the scentless wildings  
She plucked them for their beauty, crimson-tipped,  
Or dropped with gold; and, sitting by her mother,  
With delicate freaks of fancy and of love,  
Quaintly she put them in her dear white hair.  
Trembled that blind old woman with the weight  
Of a full heart, o'erburdened with its blessing;  
She laid her hand upon her daughter's head,  
And praying to the shining light of God,  
Which lighted all her face:—"My own true child!  
Orpah, my last! child of my blood and heart!

I'll bless thee now: Our good Lord Christ uphold thee,  
All thy dear life! And, past the grave's deep sleep,  
Wake in His careful everlasting arms!"

Such was A MOTHER'S BLESSING on thy mother.

ARTH. That gracious child! dear fountain of my life!

FR. CL. How could I fail to mark her from that hour?

The light step, the meek grace, the watchful love  
With which she went about her mother's house,  
Feeding, sustaining, cheering that old parent,  
Reft of her husband, and twelve other children,  
And having only this ewe lamb of love  
To lie within her bosom, was to me  
A glory more than all the stars of heaven.  
Up lightly rose she, ere the lark arose  
O'er the wide frosty meadows of the spring,  
To do her careful work. The summer eve  
Shone sweetly on her, as she sate and knit  
By her old mother on the lowly bed  
Of chamomile, or neighbouring woodland seat,  
Loving the green society of trees.  
Still was the autumn day: that mother lone  
Sate in her house, which now was dark to her;  
But in her busy fancy aye she heard  
The laughing voices and the running feet  
Of children, filling all the house with life,  
As in the days gone by, till came anew  
The aching sense of present desolation,  
And up she rose and felt with trembling hands  
The old familiar things, to be assured  
She still was dwelling in her early home;  
Then, groping forth upon her staff she stood  
Long hours beneath the humming sycamore,  
Listening the far-off shouts of happy children,  
Gleaning by fits, but oftener idly climbing

The mountain ashes round the harvest field,  
Gathering wild hips, and running here and there  
To drink from shaded wells with pipes of straw.  
Alas! she saw them not, but there she listened,  
Till came her little gleaner home at eve,  
Orpah, still working for her mother's bread.  
Nor less when winter came that daughter wrought,  
Spinning into the watches of the night,  
So dutiful, that I have often deemed  
Light Fairy hands took up the weary thread  
From her still fingers, overta'en by sleep,  
After the careful day and busy eve,  
And spun for her who spun for her old mother.  
Thus dignified by duty she upgrew  
A stately, beautiful, and deep-souled woman.  
But mark again THE BLESSING:—  
Forth as I walked one sultry summer noon,  
A cloud came sailing up against the wind,  
Smothering the day; a grim and breathless silence  
Sunk on the moors; creatures of earth and air  
Seemed all withdrawn, save where the shifting wings  
Of stormy sea-birds in the dun light, seen  
Close coming o'er the mountains in their gloom,  
Relieved the startled cloud with twinkling glimpses;  
Moaned the wild caves; down all at once a wind  
Came whewing from the hollow of the hill,  
Lashing as with a whip the dreary rushes;  
Big drops of rain fell scattered; forthwith burst  
The flagrant lightnings and deep-bellied thunder.  
But Orpah's cot was near, and gave me shelter.  
There sate the virgin in her darkened house  
Scarce seen, and sewed with many solemn tears  
Her dying mother's shroud. The aged Christian  
Sate up within her bed, and called her daughter;

And o'er her bowing low, "God's storms," she said,  
"Are in the wide heavens, but His peace is here.  
Bless thee, my child! thy love to me has been  
Above the love of women, very great.  
I go from thee, my lamb; but grieve not, fear not,  
I leave thee on the fatherhood of God:  
Through thunders loud, and many mighty waters,  
He'll bear thee up: Our good Lord Christ uphold thee,  
All thy dear life; and, past the grave's deep sleep,  
Wake in His careful everlasting arms!"  
She said, and died. That moment from the cloud,  
Wide rifted, came a glory of the sun,  
Filling with sudden light that saintly bed,  
Illumining that head serene in death,  
And that young mourner, and her glistening tears,  
As with a radiance from the face of God,  
Bearing the assurance of His love divine.

ARTH. Go on: O tell me all her precious life.

FR. CL. Thy father, hunting in those eastern dales,  
Saw her, and, learning all her virtues, loved her,  
And wed her in his passion, calm but deep.  
I joyed to make them one. Long years passed by,  
And we were far apart. Back then I came  
To end my days here in my native dale.  
Straightway I sought their dwelling: Near it sate  
A damsel, on the cold autumnal eve,  
By a small fountain in its rocky shell,  
Fed from the crystal veins of a huge cliff  
All moist and black above; a ruffled redbreast,  
His jetty eye turned to the yellow west,  
Trilled on the bare top of a small near tree,  
By her unheard; nor when her urn o'erbubbled  
With sweet clear water did she go away,  
But sat looking afar to the wide west,

While many a tear fell from her glazed eyes,  
 Aye mingling with the cold blue drops that, slipping  
 From the green fringes of the rock, were blown  
 Against her cheek by the wind, as steadfastly  
 She looked for one that came not—Will he come?  
 Nay, will *they* come? for thou wert also gone:  
 This was thy sister Edith, looking far  
 For thee and for thy father—so I learned  
 As on she took me to her mother's house.  
 I saw them oft. Your father and yourself  
 They mourned as lost, all else seemed well with them.  
 Some months ago grief-stricken Edith pined.  
 I too was sick, and failed a while to see them;  
 Nor have I seen them since. Woe's me for Edith!  
 As for your mother, fear not, her we'll find.

ARTH. For this I go: farewell. But I'll be back,  
 Lest blame be thine to have helped the homicide.

[*Exit* ARTHUR.]

FRIAR CLEMENT *stands a while looking out of his door.*

FR. CL. Would he were back! we'll have a night of  
 storms,

Worse than the watery day, so warm and heavy,  
 Closing now down on the fat oozing earth.  
 Up the low channels of the rivers lie  
 Rank mists, or creep into the shuddering woods.  
 From his dull cot the peasant looking forth,  
 Starts as the rushing of sonorous rain  
 Comes o'er the border fells; the thunder growls  
 Far in the south, and rolls its burden round  
 On the black heavy chambers of the west:  
 Blind smothering fears come o'er him; shrinking half,  
 Half looking still throughout the struggling twilight,  
 He sees, or fancies in the low-hung clouds,

A thousand shapes that blast the unwholesome night  
By cave, blue forest, or wide moorish fen ;  
And hastes to bolt his door, and bless his peaceful bed.  
[FRIAR CLEMENT *retires into an inner cell.*

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## ACT II.

SCENE I.—*A Moor, with Sheep feeding on it.*

*Enter ARTHUR and a SHEPHERDESS, meeting.*

ARTH. Happy are you, my pretty Shepherdess,  
So far and clear came your song o'er the wild.  
Blush of young blood ! come tell me now how you  
Can be so happy in these listless places,  
Where nought is to be seen the livelong day,  
But peevish stone-chats bobbing on the stone,  
And solitary men in far-off mosses.

SHEP. Ay, but these thriving sheep, and lambs at play,  
Are not these something ? And glad summer days ?

ARTH. And health ? And innocence ? And those young  
eyes,  
With going through the light and through the air,  
As ether pure that feeds the vivid stars,  
So beautifully sharp ? And peace and love  
Found in the wilderness ? I stand reprov'd.  
Forth come you singing through the morning gleam,  
Over the purple acres of the moorlands.  
Nor know you grief, save when a lost lamb makes  
Pity's sweet drops slide from your crystal eyes.  
Nor fear is yours, save when at noontide you  
Hear the loud thunders rattle on the hills,—



Short-lived, for you are innocent: Up you spring,  
Your mind serenely brightening as the day.  
If slow to you lingers the golden eve,  
You sit you down and watch your desert clock,  
Counting the clear beads of the glassy wells,  
Peace still producing peace; until what time,  
Their glittering breasts suffused with rosy air,  
The high doves homeward to their windows shoot,  
You seek your cottage by some flowery shaw,  
And night's deep sleep receives you from the day.  
Thrice fortunate Shepherdess! did you but know  
What he before you is; how wretched she,  
He wanders seeking! What's yon form? A woman?

SHEP. A poor lorn creature, somewhat crazed in mind,  
Who all the day follows the silly sheep  
Over the quiet fells, gathering the locks  
Of wool, to work in the low winter nights.

ARTH. God keep her! I must see her: has she been  
Beautiful in her youth?—but that's long past!

SHEP. Never even comely, but she can't help that.

ARTH. 'Tis not my mother. Maiden, I seek my mother.  
Cities I've searched for her, the wild sea-shores,  
Rough quarries idle, dreary fens of rushes,  
Forests, and wide unprofitable moors;  
Oft looking for her into pools of rivers.  
But last night, when the rains fell heavily,  
I saw a form on the dun plashy wild  
Wearily, wearily going; fast I ran,  
But in a moment she had disappeared,  
And there was nothing on the wide flat waste.  
My senses are bewildered! Yet I'll seek her,  
Though I should light a candle and go search.  
Damsel, her name is Orpah; if you find her  
Wandering this way, tell her I seek her thus,

And Father Clement's is my resting-place.  
I've bid the people of a thousand hills  
Do this for me ; travellers before the sun,  
Wayfaring men that in the twilight haste,  
Unquestioned pass not : surely at last we'll find her.  
I'll be back soon ; keep watch, and I will bless you.

SHEP. Trust me for that.

[*Exeunt severally.*]

SCENE II.—*A Pathway through the Corn-fields, by a  
River's side.*

FRIAR CLEMENT.

FR. CL. How each division of the plastic soil  
Wears the true livery of its master's nature !  
Were then the lords of earth but wise and gentle,  
Our land might be a watered garden, full  
Of blameless people and of all good fruits,  
As in the glad days of the Golden Age.  
Here dwells the owner of a wide domain,  
'Mong his own people, as his fathers dwelt,  
Remote from strife, in patriarchal ease,  
Living and letting live ; and so his farms,  
Lusty and rough with bearded crops of bread,  
As in earth's virgin and spontaneous years,  
Swarm with free life, and health, and happiness.  
For, look and see it ; ay, and bless the sight !  
Now are the days of wheat and barley harvest :  
The reapers' hooks glint on the yellow uplands ;  
Whoop little gleaners ; many barking dogs,  
And the rough jingling of the farmer's wain  
Hurrying afield adown the loosened slope,  
Or homeward creaking through the sandy lane

Of dwarf elms feathered to the very heels,  
Make up the cheerful din; nor wants the hum  
Of mealy beggar eating by the hedge.  
The stack-yard rises. Here the sturdy swain,  
His pitchfork o'er his shoulder, with his sleeve  
Wipes from his brow the honourable sweat,  
As burns the glistening sun, rather than shines,  
Through a white gummy veil, say of thick air,  
Rather than clouds, filling with sweltering heat  
The day, as from an oven. There his boys,  
Fair-haired and flushed, shake the meek orchard, down  
Showering the pattering apples on the ground;  
Wild laughing girls gather them up in baskets.  
But look across that narrow-running river,  
And see another and contrasted scene:—  
The grange, untenanted, sinks to decay.  
Low comes the swallow through the shattered pane,  
Where not of wood, or stuffed with an old hat.  
The sheds are littered with the mingled straw  
And rags of haunting gipsies: on the handle  
Of the dismantled pump-well fluttering stripes  
Of blankets hang. Yon cowering sheep diseased  
In its dull corner, rank with nettle-wands  
And seeded docks, has barked with tooth unwholesome  
The scurfy stunted fruit-trees in the place  
That was an orchard once, leaving its tufts  
Of cankering wool upon the red peeled stumps.  
O'er the wide thistly lands no form of life  
Is seen, save where some solitary man,  
Feeble and old, goes sauntering, filling up  
With stakes the gaps of the unthriving hedges.  
They show an owner harsh or ill at ease,  
These lands unsightly: they are Rothmond's lands.

*Enter ARTHUR.*

ARTH. If blame there be, I'm here.

FR. CL.

No man has brought

A charge against you: be at ease for this.

ARTH. At ease! O hermit, coming through last eve,  
I saw the lovely daughters of the land  
Walking on terraces and on balconies  
In the rich light, with stringèd instruments,  
Oft looking o'er the meads delectable,  
At the fair children wading in the grass,  
Pulling the wild flowers' spotted bells. Down fluttered  
The airy creatures through the mellow orchards,  
Gathering the golden apples in the sunset,  
Beautiful, walking in the prosperous trees.  
How I wept for my sister and my mother!  
Why were they not in this glad light of day  
All-happy too? That dear young sister lies  
Whelmed in sad waters, wo is unto me!  
And where's my mother? I have found her not,  
Though I have sought her from the simple hills  
Even to the city's places of dishonour,  
Hunger's pale dens, and scurrilous thievish haunts.  
The very lazar-house I have not missed;  
Nor the strait mad-house, searching it throughout  
The groans and blasphemies of disjointed spirits,  
Laughter unbounded, strokes, and many cries.  
Shade of my mother, if thou'rt dead, hear this!  
If living, weary creature, where art thou?  
O! all the hoards of thy exhaustless heart,  
Heaped on my boyhood, turned to fruitless ashes!  
Thou livedst to think thy one son did forsake thee!  
O'er melancholy hills, by moonlit hedges  
Wandering, the thought filled thy astonished heart;  
And tears for this did moisten thy frail bread.

Then lying low on thy strange bed of death,  
Oft didst thou raise thy head—it ne'er was I ;  
Day or night never came I unto thee.  
Wild world of man! what next? what have we here?

[*Mad MARTHA runs shrieking down the river's  
side, looking into it.*]

FR. CL. The Woman of the River, poor mad Martha.  
Forth from the outcast chambers of the rocks,  
Where windy mists whistle through their forced rifts,  
Issues the haggard creature with a scream,  
Wringing her hands, down to the river's brink.  
Her eyes intently fixed upon its flow,  
Fast she outruns the current, bending oft  
To scan the black depths of the wheeling pool ;  
Nor seldom plunging in she wades the stream.  
What looks she for? Some years ago, she nursed  
An orphan, Rothmond's grandson and sole heir :  
Too near that river on a sultry day  
Heedless she slept ; awakened by a cry,  
There was her young charge rolling down the wave!  
She shrieked, she sprung, she plunged, she snatched at him,  
In vain ; he perished, and she scarce was saved  
From death, to be the maniac that you see.  
Vain was forgiveness, pity, care ; by day  
Resting, nor yet by night, with piercing prayers  
She sought her nursling from the fatal flood.  
Nor when the love of friends removed her far,  
That she might rest from the forgotten scene,  
Was she at peace ; back to her yearning haunt  
O'er wilds she ran, and solitary hills,  
As with the instinct of a thing bereaved.  
Hers the wild benefit of the cave, she sleeps  
Her fitful sleep, then hurries to that bank  
Through all the seasons of the changeful year.

If down the current pass a floating rag,  
Her heart absorbed o'erfills her dazzled eyes,  
Blind from their very eagerness of gaze;  
Stumbling she runs down the unequal shore,  
Screaming:—" 'Tis he! 'tis he!" God pity her!  
She would not give his little bleached cheek  
For all the living things of this great world.

ARTH. Poor faithful one! But take me to thy place;  
There where clear thoughts and holy quiet be,  
I'll rest one night, and rise unto my quest.

FR. CL. Come then, my son.

ARTH. Would I, like thee, were anchored  
At peace within some little hermitage.  
O blessed they who wisely musing turn  
To sweetest uses all the forms of nature;  
Whether young Spring, the leafy architect,  
Is in the woods and builds her green device;  
Or genial Summer melts her gracious cloud,  
Dropping down fatness on the earth's glad furrows,  
Swelling the young wheat with the milk of bread,  
With sweet warm liquor cleaving the moist hoods  
Of bursting flowers that live i' the purpled meadows;  
Or costly Autumn shears her yellow crofts;  
Or Winter, slinging his fierce hail about,  
Thrashes as with a flail the forests bare!  
War, Famine, Pestilence, tell them their design;  
The Earthquake shows the secret of her mine;  
To them the Comet his wan hair unbinds;  
They know the errands of the mighty winds;  
The thunder-stone; and meteors of the storms,  
That plough the dark night with their fiery forms.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III.—*Friar Clement's Cell.*

FRIAR CLEMENT *is discovered reading by the light of his lamp.*

ARTH. (*awaking from his bed in a corner*).  
What hour is't, holy Sir?

FR. CL.                               The faintest gray  
Is in the east. Rest thee. Sleep is for Youth,  
While Age is up with the bird. I'll waken thee  
When the day comes upon the mountain-tops.

ARTH. Say rather that this mortal state of ours  
Has nothing better than this soothing rest,  
And I'll believe thee, and lie still. O life!  
Even there where dwell the old simplicities  
In country places, heaviness of heart  
Dwells with them. Try we boyhood: is it happy?  
Over the tufted common yonder comes  
A rural thing, and as he comes he sings.  
Springing upon his staff, he overleaps  
The blossomed whins, light as the morning lark.  
Along the glistening herbage audibly eat  
His cows, nor wander yet; so with his dog  
Wide running he can leave them at their will.  
The grasshoppers that from his brushing shoon  
Start all around away like jointed sparks,  
He heeds not; climbing to the hermit well,  
That with its clear eye and green floating beard  
Looks from the eastern-sided hill, and sees  
The early sun: slipping in crystal drops,  
The beautiful water trickles sliding down  
The polished rushes, freshening with cold bubbles  
The vivid grass below. Down on his knee,  
That feels the chillness of the oozing moisture,

Bending he drinks; then to the velvet turf  
Of Sabbath pathway leading o'er the hills  
Hastes; sitting there he carves the lettered sod,  
Till fancy has her fill. But now o'ercast,  
The changeful autumn day brings o'er his heart  
An equal gloom, so vacant are his hours,  
His task so slight to turn the wandering kine,  
Running behind his dog that barks against  
The blowing wind. What time the shepherd comes  
Down from the hill, he sucks his gurgling bottle,  
Draining the milk. What next shall be his sport?  
The wild bees, flying high and straight away,  
Alight not to be caught on the dry moor;  
The year's last butterflies sit dull and tarnished  
On dewless flowers, not worthy to be ta'en;  
Oft has he made the urchin swim the pool,  
But now before him laid the prickly clew  
Unheeded stirs, and shows his cautious nose;  
The rushes white and green are pulled and platted;  
His knife lies idle by the listless branch;  
His crammed dog gambols not; there are no more  
Rabbits to snare; and he is tired of hunting  
The slender weasels in the mossy dikes.  
Then is he wretched: to the distant road  
He runs to ask the traveller what's the hour;  
He sees the far-off children, from the tree  
He shouts to them—they hear or heed him not.  
Long hours till evening! then he loses heart;  
The tears are in his eyes; he lays him down  
Wrapped in his plaid, and sobs beneath the hedge  
To the cold shuddering sigh that creeps through it,  
And the shrill shrew-mouse running through the grass.  
So much for boyhood.

Try we next the swain,



Whose life be-praised palls through each rhyming ballad :—  
If dry the summer, heaven is bound with brass,  
Ne'er to be loosened by the slipping rains ;  
His pastures languish ; crops ! you might as well  
Upbind a torch in every harvest sheaf.  
Fat showers have fallen : he on his upland crofts  
With knowing stride steps through his bearded rye,  
His crops of silky barley waving green,  
His wheaten hollows with their blessed spikes,  
His beans, his vetches, his pea-blossomed leas ;  
Yet, standing in a sea of corn, he talks  
Of darnel, thistles, poppies, corn-rose, charlock,  
With rueful stories of the slaving Spring  
Rotting his seed—is thankless and unpleased.  
Canker and care ! vanity all ! Let's sleep !  
Father, 'twere best to sleep !

FR. CL. 'Twill draw from sleep  
A fresher dew, to bear upon thy heart  
The picture, counter to thy peevish swain,  
Of happy labour in the moonlit yard,  
We saw last night—a rustling harvest night.  
The wain, subduedly creaking, prest with sheaves,  
Shadowy came on along the glittering road,  
Whose ruts with sable silver were all polished.  
The low-hung moon upon the southern fell,  
Skirting the doddered trees, poured her wide light.  
The shepherd lad home coming from the hill,  
With his clear whistle, overleapt the dike,  
And tumbling, rose laughing from the crushed ferns  
Through the pure bracing night, to join the maidens  
That with their gleesome laughter at his cost  
Made all the barn-yard echo. Round his stack  
Half-built, with keen eye went the husbandman,  
And with his pitchfork nicely fashioned it.

Forth from it came he, and stood widely off  
As came his crushing wain : heavily swayed,  
Turning it cast a sheaf ; this, from the door  
His chubby boy forth sallying seized and raised  
With toil unfeigned, and mimic pantings loud ;  
Half bearing it, half trailing it, he drew  
The wheaten burden, bigger than himself,  
And fell upon it at his father's feet.  
No lot of man but has its side of light.

ARTH. Come now, the beggar, can you speak for him,  
Or rather *her* ? Nay, let us draw a veil  
Over poor outcast mothers—we'll say *him*.  
Yon gray scarred man, he fought his country's battles ;  
And his reward is—leave to beg his bread  
Throughout the thankless land he helped to save.  
The cross winds vex his head ; the sulphurous gloom,  
Riven by the flaming wedges of the thunder,  
Bursts on his blinded face. O'er hungry heaths,  
By moorland farms, wandering, and lonely mills,  
He finds his shelter, and his dole of food,  
In some permitted nook. There now he sits,  
With many a stealthy glance at the big dame  
Who ranges through the house, and scolds her maids  
The louder for her hospitality :  
This feels the old man, as demure he sits,  
Eating his little portion noiselessly.  
Nor loses he the chance when, thanks repaid,  
Her mitigated voice comes from the pantry ;  
Forth steals he modestly, still further glad  
To pass unroused the mastiff's half-shut eye ;  
The gate behind him clanks not ; nor he stops,  
Nor turns to look till he has gained the road.  
This is the best the beggar's life can boast of,  
The very best ; for we have given him bread,

Where many starve: Ah wo is me for them!  
And thou, the mother of my blood and being,  
Forgive this sorry idleness of speech!  
Why am I here? There goes the gleam of morn,  
And I must work.

[ARTHUR *springs up, prepared to set out.*

FR. CL. Nay, then, here's a small basket  
Of honey, bread, and fruit, let's bear it forth,  
And eat of it in the sweet-breathing air;  
And I'll go on with you a little way. [Exeunt.

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### ACT III.

#### SCENE I.—*The Outskirts of a Forest.*

*Enter ARTHUR.*

ARTH. Boreas, bleak chamberlain, that mak'st my bed,  
Robbing the elms, thou art the kindest fellow  
In all the north.

[*He lies down, and sleeps among leaves at the root  
of a tree.*

*Enter EDGAR.*

ED. Orpah, and ye twin children of my loins,  
Am I not near you now? O are they living,  
Or are they dead? Would they came forth to meet me!  
I almost fear to go and ask of them.  
Yonder's the churchyard, let me turn and see  
What graves are there where they and I should rest.  
But soft, what's this? (*discovering ARTHUR*) a man among  
the leaves?  
Asleep unsheltered on an eve like this?

I must awake him ere cold death strike through him.

Up, friend. Why thus? What are you?

ARTH. (*starting up*). One self-doomed;  
In festering cities, burrowing down through all  
The spawn of Sin that quickens in the night;  
Making me fellow with the freckled children,  
Brood o' the wild hedge-nurse; with swarming beggars;  
Strollers; infesting gipsies; roaring sailors;  
With blind, gnarled, sun-bronzed minstrels; sly, lame  
creatures,  
Tender of foot as is the borrowed horse,  
But swift before the beggar-compelling baton;  
With remnant soldiers of old wars; with jugglers;  
Lunatics; wandering boys; all homeless things;  
All furious outcasts; all degraded bastards;—  
With these oft sheltered 'neath the howling bridge,  
In barns wind-visited, or in dull vaults,  
Where drop upon your sleepless eyes rank sweats  
From leathern wings of filthy flitter-nice,  
Half-formed, and clustering in a blistered stew  
About the roof.

ED. Your words are all too wild,  
Wild as your bed.

ARTH. This bed! I'll sleep no more  
In such dry luxury: I'm on my way  
Down to the low damp forest, where the peeled,  
Fat, clammy ground for ever reeks; the rill  
Scarce soaks its way through the dead choking leaves;  
Where the toad, gross and lazy, squatted sits  
Amidst the soapy fungi, and distends  
The spotted leather of his wrinkled throat  
With minute puffs from his asthmatic lungs.  
There let me sleep, or in the marish-pool!  
What right have I to all these good dry leaves,

When those I love, my manly father first,  
Are lying in the bottom of the seas,  
And in the rivers, and—I know not where!  
Stranger, farewell, and pardon me! Grave care,  
The dignity of sorrow and of patience,  
Sit on thy brow considerate: God go with thee,  
And make thee happy—happier far than I.

[*Exit* ARTHUR.

ED. There is a savage riot in his words,  
From some great stress of mind. Bear must we all. [*Exit*.

SCENE II.—*Friar Clement's Cell.*

FRIAR CLEMENT—*Enter* ROTHMOND.

ROTH. I come to thee, thou holy man of God,  
With other thoughts than in my days of pride.  
Rumours have reached me that my grandson Arthur  
Is in these parts, and that you know of him.  
Would I could find him!

FR. CL.                      Wandering round, he seeks  
His mother still in filial hope, in penance,  
In the wild luxury of self-abasement.

ROTH. She dwells with me. You wonder. Palsy-struck,  
Down by the wood I fell; she found me there,  
As forth she wandered begging; help she brought;  
She held my head herself, as home they bore me:  
And unto me she ministered as a daughter.  
Restored to consciousness, and humbler now,  
My heart grew as a father's, and I prayed her  
To leave me not, but live with me for aye.  
Her decent pride, for outcast Edgar's sake,  
Could ill endure the place denied to him;  
But Edith came, and ere the maid and I,

Sore-smitten both, could be restored to strength,  
Allowing her to go, my prayers had won  
Pardon for all the past, and filial love:  
And now they dwell with me, my own dear children.

FR. CL. Did you say Edith? This is passing strange!  
But know you aught of Hulin?

ROTH. Whither gone,  
And why, unless he thought a certain crime  
Discovered, I can't guess.

FR. CL. He's in the waters.  
Thy grandson saw his deed, and with fell quest  
Hunted and smote him down, and to the river  
Gave his dead body.

ROTH. Let him perish so,  
And those who loved him seek him and avenge him!  
Edith has told me all. You know it too?

FR. CL. But how was Edith saved?

ROTH. The o'erboiling flood  
Bore her light-whirled into a sandy creek,  
And laid her high and clear behind a rock.  
There poor mad Martha, whom no doubt you know,  
Found her that night I rallied from my shock.  
Whether the maniac-creature saw in her  
Some kindred features of her long-lost charge,  
Or from whatever instinct wild but true,  
Bearing the half-drowned damsel in her arms,  
With desperate might she dashed into my chamber,  
And madly laughing laid her at my feet.  
"Is she not thine? God help me, I can find  
No other child!" she cried, and burst away.  
Sore bruised was Edith, but she soon recovered.

FR. CL. Hulin, dark villain, I can guess his motive.

ROTH. He saw that I relented, for I deemed  
Edgar and Arthur lost, and wished to take

Orpah and Edith to my house and heart;  
 So, to maintain himself my heir, he strove  
 To keep them still shut out. How he cut off  
 The means of Orpah's life, to drive her far,  
 Beggared and hopeless, from the neighbourhood,  
 I've traced it all. Edith he met by chance,  
 And, doubtless by compendious guilt at once  
 To reach his purpose, pushed her o'er the cliff.  
 But now she's safe; her mother too: all's well.  
 I joy to tell thee all, for thou hast been  
 Their friend unchanging through the change of days:  
 But for our sickness we had told thee sooner.  
 I said, All's well; 'tis not so till we find  
 Our Arthur. Gallant has his bearing been  
 In the far West: I've heard of it with joy.

FR. CL. Pangs for a loss of love, wo for his mother,  
 Anguish for what he deems his sister's fate,  
 Work in his brain like madness; but his soul  
 Is honour's mould ethereal. I do hope  
 He'll soon be here; gladly, how gladly then  
 I'll bring him to his own true home at last.

ROTH. O yes. Farewell.

[*Exit* ROTHMOND. FRIAR CLEMENT *retires into his inner Cell.*]

SCENE III.—*An open place in the Forest: Rocky dells on each side.*

*Enter* ARTHUR.

ARTH. High overhead the moon, crags with their jags  
 Of splintered silver, slants of falling light  
 Down the blue glooms, streams with their sudden flash  
 From darksome nooks, the same as when of old

I joyed to wander in these glimpsing woods!  
On such a night might Oberon and his train,  
Seeking or shunning Queen Titania,  
On the green parks or solitary sands  
Glance trippingly; or from these shadowy rifts  
Of tusky-rooted trees peep quaintly forth.  
Ay, ay, all this is beautiful; and yet  
Who, knowing man, knows not this lovely hour  
Is stained by him? Forth come the things of guilt  
To affront the holy beauty of the moon:  
There hangs Despair, and gasps away his life;  
Here glaring Murder hides his dropping knife;  
To Theft, to Lust, the shadowy hour is dear;  
And Treason's eyes throughout the night are clear.  
*[Cries for help are heard. ARTHUR runs out.]*

SCENE IV.—*Another part of the Forest.*

ROTHMOND *is seen attacked by two Robbers*—ARTHUR  
*comes in armed with a stick.*

ARTH. Two upon one! Foul play, I fear me, then.  
Masters, stand back! Come now, sweet Sirs, be off!  
You won't? Nay then, take that! and that! and that!

*[The Robbers are driven back by ARTHUR's vigorous strokes, and at last make off.]*

ROTH. *(advancing to ARTHUR)*. My brave deliverer, art  
thou hurt for me?

ARTH. Ha! Rothmond? Well! my hand at least has been  
Nature's just instrument: be it so, then!  
No, Sir, I'm safe: I trust you are so too?

ROTH. Can it be he? Are you my grandson Arthur?

ARTH. I am the son of Edgar: for his sake  
I'll guard you to your gates, and leave you there.



ROTH. Come then, my son. But, ere we reach our gates,  
I humbly hope to win thee to go in. *[Exeunt.]*

SCENE V.—*An Apartment in ROTHMOND'S Castle.*

ORPAH is seen seated on a couch, and EDITH near a window.

ORP. The moon is shining clear. Look out, my child,  
What do you see? Blest day, that we have heard  
Our Arthur's still alive! So near us too!  
I only dread that our seclusion here,  
Unknown of Father Clement, and our neighbours,  
Has made the dear boy miss us, and has driven him,  
Despairing at our loss, again afar.

Would Rothmond were but come! He scarce can fail  
To bring us news of Arthur. See you aught?

EDITH. Two men are coming from the moonlit wood.  
Rothmond's the one: he leans upon the other.  
Can it be he? No—yes. But here they are.

*Enter ROTHMOND and ARTHUR.*

ARTH. My honoured mother! I have sought thee long.  
*[Embracing her.]*

ORP. My lost! my gladly found!

ARTH. My own twin-half!  
*[Embracing EDITH.]*

*Enter a Servant.*

SER. The Friar, my Lord, craves entrance with a stranger.

ROTH. Welcome his blessed feet! Let him come in.

*Enter FRIAR CLEMENT and EDGAR.*

FR. CL. I come thus late to bring you one friend more,  
Won from the far lands of lost men to you.

ROTH. Is this a vision? Am I sick again?  
Orpah, is this not he?

ORP. Lord of my life!  
O wondrous night! my husband!

*[She falls into his arms. When she recovers, he leads her, almost fainting, to the couch.]*

ED. Fear not, my wife, I'll never leave thee more!  
Ta'en by the Moors, what long long weary years  
I wore away! Patience! I'm free at last!  
Now then for home! 'Tis desolate! But I found  
This Friar, old friend and true: He made me come  
With filial confidence within these gates.  
My honoured father, let me kneel to thee  
And crave thy blessing! *[Kneels to ROTHMOND]*

ROTH. Be it on thy head!  
Rise up, my son: all's well: dear children all!  
My house is now complete, and whole, and round.

ED. These are my twins? My Arthur! dear, my Edith!  
Come to your father's heart! *(he embraces them)* I cannot tell  
How much I love you both! Ha! but I've lost  
My pair of little ones I left behind;  
Yet who have lived in my remembering heart  
All these long years, and never grown an inch.  
Well, well, I let them go, and take you for them;  
Though I have missed the joys of your sweet springing,  
A much-defrauded father: O my children!

FR. CL. I go, but, ere I go, let me remind thee,  
My daughter Orpah, of thy MOTHER'S BLESSING,  
Which still is mighty, fighting on thy side.  
Nay, I do bless this house with that good blessing:  
I bless you all:—"Our good Lord Christ uphold you  
All your dear lives; and, past the grave's deep sleep,  
Wake in His careful everlasting arms!"

*[Exit FRIAR CLEMENT, and the Scene closes.]*

## THE CHURCHYARD.

### Night the First.

WITH a quick imperfect shriek,  
Rose the thin embodied reek.  
Like a thing pursued, it fled  
From the kingdoms of the dead,  
Through the green silent vales  
(As the moon unclouded sails),  
O'er the dewy-hazèd hill,  
Through the forest deep and still,  
By the river's sandy shore,  
By the gray cliffs gleaming hoar,  
Through the fens, and through the floods  
Of the fruitless solitudes,  
Far to flee through night away  
To the healthful coasts of day.

Back shuddering, shimmering, o'er its grave it sate;  
Another ghost was near, and thus they mourned their  
fate:—

#### FIRST GHOST.

O dim unbodied land!  
Joy dwells not there, even pain is at a stand.  
A smothering presence fills the air around  
Of patience dumb, and fears without a sound.

## SECOND GHOST.

The Heavenly Watchers where,  
That deigned for man to cleave the morning air,  
And stooping closed, glad message to fulfil,  
Their golden wings on many a glorious hill ;  
And in earth's green and patriarchal days  
With converse joyed our fathers' hearts to raise,  
Beneath broad tented trees, blessing their state  
With great approval, interdiction great ?

## FIRST GHOST.

Far other state is ours ! No simple grace  
Of life primeval, no green dwelling-place !  
Sun there, nor moon, nor ether molten blue,  
Valley, nor tufted hill divides the view,  
Nor lucid river, on whose borders blow  
Flowers many-hued, and trees of stature grow :  
Nor leafy summer, nor the stormy glee  
Of winds, when winter falls upon the sea,  
With change delights us : nor returning morn,  
Nor face of man relieves that sad sojourn.

## SECOND GHOST.

Sorrow is in man's world, but what of this ?  
There sorrow lends an attribute to bliss.  
God send me back, let sorrow come amain,  
And all the crooked family of Pain !  
Were men but wise ! Did but Ambition know  
The flat endurance of our listless woe,  
How to his soul would triumph be denied,  
How slacked the spasms of his o'ertorturing pride,  
Spun from the baffled heart ! O how would fail  
Fires of blood and Passions pale !

## FIRST GHOST.

Behold the goodly pattern of yon heaven !  
Beneath yon moon becalmed the woodlands lie.  
By dogs of chase the desert creature driven,  
Climbs up the rocky stairs of mountains high ;  
With sealing light she touches his wild eye,  
And all the bliss of slumber is for him.  
So sweet yon moon to earth ! Sweeter to me  
Life fresh of blood would be ;  
'Twould fill my heart with joy up to the trembling brim.

## SECOND GHOST.

What though the churchyard, by the glimmering light,  
Pours forth the empty children of the night ;  
O'er seas and lands we flit, but back are fain  
To troop dishonoured to our place again.  
Vain privilege ! it serves us but to show  
The joy that we for ever must forego.

## FIRST GHOST.

O the glad earth ! no more, ah ! never, there  
With chaste clear eyes we'll drink the morning air,  
Breathed through the sweet green saplings of the spring,  
Fresh by the water-courses flourishing !  
No more from cooling shades, at noon of day,  
We'll watch the crystal waters slide away ;  
Till come still evening with her drops of dew,  
And her large melting moon hung in the southern blue !

## SECOND GHOST.

From out the west a haze of thick fine rain  
Comes o'er green height, high rock, and smoking plain,  
Flies lightly drifted o'er the dimmèd floods,  
And shakes its sifted veil upon the woods.

Forth looks the sun, the impearled valley fills  
With seeds of light, and sleeks the slippery hills.  
Nor yet the showery drops away have ceased  
To fall, clear glancing on the darkened east,  
When o'er them cast, with saffron horns the Bow  
Of Beauty melts the fluid woods below.

With glittering heads, down in the grassy plain  
The milk-white herds feed onward in a train;  
Sheep nibbling up, goats on the higher slopes,  
The shepherds stand upon the mountain-tops.  
O beauty! O the glory of the hour!  
What living spirit could resist your power?  
Not mine; far less it could when rustling through  
The crimped translucent cups of leaves, with dew  
And sunshine overflown, my love first stood in view.  
What tranquil might upon that forehead lies!  
How pure the spirit that refines those eyes!  
Joy dwelt in her, as light dwells in the stone,  
Dear to my heart, but now for ever gone.  
God, do but clear her from the grave's foul stains,  
Pour back the branching blood along her veins,  
Build up that lovely head! O let her rise,  
Let youth's fine light revive within her eyes!

#### FIRST GHOST.

Forks of fire, heaven's floodgates pouring,  
Crushed and jammed the thunders roaring,  
My bride of beauty by my side  
Shrinking, we were touched—and died!  
What means this death? O God upon Thy throne,  
Give us the day; we'll let Thee not alone!  
From floods, and fields, and ways, arise, ye ghosts,  
Tribes of dusk time! kingdoms! unnumbered hosts!  
No more of sufferance! upward let us flee  
To God's own gates, and pray the end to be.

Why fear the light? Why fear the morning air?  
 Fill we His skies with shrieks, and He must hear our prayer.

## SECOND GHOST.

Strong is His arm; it o'er that Power prevailed  
 Who rose with darkness and His Heavens assailed,  
 And drove him out, far kindling, as he fell,  
 Around his head the virgin fires of Hell.  
 His very eye could clear us all away,  
 Chase us into the grave, and seal us with the clay.  
 Hush! breathe not of it, lest for aye He change  
 To barren darkness this our nightly range.

## FIRST GHOST.

Lo! through the churchyard comes a company sweet  
 Of ghosted infants—who has loosed their feet?  
 Linked hand in hand, this way they glide along;  
 But list their softly-modulated song:—

## SONG OF THE CHURCHYARD CHILDREN.

Our good Lord Christ on high  
 Has let us forth a space,  
 To see the moonlit place  
 Where our little bodies lie.  
 Back He will call us, at His dear command  
 We'll run again unto the happy land.

O'er each unblemished head  
 No thunder-cloud unsheaths its terrors red;  
 Mild touching gleams those beauteous fields invest,  
 Won from the kingdoms of perpetual rest.  
 Stony Enchantment there,  
 Nor Divination frights;

Nor hoary witch with her blue lights,  
And caldron's swarming glare.  
There are no muttered spells,  
Envy, nor Clamour loud ;  
Nor Hatred, on whose head for ever dwells  
A sullen cloud.  
There is no fiend's dissembling,  
Nor the deep-furrowed garment of trembling,  
But the robes of lucid air.  
O all is good and fair!

Unto the Lamb we'll sing,  
Who gives us each glad thing:  
For Mercy sits with Him upon His throne ;  
For there His gentle keeping is revealed,  
O'er each young head select a glory and a shield.  
Wide be His praises known!

And in the end of days,  
Our little heads He'll raise  
Unto Himself, unto His bosom dear,  
Far from the outcast fear  
Of them, O wo! who make their beds in fire.  
Sons shall we be of the celestial prime,  
Breathing the air of Heaven's delicious clime,  
Walking in white attire,  
With God himself sublime.

*[The Children vanish.]*

FIRST GHOST.

Wo! wo for us! that land is not our land:  
We feel no keeping of a gentle hand ;  
No gleams revealed to us of happier days  
Have drawn our hearts the Saviour-Lamb to praise.



## SECOND GHOST.

Hark! O dire constraint! away,  
We must not look upon the light of day!

How they shudder down to smoke  
At the crowing of the cock,  
And the fat absorbing ground  
Drinks them up without a sound!

---

*Night the Second.*

A brooding silence fills the twilight churchyard;  
Not even the bat stirs from her cloistered rift,  
Nor from her tree the downy-muffled owl,  
To break the swooning and bewildered trance.  
A crowding stir begins; the uneasy Night  
Seems big with gleams of something, restless, yearning,  
As if to cast some birth of shape from out  
Her hutching loins upon the waiting earth.  
The smothered throes are o'er, the birth is out  
In glistening ghosts. Thinned and relieved, the air  
Lends modulation to their spiritual meanings:—

## FIRST GHOST.

Disembodied, we on high  
Dwell in still serenity.  
Name not faculty nor sense,  
Where the soul's one confluence  
Of light divine, and love, and praise,  
From the Lord's unsealed ways.  
Yet we the waiting dust would don,  
With our dear bodies clothed upon;

Loving (for He wears the same)  
Jesus through our earthly frame:  
Then we'd sit at Jesus' feet,  
Then our Heaven should be complete.  
Therefore, for the body's sake,  
Oft its thin semblance do we take,  
Quick-fashioned from our Paradise,  
Thus to revisit where it lies.  
And flitting through the night we're fain  
To see our mother earth again.

## SECOND GHOST.

O'er the shadowy vales we go,  
O'er the eternal hills of snow,  
O'er the city, and its cries  
Heard from Belial's nightly sties,  
And deserts where no dwellers be,  
O'er the land and o'er the sea;  
Round the dark, and all away,  
Touching on the hem of day.

## THIRD GHOST.

I had a wife, what earnest-trembling pen  
Shall tell her love for me? what words of men?  
Spouse of my heart and life! how harsh the pain  
To go from thee, and from our children twain!  
Unborn unto his sorrowful entail,  
The unconscious third could not his loss bewail;  
Yet nature reached him when his father died:  
Fed on blind pangs within thy widowed side,  
And dry convulsive sorrow, bitter food,  
He took a deeper stamp of orphanhood,  
Than if, life-conscious, he had seen me die,  
And wept with many waters of the eye.

This very eve I heard my wife, where she  
In saintly calm dwells with our children three;  
Their low sweet voices of my name were telling:  
O how I yearned around their little dwelling!  
I could not enter in, I could not make  
My presence known, one kiss I could not take!  
Yet I rejoice, the Heavenly Watch are keeping  
Their nightly vigil o'er the dear ones sleeping.

## FOURTH GHOST.

Guard the young lambs, ye Angels; Jesus bids,  
Who laid His hand on little children's heads!  
From Sin defend them, Thou, O Spirit Good!—  
None other can—from Sin still unsubdued,  
Plague still permitted! Here wide-glorying Crime  
Slays half the kingdoms of man's mortal time;  
There Pleasure's form belies the ancient pest,  
For whom in sackcloth must the worlds be dressed:  
She drugs the earth; then by fierce gleams of haste  
The false allurements of her eye displaced,  
By scorn, by cruel joy her prey to win,  
The hoary shape of disenchanted Sin,  
Above the nations bowed beneath her spell,  
Seals the pale covenant of Death and Hell.

## FIFTH GHOST.

From the dungeon, from the cave,  
From the battle, from the wave,  
From the scaffold and its shame,  
From the rack, and from the flame,  
From the lava's molten stone,  
Like a river coming on,  
From the Samiel hot and swift,  
From the earthquake's closing rift,

From the snow-waste's faithless flaws,  
 From the monster's rending jaws,  
 From the famished town, possess  
 By the blue and spotted pest,  
 From the lazar-house of pain,  
 From the mad-house and its chain,—  
 Day and night, day and night  
 (Could we hear its gathered might),  
 What a cry, what a cry,  
 Prayer, and shriek, and groan, and sigh  
 (Even the dumb have burst to speech,  
 In strong yearnings to beseech),  
 Has gone up to Heaven from earth,  
 Since that curse of Sin had birth!

## SEVENTH GHOST.

The glistening infant dies in its first laugh,  
 Like flower whose fragrance is its epitaph.

## SECOND GHOST.

Let the sweet fable tell  
 Of Aphrodite in her rose-lipped shell,  
 Fresh from the white foam of the morning sea  
 Into the birth of beauty ; ne'er was she  
 A lovelier emanation to the sight,  
 Than earth's young virgin in her dewy light.  
 But see her now!—a faded drooping thing  
 (When gleam through sleet the violets of the Spring),  
 Shuddering and shrinking o'er Death's misty jaws,  
 They suck her down, the shade of what she was!

## THIRD GHOST.

Yon strenuous youth—a soul of thoughtful duty,  
 Clothed with heroic beauty—

Look how he scales, so high and clear aloof,  
The tops of purpose to the sons of proof.

Death strikes the towering mark,  
And slings his name for ever down the dark.

## FIRST GHOST.

Would the body's death were all  
Might the sons of men befall !  
But where the spent assault of light  
In crystal tremblings dies away  
Into the spongy waste of night  
Beyond it I had power to stray :  
Far beyond the voice of Thunder,  
Through the silent Lands of Wonder,  
As they wait the birth of Being,  
I was given the power of seeing ;  
And I saw that baleful place,  
Void of mercy and of grace,  
For the outcasts of our race.  
On the scathed shore, as of a flood  
Of fire, a naked creature stood,  
Forlorn ; and stooping, with his hand  
He wrote along the barren sand  
Remembered things of upper air,  
And earth so cool, and green, and fair.  
But strong regrets convulsed his frame,  
As aye he traced his mother's name—  
Regrets subdued to many a tear,  
Dropping on that name so dear.  
A noise like coming waves ! and lo !  
Gleams of a fiery-crested flow !  
The molten flood with crowding sway,  
Near, nearer, licked those lines away ;

Then rising with a sudden roar  
(The levelled mist streamed on before),  
With horns of flame pushed out, it chased  
That being o'er the the sandy waste ;  
Till turning round, with blasphemies  
Glaring from out his hollow eyes,  
He dared the wrath which, ill defied,  
Went o'er him with its whelming tide.  
And sights and sounds I cannot name,  
Were in that sore possessing flame.  
And, ever down from worlds unseen,  
(Wrath, wrath beyond what yet hath been !)  
Thunderings, and hissings as of rain  
Wading through fire, were heard amain.  
O place of anguish ! place of dread !  
Veil the eyes, and bow the head !

## SECOND GHOST.

A change comes o'er the night ; how gracious soft  
This light of upper earth to that sad dwelling !  
The firmament is full of white meek clouds,  
And in them is the moon ; slowly she sails,  
Edging each one with amber, as she slides  
Behind it, and comes out again in glory.  
Darkness falls like a breath, and silent brightness  
Touches the earth alternately : how sweet !

## THIRD GHOST.

But who is this her vigil keeping  
O'er a grave ?

## FOURTH GHOST.

The maid is sleeping.  
With her old widowed father she  
Dwells in her virgin purity,

Young staff of reverence 'neath his weighed years,  
Eyes to his dimness, safety to his fears.  
And oft when he retires to rest,  
She, with her holy thoughts possest,  
Comes hither at the shut of day,  
To muse beside her mother's clay.  
Here once more to muse and weep,  
Wearied she hath fallen asleep.

## FIFTH GHOST.

Filial piety, how sweet !  
Kiss her head, and kiss her feet !

## SIXTH GHOST.

May these kisses, dove, infuse  
Power to bear the nightly dews !

## FOURTH GHOST.

She would fold her arms, and go  
To the dark of death below ;  
Might but a space her mother be  
Let up the gladsome day to see.

## SIXTH GHOST.

But with eternal sanctity  
In that mother's soul and eye,  
What to her were all the mirth,  
Pomp, and glory of the earth ?

## SEVENTH GHOST.

Glistening, solemn, sealed from sin,  
She to her spouse at eve comes in.  
O that meeting ! Does she live ?  
Milk and honey he would give.

A holy joy, but no excess,  
Through her pure body passionless  
Thrillingly goes, to hear that voice  
Which made her wedded days rejoice.  
In silence gazing still on him,  
Till tears her spiritual eyes bedim,  
Sweet murmurs bless him; round she flings  
A glance on old remembered things;  
Another gaze on him; and then  
She's vanished from the world of men.

## . FIRST GHOST.

Lo! on the maiden's knee the Book of Life!  
Kiss every leaf—kiss every wondrous leaf!  
The charter of the Paradise we've won,  
And Heaven we hope for—kiss each blessed leaf!

## SECOND GHOST.

Had we, some eighteen hundred years ago,  
Been passing through a certain Eastern village,  
We might have seen a fair-haired little boy  
Stand at his mother's door, in no rude play  
Joining His fellows; grave, but holy sweet  
Of countenance. Who's that little boy? The God  
Who made the worlds—the very God of Heaven!

## THIRD GHOST.

Love to man, and great salvation!  
Wondrous, wondrous Incarnation!

## FOURTH GHOST.

Ever going to His bed,  
At His little feet and head



Looks His mother, laden she  
With her burdened mystery ;  
Still with tears of wonder weeping  
O'er the mystic infant sleeping :  
He's her son, but He's her Lord !  
O the blessed, blessed Word !

## FIFTH GHOST.

This Book's His Word, and He Himself's the Word !  
This Book is the white horses of Salvation,  
The chariot this, and this the Conqueror !  
Go forth thou Lion-Lamb, far forward bending !  
Strike through dark lands with Thy all-piercing eyes !  
See, see the shadows break—tumultuous stir,  
Masses, abysses ! But among them stand,  
Pillars of steadfastness, majestic shapes,  
Grisly, the Principalities and Powers  
Of outer night, wearing upon their brows  
Defiance, and the swarthy bloom of Hell.  
Go in among them, Thou, go down upon them,  
Queller of all dark things, great Head of Flame !  
Them with Thy lightnings and compelling thunders  
Smite, bow them backward, sweep them to their place !  
Burn with Thy wheels ! Trample the darkness down  
To melting light, and make it Thy clear kingdom !

## SIXTH GHOST.

Worthy is the Lion-Lamb !  
Glory to the great I AM !

## SEVENTH GHOST.

Sin-spotted youth, world-wearied ; difficult age,  
Cramped down with stiff-bowed torments ; homeless  
outcasts,

Lying in destitute benumbed caves ;  
And wanderers reasonless, fantastical,  
Gibbering abroad, what time the Moon is hunting  
In thin white silence in the shadowy woods ;  
And stricken creatures in the lazar-house,  
Who know no kin, in whom care more than pain  
Drinks up the eyes and blood in the night watches,  
Or the half draught of suicidal poison  
(Remorse and shuddering nature spilt the rest)  
Holds its pale quarrel at the heart's red gates ;  
And they whose hearts are locked up by Despair,  
And the key flung into the pit of Hell,—  
Even these, all wasted and imperfect natures,  
Shall be renewed and finished, and shall walk  
Like angels in the white Millennial day,  
Day of dead war and of consummate peace :  
And that up-going pillared cry of sadness  
Shall be an equal sound of praise and gladness.

## FIRST GHOST.

This little Book the instrument shall be,  
Filled with the Spirit ; kiss it reverently !

## SECOND GHOST.

And this virgin bless again,  
Free from sin and free from pain !

## THIRD GHOST.

Her no fabled cestus, wrought  
In the magic looms of thought,  
Of Gorgon hairs, and coldest gleams  
From Dian o'er the morning streams,  
And plumes which staid Minerva gave  
At midnight from her bird so grave,

Tissued in mystic warp with rays  
Plucked from Apollo's head a-blaze,  
And stings of Wit, whose arrow-tips  
In poignant wrath he keenly dips—  
A woven dream—encircles round.  
A better girdle she has found  
In her filial piety,  
And that good Book for ever nigh,  
In angels, and the Comforter  
Whom her dear Lord has sent to her.  
Be she where the tempests blow  
O'er the North the hail and snow,  
Be she where in Southern lands  
Hot winds lift the winnowed sands,  
Peace with her shall still abide,  
The peace that comes from Jesus' side.

## FOURTH GHOST.

Child of duty, child of honour,  
Thus we breathe our wish upon her:  
Bless her to Death's earnest gates,  
Leading to the separate states;  
Bless her to the Judgment-seat,  
Bless her to the Heavens complete!

## FIFTH GHOST.

But ha! I smell the breath of day;  
Come away, come away.

And they vanish to the Blest  
In the Land of Waiting Rest.

### Night the Third.

What though no eager yearnings ever pass  
With curdled tremblings through the Sea of Glass  
Serene, where dwell the spirits of the just ;  
Yet oft their wishful ghosts revisit here their dust.  
Blood-spotted shadows ; scarce from darkness won,  
The untimely babe that never saw the sun,  
Buried at midnight, yearning with dumb strife  
For the enlarged capacities of life ;  
The suicide with stake-impaled breast,  
That in his damned crossway cannot rest ;  
And things of guilt unknown, a thousand ghosts,  
A thousand wandering creatures from the coasts  
Of outer night, beyond the reach of grace,  
With restless flittings fill this burial-place.  
Ye sons of living men, first lay aside  
Full bread and purple clothing, lust and pride ;  
And let the clear sense, that ye too must die,  
Pierce the fat ear, and purge the filmy eye ;  
Then hither come, and see these Shapes, and hear,  
Sifted from out the dust, their voice of truth severe :—

#### FIRST GHOST (*rising from a grave*).

Mercy ! ah ! give me mercy ! Give me back  
My hours of living days—give me but one !  
One crystal minute, then ! O how I'd fill it  
With penitential groans, grappling with God,  
Bowed by His covenants to hear and pardon !  
'Tis past ! And the sore pressure lies on me  
Of alienation and expected Judgment.  
Plaguing my spiritual vision, dooming me

Still more, the image of One crucified,  
Ever before me, hanging in the gloom,  
So looks at me, piercing me through and through  
With His undying patience—O that look!  
Come down, thou Meek-face; 'twas not I that did it!  
You cannot say 'twas I! Go to the doers  
Of the dread literal act; and let them cry  
(As cry they must, when the last heat comes on)  
For one drop of the water and the blood  
From Thy side wound, to lie one little moment  
Upon their fire-curved, cinder-crust'd tongues.—  
But ha! from out the Judgment-waiting land,  
Here comes a Child of Wrath beyond myself.  
Hither, thou guiltier Ghost! Knowest thou me?  
Thou lord and master of my youthful crimes,  
Behold thy scholar! What! thou shivering thing,  
Do thy pale skirts of spongy porous mist  
Drink up the glimmerings of the lights of night,  
Even like mine own? I should have thought thee kneaded  
Of leprous crusts of sin, and blistered marle  
Baked with the blood of souls, and scurfy dross  
From the purged furnaces of Hell, made clear  
To the last spirituality of heat  
For master sinners. Look upon me, fiend,  
Look on thy handiwork, fashioned by thee  
Into a thing for Tophet! Was it good  
To make me this? My curse go down with thee  
Beyond the soundings of extravagant thought!

SECOND GHOST (*advancing*).

The old apology for native vice!  
Weak thing! as if thy blindly breathing soul  
Within thy mother's womb was not engrained

With all thy colours of eternal years!  
Our place is wide enough, let's shun each other.

*[The Second Ghost glimmers away.]*

FIRST GHOST.

He thinks to flee: vain thought! Down he must go!  
I too must down! Pitfall, nor den forlorn,  
Nor the lone crags of the high hornèd mountains  
Where eagles yelp, jungles, nor sandy lands  
Of idle desolation, nor all places  
Where the last modesties of nature dwell,  
Can hide me from the Power that lets me forth  
A little space, to aggravate my doom  
By the contrasted sweetness of the earth,  
Then draws me back again.—Here are the graves  
Of our old house. Would I could gather up  
My dust, and take it hence! How shall I bear  
The looks of virtuous kindred on that Day,  
When summoned I must rise and stand with them,  
Even face to face, with all my guilt revealed?  
But ha! a new-made grave? Is it my sister's?  
Ah! yes, the length and place of it are hers.  
My father's and my mother's, long ago  
Sunk to the natural level of the earth,  
Are hard, and green, and undistinguishable.  
But where the spirits of the three? In Bliss,  
Let me believe; for I've not known them in  
My land of heavy patience. I'm alone  
Of all my father's house shut out from Bliss.  
Can they be happy when I'm thus shut out?  
O for the Patriarch's Ladder to come down,  
Resting its glory on my mother's dust,  
That I might climb the battlements of light,  
And be with them for ever!

Help me, my mother, plead for me with Christ!  
 Stretch down thy dear, dear arms, and take me up;  
 For I was fashioned in thy holy body!  
 My father, and my sister, plead for me,  
 Hang on His wounded side, and plead for me!

*The Phantom of his Mother passes by.*

Salvation! 'Tis my mother! But she's gone!  
 Would she but come again, I'd burst my bounds,  
 And follow her unto the shining doors,  
 And catch her hand, and she would draw me in!  
 But ah! she did not speak to me, nor look  
 Back with regret: 'Twas not my mother, then;  
 But some false head which the Avenging Power  
 Built up of crystal air and sunny light,  
 To mock and plague me.

*[The Phantom again passes by.]*

She again? 'Tis she!

I'll follow—O! O! O! Perdition has me!  
 'Tis but the grinning Fiend! See, how he leers  
 Back through the blasted night! I know thee, Demon,  
 Practical Liar in impersonations,  
 As in thy cozening terms and instigations;  
 Meanest of all created things! But power  
 Is given him o'er me, and I must go down.

*[The First Ghost vanishes.]*

*The Second Ghost reappears.*

#### SECOND GHOST.

There's no escape! Souls, not yet clothed upon  
 With semblance, stretching toward the light of life  
 On the vague shores of Possibility,

Sorrow shall bring you to the birth of blood,  
If come you must! Would I had ne'er been born!

[*The Second Ghost vanishes.*

*A strange but short-lived Tempest fills the Churchyard.*

THIRD, FOURTH, FIFTH, AND SIXTH GHOSTS.

THIRD GHOST.

What Evil Thing so beats about the night,  
With dragon wings of tumult and affright?

FOURTH GHOST.

By yon trail of sulphurous blue,  
Demons here have had to do.  
In the livid issue, lo!  
Pale and dreadful faces go.

FIFTH GHOST. \*

Wo to the outcasts! Them, nor cunning strings  
Melodious, nor soft-stopping pipes, nor all  
The sylvan company of sweet-throated birds,  
No, nor the very music of the spheres,  
Could tune to peace!

*A Seventh Ghost comes shuddering near.*

SEVENTH GHOST.

I am that outcast thing!  
Ye Powers of Mercy, will ye not yet take  
Penance from me on earth? Cut ye it out  
From the vast quarries of prodigious sorrow,  
Shaping it to my soul, and I will do it.  
Be it but on the earth, I care not how  
Or where I do it; whether groping through  
The barren darkness of the Polar hills,  
Or glaring shadowless where the inflamed



Dog of the Firmament, fire-fanged, breathing fire,  
 Bays down with his unmitigated jaws  
 The panting nations : I will do it there !  
 Far have I wandered, beating round the bars  
 Of night, to burst into the boundless day,  
 Unnoticed ; ah ! it cannot be, the Power  
 Of Punishment's too strong and subtle for me,  
 Curbing me back with his invisible hand.  
 Wo ! wo ! my hour is come, and I must down !

*[The Seventh Ghost melts away down into a grave.]*

#### FIFTH GHOST.

Look ! look ! O look ! They're gone ! Saw ye them not ?  
 Round yon flat table of memorial stone  
 They seemed to sit, a ghostly company  
 Of hopeless Ones (judging from their sad faces,  
 Solemnly sad), there with symbolic handling  
 Of shadowy elements, trying to renew  
 The Supper of the Lord, as if they might  
 Call back the day of mercy and of grace,  
 And still be Christ's. But full upon them came  
 A blast from the Evil One, to whom was given  
 Power o'er their lawless and uncertain rite,  
 A levelled blast, and whirled them clean away,  
 Like dry dead leaves, sweeping the naked table  
 Bare of commemoration. O ye sons  
 Of living men, lay hold of the blue day  
 Which yet is yours, hold fast the fleeting night  
 With struggling prayers—hold them, nor let them go  
 Till you have made your peace with the Almighty !

#### SIXTH GHOST.

Yon solitary Shade, see how he stands  
 Aloof—I knew him in the days of earth—

Aloof, alone, and introverted all !  
Back, and far back in Memory's inner rooms,  
Hung round with haunted glooms, Life's Tragic Sorrows  
Act themselves o'er anew, under the eye  
Of dread, sole-sitting Conscience.—O that groan !  
See how he starts, breaking off all at once  
The unfinished trilogies of evolving Guilt,  
Shuddering away, self-chased, down into night !

## THIRD GHOST.

Let us be humbly thankful, we are safe ;  
Rejoicing humbly, as the little bird  
Flies low and coweringly, and with a half  
Chirrup of gladness from the fowler's hand.

## FOURTH GHOST.

Praise to our Elder Brother ! But for Him,  
No earth had been to us, no life, no Heaven !

## FIFTH GHOST.

But for His covenanted blood, the Curse'  
Had killed man's blighted world. The orbs of air  
Spin on the axis of His love. The Bow,  
Fashioned of air, and light, and tears of rain,  
Is but the glad reflection of His face,  
Graciously pleased. The linnet in the leaves  
Christ-chartered sits, while warblings well and bubble  
Out from its white-ruffed throat ; the dappled fawn  
Leaps through the sunny glades, and through the thickets  
Bursts, richly powdered with the coloured dust  
Of sylvan pith exuberant, and smelling  
Of honey-dews, balsams, and dropping gums.  
Sleep comes from Him, and peace ; the husbandman  
Bearing his harvest sheaves, and the blithe shepherd

Piping upon his unmolested hill ;  
Honey, and wine, and oil ; marriage and children ;  
And all the milky veins of love that run  
Branching through nature—all that's fair and good.

## SIXTH GHOST.

And for the sake of Jesus, God's own Heavens  
Are softly set upon a thousand hinges  
Of mercy, ever flexible, ever bowing  
Flexible downward to the contrite ones.

## THIRD GHOST.

Afflictions come from Him. The awful Finer  
Sits by His furnace pot. The heart of man  
Is in the pot—the foul, the stony heart.  
Lurid from far, but ever coming nearer,  
Fiercer and redder, with its threatened flame,  
The heat of Hell burns on the furnace pot.  
But all-pervading Love goes quicklier through it,  
Melting it down dissolved : The dross is purged  
Away, below ; and in the liquid metal,  
Perfect and pure through suffering, the Finer,  
Looking therein, sees His own image clear  
Reflected : And the holy workmanship  
Of every feature, by His art divine,  
He fixes there, never to be effaced.

## FIFTH GHOST.

Forth stalks the King of Terrors, on his head  
The fretted crown of pain ; his bony hands  
Grasping his sheer cold scythe, down through the field  
Of Time he goes, a mower lean and strong,  
Mowing his swaths of life. But see, the Babe

Of Bethlehem strikes the crown from off his head,  
And breaks his scythe, and casts him into Hell.

## SIXTH GHOST.

O for the Spirit's day, when Sin and Death  
No more shall hurt the people of the Lord !

## THIRD GHOST.

Hasten Thy day of power, refining Spirit,  
Making earth's dwellers like the Saints whose feet  
Walk on the terrible crystal.

## FOURTH GHOST.

Judgment then  
Comes unto the sons of men.

## FIFTH GHOST.

It should be noon ; but where's the sun ?  
The air is stagnant, silent, dun.  
Is it eclipse ? Is earthquake near ?  
Nature listens dumb and drear.

That Trump of Doom !

It rends the gloom.

The eagle falls a ruffled heap,  
His pinions drowned in endless sleep :  
The affrighted horse, half rearing, sinks ;  
The dull ox, as he stoops and drinks :  
The lion in the wilderness  
Has crooked his knees to that stern stress.  
The quick are changed : the dead arise.  
Lo ! the Judge is in the skies.  
Rejoice, ye Saints ! The Saints rejoice  
To hear His bliss-awarding voice :

He blesses them, and they are blest  
To go into His Heavenly rest.  
Wrath for the Wicked ! Doomed and driven,  
They sink beneath the Eye of Heaven :  
Like hurrying draught of bitter cup,  
The Eternal Gulf has drunk them up.

## SIXTH GHOST.

Happy, happy we who dwell  
In His love unspeakable,  
Fearing not that coming Day,  
When heaven and earth shall pass away ;  
For, from the days of everlasting years, \*  
Ere we were fashioned in the Vale of Tears,  
The Lamb—the Judge himself—was pledged to be our stay !

## THIRD GHOST.

Widening up the eastern skies,  
See the pale rim of day arise,  
Another day to mortal men,  
Toil, and fear, and care again !  
Spirit ('tis Thy sacred trust),  
Help them, help them, they are dust ;  
Make them wise, and make them just !  
And in great consummation, Dove,  
Bring them to our morn above,  
Morn of the perpetual day !—  
Sister shadows, come away.

[*The Ghosts vanish.*]

## THE OLD SOLDIER.

### CAMPAIGN THE FIRST.

"GLORY of War! But there—behold the end!"  
The Old Soldier said: 'twas by his evening fire,  
Winter the time: so saying, out he jerked  
His wooden leg before him. With a look  
Half comic, half pathetic, his gray head  
Turned down askance, the pigtail out behind  
Stiff with attention, saying nothing more,  
He sat and eyed the horizontal peg.  
Back home the stump he drew not, till with force  
Disdainful deep into the slumbering fire  
He struck the feruled toe, and poking roused  
A cheery blaze, to light him at his work.  
The unfinished skep is now upon his knee,  
For June top-swarmer in his garden trim:  
With twists of straw, and willow wattling thongs,  
Crooning he wrought. The ruddy flickering fire  
Played on his eyebrow shag, and thin fresh cheek,  
Touching his varying eye with many a gleam.  
His cot behind, soldierly clean and neat,  
Gave back the light from many a burnished point.  
His simple supper o'er, he reads The Book;  
Then loads and mounts his pipe, puffing it slow,  
Musing on days of yore, and battles old,

And many a friend and comrade dead and gone,  
And vital ones, boughs of himself, cut off  
From his dispeopled side, naked and bare.  
Puffs short and hurried, puff on puff, betray  
His swelling heart: up starts the Man, to keep  
The Woman down: forth from his cot he views  
Yon moon high going through the clouds of night,  
Soft as the soul makes way through yielding dreams:  
And Wonder listens in yon starry lofts.  
No voice for him! True to the veins of blood,  
His eyes still soften; turning in, he locks  
His lonely door, and stumps away to bed.

## CAMPAIGN THE SECOND.

How fresh the morning meadow of the Spring,  
Pearl-seeded with the dew: adown its path,  
Bored by the worms of night, the Old Soldier takes  
His wonted walk, and drinks into his heart  
The gush and gurgle of the cold green stream.  
The huddled splendour of the April noon;  
Glancings of rain; the mountain-tops all quick  
With shadowy touches and with greening gleams;  
Blue bent the Bow of God; the coloured clouds,  
Soaked with the glory of the setting sun,—  
These all are his for pleasure: his the Moon,  
Chaste huntress, dipping, o'er the dewy hills,  
Her silver buskin in the dying day.

The Summer morn is up: the tapering trees  
Are all a-glitter. In his garden forth  
The Old Soldado saunters: hovering on  
Before him, oft upon the naked walk  
Rests the red butterfly; now full dispread;

Now, in the wanton gladness of life,  
Half on their hinges folding up its wings;  
Again full spread and still: o'erhead away,  
Lo! now it wavers through the liquid blue.  
But he intent from out their straw-roofed hives  
Watches his little foragers go forth,  
Boot on the buds to make, to suck the depths  
Of honey-throated blooms, and home return,  
Their thighs half smothered with the yellow dust.  
Dibble and hoe he plies; anon he props  
His heavy-headed plants, and visits round  
His herbs of grace: the simple flowerets here  
Open their infant buttons; there the flowers  
Of preference blow, the lily and the rose.

Fast by his cottage door there grows an oak,  
Of state supreme, drawn from the centuries.  
Pride of the old man's heart, in many a walk  
Far off he sees its top of sovereignty,  
And with instinctive loyalty his cap  
Soldierly touches to the Royal Tree—  
King of all trees that flourish! King revered!  
Trafalgars lie beneath his rugged vest,  
And in his acorns is the Golden Age!  
Summer the time; thoughtful beneath his tree  
The Veteran puffs his intermittent pipe,  
And cheats the sweltering hours; yet noting oft  
The flight of bird, and exhalation far  
Quivering and drifting o'er the fallow field,  
And the great cloud rising upon the noon,  
The sultry smithy of the thunder-forge.  
Anon the weekly journal of events  
Conning, he learns the doings of the world,  
And what it suffers—justice-loosened wrath  
Falling from Heaven upon unrighteous states;



Lean Sorrow tracking still the bread-blown Sin;  
A spirit of lies; high-handed wrong; the curse  
Of ignorance crass and fat stupidity;  
And maddened nations at their contre-dance  
Of Revolutions, when each bloody hour  
Comes staggering in beneath its load of crimes,  
Enough to bend the back of centuries.

The sun goes down the western afternoon,  
Lacing the clouds with his diverging rays:  
Homeward the children from the village school  
Come whooping on; but aye their voices fall,  
As aye they turn unto the old man's door—  
So much they love him. He their progress notes  
In learning, and has prizes for their zeal,  
Flowers for the girls, and fruit,—hooks for the boys,  
Whistles, and cherry-stones; and, to maintain  
The thews and sinews of our coming men,  
He makes them run and leap upon the green.

The nodding wain has borne the harvest home,  
And yellowing apples spot the orchard trees:  
Now may you oft the Old Soldado see  
Stumping, relieved against the evening sky,  
Along the ferny height—so much he loves  
Its keen and wholesome air; nor less he loves  
To hear the rustling of the fallen leaves,  
Swept by the wind along the glittering road,  
As home he goes beneath the Autumnal moon.

Thus round the starry girdle of the year  
His spirit circles thankfully. Not grieved  
When Winter comes once more, his hale red cheek  
Goes kindling through the cold, forth when the morn  
Tinkles with ice, and when on day's far edge,  
Down in the windy trouble of the west,  
Night's ghostly masons build the toppling clouds.

Zest to his cottage thus: with chosen books  
He sits with Wisdom by his evening fire;  
Puff goes his cheerful pipe; by turns he works;  
And ever from his door, before he sleeps,  
He eyes the sister planets, luminous large,  
Silent, soft spinning on their mystic wheels  
The thread of time: how beautiful they be!

## CAMPAIGN THE THIRD.

Lo! yonder sea-mew seeks the inland moss:  
Beautiful bird! how snowy clean it shows  
Behind the ploughman, on a glinting day,  
Trooping with rooks, and farther still relieved  
Against the dark-brown mould, alighting half,  
Half hovering still; yet far more beautiful  
Its glistening sleekness, when from out the deep  
Sudden and shy emerging on your lee,  
What time thro' breeze, and spray, and freshening brine,  
Your snoring ship, beneath her cloud of sail,  
Bends on her buried side, carried it rides  
The green curled billow and the seething froth,  
Turning its startled head this way and that,  
Half looking at you with its wild blue eye,  
Then moves its fluttering wings and dives anew!

Smoking his pipe of peace, wearing away  
The summer eve, the Old Soldado sits  
Beneath his buzzing oak, and eyes the bird,  
With many a thought of the suggested sea.  
The veering gull came circling back and near:  
"What! nearer still?" the Veteran said, and rose,  
And doffed his bonnet, and held down his pipe:  
"Give me her message, then! O be to me

Her spirit not unconscious from the deep  
Of how I mourn her lost! Bird, ah! you're gone.  
Vain dreamer I! For every night my soul  
Knocks at the gates of the invisible world;  
But no one answers me, no little hand  
Comes out to grasp at mine. Well, all is good:  
Even, bird, thy heart-deceiving change of flight,  
To teach me patience, was ordained of old."

Yes, all is ordered well: Aimless may seem  
The wandering foot; even it commissioned treads  
The very lines by Providence laid down,  
Sure, though unseen, of all-converging good:  
Look up, old man, and see:—

Along the road  
Came one in sailor's garb: his shallow hat  
Of glazed and polished leather shone like tin.  
A fair young damsel led him by the hand—  
For he was blind: and to the summer sun,  
Fearless and free, he held his bronzed face.  
An armless sleeve, pinned to his manly breast,  
Told he had been among the "Hearts of Oak."  
The damsel saw the old man of the tree,  
His queue of character, and wooden leg,  
And smiling whispered to the tar she led.  
Near turned, both stood. Down from her shoulder then  
The maid unslung a mandolin, and played,  
High singing as she played, a battle-piece  
Of bursts and pauses: keeping time the while,  
Now furious fast, now dying slow away,  
His pigtail wagging with emotion deep,  
The Old Soldier puffed his sympathetic pipe.  
The minstrel ceased; he drew his leathern purse,  
With pension lined, and offered guerdon due.  
"Nay," said the maiden, smiling, "for your tye

Alone I played, and for your wooden leg;  
Yea, but for these, the symbols of the things  
You've done and suffered—like my father here."

"Well, then, you'll taste my honey and my bread?"  
The Soldier said, and from his cot he brought  
Seats for the strangers; him the damsel helped,  
Bearing the bread and honey; and they ate,  
The damsel serving, and she ate in turn.  
When various talk had closed the simple feast,  
The strangers rose to go: "My head! my head!"  
The sailor cried, and fell in sudden pangs.  
They bore and laid him on the Soldier's bed.  
Forth ran the lass, and from the neighbouring town  
Brought the physician; but all help was vain,  
For God had touched him, and the man must die.  
His mind was clear: "Give me that cross, my child,  
That I may kiss it ere my spirit part,"  
He said. And from her breast the damsel drew  
A little cross, peculiar shaped and wrought,  
And gave it him. It caught the Soldier's eye;  
And when the girl received it back, he took  
And looked at it.

"This cross, O dying man,  
Was round my daughter's neck, when in the deep  
She perished from me, on that fatal night  
The 'Sphinx' was burnt, forth sailing from the Clyde.  
Her dying mother round the infant's neck  
This holy symbol, with her blessing, hung.  
Friendless at home, I took my only child,  
Bound to the Western World, where we had friends.  
Scarce out of port, up flamed our ship on fire,  
With crowding terrors through the umbered night.  
O what a shout of joy, when through the gloom  
Which walled us round within our glaring vault,

Spectral and large, we saw the ship of help!  
Our boats were lowered; the first, o'ercrowded, swamped;  
Down to the second, as it lurched away,  
I flung my child: the monstrous waves went by  
With backs like blood: the sudden-shifting boat  
Is off with one, another has my babe.  
I sprung to save her—all the rest is drear  
Grisly confusion, till I found me laid,  
In some far island, in a fisher's hut.  
Me, as they homeward scudded past the fire,  
Those lonely farmers of the deep picked up,  
Floating away, and rubbed to vital heat;  
And through the fever-gulf which had me next,  
With simple love they brought my weary life.  
The shores and islands round, for lingering news  
Of people saved from off that burning wreck,  
O how I haunted then; but of my child  
No man had heard. Hopeless, and naked poor,  
I rushed to war: From zone to zone, across  
The rifts of ice, beneath the strokes of heat,  
Reckless I fought. This cot received me next;  
And here, I trust, my mortal chapter ends.  
But say, O say, how came you by this cross?"

The dying man had risen upon his arm,  
Ere ceased the Soldier's tale: "She is thy child,  
Take her," he said; "and may she be to thee,  
As she to me has been, a daughter true,  
A child of good, a blessing from on high!"  
So saying, back he fell. Around his neck  
Her arms of love the sobbing damsel threw,  
And kissed him many a time. And then she rose,  
And flung herself upon the Soldier's breast—  
For he's her father too. And many tears,  
Silent, the old man rained upon her neck.

“O wondrous hour!” the dying tar went on,  
“Who could have thought of this! I am content.  
The Lord be praised that she has found a friend,  
Since I must go from her! That night of fire,  
Our brig of war bore down upon your ship,  
And sent her boats to save you from the flame.  
Near you we could not come; so forth I swam,  
And to your crowded stern I fixed a rope,  
To take the people off. Back as I slid  
Along the line to show them how to come,  
A child, upheaved upon the billow top,  
Was borne against my breast; I snatched her up;  
Fast to my neck she clung; none could I find  
To claim and take her: she was thus mine own.  
That night she wore the cross which now she wears.  
Why need I tell the changes of my life?  
In war I lost an arm, and then an eye;  
My other eye went out from sympathy,  
And home I came a blind and helpless man.  
But I had still one comforter, my child—  
My young breadwinner, too! From wake to wake  
She led me on, playing her mandolin,  
Which I had brought her from the south of Spain.  
She’ll tell you all the rest when I am gone.  
Bury me now in your own burial-place,  
That still our daughter may be near my dust.  
And Jesus keep you both!” He said, and died.

They buried him in their own burial-place.  
And many a flower, heart-planted by that maid,  
And good Old Soldier, bloomed upon his grave.  
And many a requiem, when the gloaming came,  
The damsel played above his honoured dust.  
Not less, but all the more, her heart was knit  
Unto her own true father. He, the while,

How proud was he to give her up his keys,  
Mistress installed of all his little stores;  
And introduce her to his flowers, and bees,  
Making the sea-green honey—all for her;  
And sit beside her underneath the oak,  
Listening the story of her bygone life.  
In turn she made him of her mother tell,  
And aye a tear dropped on her needlework;  
And all his wars the old campaigner told.  
And God was with them, and in peace and love  
They dwelt together in their happy home.

## GENIUS.

### I.

EYE of the brain and heart,  
O Genius, inner sight,  
Wonders from the familiar start  
In thy decisive light.  
Wide and deep the eye must go,  
The process of our world to know.  
Old mountains grated to the sea  
Sow the young seed of isles to be.  
States dissolve, that Nature's plan  
May bear the broadening type of Man.  
Passes ne'er the Past away:  
Child of the ages, springs To-day.  
Life, death, and life! but circling change  
Still working to a higher range!  
Make thee all Science, Genius, clear  
Our world; all Muses, grace and cheer.  
And may the Ideal thou hast shown,  
With joy peculiar be thine own:  
For thee the starry belts of time,  
The inner laws, the heavenly chime:  
Thine storm and rack—the forests crack,  
The sea gives up her secrets hoary;  
And Beauty thine, on loom divine  
Weaving the rainbow's woof of glory.



## II.

Power of the civic heart,  
More than a power to know,  
Genius, incarnated in Art,  
By thee the nations grow.  
Lawgiver, thine, and priest, and sage  
Lit up the Oriental Age.  
Persuasive groves, and musical  
Of love the illumined mountains all,  
Eagles, and rods, and axes clear,  
Forum and amphitheatre,  
These in thy plastic forming hand,  
Forth leapt to life the Classic Land.  
Old and New, the Worlds of Light,  
Who bridged the gulf of Middle Night ?  
See the purple passage rise,  
Many-arched of centuries ;  
Genius built it long and vast,  
And o'er it Social Knowledge passed.  
Far in the glad transmitted flame,  
Shinar knit to Britain came.  
Their State by thee our fathers free,  
O Genius, founded deep and wide ;  
Majestic towers the fabric ours,  
And awes the world from side to side.

## III.

Mart of the ties of blood,  
Mart of the souls of men !  
O Christ, to see Thy Brotherhood  
Bought to be sold again !

Front of Hell, to trade therein !  
Genius, face the giant sin :  
Shafts of thought, truth-headed clear,  
Tempered all in Pity's tear,  
Every point, and every tip,  
In the blood of Jesus dip ;  
Pierce till the Monster reel and cry,  
Pierce him till he fall and die.  
Yet cease not, rest not, onward quell,  
Power divine and terrible !  
See where yon bastioned Midnight stands  
On half the sunken central lands ;  
Shoot ! let thy arrow-heads of flame  
Sing as they pierce the blot of shame,  
Till all the dark economies  
Become the light of blessed skies.  
For this above, in wondering love,  
To Genius shall it first be given  
To trace the lines of past designs,  
All confluent to the finished Heaven.

## THE DEMONIAK.

### CHAPTER I.

#### MIRIAM'S INTERVIEW WITH CHRIST.

IN the green month of Zif beneath an aged palm-tree sate,  
In the wide plain of Jericho, a mother desolate:  
Her lips were covered with her robe, upon her head she cast  
The dust of earth; and over her the hours unheeded passed.  
Forth from the neighbouring trees came Christ, and stood at  
Miriam's feet;  
His face with peace and ardour blent, unutterably sweet.

She raised her head, she saw Him stand, kneeling she clasped  
His knee:

"Help me, great Man of Nazareth! give back my son to me!  
Take pity on a mother's loins, broken with weary pain!  
Over the cloudy hills I go—I seek him still in vain!  
Sorrow my only portion is; sleep flees from me; for food,  
Thy handmaid oft is fain to pick harsh berries from the wood.

"My heart breaks: Tell me, where is he?"—"Daughter of  
Judah, how  
Should I thy son know?"—"I have seen Thy might—a pro-  
phet Thou!

And I have heard Thee speak great things, like arrows dipped  
in gall,  
Shot from a bow, against the proud ; have seen before them fall  
The brows of haughty men : but aye, like honey-drops, distil  
Thy words, the spirits of the grieved with healing balm to fill.

“ Where is my son, my Herman ? At first I stayed at home,  
Till it was cruel so to rest, while he was forced to roam.  
At morn I looked for him, from noon on to the twilight dim ;  
And when in the uncertain light the evening shadows swim,  
I shaped him thence. He came not—God from love has cast  
him forth ;  
But he is dear to me, and I will hunt him o’er the earth.

“ Hear me, good Lord ! O bless me then ! A widow, sore bereft,  
I lost my daughter Judith. But Herman still was left.  
With power, like an anointed child’s, with glory his brow was  
clad,  
His cheek with virgin health ; how bloomed the beauty of his  
head !  
His young eye was as when the sun shines in an eagle’s eye ;  
A life within a life was there, burnished, and bold, and shy.

“ And scarce the silky blossom of his yellow beard was seen,  
When he the ancient forests traced with slings and arrows keen ;  
Heroic daring from each limb breathed ; as the posting winds  
Fleet, o’er the hills so high and bright he chased the dappled  
hinds.  
Then with the men of Naphtali, a lion-hunter bold,  
He tossed his golden head afar on their snowy mountains cold.

“ His boyhood with just joys enlarged, no guilt had spoilt, no  
fear ;  
Nor painted women lured his youth—hence was his spirit clear.

And I had taught him the great acts of old embattled kings,  
Champions, and sainted sages, priests, judges, all mighty things;  
Till, from deep thought, his eye was like a prophet's burdened  
eye:

And he was now a man indeed, built for a purpose high.

"God of my fathers! if my hopes in him presumptuous were,  
From him to me the punishment, tempered with love, transfer!  
Help us, thou Man of God! Perhaps by hopeless passions bound  
And rendered weak, the mastery a Demon o'er him found:  
Reason and duty all, all life, his being all became  
Subservience to the wild strange law that overbears his frame.

"Dark as the blue piled thunderlofts then grew his forehead  
high,

And gleamed like their veined lightnings, rash and passionate,  
his eye;

For he was sorely vexed and fierce. Anon, in gentle fits,  
Like idle hermit looking at the clouds, all day he sits.  
At length he fled far from my care, he felt his life disgraced:  
Pride took him to the wilderness, shame keeps him in the waste.

"Strong as the eagle's wings of quest, on aimless errands runs  
The beauteous savage of my love; but still his mother shuns.  
Along the dizzy hills that reel up in the cloudy rack,  
O'er tumbling chasms, by desert wells, he speeds his boundless  
track;

And in the dead hours of the night, when happier children lie  
In slumber sealed, he journeys far the flowing rivers by.

"And oft he haunts the sepulchres, where the thin shoals of  
ghosts  
Flit shivering from Death's chilling dew; to their unbodied  
hosts,

That churm through night their feeble plaint, he yells; at the  
red morn

Meets the great armies of the winds, high o'er the mountains  
borne,

Leaping against their viewless rage, tossing his arms on high,  
And hanging balanced o'er sheer steeps against the morning sky.

"His food from honey of the rocks and old cleft trees is drawn,  
From wild-fowl caught in weedy pools by the raw light of dawn,  
From berries, all spontaneous fruits. In winter, in the caves  
Of hills he sleeps; the summer tree above his slumber waves;  
Nature's wild commoner, my child! on the bleak autumn eves,  
When small birds shriek adown the wind, he lies among the  
leaves.

"By day the sun, the frost by night, weariness, want, and pain,  
Sorely his young eyes must have spoilt, and dried his wasted  
brain.

Gone are his youth's fine hopes; and mine, what are they?  
My poor child,

Sweet Patience for thy minister go with thee to the wild!

What shalt thou do when sickness comes? How much it  
grieveth me,

That from thy mother's love thou shouldst, as from an enemy,  
flee!

"For him these chastened bones of mine have stood the winter's  
shock;

I've crept to reach him as he sate on the bald top of the rock;  
When summer has enlarged the year upon the pleasant moun-  
tains,

I've seen him sit long hours afar beside their spangled fountains;  
But the coy lightning of his eye ne'er sleeps: my art is vain;  
Swift as a roebuck he is gone, and I must weep again.

“Charmers, exorcists of old skill, wizards that muttering go,  
 All that deal subtly, I have tried: I add but sin to wo.  
 The Expiation-feast I’ve kept; I’ve prayed by many a tomb  
 Of prophets, fervid men of old, that God would change his doom:  
 All’s vain! No, no, it shall not be; for I will track the earth,  
 O’ertake him, hold him with strong love, and drive the Demon  
 forth!”

A cry rung in the distant woods: up Miriam rose and ran;  
 But turned, came back, and kneeling kissed the garment of that  
 Man—

For anxious hope is dutiful. With beating heart again  
 She turned away, ere Jesus spake, and sought the woody plain;  
 And through the rustling alleys, through the mild glades, one  
 by one,  
 She wandered half the summer day, but could not see her son.

## CHAPTER II.

### MIRIAM’S INTERVIEW WITH HER SON, HERMAN THE DEMONIAK.

By Jordan’s waters, Miriam sate beneath a tree and wept.  
 She heard a groan: a man from out the shrubs before her crept;  
 And, like the Serpent damned of God—as if to crush the worm  
 Of hunger that within him gnawed, and ground his writhing  
 form—

He trailed his belly in the dust; his eye, that keenly burned  
 With famine’s purging fire, to her—his mother—was upturned.

“Bread! bread! O bread!” feebly he cried. Her little store she  
 took,  
 And gave it to his trembling clutch; and brought him from the  
 brook

Water in hollow leaves; then down beside him sitting she  
Soft drew to her his yellow head, and laid it on her knee;  
With kiss long as an exile's kiss, she clung unto him there;  
Bedewed his face with many tears, and wiped it with her hair.

He slept, like an o'erwearied babe: she held her sobbing breast  
To stir him not; and hid his eyes, that he might longer rest;  
And smoothed his far-descending locks, dishonoured with the  
dust;

And long and calmly did he sleep beneath her sacred trust.  
At length he started with a groan, he knelt upon his knee:—  
“Thou mother! why hast thou not sought the Son of God for  
me?

“Ha! this is harsh: O pardon me! I know thy love, well tried,  
Has me by the tall forests sought, and by the pastures wide,  
Rocks, and dim sepulchres: dear one! O think me not unkind;  
The Fiend has kept me from you so, wild as the wintry wind:  
He takes me far, he brings me near; athwart your path I fleet,  
Driven, that each other we may see, but ne'er each other meet.

“Blest are the dead! what though their face no more beholds  
the sun,

Though filled with barren ashes be the breast of each loved one,  
With dusty motes confused and dull the jewel of the eye;  
Yet are they gone, and are at rest: how peacefully they lie!  
O to be with them! Spotted plague blue strike me, each sore ill;  
So were I not a vessel filled with an infernal will!

“I am thy quarry of the wild! my faithful huntress thou!  
And think'st thou not thy toils for me my spirit down must  
bow?

The Fiend will come again, leave me ere I leave thee: Away!  
Spend not thy body, so shall I less truly be thy prey.”—



“Speak not to me, I will not go; think'st thou thy youth's first  
prime  
Was half so dear to me as thou, now old before thy time?”

“But come with me: fear not; 'tis past; we'll hear soft waters  
flow;  
The stock-dove in the twilight woods shall soothe us as we go,  
Which aye so well thou lovedst to hear; the stars that softly  
burn  
O'er the green pasture-hills, shall light our homeward glad  
return;  
And then the holy moon shall rise, and lead us all the way;  
And the very God of peace and love will guard our home for aye!”

“Ha! this is vain: why art thou here? haste, haste, there's but  
one hope;  
The Man of Nazareth alone can with the Demon cope:  
Man? Nay, the Son of God; for oft have I, in midnight hours,  
Heard in Engaddi's howling caves whisperings of the Dark  
Powers  
Speak of Messiah, and declare this Jesus him to be.  
And, from some great event at hand, this pause is given to me.”

“To-day, O had I Him constrained! With my own thoughts  
oppressed,  
Even I can see Him more than man: from house to house  
distressed  
He breathes His noiseless peace; by shores of lakes, on the dim  
hills,  
He teaches men; the lazar-house His gracious presence stills;  
A new spirit whispers through the woods of Him to me at  
eve;  
All nature seems with conscious hope of some great change to  
heave.”

"The Fiend! the Fiend! hark!" Herman cried: "He left me  
here at noon,  
Hungry and sick among the brakes; and comes he then so soon?"  
Up from the shores of the Dead Sea came a dull booming sound;  
The leaves stirred on the trees; thin winds went wailing all  
around;  
Then laughter shook the sullen air. To reach his mother's hand,  
The young man grasped; but back was thrown convulsed upon  
the sand.

No time was there for Miriam's love; he rose, a smothered gleam  
Was on his brow, with fierce notes rolled his eye's distempered  
beam;  
He smiled—'twas as the lightning of a hope about to die  
For ever from the furrowed brows of Hell's eternity;  
Like sun-warmed snakes, rose on his head a storm of golden  
hair,  
Tangled; and thus on Miriam fell hot breathings of despair:—

"Perish the breasts that gave me milk! yea, in thy mouldering  
heart  
Good thrifty roots I'll plant, to stay, next time, my hunger's  
smart;  
Red-veined derived apples I shall eat with savage haste,  
And see thy life-blood blushing through, and glory in the  
taste!"—  
"Peace!" Miriam cried, "thou bitter Fiend! 'tis thou, and not  
my son,  
That speaks: I know thee, Demon cursed! I scorn thee, thou  
dark One!

"Glory beyond thy power, dark One! him in the last of days—  
My son redeemed from thee—to Heaven my fathers' God will  
raise;

Whilst thou—ha! outcast from that God!—forth shalt be driven  
to dwell

With horned flames and Blasphemy, in the red range of Hell:  
There prey the old Cares, the Furies there whirl their salt  
whips for aye,  
And faces faded in the fire look upward with dismay.

“And sighs are there, and doleful cries, and tongues with  
anguish dumb;

And through that glaring fierce abyss of years no hope can come.  
Fiend! leave my child—God’s child—avaunt! down to thy  
chambers blue

Of sulphur go! the palaces of Sodom yawn for you.”

“Amen, Amen, Amen!” the Fiend with yelling laughter cried;  
And, like an arrow from the bow, her Herman left her side.

“Stay!” she exclaimed: “hear me, my son: I spake not thus to  
you!”

Swift o’er the desert shore he ran, she hasted to pursue;  
Crushing the salt surf samphire weeds, and many a crusted cake  
Of salt, stumbling o’er pits, she went: she saw Gomorrah’s lake,  
She saw her son plunge in the waves; but fast-descending night,  
Mingled with storms, fell on the deep, and hid him from her  
sight.

And she by the dark waters of great confusion stood,  
Called on her son, prayed to her God to save him from the flood;  
She beat her breast, she cursed her tongue which to the Demon  
gave

Suggestion thus to drown her boy; she met the lashing wave;  
And, bending forward, listened in each pause of the storm’s  
sweep,

And thought she heard her Herman cry for help from out the  
deep.

And O for him, for him, into the wasteful night she gazed;  
And seemed to see his arms above the flashing waters raised.  
She felt at length that she was mocked; along the barren shore  
Far did she wander, and sate down when she could go no more.  
The storm was now o'erblown, the moon rose o'er the lullèd sea;  
She looked behind her—murky crags rose beetling awfully.

Strange heads came stretching from the clefts of people sheltered there,  
Wild tenants of the rock, waked by the cries of her despair,  
Or by the tempest roused; with threats they bade her thence  
be gone,  
Nor vex their drowsy caves of night with her untimely moan.  
“What creature of the shore art thou?” they cried. “Thee  
hence betake!  
A woman? and hast dared to meet the storm-blast of the Lake?

“To hear the smothered voices rack the Sodomitish sea,  
Of spirits pent in the whelmed rooms? Whence may thy sorrows be?  
Seek'st thou the apples fair and false?” Thence back did  
Miriam run,  
Less from her dread of violence, than haste to seek her son.  
She could not find him; homeward then she turned at break  
of day,  
And, with a sore bereavèd heart, went weeping all the way.

### CHAPTER III.

#### MIRIAM FOLLOWS HERMAN TO THE SEPULCHRES.

Deep in the hollow night, a voice to Miriam's slumbering ear  
Seemed thus to say, “Sleep'st thou, when I can sleep not,  
mother dear?”

She started, listened, all was still:—" 'Tis but a dream's wild  
freak ;

These haggard fancies vex me so, since grief has made me weak !

Yet, Demon-borne, in that dark storm, from out the watery  
waste,

Unseen by me, he might have come." She rose with trembling  
haste ;

Quickly attired, she looked abroad: The clouds away were  
gone ;

Blue ether, as if newly washed, with dewy gleams wide shone ;

The stars were very lustrous ; and in the abyss of night

The moon was set severely pure, a well of living light ;

Deep peace lay in the shadowy vales ; the solemn woods were  
still ;

And nought was heard, save oft the bark of fox upon the hill.

Again upon her bed she lay, sleep hovered o'er her eyes ;

Again unto her lattice came that voice, and called her thrice.

" 'Tis but the Tempter-fiend ! " she said, and wept unto her  
God ;

Yet still from hope and changeless love again she looked  
abroad ;

She heard a cry—she knew that voice ! with beating heart she  
ran,

And followed through the glimmering trees the figure of a man.

His form was hid:—" Heaven help," she prayed, " a mother's  
weary side !

No farther can I go ! " Again his shadow she espied ;

Again forgot her weariness, and ran with all her speed

To have him now, to have him now—it is her son indeed !

At length she came unto the place of the white sepulchres,

And paused—shall she pursue him there ? For now deep fear  
was hers ;

For heavy clouds came o'er the moon; darkness fell all around;  
A shuddering wind grieved in the trees, skirting the charnel  
ground;  
Then clamoured birds obscene; and yells as from lean hounds  
of blood,  
Mixed with careering laughter, rose; choked shrieks as from  
the flood,  
And gallowing cries, like grappled fiends' clinched with the  
last despair,  
And hurried through Hell's fire-wrought gates, thickened the  
midnight air.

And Miriam saw white wispy fires dance, warped with vapours  
close,  
Like exhalations kindled from the rotten churchyard gross.  
She feared the vexed Fiend, feared the ghosts of milky babes to  
brave,  
And fretted age that cannot rest within the wormy grave.  
Yet there oft heard she Herman's voice: and morning soon  
shall rise:  
Beneath a tree she sate to watch, but sleep o'ertook her eyes.

## CHAPTER IV.

### HERMAN'S SICKNESS.

'Twas now the time when, stepping down from her ethereal  
bowers,  
The touch of Spring's dew-sandalled foot kindles the earth with  
flowers.  
Fair rose the morn on Judah's hills: as Miriam waked, a band  
Of earnest men drew nigh; there Christ led Herman by the hand.

“Woman, thy son’s restored to thee,” the blessed Jesus said;  
And with a shriek of joy she clasped, she kissed her Herman’s  
head.

And he, too, wept, like one in whom pride is o’ermastered last.  
Meanwhile, with modesty divine, Jesus away had passed.  
Then Miriam took her Herman’s hand, and led him to her home.  
Came quiet days: he lived like one by some strange blight  
o’ercome.

His spirit pined, his days declined: beneath his mother’s eye  
Of watchful love he bowed his head austere calm to die.

## CHAPTER V.

### HERMAN’S BLESSING.

’Twas now the golden Autumn-tide: Herman lay on his bed,  
Through a small lattice on his face the yellow light was  
shed:—

“Is it the matin-hour, mother?”—for she was near at hand.

“No, my dear boy; the setting sun shines sweetly o’er our  
land;

With songs unto the fountains go the maids in a long train;  
Why loiterest thou, dear idle one? Up, list to them again:

“Loved wert thou by them all. I see the illumined hills of  
oak;

Valleys, where bow the cumbered trees ’neath Autumn’s mellow  
yoke;

The glittering streams; and the wide heavens of glory o’er our  
head;

The barley-harvest days are come—I see the reapers spread.

Be up, my boy! be up, fair boy! thy look is all too sad.  
Nay, health is dawning on thy face: Up, make thy mother  
glad."

He raised his head with fearful haste, but drooping nature failed,  
Feebly he groaned; yet, yet with might his filial heart prevailed,  
Again he rose, he took her hand:—"Eternal God above,  
Keep this tried mother when I die, and recompense her love!  
Her very love has almost been my evil minister,  
So solemn has it made my life, so full of cares for her.

"Keen as the wild wolf's following o'er the glazed wintry waste,  
Biting the blast, whetting his fangs, upon the prey to haste,  
She hunted my distempered life—her heart could ne'er stand  
still!—

Even where the sun unseals the snows, high on the perilous  
hill.

Of whom but thee? of none but thee, thou mother, dearest,  
best,

Speak I! Beneath thy weight of love my spirit lies oppressed.

"I die from thee, I soon must go, my days are a swift stream;  
Thy fond hopes must be shattered like the frailty of a dream.  
Yet fear not; He that freed thy son, will help thee when I die,  
And, when thy days of flesh are done, will lift thee up on high;  
And, with salvation beautified, to thee it shall be given  
To walk, with the redeemed of God, the starry floor of Heaven.

"What shall I say, that when I die my mother may not weep?  
My blood, my life, would they were fused into one blessing deep!  
Spring, and dew-dropping heaven, each star of goodliest in-  
fluence,  
Trees weeping balms, all precious things—O I would not go  
hence,



Till I could bless thee with all things! Nay, hear me yet—”

“Cease, cease!

I love thee so! I love thee so! I cannot be at peace!

“But to the Holy City I this night, this hour, will haste;  
Jesus is there, mercy I'll have.” Beside his bed she placed  
Food—would not hear his kind reproof—swift went—yet, paus-  
ing, turned—

Again bent o'er him, and with love unutterable burned—  
Prayed leave to go—stayed not to hear refusal or consent;  
And all the night, led by the moon, wide o'er the hills she went.

## CHAPTER VI.

### MIRIAM AT THE HILL OF CALVARY.

The Holy City Miriam reached; but Jesus was not there,  
For He was gone to Galilee. She turned with mute despair,  
And wearily retraced her path. Months slowly rolled away,  
Her son still pining down through each gradation of decay.  
At length she was assured that Christ was in Jerusalem,  
And through the silent night again she went in quest of Him.

As broke the spotted dawn she heard the sound of camel bells,  
Soft tinkling far; before her now a tented valley swells:  
For from wide lands, and distant isles, the Passover could still  
Bring up the scattered tribes of God unto His Holy Hill.  
Their whitening tents the valley filled; but all deserted stood,  
Save that some slaves went here and there to give the camels  
food.

To Miriam's question they replied, their lords were gone to see  
A strange impostor crucified with thieves on Calvary.

Then went she on until she saw, above the City fair,  
The Temple like a snowy mount far up in the clear air;  
Around its upward-circling courts she saw the forms of men,  
That bending westward looked as if some distant thing to ken.

Still was the sky. At once on them a mighty whirlwind fell,  
And tossed their garments seen afar, and brought with many a  
swell

The City's din tumultuous. A blind and smothering fear  
On Miriam came; with breathless haste she to the gates drew  
near,

Passed through the hurrying streets, and gained the foot of  
Calvary.

She turned—a pomp processional, and shouting crowds were  
nigh.

She saw—blind to all else—she saw Him whom she came to  
seek,

Bearing His cross; and thorns were crushed around that brow  
so meek!

Immortal anguish held His face; yet tempered with a look  
Which seemed prepared no shame, no pain, from mortal man  
to brook;

Prepared to burst all bands, to flash, put indignation on,  
To shake—to thunder-strike—to quell His foes as from a throne.

O Son of God! Yet still His face majestic patience bound.

How can she ask, in such an hour, His help? He turned half  
round;

She felt that He read all her heart, when on her face was stayed  
That eye, like an abyss of love. With clasped hands she  
prayed,

With silent lips and reverent eyes. He turned from her again;  
Yet left her to believe, with joy, her prayer had not been vain.

How can she go and leave Him thus? O how her bosom burned  
With holy gratitude to Christ, as up she slowly turned!  
She saw the throngs go closing up; the winding pomp before  
A lustre all unnatural upon its ensigns bore,  
Beneath a burning sun that smote the summit of the hill.  
An ominous cloud, behind, o'ershadowed the City dark and still.

Softly she joined a company of women; and they stood  
Afar, and oft with quick short look the glancing summit viewed.  
They saw not what was done—from this the greater was their  
fear.

Mute, trembling, pale, forward they bent as if some shriek to  
hear.

Horror on Miriam fell; she thought of Herman, and was glad  
That in his sickness a just cause to haste away she had.

She went, yet oft looked back; she saw the uplifted cross at  
last,

And shrieked, and faster went till she the gates of Zion passed.  
She passed the silent vale of tents, the camels grazing wide;  
The glittering streams shone in the sun, and shone the mountain  
side;

A forest near, when she its first outstanding trees had won,  
A horror of great darkness fell: the quenched day was done.

She went into the night-locked wood; 'twas silent as the sleep  
That watched the hoary secrets of the uncreated deep.

Then a sound shook the mountain bars, as when some fallen  
pile

Of ages sends a dull far voice o'er sea and sounding isle.

Without a breath the forest shook; and then the earth was  
rocked;

And trees fell crashing all around; and birds of night were  
shocked,

Screaming from out their rifted nests: with helpless wings they  
beat

The ground, and came and fiercely pecked, fluttering o'er  
Miriam's feet.

Steps, as if shod with thunder, ran. Through the infested wood  
Slowly had Miriam groped her way, and in its skirts she stood,  
When all at once burst forth the day from out the folds of night,  
And with rebounding glory flashed along the heavens of light.

Wedges of terror clove her heart; stumbling, she hasted on  
With dazzled eyes, and reached her home—her Herman's life  
was gone!

Reeling she turned, she knew not why; all blindly forth she  
burst;

But back she flew, and kissed his lips: "How durst I go! how  
durst

I leave him thus in death!" and then she beat her breast, and  
cried,

"Had I not gone, had I been here, my Herman had not died!"

## CHAPTER VII.

### MIRIAM'S INTERVIEW WITH HER SAINTED DAUGHTER, JUDITH.

The mourners from the house of wo, the minstrels forth were  
gone;

Deep in the middle watch of night sate Miriam all alone,  
Sleepless, in silent sorrow rocked, with fixed gaze intense  
On him dressed for the grave, her last, still dear inheritance.

"Peace!" said a voice like the far-off soft murmur of a wave;  
Starting she turned, she saw—"My child! my Judith from the  
grave!"

With lips apart, with heaving heart, gazed Miriam on a form  
 Lovely beyond the power of death, the grave's polluting worm.  
 A lucid air enswathed her head: How excellent are they,  
 Dear God, Thy ransomed ones! On her consummate forehead lay  
 The moonlight of eternal peace, solemn and very sweet;  
 A snowy vesture beautiful came flowing o'er her feet.

"I see—I do—methinks I see my dear, immortal child!  
 Come near me, God-given! Be not these the garments unde-  
 filed?"

Those eyes, the spirit's sainted wells, o'erflowing still with love,  
 I know them! Ever look on me, my own celestial dove!  
 Art thou not come to take me hence, the awful worlds to see?  
 I long to go, I long to go, to dwell in Heaven with thee!

"Ah no, 'tis but a dream!"—"Fear not, for I am ever thine!"  
 With beautiful tranquillity, with majesty divine,  
 Forth stepped the unblemished child of life, and with a meek  
 embrace

Folded her mother's crowding heart, and kissed her breathing  
 face:—

"Fear not: trust thou in Christ, who died this day mankind to  
 save;

By whose dear leave I come to thee, redeemed from out the  
 grave.

"Many have been, greatly beloved! thy days of trial sore,  
 Bereavement, sorrow, wandering, pain; but these shall soon be  
 o'er:

And loss, wo, weariness, all pain, each want, each mortal load,  
 Are in the many-linkèd chain which draws earth up to God.  
 But look to Christ, the assurèd One, and thou for aye shalt  
 stand

In the Lord's palaces of life, in the uncorrupted land.

“O it is well with me mother! No sin is there, no night;  
There be the bliss-enamelled flowers, bathed with the dews of  
light;

Rivers of crystal, shaded with the nations’ healing trees,  
Whose fadeless leaves, life-spangled, shake in the eternal breeze;  
The shining, shining host of saints; the angels’ burning tiers;  
And there God’s face ineffable lights the perpetual years!”

“Speak of thy father, holy child! my youth’s spouse, where is  
he?

Thy brother—he has left me too: O are they saved like thee?  
Then with great joy would I rejoice, and calmly wait the time  
To join you all in Heaven. But speak, child of the unfailing  
prime!

Thy mother’s yet on earth—how lone! shall they not also rise,  
And come this night anew to bless these old o’erwearied eyes?”

“Fear not; rest thou in hope and peace; to thee, on earth  
below,

More of the Spirits’ hidden world ’tis not allowed to know.  
Now let me see my brother’s face; night’s mid-watch passes fleet,  
And in the Holy City I the risen saints must meet,  
To pass with them into the Heavens.” Slowly, with trembling  
hands,

In silence Miriam from his face undid the linen bands:—

“Judith, draw near and see his face; upon thy brother look.”  
And she drew near: her glistening stole one moment ruffled  
shook;

Like light in tremulous water gleamed her eyes divine, as they  
Gazed on her brother as he in his bloodless beauty lay;  
With earth’s dear frailty tempered still—Heaven’s great and  
perfect years

Not yet attained—her eyes’ sweet cups ran o’er with many tears.

She parted on his lofty brow his locks of yellow hair,  
And kissed his forehead and his lips; then, with a sister's care,  
Around his dead composed face the grave's white folds she tied;  
She took her mother by the hand, and led her from his side;  
Then stood the ethereal creature clothed with peace serene:—

“Thy leave,  
Sweet mother! let me go; and say, dear one! thou wilt not  
grieve.”

“I shall not grieve, I will not grieve. But come, through the  
dark woods

Thy mortal mother shall thee guide, and o'er the crossing floods.  
O I am greatly glad for thee, my young lamb of the fold!  
Come near, and let me lead thee thus; thy mother gently hold!  
For thou art washed in our Christ's blood! for thou art passing  
fair!

The very Spirit of God's Heavens has breathed upon thy hair!

“Now let me guide thee forth. Nay, nay, the thought is foolish  
all,

That thou canst wandering err, that aught of ill can thee befall.  
Young dweller of the Heavens! mine own! the angels pure that  
be,

Primeval creatures of God's hand, in light excel not thee!  
Those vivid eyes can look through night! No monster of the  
wild,

Demon, or bandit of the cave, dares harm my sealèd child.

“In dazzling globes those angels wait, to bear thee with swift  
might

O'er the bowed tops of tufted woods to Zion's holy height!  
Go then—ah! thou must go indeed!” She smiled, she turned  
to go;

But Miriam caught her shining skirts with a mother's parting wo,

And knelt, and clasped her hands. Then turned the daughter  
of the skies,

Raised, led the mourner to a couch, and breathed upon her eyes.

Deep sleep on Miriam fell. With face meek as the moon of  
night,

Far down in waveless water seen, a sleeping pearl of light,

A moment gazed that child on her; then brightening went. At  
morn,

With hope through sorrow, Miriam saw to dust her Herman  
borne.

Her faith was perfect now in Him whose blood for men had  
flowed.

Calm shone her evening life, and set in the bosom of her God.



## SONG OF PROCESS.

HIGH stood (he sang) the Sons of Light,  
Exultant o'er our wondrous birth.  
And through the alternate day and night  
Whirled the glimmering ball of earth.

Eden the Blest ! Ah, Sin is Wrath,—  
War and Famine, Plague and Storm :  
Crash goes the stony midriff of the earth,  
Flee ! the molten Fury's forth :  
'Tis Wrath and Death in every form ;  
Tremble ! 'tis the Second Death.

Life ! Life ! The Song, to Mercy's name,  
Was truth on fire—ecstatic flame.

Midnight by the screech of owls !  
Starved and gaunt the she-wolf howls :  
Her whelps, as fierce the tempest beats,  
Bite her yellow milkless teats ;  
Angry how she grins and howls !  
Simple storms ! a weirder power  
Brews on the dark undialled hour :  
What spectres thin, with blots of sin !  
    By horns and capes  
    Go wrecking Shapes,

Careering on the roaring din !  
And the terrible Things that are here,  
Came up by the Regions of Fear !  
Twanged the wild chords. Morn in her dew,  
Glistening green, and airy blue,  
With roses red, and lilies white,  
Made of the sweet consent of light ;  
Far noon, where summer seas away  
Melt on the trembling brim of day ;  
Night-folded doves ; Peace with her moon  
Charmed in the curdled clouds of June ;  
And all the dædal earth he sang,  
Till Beauty's haunts divinely rang.

Blood ! Blood ! It cries to Heaven !  
(How the haggard chords are riven !)  
Knotted scorpions, these the scourge,  
See the frantic Furies urge !  
Jar and tumult ! patriot Zeal,  
Meet it with thy breast of steel ;  
Rasp, rasp on the exasperated age,  
Blunt the bristling civic rage.  
Gravely sweet, he sang of Law,  
Freedom, and Art, and Holy Awe,  
Lists of renown, life's soft degrees,  
Social charm, and lettered ease.

Him these blessings crown sublime  
O'er all the sceptred sons of time,—  
Him who scorned the mortal joys,  
Him who scorned for self to reign :  
What blocks of work, of awful poise,  
Stood on that single brain !

He built our state. For Alfred flowed  
The loyal Soul, the free and strong;  
The people's heart, it rose and redd  
Triumphant on the swelling Song.

Lord of all the sinewy graces,  
Lord of all the sovran places,  
Manhood kneels at Beauty's feet.  
How the Song of Songs prevailed  
To tell her majesty complete,—  
The form, the bloom, the nameless grace exhaled  
From the sweet symmetry of soul and life,  
When Manhood blessed her his consummate Wife!

Mingled measure, quick of range,  
Weep and joy for Wizard Change!  
He splits the towers, but hangs sublime,  
A tongue in every rift of time;  
Good and ill he works for Man,  
Yet good from ill itself in life's mysterious plan.

And realms that wait in hoary state  
Shall move to issues sweet and strange.  
Love melts the iron rim of Fate  
Around the weeping world of change.

Hence the spotted Sin shall cease,  
And all be Truth, and all be Peace:  
Come, come, thou better prime,  
Flower and maidenhood of Time!

The hornèd months that come and go,  
They never count, they never know;

Ranged in their kingdoms dark and deep,  
I see the faded people sleep :  
But, as we lie forlorn and dim,  
The Lord, with woman's blood in Him,  
Will touch our sunken eyes,  
Fill us with life (he sang) and lift us to the skies.

Crashing bursts the choral thunder !  
Never ending,  
Still ascending,  
Rolls the Song of Joy and Wonder,—  
Joying that the cycled plan  
Of Time is crowned with perfect Man.

THE END.













