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Montgomery.

POETICAL WORKS
OF
JAMES MONTGOMERY
WITH A
MEMOIR BY THE AUTHOR
BY THE REV. R. W. CHISWOLD.
COMPLETE IN TWO VOLUMES.
VOL. I.



James Montgomery, as he appeared in the year 1785, when he was first introduced to the public eye.

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BOSTON:
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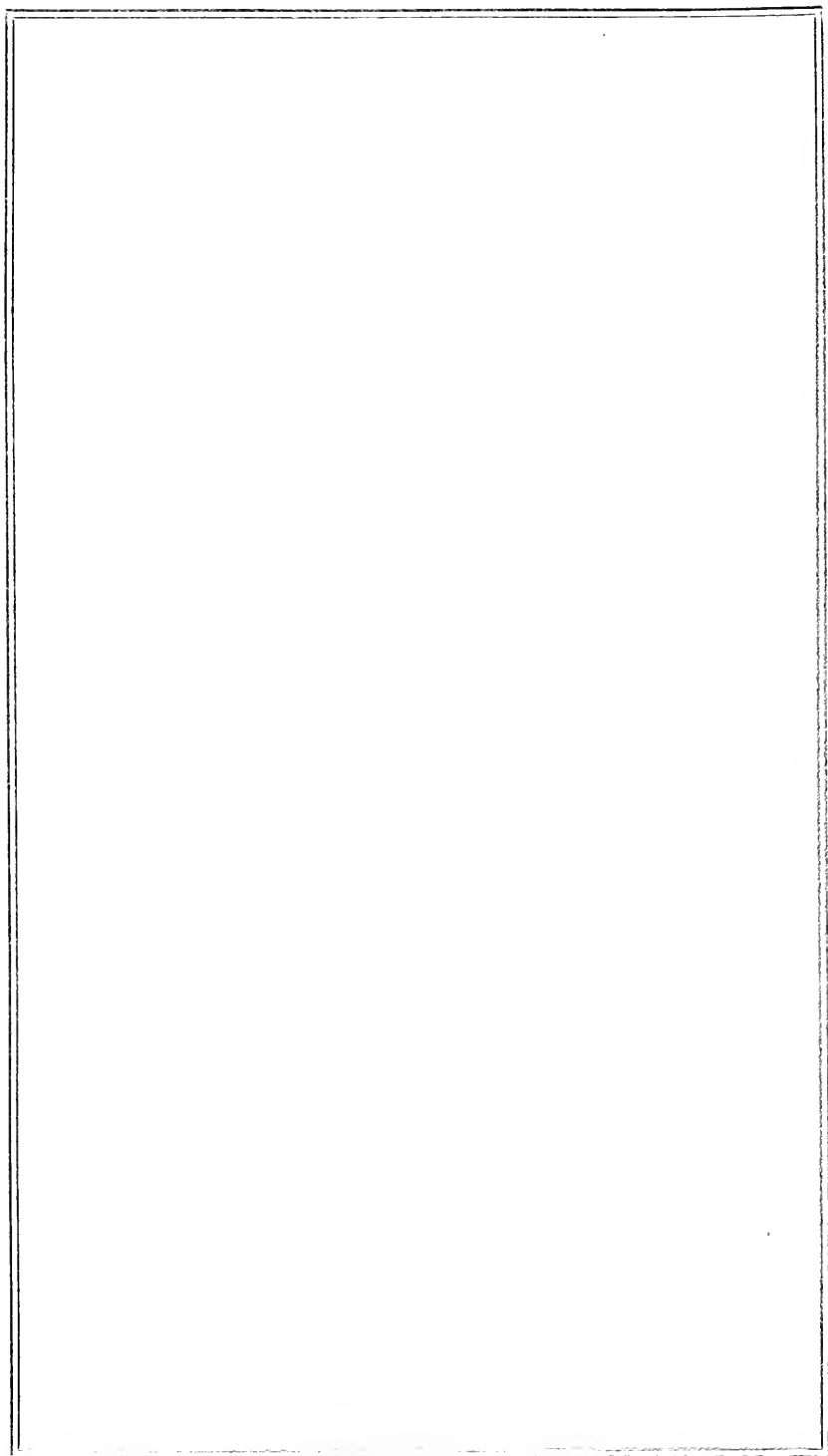
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MEMOIR OF THE AUTHOR.

JAMES MONTGOMERY is admitted by all the critics to be at the head of the religious poets of the present age. Since the bard of Olney, no one has surpassed him in purity of sentiment or fervour of devotion. For half a century he has been slowly and constantly increasing in the popular favour, and his reputation has now a compass and a solidity which forbid all thought of its decay.

Of the throng of competitors among whom he has won his laurels, CRABBE, BYRON, SOUTHEY, COLERIDGE and CAMPBELL have gone before him into the region of the Unknown; and ROGERS and WORDSWORTH, his venerable brothers, are permitted with him to linger at the gates of the Future and listen to the applauses of posterity. They are the noblest impersonations of Piety, Philosophy, and Taste, and they are all immortal.

In the last and completest edition of his works, published recently in London, Mr. MONTGOMERY has given in various prefaces and notes an account of his

life and writings, from which, and some other materials, we prepare this brief biography.

JAMES MONTGOMERY is the eldest son of a Moravian clergyman, and was born at Irvine, in Scotland, on the fourth of November, 1771. His parents determined to educate him for the ministry, and at a very early age placed him in one of the seminaries of their church, where he remained ten years. At the end of this period he decided not to study the profession to which he had been destined, and was, in consequence, placed with a shop-keeper in Yorkshire. Ill satisfied with his new employment, however, he abandoned it after a few months, and, when but sixteen years of age, made his first appearance in London, with a manuscript volume of poems, of which he vainly endeavoured to procure the publication.

In 1792, being then about twenty-one years of age, he went to Sheffield, where he was soon after engaged as a writer for *The Register*, a weekly gazette, published by a Mr. GALES; and, in 1794, on the flight of his employer from England, to avoid a political prosecution, he himself became publisher and editor, and changing the name of the paper to *The Iris*, conducted it, with much taste, ability, and moderation. It was still, however, obnoxious to the government, and Mr. MONTGOMERY was prosecuted for printing in it a song commemorative of the destruction of the Bastille, fined twenty pounds, and imprisoned three months in York Castle. On resuming his editorial duties, he carefully avoided partisan politics, but after a short period he

was arrested for an offensive passage in an account which he gave of a riot in Sheffield, and again imprisoned.

It was during his second confinement that he wrote "Prison Amusements," which appeared in 1797. In the preface to the first edition, he says, "These pieces were composed in bitter moments, amid the horrors of a jail, under the pressure of sickness. They were the transcripts of melancholy feelings,—the warm effusions of a bleeding heart. The writer amused his imagination with attiring his sorrows in verse, that, under the romantic appearance of fiction, he might sometimes forget that his misfortunes were real."

Mr. MONTGOMERY returned to his office, and with a strong determination, "come wind or sun, come fire or water, to do what was right," conducted his paper; and his taste, judgment and integrity gradually overcame the prejudices which the course of his predecessor, much more than any thing he had himself written, had created against it.

Referring to this period of his life, he tells us that he had "foolishly sacrificed all his friends, connections, and prospects in life, and thrown himself headlong into the world, with the sole view of acquiring poetic laurels." "In the retirement of Fulneck, among the Moravian Brethren, by whom I had been educated," he continues, "I was nearly as ignorant of the world and its every-day concerns, as the gold fishes swimming about in the glass globe on the pedestal before us are of what we are doing around them; and when I took

the rash step of running into the vortex, I was nearly as little prepared for the business of general life as they would be to take a part in our proceedings, were they to leap out of their element.....The experience of something more than two years had awakened me to the unpoetical realities around me, and I was left to struggle alone amidst the crowd, without any of those inspiring motives left to cheer me, under the delusive influence of which I had flung myself amidst scenes, and into society, for which I was wholly unfit by feeling, taste, habit, or bodily constitution. Thus, I came to Sheffield, with all my hopes blighted like the leaves and blossoms of a premature spring.....There was yet life, but it was perverse, unnatural life, in my mind; and the renown which I found to be unattainable, at that time, by legitimate poetry, I resolved to secure by such means as made many of my contemporaries notorious. I wrote verses in the doggerel strain of Peter Pindar, and prose sometimes in imitation of Fielding and Smollett, and occasionally in the strange style of the German plays and romances then in vogue. Effort after effort failed. A Providence of disappointment shut every door in my face, by which I attempted to force my way to a dishonourable fame. I was thus happily saved from appearing as the author of works which, at this hour, I should have been ashamed to acknowledge. Disheartened at length with ill success, I gave myself up to indolence and apathy, and lost seven years of that part of my youth which ought to have been the most active

and profitable, in alternate listlessness and despondency, using no further exertion in my office affairs than was necessary to keep up my credit under heavy pecuniary obligations, and gradually, though slowly, to liquidate them.”

About the year 1803 he began to write in his better vein of seriousness, and a lyric which he published, under a *nom de plume* in *The Iris*, received such unexpected applauses, that he from that period abjured his former eccentricities. One lay after another, in the “reformed spirit,” appeared in the two following years, and he collected the series into a volume, which was printed under the title of “The Ocean, and other Poems,” in 1805.

In 1798, the independence of Switzerland had been virtually destroyed by France, though till 1803 the cantons were nominally allowed to exercise home jurisdiction. In the beginning of the last mentioned year NAPOLEON abolished the government, and declared that the cantons must in future be the open frontier of France. On the seventeenth of February this circumstance was thus recorded by Mr. MONTGOMERY, in *The Iris*:

“The heart of Switzerland is broken; and Liberty has been driven from the only sanctuary which she had found on the Continent. But the unconquered, the unconquerable offspring of Tell, disdaining to die slaves in the land where they were born free, are emigrating to America. There, in some region remote and romantic, where Solitude has never seen the face of man, nor Silence been startled by his voice, since the hour

of creation, may the illustrious exiles find another Switzerland, another country rendered dear to them by the presence of Liberty. But even there, amidst mountains more awful, and forests more sombre than his own, when the echoes of the wilderness shall be awakened by the enchantment of that song which no Swiss in a foreign clime ever hears without fondly recalling the land of his nativity, and weeping with affection, how will the heart of the exile be wrung with home-sickness! and oh! what a sickness of heart must that be, which arises, not from '*hope deferred,*' but from '*hope extinguished,—yet remembered.*'"

A friend, on reading this paragraph, suggested to the author that it was a fine subject for a poem; and with the intention of composing a ballad in the style and of the length of the well-known fragmentary cento of "The Friar of Orders Gray," he immediately commenced what grew under his hands to be "The Wanderer of Switzerland." In the year after its publication, when it had reached a third edition, it was violently attacked in one of those smart but shallow criticisms which gave notoriety to the earlier numbers of the *Edinburgh Review*. It was still, however, successful; and twenty-eight years afterward the *Review* confesses, against its prophecy, that our poet has taken a place among the classics of the British nation.

His next work was "The West Indies," which appeared in 1809, and was designed as a memorial of the then recent abolition by the British government of the Slave Trade.

It was followed, in 1812, by "The World before the Flood," in four cantos, suggested by an allusion in "Paradise Lost"* to the translation of Enoch. This is one of Mr. MONTGOMERY'S most popular works, and has many passages of quiet, reflective beauty, which will make perpetual its good reputation.

"Greenland" appeared in 1819. The subject was well suited to his powers and habits of feeling. In the region of eternal snows to which the pious Moravians bore the gospel, Nature was grand, beautiful, and peculiar; and with the zeal, the faith, and the heroism of the missionaries, the poet had a perfect sympathy. Like "The World before the Flood," it has passages of description and reflection which would add to the fame of the greatest of bards, and in unity and completeness it is superior to any of our author's other works.

In 1822 Mr. MONTGOMERY published his "Songs

"In other part the sceptred heralds call
To council, in the city-gates;—anon,
Gray-headed men and grave, with warriors mix'd,
Assemble, and harangues are heard; but soon
In factious opposition; till at last
Of middle age one rising, eminent
In wise deport, spake much of right and wrong,
Of justice, of religion, truth and peace,
And judgment from above. Him old and young
Exploded, and had seized with violent hands,
Had not a cloud descending snatch'd him thence,
Unseen amid the throng; so violence
Proceeded, and oppression, and sword-law,
Through all the plain, and refuge none was found."

of Zion." By many earlier pieces, of a similar kind, he had shown that he possessed, in an eminent degree, all the qualities of a lyrical poet, and he now took his place as a weaver of sacred song on the same elevation with WATTS and COWPER. His minor poems will, hereafter, be most frequently read, and most generally admired. They have the antique simplicity of pious GEORGE WITHERS, and a natural, unaffected earnestness, joined to a pure and poetical diction, which will secure to them a permanent place in English literature.

Mr. MONTGOMERY has little dramatic power, and little skill in narrative. His longest and most elaborate works, though they contain beautiful and touching thoughts, and descriptions distinguished alike for grace, minuteness, and fidelity, are without plot, and are deficient in incident. His little songs and cabinet pieces, however, are almost perfect in their way; and nearly all of them are full of devotion to the Creator, sympathy with suffering humanity, and a cheerful and hopeful philosophy.

In 1827, Mr. MONTGOMERY gave to the world "The Pelican Island," descriptive of the solitary contemplation of nature. It has the faults of his other long poems, but is more graceful and fanciful, and some parts of it were declared by the leading reviewers to be worthy of MILTON. It is the last of his considerable works.

After a silence of nearly a decade, he published, in 1835, a "Poet's Portfolio, or Minor Poems," contain-

ing, as he states modestly in his preface, "miscellaneous and fugitive pieces, which, with many others, had been collecting on his hands during a period when no recollection of past success could embolden him to attempt greater things." "Speed the Prow," "A Story without a Name," and other pieces in this volume, show that his energy, his perception of the beautiful, his sincere and earnest feelings, and his fine poetical expression, had not passed away with the completion of his three score years.

Mr. MONTGOMERY conducted *The Iris*, until 1825, and on his retirement from the editorial profession, which he had adorned by his uniform courtesy as well as by his integrity and his ability, his friends gave him a public dinner at Sheffield, at which Lord MILTON presided. In reply to a complimentary sentiment, he made a speech, in which he reviewed with his customary modesty his literary career. "Success upon success, in the course of a few years," he said, "crowned my labours,—not indeed with fame and fortune, as these were lavished on my greater contemporaries, in comparison with whose magnificent possessions on the British Parnassus, my small plot of ground is no more than Naboth's vineyard to Ahab's kingdom; but it is my own, it is no copyhold; I borrowed it, I leased it, from none. Every foot of it I enclose from the common myself; and I can say that not an inch which I had once gained have I ever lost. I attribute this to no extraordinary power of genius, or felicity of talent in the application of such power as I

may possess. The estimate of that I leave to you who hear me, not in this moment of generous enthusiasm, but when the evening's enjoyment shall come under the morning's reflection. The secret of my moderate success, I consider to have been the right direction of my abilities to right objects. In following this course I have had to contend with many disadvantages, as well as resolutely to avoid the most popular and fashionable ways to fame. I followed no mighty leader, belonged to no school of the poets, pandered to no impure passion; I veiled no vice in delicate disguise, gratified no malignant propensity to personal satire; courted no powerful patronage; I wrote neither to suit the manners, the taste, nor the temper of the age; but I appealed to universal principles, to imperishable affections, to primary elements of our common nature, found wherever man is found in civilized society; wherever his mind has been raised above barbarian ignorance, or his passions purified from brutal selfishness.

“I sang of war,—but it was the war of freedom, in which death was preferred to chains. I sang the Abolition of the Slave Trade, that most glorious decree of the British Legislature, at any period since the Revolution.....I sang, likewise, the love of home; its charities, endearments, and relationship; all that makes ‘home *sweet* home;’ the recollection of which, when the air of that name was just now played from yonder gallery, warmed every heart throughout this room into quicker pulsations. I sang the love which

man ought to bear towards his brother, of every kindred, and country, and clime upon earth. I sang the love of virtue, which elevates man to his true standard under heaven; I sang, too, the love of God, who is love. Nor did I sing in vain. I found readers and listeners, especially among the young, the fair, and the devout; and as youth, beauty and piety will not soon cease out of the land, I may expect to be remembered through another generation at least, if I leave any thing behind me worthy of remembrance. I may add, that from every part of the British empire, from every quarter of the world where our language is spoken,—from America, the East and West Indies, from New Holland and the South Sea Islands themselves,—I have received testimonies of approbation from all ranks and degrees of readers, hailing what I had done, and cheering me forward. I allude not to criticisms and eulogiums from the press, but to voluntary communications from unknown correspondents, coming to me like voices out of darkness, and giving intimation of that which the ear of a poet is always hearkening onward to catch,—the voice of posterity.”

Mr. MONTGOMERY is still living, beloved for his piety and admired for his genius—awaiting calmly and trustfully his summons to that better world for which he has prepared himself by a life of faith and loving obedience. We cannot better conclude this notice, nor better express our judgment of his works, than by quoting the declaration of the *Edinburgh Review*, that “there is something in all his poetry which makes

Fiction the most impressive teacher of truth and wisdom, and by which, while the intellect is gratified and the imagination roused, the heart, if it retains any sensibility to tender or elevating emotions, cannot fail to be made better.”

PHILADELPHIA, September, 1845.

PRISON AMUSEMENTS.

VERSES TO A ROBIN RED-BREAST,

WHO VISITS THE WINDOW OF MY PRISON EVERY DAY.

WELCOME, pretty little stranger !
Welcome to my lone retreat !
Here, secure from every danger,
Hop about, and chirp, and eat :
Robin ! how I envy thee,
Happy child of Liberty !
Now, though tyrant Winter, howling,
Shakes the world with tempests round,
Heaven above with vapours scowling,
Frost imprisons all the ground ;—
Robin ! what are these to thee ?
Thou art blest with liberty.

Though yon fair majestic river*
Mourns in solid icy chains ;
Though yon flocks and cattle shiver,
On the desolated plains ;—
Robin ! thou art gay and free,
Happy in thy liberty.

Hunger never shall distress thee,
While my cates one crumb afford ;
Colds nor cramps shall e'er oppress thee ;
Come and share my humble board :
Robin ! come and live with me,
Live—yet still at liberty.

* The Ouse.

Soon shall Spring in smiles and blushes
 Steal upon the blooming year ;
 Then, amid the enamour'd bushes,
 Thy sweet song shall warble clear ;
 Then shall I, too, join'd with thee,
 Swell the Hymn of Liberty.

Should some rough unfeeling Dobbin,
 In this iron-hearted age,
 Seize thee on thy nest, my Robin !
 And confine thee in a cage,
 Then, poor prisoner ! think of me,
 Think—and sigh for liberty.

Feb. 2, 1795.

MOONLIGHT.

GENTLE Moon ! a captive calls ;
 Gentle Moon ! awake, arise ;
 Gild the prison's sullen walls ;
 Gild the tears that drown his eyes.

Throw thy veil of clouds aside ;
 Let those smiles that light the pole
 Through the liquid ether glide,—
 Glide into the mourner's soul.

Cheer his melancholy mind ;
 Soothe his sorrows, heal his smart :
 Let thine influence, pure, refined,
 Cool the fever of his heart.

Chase despondency and care,
 Fiends that haunt the GUILTY breast :
 Conscious virtue braves despair ;
 Triumphs most when most oppress'd.

Now I feel thy power benign
Swell my bosom, thrill my veins ;
As thy beams the brightest shine
When the deepest midnight reigns.

Say, fair shepherdess of night !
Who thy starry flock dost lead
Unto rills of living light,
On the blue ethereal mead ;

At this moment, dost thou see,
From thine elevated sphere,
One kind friend who thinks of me,—
Thinks, and drops a feeling tear ?

On a brilliant beam convey
This soft whisper to his breast,—
“Wipe that generous drop away ;
He for whom it falls is blest.

“Blest with Freedom unconfined,
Dungeons cannot hold the Soul :
Who can chain the immortal Mind ?
—None but He who spans the pole.”

Fancy, too, the nimble fairy,
With her subtle magic spell,
In romantic visions airy
Steals the captive from his cell.

On her moonlight pinions borne,
Far he flies from grief and pain ;
Never, never to be torn
From his friends and home again.

Stay, thou dear delusion ! stay ;
Beauteous bubble ! do not break ;
—Ah ! the pageant flits away ;
—Who from such a dream would wake ?

THE CAPTIVE NIGHTINGALE.

NOCTURNAL Silence reigning,
A Nightingale began
In his cold cage complaining
Of cruel-hearted Man :
His drooping pinions shiver'd,
Like wither'd moss so dry ;
His heart with anguish quiver'd,
And sorrow dimm'd his eye.

His grief in soothing slumbers
No balmy power could steep ;
So sweetly flow'd his numbers,
The music seem'd to weep.
Unfeeling Sons of Folly !
To you the Mourner sung ;
While tender melancholy
Inspired his plaintive tongue.

“ Now reigns the moon in splendour
Amid the heaven serene ;
A thousand stars attend her,
And glitter round their queen :
Sweet hours of inspiration !
When I, the still night long,
Was wont to pour my passion,
And breathe my soul in Song.

“ But now, delicious season !
In vain thy charms invite ;
Entomb'd in this dire prison,
I sicken at the sight.

This morn, this vernal morning,
The happiest bird was I,
That hail'd the sun returning,
Or swam the liquid sky.

“In yonder breezy bowers,
Among the foliage green,
I spent my tuneful hours
In solitude serene :
There soft Melodia's beauty
First fired my ravish'd eye ;
I vow'd eternal duty ;
She look'd—half kind, half shy !

“My plumes with ardour trembling,
I flutter'd, sigh'd, and sung :
The fair one, still dissembling,
Refused to trust my tongue ;
A thousand tricks inventing,
A thousand arts I tried ;
Till the sweet nymph, relenting,
Confess'd herself my bride.

“Deep in the grove retiring,
To choose our secret seat,
We found an oak aspiring,
Beneath whose mossy feet,
Where the tall herbage swelling,
Had form'd a green alcove,
We built our humble dwelling,
And hallow'd it with love.

“Sweet scene of vanish'd pleasure !
This day, this fatal day,
My little ones, my treasure,
My spouse, were stolen away !
I saw the precious plunder,
All in a napkin bound ;

Then smit with human thunder,
I flutter'd on the ground!

“O Man! beneath whose vengeance
All Nature bleeding lies!
Who charged thine impious engines
With lightning from the skies?
Ah! is thy bosom iron?
Does it thine heart enchain?
As these cold bars environ,
And, captive, me detain!

“Where are my offspring tender?
Where is my widow'd mate?
—Thou Guardian Moon! defend her!
Ye Stars! avert their fate!—
O'erwhelm'd with killing anguish,
In iron cage, forlorn,
I see my poor babes languish:
I hear their mother mourn!

“O Liberty! inspire me,
And eagle-strength supply!
Thou, Love almighty! fire me!
I'll burst my prison—or die!”
He sung, and forward bounded;
He broke the yielding door!
But, with the shock confounded,
Fell, lifeless, on the floor!

Farewell, then, Philomela:
Poor martyr'd bird! adieu!
There's one, my charming fellow!
Who thinks, who feels like you:
The bard that pens thy story,
Amidst a prison's gloom,
Sighs—not for wealth nor glory,
—But freedom, or thy tomb!

ODE TO THE EVENING STAR.

HAIL! resplendent Evening Star!
Brightly beaming from afar;
Fairest gem of purest light
In the diadem of night.

Now thy mild and modest ray
Lights to rest the weary day;
While the lustre of thine eye
Sweetly trembles through the sky;
As the closing shadows roll
Deep and deeper round the pole,
Lo! thy kindling legions bright
Steal insensibly to light;
Till, magnificent and clear,
Shines the spangled hemisphere.

In these calmly pleasing hours,
When the soul expands her powers,
And, on wings of contemplation,
Ranges round the vast creation;
When the mind's immortal eye
Bounds, with rapture, to the sky,
And, in one triumphant glance,
Comprehends the wide expanse,
Where stars, and suns, and systems shine,
Faint beams of MAJESTY DIVINE;
—Now, when visionary sleep
Lulls the world in slumbers deep;
When silence, awfully profound,
Breathes solemn inspiration round;
Queen of Beauty! queen of stars!
Smile upon these frowning bars,
Softly sliding from thy sphere,
Condescend to visit here.

In the circle of this cell,
No tormenting demons dwell ;
Round these walls in wild despair,
No agonizing spectres glare ;
Here reside no furies gaunt ;
No tumultuous passions haunt ;
Fell revenge, nor treachery base ;
Guilt, with bold unblushing face ;
Pale remorse, within whose breast
Scorpion-horrors murder rest ;
Coward malice, hatred dire,
Lawless rapine, dark desire ;
Pining envy, frantic ire ;
Never, never dare intrude
On this pensive solitude :
—But a sorely-hunted deer
Finds a sad asylum here ;
One, whose panting sides have been
Pierced with many an arrow keen ;
One, whose deeply-wounded heart
Bears the scars of many a dart.
In the herd he vainly mingled ;
From the herd, when harshly singled,
Too proud to fly, he scorn'd to yield ;
Too weak to fight, he lost the field ;
Assail'd, and captive led away,
He fell a poor, inglorious prey.

Deign then, gentle Star ! to shed
Thy soft lustre round mine head ;
With cheering radiance gild the room,
And melt the melancholy gloom.
When I see thee, from thy sphere,
Trembling like a brilliant tear,
Shed a sympathizing ray
On the pale expiring day,
Then a welcome emanation
Of reviving consolation,

Swifter than the lightning's dart,
Glances through my glowing heart ;
Soothes my sorrows, lulls my woes,
In a soft, serene repose.
Like the undulating motion
Of the deep, majestic ocean,
When the whispering billows glide
Smooth along the tranquil tide ;
Calmly thus, prepared, resign'd,
Swells the independent mind.
But when through clouds thy beauteous light
Streams, in splendour, on the night,
Hope, like thee, my leading star,
Through the sullen gloom of care,
Sheds an animating ray
On the dark, bewildering way.
Starting, then, with sweet surprise,
Tears of transport swell mine eyes ;
Wildly through each throbbing vein,
Rapture thrills with pleasing pain ;
All my fretful fears are banish'd,
All my dreams of anguish vanish'd ;
Energy my soul inspires,
And wakes the Muse's hallow'd fires :
Rich in melody, my tongue
Warbles forth spontaneous song.
Thus my prison moments gay,
Swiftly, sweetly, glide away ;
Till the last long day declining,
O'er yon tower thy glory shining,
Shall the welcome signal be
Of to-morrow's liberty !
Liberty triumphant borne
On the rosy wings of morn,
Liberty shall then return !
Rise to set the captive free :
Rise, O sun of Liberty !

SOLILOQUY OF A WATER-WAGTAIL

ON THE WALLS OF YORK CASTLE.

ON the walls that guard my prison,
Swelling with fantastic pride,
Brisk and merry as the season,
I a feather'd coxcomb spied :
When the little hopping elf
Gaily thus amused himself.

“ Hear your sovereign's proclamation,
All good subjects, young and old :
I'm the Lord of the Creation ;
I—a Water-Wagtail bold !
All around, and all you see,
All the world was made for ME !

“ Yonder sun, so proudly shining,
Rises—when I leave my nest ;
And, behind the hills declining,
Sets—when I retire to rest :
Morn and evening, thus you see,
Day and night, were made for ME !

“ Vernal gales to love invite me ;
Summer sheds for me her beams ;
Autumn's jovial scenes delight me ;
Winter paves with ice my streams ;
All the year is mine, you see ;
Seasons change, like moons, for ME !

“ On the heads of giant mountains.
Or beneath the shady trees ;
By the banks of warbling fountains,
I enjoy myself at ease :

Hills and valleys, thus you see,
Groves and rivers, made for ME !

“ Boundless are my vast dominions ;
I can hop, or swim, or fly ;
When I please, my towering pinions
Trace my empire through the sky :
Air and elements, you see,
Heaven and earth, were made for ME !

“ Birds and insects, beasts and fishes,
All their humble distance keep ;
Man, subservient to my wishes,
Sows the harvest which I reap :
Mighty man himself, you see,
All that breathe, were made for ME !

“ ’Twas for my accommodation,
Nature rose when I was born :
Should I die—the whole creation
Back to nothing would return :
Sun, moon, and stars, the world, you see,
Sprung—exist, will fall with ME !”

Here the pretty prattler, ending,
Spread his wings to soar away ;
But a cruel Hawk descending,
Pounced him up—an helpless prey.
—Couldst thou not, poor Wagtail ! see,
That the Hawk was made for THEE ?

April 15, 1795.

THE PLEASURES OF IMPRISONMENT.

IN TWO EPISTLES TO A FRIEND.

EPISTLE I.

You ask, my friend, and well you may,
You ask me how I spend the day;
I'll tell you, in unstudied rhyme,
How wisely I befool my time :
Expect not wit, nor fancy then,
In this effusion of my pen ;
These idle lines—they might be worse—
Are simple prose, in simple verse.

Each morning, then, at five o'clock,
The adamantine doors unlock ;
Bolts, bars, and portals, crash and thunder ;
The gates of iron burst asunder ;
Hinges that creak, and keys that jingle,
With clattering chains, in concert mingle ;
So sweet the din, your dainty ear,
For joy, would break its drum to hear ;
While my dull organs, at the sound,
Rest in tranquillity profound :
Fantastic dreams amuse my brain,
And waft my spirit home again.
Though captive all day long 'tis true,
At night I am as free as you ;
Not ramparts high, nor dungeons deep,
Can hold me when I'm fast sleep.

But every thing is good in season,
I dream at large—and wake in prison.
Yet think not, sir, I lie too late,
I rise as early even as eight :
Ten hours of drowsiness are plenty,

For any man, in four-and-twenty,
You smile—and yet 'tis nobly done,
I'm but five hours behind the sun!

When dress'd, I to the yard repair,
And breakfast on the pure, fresh air:
But though this choice Castalian cheer
Keeps both the head and stomach clear,
For reasons strong enough with me,
I mend the meal with toast and tea.
Now air and fame, as poets sing,
Are both the same, the self-same thing:
Yet bards are not cameleons quite,
And heavenly food is very light;
Whoever dined or supp'd on fame,
And went to bed upon a name?

Breakfast despatch'd, I sometimes read,
To clear the vapours from my head;
For books are magic charms, I ween,
Both for the crotchets and the spleen.
When genius, wisdom, wit abound,
Where sound is sense, and sense is sound;
When art and nature both combine,
And live, and breathe, in every line;
The reader glows along the page
With all the author's native rage!
But books there are with nothing fraught,—
Ten thousand words, and ne'er a thought;
Where periods without period crawl,
Like caterpillars on a wall,
That fall to climb, and climb to fall;
While still their efforts only tend
To keep them from their journey's end.
The readers yawn with pure vexation,
And nod—but not with approbation.
In such a fog of dulness lost,
Poor patience must give up the ghost;
Not Argus' eyes awake could keep,
Even Death might read himself to sleep.

At half-past ten, or thereabout,
My eyes are all upon the scout,
To see the lounging post-boy come,
With letters or with news from home.
Believe it, on a captive's word,
Although the doctrine seem absurd,
The paper-messengers of friends
For absence almost make amends :
But if you think I jest or lie,
Come to York Castle, sir, and try.

Sometimes to fairy land I rove :
Those iron rails become a grove ;
These stately buildings fall away
To moss-grown cottages of clay ;
Debtors are changed to jolly swains,
Who pipe and whistle on the plains ;
Yon felons grim, with fetters bound,
Are satyrs wild, with garlands crown'd ;
Their clanking chains are wreaths of flowers ;
Their horrid cells ambrosial bowers :
The oaths, expiring on their tongues,
Are metamorphosed into songs ;
While wretched female prisoners, lo !
Are Dian's nymphs of virgin snow.
Those hideous walls with verdure shoot ;
These pillars bend with blushing fruit ;
That dunghill swells into a mountain,
The pump becomes a purling fountain ;
The noisome smoke of yonder mills,
The circling air with fragrance fills ;
The horse-pond spreads into a lake,
And swans of ducks and geese I make ;
Sparrows are changed to turtle-doves,
That bill and coo their pretty loves ;
Wagtails, turn'd thrushes, charm the vales,
And tomtits sing like nightingales.
No more the wind through key-holes whistles,
But sighs on beds of pinks and thistles ;

The rattling rain that beats without,
And gurgles down the leaden spout,
In light, delicious dew distils,
And melts away in amber rills ;
Elysium rises on the green,
And health and beauty crown the scene.

Then by the enchantress Fancy led,
On violet banks I lay my head ;
Legions of radiant forms arise,
In fair array, before mine eyes ;
Poetic visions gild my brain,
And melt in liquid air again ;
As in a magic-lantern clear,
Fantastic images appear,
That beaming from the spectred glass,
In beautiful succession pass,
Yet steal the lustre of their light
From the deep shadow of the night :
Thus, in the darkness of my head,
Ten thousand shining things are bred,
That borrow splendour from the gloom.
As glow-worms twinkle in a tomb.
But lest these glories should confound me,
Kind Dulness draws her curtain round me ;
The visions vanish in a trice,
And I awake as cold as ice :
Nothing remains of all the vapour,
Save—what I send you—ink and paper.

Thus flow my morning hours along,
Smooth as the numbers of my song :
Yet let me wander as I will,
I feel I am a prisoner still.
Thus Robin, with the blushing breast,
Is ravish'd from his little nest
By barbarous boys who bind his leg,
To make him flutter round a peg :
See the glad captive spreads his wings,
Mounts, in a moment, mounts and sings,

When suddenly the cruel chain
 Twitches him back to earth again.
 —The clock strikes one—I can't delay,
 For dinner comes but once a day :
 At present, worthy friend, farewell ;
 But by to-morrow's post I'll tell,
 How, during these half-dozen moons,
 I cheat the lazy afternoons.

June 13, 1796.

EPISTLE II.

In this sweet place, where freedom reigns,
 Secured by bolts, and snug in chains ;
 Where innocence and guilt together
 Roost like two turtles of a feather ;
 Where debtors safe at anchor lie
 From saucy duns and bailiffs sly ;
 Where highwaymen and robbers stout
 Would, rather than break in, break out :
 Where all's so guarded and recluse,
 That none his liberty can lose ;
 Here each may, as his means afford,
 Dine like a pauper or a lord,
 And those who can't the cost defray,
 May live to dine another day.

Now let us ramble o'er the green,
 To see and hear what's heard and seen ;
 To breathe the air, enjoy the light,
 And hail yon sun, who shines as bright
 Upon the dungeon and the gallows
 As on York Minster or Kew Palace.
 And here let us the scene review :—
 That's the old castle, this the new ;
 Yonder the felons walk, and there
 The lady-prisoners take the air ;

Behind are solitary cells,
Where hermits live like snails in shells ;
There stands the chapel for good people ;
That black balcony is the steeple ;
How gaily spins the weathercock !
How proudly shines the crazy clock !
A clock, whose wheels eccentric run,
More like my head than like the sun :
And yet it shows us, right or wrong,
The days are only twelve hours long ;
Though captives often reckon here
Each day a month, each month a year.
There honest William stands in state,
The porter, at the horrid gate ;
Yet no ill-natured soul is he,
Entrance to all the world is free ;
One thing, indeed, is rather hard,
Egress is frequently debarr'd :
Of all the joys within that reign,
There's none like—getting out again !
Across the green, behold the court,
Where jargon reigns and wigs resort !
Where bloody tongues fight bloodless battles,
For life and death, for straws and rattles ;
Where juries yawn their patience out,
And judges dream in spite of gout.
There, on the outside of the door,
(As sang a wicked wag of yore,)
Stands Mother Justice, tall and thin,
Who never yet hath ventured in.
The cause, my friend, may soon be shown,
The lady was a stepping-stone,
Till—though the metamorphose odd is—
A chisel made the block a goddess :
—Odd !' did I say ?—I'm wrong this time ;
But I was hamper'd for a rhyme :
Justice at—I could tell you where—
Is just the same as justice there.

But lo! my frisking dog attends,
The kindest of four-footed friends ;
Brim-full of giddiness and mirth,
He is the prettiest fool on earth.
The rogue is twice a squirrel's size,
With short snub nose and big black eyes ;
A cloud of brown adorns his tail,
That curls and serves him for a sail ;
The same deep auburn dyes his ears,
That never were abridged by shears :
While white around, as Lapland snows,
His hair, in soft profusion, flows ;
Waves on his breast, and plumes his feet
With glossy fringe, like feathers fleet.
A thousand antic tricks he plays,
And looks at one a thousand ways ;
His wit, if he has any, lies
Somewhere between his tail and eyes ;
Sooner the light those eyes will fail,
Than *Billy* cease to wag that tail.

And yet the fellow ne'er is safe
From the tremendous beak of Ralph ;
A raven grim, in black and blue,
As arch a knave as e'er you knew ;
Who hops about with broken pinions,
And thinks these walls his own dominions.
This wag a mortal foe to Bill is,
They fight like Hector and Achilles ;
Bold Billy runs with all his might,
And conquers, Parthian-like, in flight ;
While Ralph his own importance feels,
And wages endless war with heels :
Horses and dogs, and geese and deer,
He slyly pinches in the rear ;
They start surprised with sudden pain,
While honest Ralph sheers off again.

A melancholy stag appears,
With rueful look and flagging ears ;

A feeble, lean, consumptive elf,
The very picture of myself!
My ghost-like form, and new-moon phiz,
Are just the counterparts of his :
Blasted like me by fortune's frown ;
Like me, TWICE hunted, TWICE run down !
Like me pursued, almost to death.
He's come to jail, to save his breath !
Still, on his painful limbs, are seen
The scars where worrying dogs have been ;
Still, on his wo-imprinted face,
I weep a broken heart to trace.
Daily the mournful wretch I feed
With crumbs of comfort and of bread ;
But man, false man ! so well he knows,
He deems the species all his foes :
In vain I smile to soothe his fear,
He will not, dare not, come too near ;
He lingers—looks—and fain he would—
Then strains his neck to reach the food.
Oft as his plaintive looks I see,
A brother's bowels yearn in me.
What rocks and tempests yet await
Both him and me, we leave to fate :
We know, by past experience taught,
That innocence availeth naught :
I feel, and 'tis my proudest boast,
That conscience is itself an host :
While this inspires my swelling breast,
Let all forsake me—I'm at rest ;
Ten thousand deaths, in every nerve,
I'd rather SUFFER than DESERVE.

But yonder comes the victim's wife,
A dappled doe, all fire and life :
She trips along with gallant pace,
Her limbs alert, her motion grace :
Soft as the moonlight fairies bound,
Her footsteps scarcely kiss the ground ;

Gently she lifts her fair brown head,
 And licks my hand, and begs for bread :
 I pat her forehead, stroke her neck,
 She starts and gives a timid squeak ;
 Then, while her eye with brilliance burns,
 The fawning animal returns ;
 Pricks her bob-tail, and waves her ears,
 And happier than a queen appears :
 —Poor beast ! from fell ambition free,
 And all the woes of LIBERTY ;
 Born in a jail, a prisoner bred,
 No dreams of hunting rack thine head ;
 Ah ! mayst thou never pass these bounds
 To see the world—and feel the hounds !
 Still all her beauty, all her art,
 Have fail'd to win her husband's heart :
 Her lambent eyes, and lovely chest ;
 Her swan-white neck, and ermine breast ;
 Her taper legs, and spotty hide,
 So softly, delicately pied,
 In vain their fond allurements spread,—
 To love and joy her spouse is dead.

But lo ! the evening shadows fall
 Broader and browner from the wall ;
 A warning voice, like curfew bell,
 Commands each captive to his cell ;
 My faithful dog and I retire,
 To play and chatter by the fire :
 Soon comes a turnkey with “ Good night, sir ! ”
 And bolts the door with all his might, sir :
 Then leisurely to bed I creep,
 And sometimes wake—and sometimes sleep.
 These are the joys that reign in prison,
 And if I'm happy 'tis with reason :
 Yet still this prospect o'er the rest
 Makes every blessing doubly blest ;
 That soon these pleasures will be vanish'd,
 And I, from all these comforts, banish'd !

THE BRAMIN.

EXTRACT FROM CANTO I.

ONCE, on the mountain's balmy lap reclined,
The sage unlock'd the treasures of his mind ;
Pure from his lips sublime instruction came,
As the blest altar breathes celestial flame ;
A band of youths and virgins round him press'd,
Whom thus the prophet and the sage address'd :—
 " Through the wide universe's boundless range,
All that exist decay, revive, and change :
No atom torpid or inactive lies ;
A being, once created, never dies.
The waning moon, when quench'd in shades of night.
Renews her youth with all the charms of light ;
The flowery beauties of the blooming year
Shrink from the shivering blast, and disappear ;
Yet, warm'd with quickening showers of genial rain,
Spring from their graves, and purple all the plain.
As day the night, and night succeeds the day,
So death re-animates, so lives decay :
Like billows on the undulating main,
The swelling fall, the falling swell again ;
Thus on the tide of time, inconstant, roll
The dying body and the living soul.
In every animal, inspired with breath,
The flowers of life produce the seeds of death ;—
The seeds of death, though scatter'd in the tomb,
Spring with new vigour, vegetate and bloom.
 " When wasted down to dust the creature dies,
Quick, from its cell, the enfranchised spirit flies ;
Fills, with fresh energy, another form,
And towers an elephant, or glides a worm ;
The awful lion's royal shape assumes ;
The fox's subtlety, or peacock's plumes ;

Swims, like an eagle, in the eye of noon,
 Or wails, a screech-owl, to the deaf, cold moon ;
 Haunts the dread brakes where serpents hiss and glare,
 Or hums, a glittering insect in the air.
 The illustrious souls of great and virtuous men,
 In noble animals revive again :
 But base and vicious spirits wind their way,
 In scorpions, vultures, sharks, and beasts of prey.
 The fair, the gay, the witty, and the brave,
 The fool, the coward, courtier, tyrant, slave ;
 Each, in congenial animals, shall find
 A home and kindred for his wandering mind.
 "Even the cold body, when enshrined in earth,
 Rises again in vegetable birth :
 From the vile ashes of the bad proceeds
 A baneful harvest of pernicious weeds ;
 The relics of the good, awaked by showers,
 Peep from the lap of death, and live in flowers ;
 Sweet modest flowers, that blush along the vale,
 Whose fragrant lips embalm the passing gale."

EXTRACT FROM CANTO II.

* * * * *

"Now, mark the words these dying lips impart,
 And wear this grand memorial round your heart :
 All that inhabit ocean, air, or earth,
 From ONE ETERNAL SIRE derive their birth.
 The Hand that built the palace of the sky
 Form'd the light wings that decorate a fly :
 The Power that wheels the circling planets round
 Rears every infant floweret on the ground ;
 That Bounty which the mightiest beings share
 Feeds the least gnat that gilds the evening air.
 Thus all the wild inhabitants of woods,
 Children of air, and tenants of the floods ;
 All, all are equal, independent, free,
 And all the heirs of immortality !

For all that live and breathe have once been men,
And, in succession, will be such again :
Even you, in turn, that human shape must change,
And through ten thousand forms of being range.
“ Ah ! then, refrain your brethren’s blood to spill,
And, till you can create, forbear to kill !
Oft as a guiltless fellow-creature dies,
The blood of innocence for vengeance cries :
Even grim, rapacious savages of prey,
Presume not, save in self-defence, to slay ;
What, though to heaven their forfeit lives they owe,
Hath heaven commission’d thee to deal the blow ?
Crush not the feeble, inoffensive worm,
Thy sister’s spirit wears that humble form !
Why should thy cruel arrow smite you bird ?
In him thy brother’s plaintive song is heard.
When the poor, harmless kid, all trembling, lies,
And begs his little life with infant cries.
Think, ere you take the throbbing victim’s breath,
You doom a dear, an only child, to death.
When at the ring the beauteous heifer stands,
—Stay, monster ! stay those parricidal hands ;
Canst thou not, in that mild, dejected face,
The sacred features of thy mother trace ?
When to the stake the generous bull you lead,
Tremble,—ah, tremble,—lest your father bleed.
Let not your anger on your dog descend,
The faithful animal was once your friend ;
The friend whose courage snatch’d you from the grave,
When wrapp’d in flames or sinking in the wave.
—Rash, impious youth ! renounce that horrid knife,
Spare the sweet antelope !—ah, spare—thy wife !
In the meek victim’s tear-illuminated eyes,
See the soft image of thy consort rise ;
Such as she is, when by romantic streams
Her spirit greets thee in delightful dreams ;
Not as she look’d, when blighted in her bloom ;
Not as she lies, all pale in yonder tomb ;

That mournful tomb, where all thy joys repose !
That hallow'd tomb, where all thy griefs shall close.

“ While yet I sing, the weary king of light
Resigns his sceptre to the queen of night ;
Unnumber'd orbs of living fire appear,
And roll in glittering grandeur o'er the sphere.
Perhaps the soul, released from earthly ties,
A thousand ages hence may mount the skies ;
'Through suns and planets, stars, and systems range,
In each new forms assume, relinquish, change ;
From age to age, from world to world aspire,
And climb the scale of being higher and higher :
But who these awful mysteries dare explore ?
Pause, O my soul ! and tremble and adore.

“ There is a Power, all other powers above,
Whose name is Goodness, and His nature Love ;
Who call'd the infant universe to light,
From central nothing and circumfluent night.
On His great providence all worlds depend,
As trembling atoms to their centre tend ;
In Nature's face His glory shines confess'd,
She wears His sacred image on her breast ;
His spirit breathes in every living soul ;
His bounty feeds, his presence fills the whole ;
Though seen, invisible—though felt, unknown ;
All that exist, exist in Him alone.
But who the wonders of His hand can trace
Through the dread ocean of unfathom'd space ?
When from the shore we lift our fainting eyes,
Where boundless scenes of Godlike grandeur rise ;
Like sparkling atoms in the noontide rays,
Worlds, stars, and suns, and universes blaze.
Yet these transcendent monuments that shine,
Eternal miracles of skill divine,
These, and ten thousand more, are only still
The shadow of his power, the transcript of his will.”

April 14, 1796.

A TALE TOO TRUE:

Being a supplement to *The Prison Amusements*, originally published under the name of PAUL POSITIVE, in which many of the Author's Juvenile Verses were composed. The following were written at Scarborough, whither he had retired, on being liberated from York Castle, for the recovery of his health, before he returned home. They are dated July 23, 1796, and were literally a summer-day's labour.

ONE beautiful morning, when Paul was a child,
And went with a satchel to school,
The rogue play'd the truant, which shows he was wild,
And though little, a very great fool.

He came to a cottage that grew on the moor,
No mushroom was ever so strong ;
'Twas snug as a mouse-trap ; and close by the door
A river ran rippling along.

The cot was embosom'd in rook-nested trees,
The chestnut, the elm, and the oak ;
Geese gabbled in concert with bagpiping bees,
While softly ascended the smoke.

At the door sat a damsel, a sweet little girl,
Array'd in a petticoat green ;
Her skin was lovely as mother of pearl,
And milder than moonlight her mien.

She sang as she knotted a garland of flowers,
Right mellowly warbled her tongue ;
Such strains in Elysium's romantical bowers,
To soothe the departed are sung.

Paul stood like a gander, he stood like himself,
Eyes, ears, nose, and mouth open'd wide ;
When suddenly rising, the pretty young elf
The wonder-struck wanderer spied.

She started and trembled, she blush'd and she smiled,
Then dropping a courtesy she said,
"Pray, what brought you hither, my dear little child?
Did your legs run away with your head?"

"Yes! yes!" stammer'd Paul, and he made a fine bow,
At least 'twas the finest he could,
Though the lofty-bred belles of St. James's, I trow,
Would have call'd it a bow made of wood.

No matter, the dimple-cheek'd damsel was pleased,
And modestly gave him her wrist;
Paul took the fine present, and tenderly squeezed,
As if 'twere a wasp in his fist.

Then into the cottage she led the young fool,
Who stood all aghast to behold
The lass's grim mother, who managed a school,
A beldame, a witch, and a scold.

Her eyes were as red as two lobsters when boil'd,
Her complexion the colour of straw;
Though she grinn'd like a death's head whenever she
smiled,
She show'd not a tooth in her jaw.

Her body was shrivell'd and dried like a keeks,
Her arms were all veins, bone, and skin;
And then she'd a beard, sir, in spite of her sex,
I don't know how long, on her chin.

Her dress was as mournful as mourning could be,
Black sackcloth, bleach'd white with her tears;
For a widow, fair ladies! a widow was she,
Most dismally stricken in years.

The charms of her youth, if she ever had any,
Were all under total eclipse;
While the charms of her daughter, who truly had many,
Were only unfolding their lips.

Thus, far in a wilderness, bleak and forlorn,
When winter deflowers the year,
All hoary and horrid, I've seen an old thorn,
In icicle trappings appear :

While a sweet-smiling snow-drop enamels its root,
Like the morning-star gladdening the sky ;
Or an elegant crocus peeps out at its foot,
As blue as Miss Who-ye-will's eye.

‘Dear mother !’ the damsel exclaim'd with a sigh,
“ I have brought you a poor little wretch,
Your victim and mine, ”—but a tear from her eye
Wash'd away all the rest of her speech.

The beldame then mounting her spectacles on,
Like an arch o'er the bridge of her nose,
Examined the captive, and crying “ Well done ! ”
Bade him welcome with twenty dry blows.

Paul fell down astounded, and only not dead,
For death was not quite within call ;
Recovering he found himself in a warm bed,
And in a warm fever and all.

Reclined on her elbow, to anguish a prey,
The maiden in lovely distress
Sate weeping her soul from her eyelids away ;
How could the fair mourner do less ?

But when she perceived him reviving again,
She caroll'd a sonnet so sweet,
The captive, transported, forgot all his pain,
And presently fell at her feet.

All rapture and fondness, all folly and joy,
“ Dear damsel ! for your sake, ” he cried,
“ I'll be your cross mother's own dutiful boy,
And you shall one day be my bride. ”

“For shame!” quoth the nymph, though she look’d the
reverse,
“Such nonsense I cannot approve;
Too young we’re to wed.”—Paul said, “So much the
worse;
But are we too young then to love?”

The lady replied in a language that speaks
Not unto the ear but the eye;
The language that blushes through eloquent cheeks,
When modesty looks very sly.

Our true lovers lived,—for the fable saith true,—
As merry as larks in their nest,
Who are learning to sing while the hawk is in view,
—The ignorant always are blest.

Through valleys and meadows they wander’d by day,
And warbled and whistled along;
So liquidly glided their moments away,
Their life was a galloping song.

When they twitter’d their notes from the top of a hill,
If November did not look like May,
If rocks did not caper, nor rivers stand still,
The asses at least did not bray.

If the trees did not leap nor the mountains advance,
They were deaf as bailiffs, ’tis clear;
If sun, moon, and stars did not lead up a dance,
They wanted a musical ear.

But sometimes the beldame, cross, crazy, and old,
Would thunder, and threaten, and swear;
Expose them to tempests, to heat, and to cold,
To danger, fatigue, and despair.

For wisdom, she argued, could only be taught
By bitter experience to fools,

And she acted as every good school-mistress ought,
Quite up to the beard of her rules.

Her school, by-the-bye, was the noblest on earth
For mortals to study themselves ;
There many great folks, who were folios by birth,
She cut down to pitiful twelves.

Her rod like death's scythe, in her levelling hand,
Bow'd down rich, poor, wicked, and just ;
Kings, queens, popes, and heroes, the touch of her
wand
Could crumble to primitive dust.

At length in due season, the planets that reign,
By chance or some similar art,
Commanded the dansel to honour her swain
With her hand as the key to her heart.

The grisly old mother then blest the fond pair ;
—" While you live, O my darlings !" she cried,
" My favours unask'd for you always shall share,
And cleave like two ribs to my side.

" Poor Paul is a blockhead in marrow and bone,
Whom naught but my rod can make wise ;
The fellow will only, when all's said and done,
Be just fit to live when he dies."

The witch was a prophetess, all must allow,
And Paul a strange moon-stricken youth,
Who somewhere had pick'd up, I'll not tell you how,
A sad knack of telling the truth.

His sorrows and sufferings his consort may paint,
In colours of water and fire ;
She saw him in prison, desponding and faint,
She saw him in act to expire.

Then melting her voice to the tenderest tone,
The lovely enthusiast began
To sing in sweet numbers the comforts unknown,
That solace the soul of the man,

Who, hated, forsaken, tormented, opprest,
And wrestling with anguish severe,
Can turn his eye inward, and view in his breast
A conscience unclouded and clear.

The captive look'd up with a languishing eye,
Half quench'd in a tremulous tear ;
He saw the meek Angel of Hope standing by,
He heard her solicit his ear.

Her strain then exalting, and swelling her lyre,
The triumphs of patience she sung,
While passions of music and language of fire
Flow'd full and sublime from her tongue.

At length the gay morning of liberty shone,
At length the dread portals flew wide ;
Then hailing each other with transports unknown,
The captive escaped with his bride.

Behold in a fable the Poet's own life,
From which this lean moral we draw,
—The MUSE is Paul Positive's nightingale-wife,
MISFORTUNE his mother-in-law.

THE
WANDERER OF SWITZERLAND.

A POEM, IN SIX PARTS.

THE historical facts alluded to in the following narrative may be found in the Supplement to Coxe's Travels in Switzerland, Planta's History of the Helvetic Confederacy, and Zschokke's Invasion of Switzerland by the French in 1798, translated by Dr. Aiken.

THE WANDERER OF SWITZERLAND.

PART I.

A Wanderer of Switzerland and his Family, consisting of his Wife, his Daughter, and her young Children, emigrating from their Country, in consequence of its Subjugation by the French in 1798, arrive at the Cottage of a Shepherd, beyond the Frontiers, where they are hospitably entertained.

Shep. "WANDERER, whither dost thou roam?
Weary wanderer, old and gray?
Wherefore hast thou left thine home
In the sunset of thy day?"

Wand. "In the sunset of my day,
Stranger, I have lost my home:
Weary, wandering, old and gray,
Therefore, therefore do I roam.
Here mine arms a wife enfold,
Fainting in their weak embrace;
There my daughter's charms behold,
Withering in that widow'd face.
These her infants—Oh their sire,
Worthy of the race of TELL,
In the battle's fiercest fire,
—In his country's battle fell!"

Shep. "SWITZERLAND then gave thee birth?"

Wand. "Ay—'twas SWITZERLAND of yore;
But, degraded spot of earth!
Thou art SWITZERLAND no more:
O'er thy mountains, sunk in blood,
Are the waves of ruin hurl'd;
Like the waters of the flood
Rolling round a buried world."

Shep. "Yet will Time the deluge stop:
Then may SWITZERLAND be blest:
On St. Gothard's* hoary top
Shall the ark of freedom rest."

Wand. "No!—Irreparably lost,
On the day that made us slaves,
Freedom's ark, by tempest tost,
Founder'd in the swallowing waves."

Shep. "Welcome, wanderer, as thou art,
All my blessings to partake;
Yet thrice welcome to my heart
For thine injured country's sake.

On the western hills afar
Evening lingers with delight,
While she views her favourite star
Brightening on the brow of night.

Here, though lowly be my lot,
Enter freely, freely share
All the comforts of my cot,
Humble shelter, homely fare.

Spouse! I bring a suffering guest,
With his family of grief;
Give the weary pilgrim rest,
Yield the exiles sweet relief."

S. Wife. "I will yield them sweet relief:
Weary pilgrims! welcome here;
Welcome, family of grief!
Welcome to my warmest cheer."

Wand. "When in prayer the broken heart
Asks a blessing from above,
Heaven shall take the wanderer's part,
Heaven reward the stranger's love."

* ST. GOTHARD is the name of the highest mountain in the canton of URI, the birth-place of Swiss independence.

Shep. "Haste, recruit the failing fire,
High the winter-fagots raise :
See the crackling flames aspire ;
Oh how cheerfully they blaze !

Mourners ! now forget your cares,
And, till supper-board be crown'd,
Closely draw your fire-side chairs ;
Form the dear domestic round."

Wand. "Host ! thy smiling daughters bring,
Bring those rosy lads of thine :
Let them mingle in the ring
With these poor lost babes of mine."

Shep. "Join the ring, my girls and boys :
This enchanting circle, this
Binds the social loves and joys ;
'Tis the fairy ring of bliss !"

Wand. "O ye loves and joys ! that sport
In the fairy ring of bliss,
Oft with me ye held your court ;
I had once a home like this !

Bountiful my former lot
As my native country's rills ;
The foundations of my cot
Were her everlasting hills.

But those streams no longer pour
Rich abundance round my lands ;
And my father's cot no more
On my father's mountain stands.

By an hundred winters piled,
When the glaciers,¹ dark with death,
Hang o'er precipices wild,
Hang—suspended by a breath :

If a pulse but throb alarm,
Headlong down the steeps they fall ;

—For a pulse will break the charm,—
 Bounding, bursting, burying all.

Struck with horror, stiff and pale,
 When the chaos breaks on high,
 All that view it from the vale,
 All that hear it coming, die :—

In a day and hour accurst,
 O'er the wretched land of TELL,
 Thus the Gallic ruin burst,
 Thus the Gallic glacier fell !”

Shep. “Hush that melancholy strain ;
 Wipe those unavailing tears :”

Wand. “Nay—I must, I will complain ;
 ’Tis the privilege of years :

’Tis the privilege of wo,
 Thus her anguish to impart :
 And the tears that freely flow
 Ease the agonizing heart.”

Shep. “Yet suspend thy griefs awhile :
 See the plenteous table crown’d ;
 And my wife’s endearing smile
 Beams a rosy welcome round.

Cheese from mountain dairies prest,
 Wholesome herbs, nutritious roots,
 Honey from the wild-bee’s nest,
 Cheering wine and ripen’d fruits :

These, with soul-sustaining bread,
 My paternal fields afford :—
 On such fare our fathers fed ;
 Hoary pilgrim ! bless the board.”

PART II.

After supper, the Wanderer, at the desire of his host, relates the sorrows and sufferings of his Country, during the Invasion and Conquest of it by the French, in connection with his own Story.

Shep. "WANDERER! bow'd with griefs and years,
Wanderer, with the cheek so pale,
Oh give language to those tears!
Tell their melancholy tale."

Wand. "Stranger-friend, the tears that flow
Down the channels of this cheek
Tell a mystery of wo
Which no human tongue can speak.

Not the pangs of 'hope deferr'd'
My tormented bosom tear:—
On the tomb of hope interr'd
Scowls the spectre of despair.

Where the Alpine summits rise,
Height o'er height stupendous hurl'd;
Like the pillars of the skies,
Like the ramparts of the world:

Born in freedom's eagle nest,
Rock'd by whirlwinds in their rage,
Nursed at freedom's stormy breast,
Lived my sires from age to age.

High o'er UNDERWALDEN's vale,
Where the forest fronts the morn;
Whence the boundless eye might sail
O'er a sea of mountains borne;

There my little native cot
Peep'd upon my father's farm:—
Oh! it was a happy spot,
Rich in every rural charm!

There my life, a silent stream,
 Glid along, yet seem'd at rest :
Lovely as an infant's dream
 On the waking mother's breast.

Till the storm that wreck'd the world,
 In its horrible career,
Into hopeless ruin hurl'd
 All this aching heart held dear.

On the princely towers of BERNE
 Fell the Gallic thunder-stroke :
To the lake of poor LUCERNE,
 All submitted to the yoke.

REDING then his standard raised,
 Drew his sword on BRUNNEN's plain ;²
But in vain his banner blazed,
 REDING drew his sword in vain.

Where our conquering fathers died ;
 Where their awful bones repose ;
Thrice the battle's fate he tried,
 Thrice o'erthrew his country's foes.³

Happy then were those who fell
 Fighting on their father's graves !
Wretched those who lived to tell
 Treason made the victors slaves !⁴

Thus my country's life retired,
 Slowly driven from part to part ;
UNDERWALDEN last expired ;
 UNDERWALDEN was the heart.⁵

In the valley of their birth,
 Where our guardian mountains stand :
In the eye of heaven and earth,
 Met the warriors of our land.

Like their sires in olden time,
 Arm'd they met in stern debate :

While in every breast sublime
Glow'd the SPIRIT OF THE STATE.

GALLIA's menace fired their blood ;
With one heart and voice they rose :
Hand in hand the heroes stood,
And defied their faithless foes.

Then to heaven, in calm despair,
As they turn'd the tearless eye,
By their country's wrongs they swear
With their country's rights to die.

ALBERT from the council came :
(My poor daughter was his wife ;
All the valley loved his name ;
ALBERT was my staff of life.)

From the council-field he came ;
All his noble visage burn'd ;
At his look I caught the flame,
At his voice my youth returned.

Fire from heaven my heart renew'd :
Vigour beat through every vein ;
All the powers that age had hew'd
Started into strength again.

Sudden from my couch I sprang,
Every limb to life restored ;
With the bound my cottage rang,
As I snatch'd my father's sword.

This the weapon they did wield
On MORGARTHEN's dreadful day ;
And through SEMPACH's⁹ iron field
This the ploughshare of their way.

Then, my spouse ! in vain thy fears
Strove my fury to restrain ;
O my daughter ! all thy tears,
All thy children's, were in vain.

Quickly from our hastening foes
ALBERT'S active care removed,
Far amidst the eternal snows,
These who loved us,—these beloved.⁷

Then our cottage we forsook ;
Yet, as down the steeps we passed,
Mauny an agonizing look
Homeward o'er the hills we cast.

Now we reach'd the nether glen,
Where in arms our brethren lay ;
Thrice five hundred fearless men,
Men of adamant were they !

Nature's bulwarks built by Time,
'Gainst eternity to stand,
Mountains terribly sublime,
Girt the camp on either hand.

Dim, behind, the valley brake
Into rocks that fled from view ;
Fair in front the gleaming lake
Roll'd its waters bright and blue.

Midst the hamlets of the dale,
STANTZ,* with simple grandeur crown'd,
Seem'd the mother of the vale,
With her children scatter'd round.

Midst the ruins of the vale,
Now she bows her hoary head,
Like the widow of the vale
Weeping o'er her offspring dead.

Happier then had been her fate,
Ere she fell by such a foe,
Had an earthquake sunk her state,
Or the lightning laid her low !"⁸

* The capital of UNDERVALDEN.

Shep. "By the lightning's deadly flash
 Would her foes had been consumed!
 Or amidst the earthquake's crash
 Suddenly, alive, entomb'd!

Why did justice not prevail?"

Wand. "Ah! it was not thus to be!"

Shep. "Man of grief, pursue thy tale
 To the death of liberty."

PART III.

The Wanderer continues his Narrative, and describes the Battle and Massacre of Underwalden.

Wand. "FROM the valley we descried,
 As the GAULS approach'd our shores,
 Keels that darken'd all the tide,
 Tempesting the lake with oars.

Then the mountain-echoes rang
 With the clangour of alarms:
 Shrill the signal-trumpet sang;
 All our warriors leap'd to arms.

On the margin of the flood,
 While the frantic foe drew nigh;
 Grim as watching wolves we stood,
 Prompt as eagles stretch'd to fly.

In a deluge upon land
 Burst their overwhelming might:
 Back we hurl'd them from the strand,
 Oft returning to the fight.

Fierce and long the combat held;
 Till the waves were warm with blood,
 Till the booming waters swell'd
 As they sank beneath the flood.^s

For, on that triumphant day,
 UNDERWALDEN'S arms once more
Broke oppression's black array,
 Dash'd invasion from her shore.

GAUL'S surviving barks retired,
 Muttering vengeance as they fled :
Hope in us, by conquest fired,
 Raised our spirits from the dead.

From the dead our spirits rose,
 To the dead they soon return'd ;
Bright, on its eternal close,
 UNDERWALDEN'S glory burn'd.

Star of SWITZERLAND ! whose rays
 Shed such sweet expiring light,
Ere the Gallic comet's blaze
 Swept thy beauty into night :—

Star of SWITZERLAND ! thy fame
 No recording bard hath sung :
Yet be thine immortal name
 Inspiration to my tongue !⁹

While the lingering moon delay'd
 In the wilderness of night,
Ere the morn awoke the shade
 Into loveliness and light ;—

GALLIA'S tigers, wild for blood,
 Darted on our sleeping fold ;
Down the mountains, o'er the flood,
 Dark as thunder-clouds they roll'd.

By the trumpet's voice alarm'd,
 All the valley burst awake ;
All were in a moment arm'd,
 From the barriers to the lake.

In that valley, on that shore,
 When the graves give up their dead,

At the trumpet's voice once more
Shall those slumberers quit their bed.

For the glen that gave them birth
Hides their ashes in its womb :
Oh ! 'tis venerable earth,
Freedom's cradle, freedom's tomb.

Then on every side begun
That unutterable fight ;
Never rose the astonish'd sun
On so horrible a sight.

Once an eagle of the rock
('Twas an omen of our fate)
Stoop'd, and from my scatter'd flock
Bore a lambkin to his mate.

While the parents fed their young,
Lo ! a cloud of vultures lean,
By voracious famine stung,
Wildly screaming, rush'd between

Fiercely fought the eagle-twain,
Though by multitudes opprest,
Till their little ones were slain,
Till they perish'd on their nest.

More unequal was the fray
Which our band of brethren waged ;
More insatiate o'er their prey
Gaul's remorseless vultures raged.

In innumerable waves
Sworn with fury, grim with blood,
Headlong roll'd the hordes of slaves,
And engulf'd us with a flood.

In the whirlpool of that flood,
Firm in fortitude divine,
Like the eternal rocks we stood
In the cataract of the Rhine

Till by tenfold force assail'd,
In a hurricane of fire,
When at length our phalanx fail'd,
Then our courage blazed the higher.

Broken into feeble bands,
Fighting in dissever'd parts,
Weak and weaker grew our hands,
Strong and stronger still our hearts.

Fierce amid the loud alarms,
Shouting in the foremost fray,
Children raised their little arms
In their country's evil day.

On their country's dying bed
Wives and husbands pour'd their breath;
Many a youth and maiden bled,
Married at thine altar, Death.¹⁰

Wildly scatter'd o'er the plain,
Bloodier still the battle grew:—
O ye spirits of the slain,
Slain on those your prowess slew!

Who shall now your deeds relate?
Ye that fell, unwept, unknown;
Mourning for your country's fate,
But rejoicing in your own!

Virtue, valour, nought avail'd
With so merciless a foe;
When the nerves of heroes fail'd,
Cowards then could strike a blow.

Cold and keen the assassin's blade
Snote the father to the ground;
Through the infant's breast convey'd
To the mother's heart a wound.*

* An indiscriminate massacre followed the battle.

UNDERWALDEN thus expired ;
 But at her expiring flame,
 With fraternal feeling fired,
 Lo ! a band of SWITZERS came.¹⁴

From the steeps beyond the lake,
 Like a winter's weight of snow,
 When the huge lavanges break,
 Devastating all below ;¹²

Down they rush'd with headlong might,
 Swifter than the panting wind ;
 All before them fear and flight ;
 Death and silence all behind.

How the forest of the foe
 Bow'd before the thunder strokes,
 When they laid the cedars low,
 When they overwhelm'd the oaks !

Thus they hew'd their dreadful way ;
 Till, by numbers forced to yield,
 Terrible in death they lay,
 The AVENGERS OF THE FIELD."

PART IV.

The Wanderer relates the Circumstances attending the Death of Albert.

Shep. " PLEDGE the memory of the brave,
 And the spirits of the dead ;
 Pledge the venerable grave,
 Valour's consecrated bed.

Wanderer ! cheer thy drooping soul ;
 This inspiring goblet take ;
 Drain the deep delicious bowl,
 For thy martyr'd brethren's sake."

Wand. "Hail!—all hail! the patriot's grave,
 Valour's venerable bed:
 Hail! the memory of the brave;
 Hail! the spirits of the dead.

Time their triumphs shall proclaim,
 And their rich reward be this,—
 Immortality of fame,
 Immortality of bliss."

Shep. "On that melancholy plain,
 In that conflict of despair,
 How was noble ALBERT slain?
 How didst thou, old warrior, fare?"

Wand. "In the agony of strife,
 Where the heart of battle bled,
 Where his country lost her life,
 Glorious ALBERT bow'd his head,
 When our phalanx broke away,
 And our stoutest soldiers fell,
 —Where the dark rocks dimm'd the day,
 Scowling o'er the deepest dell;

There, like lions old in blood,
 Lions rallying round their den,
 Albert and his warriors stood:
 We were few, but we were men.

Breast to breast we fought the ground,
 Arm to arm repell'd the foe:
 Every motion was a wound,
 And a death was every blow.

Thus the clouds of sunset beam
 Warmer with expiring light;
 Thus autumnal meteors stream
 Redder through the darkening night.

Miracles our champions wrought—
 Who their dying deeds shall tell?

Oh, how gloriously they fought!
How triumphantly they fell!

One by one gave up the ghost,
Slain, not conquer'd,—they died free.

ALBERT stood,—himself an host:
Last of all the Swiss was he.

So, when night, with rising shade,
Climbs the Alps from steep to steep,
Till in hoary gloom array'd
All the giant-mountains sleep—

High in heaven their monarch¹³ stands
Bright and beauteous from afar,
Shining into distant lands
Like a new created star.

While I struggled through the fight,
ALBERT was my sword and shield;
Till strange horror quench'd my sight,
And I fainted on the field.

Slow awakening from that trance,
When my soul return'd to day,
Vanish'd were the fiends of France,
—But in ALBERT'S blood I lay.

Slain for me, his dearest breath
On my lips he did resign;
Slain for me, he snatch'd his death
From the blow that menaced mine.

He had raised his dying head,
And was gazing on my face;
As I woke—the spirit fled,
But I *felt* his last embrace."

Shep. "Man of suffering! such a tale
Would wring tears from marble eyes!"

Wand. "Ha! my daughter's cheek grows pale!"

W. Wife. "Help, oh help! my daughter dies!"

- Wand.* "Calm thy transports, O my wife!
Peace for these dear orphans' sake!"
- W. Wife.* "O my joy, my hope, my life,
O my child, my child, awake!"
- Wand.* "God! O God, whose goodness gives;
God! whose wisdom takes away;
Spare my child!"
- Shep.* "—————" "She lives, she lives!"
- Wand.* "Lives?—my daughter, didst thou say?
GOD ALMIGHTY, on my knees,
In the dust, will I adore
Thine unsearchable decrees;
—She was dead:—she lives once more."
- W. Dtr.* "When poor ALBERT died, no prayer
Call'd him back to hated life:
Oh that I had perish'd there,
Not his widow, but his wife!"
- Wand.* "Dare my daughter thus repine?
ALBERT! answer from above;
Tell me,—are these infants thine,
Whom their mother does not love?"
- W. Dtr.* "Does not love!—my father hear;
Hear me, or my heart will break:
Dear is life, but only dear
For my parents', children's sake.
Bow'd to Heaven's mysterious will,
I am worthy yet of you;
Yes!—I am a mother still,
Though I feel a widow too."
- Wand.* "Mother, widow, mourner, all,
All kind names in one,—my child;
On thy faithful neck I fall;
Kiss me,—are we reconciled?"
- W. Dtr.* "Yes, to ALBERT I appeal:
ALBERT, answer from above,

That my father's breast may feel
All his daughter's heart of love."

S. Wife. "Faint and way-worn as they be
With the day's long journey, sire,
Let thy pilgrim family
Now with me to rest retire."

Wand. "Yes, the hour invites to sleep ;
Till the morrow we must part :
—Nay, my daughter, do not weep,
Do not weep and break my heart.

Sorrow-soothing sweet repose
On your peaceful pillows light ;
Angel-hands your eyelids close ;
Dream of Paradise to-night."

PART V.

*The Wanderer, being left alone with the Shepherd, relates his Adventures after the
Battle of Unterwalden.*

Shep. "WHEN the good man yields his breath,
(For the good man never dies,)
Bright, beyond the gulf of death,
Lo ! the land of promise lies.

Peace to ALBERT's awful shade,
In that land where sorrows cease ;
And to ALBERT's ashes, laid
In the earth's cold bosom, peace."

Wand. "On the fatal field I lay
Till the hour when twilight pale,
Like the ghost of dying day,
Wander'd down the darkening vale.

Then in agony I rose,
And with horror look'd around,

Where embracing, friends and foes,
Dead and dying, strew'd the ground.

Many a widow fix'd her eye,
Weeping where her husband bled,
Heedless though her babe was by,
Prattling to his father dead.

Many a mother, in despair
Turning up the ghastly slain,
Sought her son, her hero there,
Whom she long'd to seek in vain.

Dark the evening shadows roll'd
On the eye that gleam'd in death ;
And the evening-dews fell cold
On the lip that gasp'd for breath.

As I gazed, an ancient dame,
—She was *childless* by her look—
With refreshing cordials came :
Of her bounty I partook.

Then, with desperation bold,
ALBERT'S precious corpse I bore
On these shoulders weak and old,
Bow'd with misery before.

ALBERT'S angel gave me strength,
As I stagger'd down the glen ;
And I hid my charge at length
In its wildest, deepest den.

Then returning through the shade
To the battle-scene, I sought,
'Mongst the slain, an axe and spade ;—
With such weapons FREEMEN fought.

Scythes for swords our youth did wield
In that execrable strife ;
Ploughshares in that horrid field
Bled with slaughter, breathed with life.

In a dark and lonely cave,
While the glimmering moon arose,
Thus I dug my ALBERT'S grave ;
There his hallow'd limbs repose.

Tears then, tears too long repress,
Gush'd :—they fell like healing balm,
Till the whirlwind in my breast
Died into a dreary calm.

On the fresh earth's humid bed,
Where my martyr lay enshrined,
This forlorn, unhappy head,
Crazed with anguish, I reclined.

But, while o'er my weary eyes
Soothing slumbers seem'd to creep,
Forth I sprang, with strange surprise,
From the clasping arms of sleep.

For the bones of ALBERT dead
Heaved the turf with horrid throes,
And his grave beneath my head
Burst asunder ;—ALBERT rose !

'Ha ! my son—my son,' I cried,
'Wherefore hast thou left thy grave ?'
—'Fly, my father,'—he replied ;
'Save my wife—my children save.'—

In the passing of a breath
This tremendous scene was o'er :
Darkness shut the gates of death,
Silence seal'd them as before.

One pale moment fix'd I stood
In astonishment severe ;
Horror petrified my blood,—
I was wither'd up with fear.

Then a sudden trembling came
O'er my limbs ; I felt on fire,

Burning, quivering like a flame
In the instant to expire."

Shep. "Rather like the mountain-oak,
Tempest-shaken, rooted fast,
Grasping strength from every stroke,
While it wrestles with the blast."

Wand. "Ay!—my heart, unwont to yield,
Quickly quell'd the strange affright,
And undaunted o'er the field
I began my lonely flight.

Loud the gusty night-wind blew;—
Many an awful pause between,
Fits of light and darkness flew
Wild and sudden o'er the scene.

For the moon's resplendent eye
Gleams of transient glory shed;
And the clouds, athwart the sky,
Like a routed army fled.

Sounds and voices fill'd the vale,
Heard alternate loud and low;
Shouts of victory swell'd the gale,
But the breezes murmur'd wo.

As I climb'd the mountain's side,
Where the lake and valley meet,
All my country's power and pride
Lay in ruins at my feet.

On that grim and ghastly plain
UNDERWALDEN's heart-strings broke,
When she saw her heroes slain,
And her rocks receive the yoke.

On that plain, in childhood's hours,
From their mothers' arms set free,
Oft those heroes gather'd flowers,
Often chased the wandering bee.

On that plain, in rosy youth,
 They had fed their fathers' flocks,
 Told their love, and pledged their truth,
 In the shadow of those rocks.

There, with shepherd's pipe and song,
 In the merry mingling dance,
 Once they led their brides along,
 Now!——Perdition seize thee, France!"

Shep. "Heard not Heaven the accusing cries
 Of the blood that smoked around,
 While the life-warm sacrifice
 Palpitated on the ground?"

Wand. "Wrath in silence heaps his store,
 To confound the guilty foe ;
 But the thunder will not roar
 Till the flash has struck the blow.

Vengeance, vengeance will not stay :
 It shall burst on GALLIA'S head,
 Sudden as the judgment-day
 To the unexpected dead.

From the Revolution's flood
 Shall a fiery dragon start ;
 He shall drink his mother's blood,
 He shall eat his father's heart.

Nursed by anarchy and crime,
 He——but distance mocks my sight ;
 O thou great avenger, TIME !
 Bring thy strangest birth to light."

Shep. "Prophet, thou hast spoken well,
 And I deem thy words divine :
 Now the mournful sequel tell
 Of thy country's woes and thine."

Wand. "Though the moon's bewilder'd bark,
 By the midnight tempest tost,

In a sea of vapours dark,
In a gulf of clouds was lost ;
Still my journey I pursued,
Climbing many a weary steep.
Whence the closing scene I view'd
With an eye that would not weep.

STANTZ—a melancholy pyre—
And her hamlets blazed behind,
With ten thousand tongues of fire,
Writhing, raging in the wind.

Flaming piles, where'er I turn'd,
Cast a grim and dreadful light ;
Like funereal lamps they burn'd
In the sepulchre of night ;

While the red illumined flood,
With a hoarse and hollow roar,
Seem'd a lake of living blood
Wildly weltering on the shore.

Midst the mountains far away,
Soon I spied the sacred spot,
Whence a slow consuming ray
Glimmer'd from my native cot.

At the sight my brain was fired,
And afresh my heart's wounds bled ;
Still I gazed :—the spark expired—
Nature seem'd extinct :—I fled.—

Fled ; and, ere the noon of day,
Reach'd the lonely goat-herd's nest,
Where my wife, my children lay—
Husband—father—think the rest."

PART VI.

The Wanderer informs the Shepherd that, after the example of many of his Countrymen flying from the Tyranny of France, it is his intention to settle in some remote province of America.

Shep. “WANDERER, whither wouldst thou roam?
To what region far away
Bend thy steps to find a home,
In the twilight of thy day?”

Wand. “In the twilight of my day
I am hastening to the West;
There my weary limbs to lay,
Where the sun retires to rest.
Far beyond the Atlantic floods,
Stretch'd beneath the evening sky,
Realms of mountains, dark with woods,
In Columbia's bosom lie.

There, in glens and caverns rude,
Silent since the world began,
Dwells the virgin Solitude,
Unbetray'd by faithless man;

Where a tyrant never trod,
Where a slave was never known,
But where Nature worships God
In the wilderness alone;

—Thither, thither would I roam;
There my children may be free;
I for them will find a home,
They shall find a grave for me.

Though my father's bones afar
In their native land repose,
Yet beneath the twilight star
Soft on mine the turf shall close.

Though the mould that wraps my clay
 When this storm of life is o'er,
 Never since creation lay
 On a human breast before ;—

Yet in sweet communion there,
 When she follows to the dead,
 Shall my bosom's partner share
 Her poor husband's lowly bed.

ALBERT's babes shall deck our grave,
 And my daughter's duteous tears
 Bid the flowery verdure wave
 Through the winter-waste of years."

Shep. "Long before thy sun descend,
 May thy woes and wanderings cease ;
 Late and lovely be thine end ;
 Hope and triumph, joy and peace !

As our lakes, at day's decline,
 Brighten through the gathering gloom,
 May thy latest moments shine
 Through the night-fall of the tomb."

Wand. "Though our parent perish'd here,
 Like the phœnix on her nest,
 Lo ! new-fledged her wings appear,
 Hovering in the golden West.

Thither shall her sons repair,
 And beyond the roaring main
 Find their native country there,
 Find their SWITZERLAND again.

Mountains, can ye chain the will ?
 Ocean, canst thou quench the heart ?
 No ; I feel my country still,
 LIBERTY ! where'er thou art.

Thus it was in hoary time,
 When our fathers sallied forth,

Full of confidence sublime,
From the famine-wasted North.¹⁵

‘Freedom, in a land of rocks
Wild as Scandinavia, give,
POWER ETERNAL!—where our flocks
And our little ones may live.’

Thus they pray’d;—a secret hand
Led them, by a path unknown,
To that dear delightful land
Which I yet must call my own.

To the vale of SWITZ they came :
Soon their meliorating toil
Gave the forests to the flame,
And their ashes to the soil.

Thence their ardent labours spread,
Till above the mountain-snows
Towering beauty show’d her head,
And a new creation rose !

—So, in regions wild and wide,
We will pierce the savage woods,
Clothe the rocks in purple pride,
Plough the valleys, tame the floods ;—

Till a beauteous inland isle,
By a forest-sea embraced,
Shall make Desolation smile
In the depth of his own waste.

There, unenvied and unknown,
We shall dwell secure and free,
In a country all our own,
In a land of liberty.”

Shep. “Yet the woods, the rocks, the streams,
Unbeloved, shall bring to mind,
Warm with evening’s purple beams,
Dearer objects left behind ;—

And thy native country's song,
 Caroll'd in a foreign clime,
 When new echoes shall prolong,
 —Simple, tender, and sublime ;—

How will thy poor cheek turn pale.
 And, before thy banish'd eyes,
 UNDERWALDEN's charming vale,
 And thine own sweet cottage, rise !”

Wand. “By the glorious ghost of TELL ;
 By MORGARTHEN's awful fray ;
 By the field where ALBERT fell
 In thy last and bitter day ;

SOUL OF SWITZERLAND, arise !
 —Ha ! the spell has waked the dead :
 From her ashes to the skies
 SWITZERLAND exalts her head.

See the queen of mountains stand,
 In immortal mail complete,
 With the lightning in her hand,
 And the Alps beneath her feet.

Hark ! her voice ;—‘ My sons, awake :
 Freedom dawns, behold the day :
 From the bed of bondage break,
 ’Tis your mother calls,—obey.’

At the sound, our fathers' graves,
 On each ancient battle-plain,
 Utter groans, and toss like waves
 When the wild blast sweeps the main.

Rise, my brethren : cast away
 All the chains that bind you slaves :
 Rise,—your mother's voice obey,
 And appease your fathers' graves.

Strike !—the conflict is begun ;
 Freemen, soldiers, follow me.

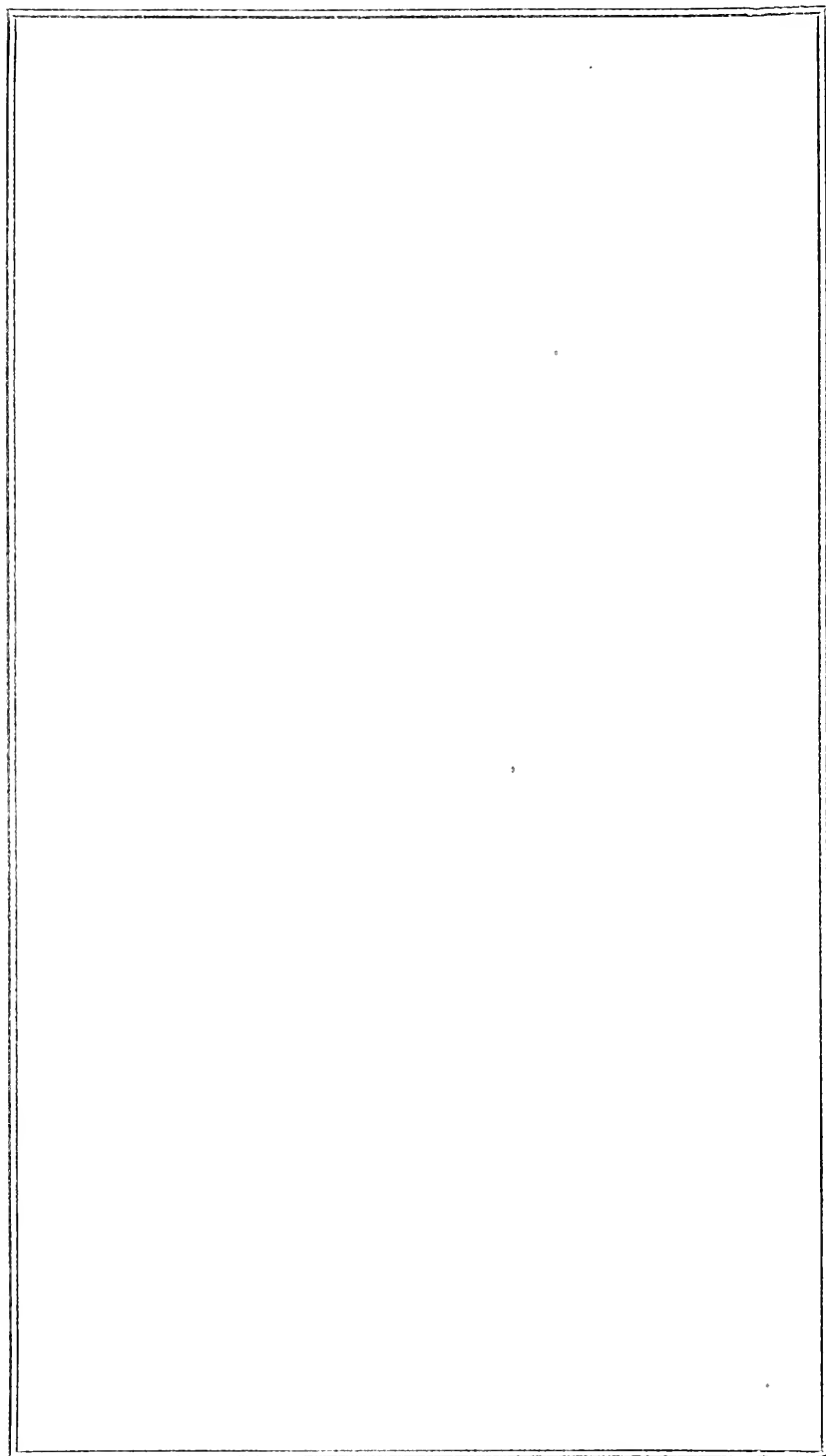
Shout!—the victory is won,—
SWITZERLAND AND LIBERTY !”

Shep. “Warrior, warrior, stay thine arm!
Sheathe, oh sheathe thy frantic sword !”

Wand. “Ah! I rave—I faint:—the charm
Flies,—and memory is restored.

Yes, to agony restored,
From the too transporting charm:—
Sleep for ever, O my sword!
Be thou wither’d, O mine arm!

SWITZERLAND is but a name;
—Yet I feel, where’er I roam,
That my heart is still the same,
SWITZERLAND is still my home.”



THE WEST INDIES.

A POEM, IN FOUR PARTS.

WRITTEN IN HONOUR OF THE ABOLITION OF THE AFRICAN SLAVE
TRADE, BY THE BRITISH LEGISLATURE, IN 1807.

“Receive him for ever; not now as a servant, but above a servant,—a brother beloved.”—St. Paul's Epist. to Philemon, v. 15, 16.

THIS poem was undertaken at the request of Mr. Bowyer, in May, 1807. The author had not the resolution to forego an opportunity of being presented before the public, in a style of external magnificence which he would never have had the assurance to assume unsolicited. Though he is convinced that, were it proper to explain the private history of this work, he would be fully acquitted of presumption in having accepted the splendid invitation of the proprietor, yet he cannot help feeling that an appearance so superb, instead of prejudicing the public in his favour, will, in reality, only render him more obvious, and obnoxious to criticism, if he be found unworthy of the situation in which he stands. Conscious, however, that he has exerted his utmost diligence and ability to do honour to his theme, and well aware that his poem can derive no lustre from the accompanying embellishments, unless it first casts a glory upon *them*, he thinks himself warranted to hope that it will be read and judged with the same indulgence, which, from past success, he believes it would have experienced had it been produced in a form more becoming his pretensions as a man and a writer.

There are objections against the title and plan of this piece, which will occur to almost every reader. The author will not anticipate them: he will only observe, that the title seemed the best, and the plan the most eligible, which *he* could adapt to a subject so various and excursive, yet so familiar and exhausted, as the African Slave Trade,—a subject which had become antiquated, by frequent, minute, and disgusting exposure; which afforded no opportunity to awaken, suspend, and delight curiosity, by a subtle and surprising development of plot; and concerning which public feeling had been wearied into insensibility, by the agony of interest which the question excited, during three and twenty years of almost incessant discussion. That trade is at length abolished. May its memory be immortal, that henceforth it may be known only *by* its memory!

Sheffield, December 1, 1808.

THE WEST INDIES.

PART I.

ARGUMENT.—*Introduction: on the Abolition of the Slave Trade—The Mariner's Compass—Columbus—The Discovery of America—The West Indian Islands—The Charibs—Their Extermination.*

“Thy chains are broken, Africa, be free!”
Thus saith the island-empress of the sea;
Thus saith Britannia. O, ye winds and waves!
Waft the glad tidings to the land of slaves;
Proclaim on Guinea’s coast, by Gambia’s side,
And far as Niger rolls his eastern tide,¹
Through radiant realms, beneath the burning zone,
Where Europe’s curse is felt, her name unknown,
Thus saith Britannia, empress of the sea,
“Thy chains are broken, Africa, be free!”
Long lay the ocean-paths from man conceal’d:
Light came from heaven,—the magnet was reveal’d.
A surer star to guide the seaman’s eye
Than the pale glory of the northern sky;
Alike ordain’d to shine by night and day,
Through calm and tempest, with unsetting ray;
Where’er the mountains rise, the billows roll,
Still with strong impulse turning to the pole,
True as the sun is to the morning true,
Though light as film, and trembling as the dew.
Then man no longer plied, with timid oar
And failing heart, along the windward shore;
Broad to the sky he turn’d his fearless sail,
Defied the adverse, woo’d the favouring gale,
Bared to the storm his adamantine breast,
Or soft on ocean’s lap lay down to rest;

While free, as clouds the liquid ether sweep,
 His white-wing'd vessels coursed the unbounded deep ;
 From clime to clime the wanderer loved to roam,
 The waves his heritage, the world his home.

Then first Columbus, with the mighty hand
 Of grasping genius, weigh'd the sea and land ;
 The floods o'erbalanced :—where the tide of light,
 Day after day, roll'd down the gulf of night,
 There seem'd one waste of waters :—long in vain
 His spirit brooded o'er the Atlantic main ;
 When sudden, as creation burst from naught,
 Sprang a new world through his stupendous thought,
 Light, order, beauty !—While his mind explored
 The unveiling mystery, his heart adored ;
 Where'er sublime imagination trod,
 He heard the voice, he saw the face of God.

Far from the western cliffs he cast his eye
 O'er the wide ocean stretching to the sky :
 In calm magnificence the sun declined,
 And left a paradise of clouds behind :
 Proud at his feet, with pomp of pearl and gold,
 The billows in a sea of glory roll'd.

“—Ah ! on this sea of glory might I sail,
 Track the bright sun, and pierce the eternal veil
 That hides those lands, beneath Hesperian skies,
 Where daylight sojourns till our morrow rise !”

Thoughtful he wander'd on the beach alone ;
 Mild o'er the deep the vesper planet shone,
 The eye of evening, brightening through the west
 Till the sweet moment when it shut to rest :
 “ Whither, O golden Venus ! art thou fled ?
 Not in the ocean-chambers lies thy bed ;
 Round the dim world thy glittering chariot drawn
 Pursues the twilight, or precedes the dawn ;
 Thy beauty noon and midnight never see,
 The morn and eve divide the year with thee.”

Soft fell the shades, till Cynthia's slender bow
 Crested the farthest wave, then sunk below :

“Tell me, resplendent guardian of the night,
 Circling the sphere in thy perennial flight,
 What secret path of heaven thy smiles adorn,
 What nameless sea reflects thy gleaming horn?”

Now earth and ocean vanish'd, all serene
 The starry firmament alone was seen ;
 Through the slow, silent hours, he watch'd the host
 Of midnight suns in western darkness lost,
 Till Night himself, on shadowy pinions borne,
 Fled o'er the mighty waters, and the morn
 Danced on the mountains:—“Lights of heaven!” he cried,
 “Lead on ;—I go to win a glorious bride ;
 Fearless o'er gulfs unknown I urge my way,
 Where peril prowls, and shipwreck lurks for prey :
 Hope swells my sail ;—in spirit I behold
 That maiden world, twin-sister of the old,
 By nature nursed beyond the jealous sea,
 Denied to ages, but betroth'd to me.”²

The winds were prosperous, and the billows bore
 The brave adventurer to the promised shore ;
 Far in the west, array'd in purple light,
 Dawn'd the new world on his enraptured sight :
 Not Adam, loosen'd from the encumbering earth,
 Waked by the breath of God to instant birth,
 With sweeter, wilder wonder gazed around,
 When life within and light without he found ;
 When, all creation rushing o'er his soul,
 He seem'd to live and breathe throughout the whole.
 So felt Columbus, when, divinely fair,
 At the last look of resolute despair,
 The Hesperian isles, from distance dimly blue,
 With gradual beauty open'd on his view.
 In that proud moment, his transported mind
 The morning and the evening worlds combined,
 And made the sea, that sunder'd them before,
 A bond of peace, uniting shore to shore.

Vain, visionary hope ! rapacious Spain
 Follow'd her hero's triumph o'er the main.

Her hardy sons, in fields of battle tried,
 Where Moor and Christian desperately died,
 A rabid race, fanatically bold,
 And steel'd to cruelty by lust of gold,
 Traversed the waves, the unknown world explored,
 The cross their standard, but their faith the sword;
 Their steps were graves; o'er prostrate realms they trod;
 They worshipp'd Mammon while they vow'd to God.

Let nobler bards in loftier numbers tell
 How Cortez conquer'd, Montezuma fell;
 How fierce Pizarro's ruffian arm o'erthrew
 The sun's resplendent empire in Peru;
 How, like a prophet, old Las Casas stood,
 And raised his voice against a sea of blood,
 Whose chilling waves recoil'd while he foretold
 His country's ruin by avenging gold.
 —That gold, for which unpitied Indians fell,
 That gold, at once the snare and scourge of hell,
 Thenceforth by righteous Heaven was doom'd to shed
 Unmingled curses on the spoiler's head:
 For gold the Spaniard cast his soul away,—
 His gold and he were every nation's prey.

But themes like these would ask an angel-lyre,
 Language of light, and sentiment of fire;
 Give me to sing, in melancholy strains,
 Of Charib martyrdoms and Negro chains;
 One race by tyrants rooted from the earth,
 One doom'd to slavery by the taint of birth!

Where first his drooping sails Columbus furl'd
 And sweetly rested in another world,
 Amidst the heaven-reflecting ocean, smiles
 A constellation of elysian isles;
 Fair as Orion when he mounts on high,
 Sparkling with midnight splendour from the sky:
 They bask beneath the sun's meridian rays,
 When not a shadow breaks the boundless blaze:
 The breath of ocean wanders through their vales
 In morning breezes and in evening gales:

Earth from her lap perennial verdure pours,
 Ambrosial fruits, and amaranthine flowers ;
 O'er the wild mountains and luxuriant plains,
 Nature in all the pomp of beauty reigns,
 In all the pride of freedom.—NATURE FREE
 Proclaims that MAN was born for liberty.
 She flourishes where'er the sunbeams play
 O'er living fountains, sallying into day ;
 She withers where the waters cease to roll,
 And night and winter stagnate round the pole :
 Man too, where freedom's beams and fountains rise,
 Springs from the dust, and blossoms to the skies ;
 Dead to the joys of light and life, the slave
 Clings to the clod ; his root is in the grave :
 Bondage is winter, darkness, death, despair :
 Freedom the sun, the sea, the mountains, and the air !

In placid indolence supinely blest,
 A feeble race these beauteous isles possess'd ;
 Untamed, untaught, in arts and arms unskill'd,
 Their patrimonial soil they rudely till'd,
 Chased the free rovers of the savage wood,
 Ensnared the wild-bird, swept the scaly flood,
 Shelter'd in lowly huts their fragile forms
 From burning suns and desolating storms :
 Or when the halcyon sported on the breeze,
 In light canoes they skimm'd the rippling seas ;
 Their lives in dreams of soothing languor flew,
 No parted joys, no future pains they knew,
 The passing moment all their bliss or care ;
 Such as their sires had been the children were,
 From age to age ; as waves upon the tide
 Of stormless time, they calmly lived and died.

Dreadful as hurricanes, athwart the main,
 Rush'd the fell legions of invading Spain ;
 With fraud and force, with false and fatal breath,
 (Submission bondage, and resistance death,)
 They swept the isles. In vain the simple race
 Kneel'd to the iron sceptre of their grace,

Or with weak arms their fiery vengeance braved ;
They came, they saw, they conquer'd, they enslaved,
And they destroy'd ;—the generous heart they broke,
They crush'd the timid neck beneath the yoke ;
Where'er to battle march'd their fell array,
The sword of conquest plough'd resistless way ;
Where'er from cruel toil they sought repose,
Around the fires of devastation rose.
The Indian, as he turn'd his head in flight,
Beheld his cottage flaming through the night,
And, midst the shrieks of murder on the wind,
Heard the mute blood-hound's death-step close behind.

The conflict o'er, the valiant in their graves,
The wretched remnant dwindled into slaves ;
Condemn'd in pestilential cells to pine,
Delving for gold amidst the gloomy mine,
The sufferer, sick of life-protracting breath,
Inhaled with joy the fire-damp blast of death ;
—Condemn'd to fell the mountain palm on high,
That cast its shadow from the evening sky,
Ere the tree trembled to his feeble stroke,
The woodman languish'd, and his heart-strings broke ;
—Condemn'd in torrid noon, with palsied hand,
To urge the slow plough o'er the obdurate land,
The labourer, smitten by the sun's quick ray,
A corpse along the unfinish'd furrow lay.
O'erwhelm'd at length with ignominious toil,
Mingling their barren ashes with the soil,
Down to the dust the Charib people pass'd,
Like autumn foliage withering in the blast :
The whole race sunk beneath the oppressor's rod,
And left a blank among the works of God.

PART II.

ARGUMENT.—*The Cane—Africa—The Negro—The Slave-carrying Trade—The Means and Resources of the Slave Trade—The Portuguese, Dutch, Danes, French, and English in America.*

AMONG the bowers of paradise, that graced
 Those islands of the world-dividing waste,
 Where towering cocoas waved their graceful locks,
 And vines luxuriant cluster'd round the rocks ;
 Where orange-groves perfumed the circling air,
 With verdure, flowers, and fruit for ever fair ;
 Gay myrtle-foliage track'd the winding rills,
 And cedar forests slumber'd on the hills ;
 —An eastern plant, engrafted on the soil,³
 Was till'd for ages with consuming toil ;
 No tree of knowledge with forbidden fruit,
 Death in the taste, and ruin at the root ;
 Yet in its growth were good and evil found,—
 It bless'd the planter, but it cursed the ground
 While with vain wealth it gorged the master's board,
 And spread with manna his luxurious board,
 Its culture was perdition to the slave,—
 It sapp'd his life, and flourish'd on his grave.

When the fierce spoiler from remorseless Spain
 Tasted the balmy spirit of the cane,
 (Already had his rival in the west
 From the rich reed ambrosial sweetness press'd.)
 Dark through his thoughts the miser purpose roll'd
 To turn its hidden treasures into gold.
 But at his breath, by pestilent decay,
 The Indian tribes were swiftly swept away ;
 Silence and horror o'er the isles were spread,
 The living seem'd the spectres of the dead.
 The Spaniard saw ; no sigh of pity stole,
 No pang of conscience touch'd his sullen soul :
 The tiger weeps not o'er the kid ;—he turns
 His flashing eyes abroad, and madly burns

For nobler victims, and for warmer blood :
Thus on the Charib shore the tyrant stood,
Thus cast his eyes with fury o'er the tide,
And far beyond the gloomy gulf descried
Devoted Africa : he burst away,
And with a yell of transport grasp'd his prey.

Where the stupendous Mountains of the Moon
Cast their broad shadows o'er the realms of noon ;
From rude Caffraria, where the giraffes browse,
With stately heads among the forest boughs,
To Atlas, where Numidian lions glow
With torrid fire beneath eternal snow :
From Nubian hills, that hail the dawning day,
To Guinea's coast, where evening fades away,
Regions immense, unsearchable, unknown,
Bask in the splendour of the solar zone ;
A world of wonders,—where creation seems
No more the works of Nature, but her dreams ;
Great, wild, and beautiful, beyond control,
She reigns in all the freedom of her soul ;
Where none can check her bounty when she showers
O'er the gay wilderness her fruits and flowers :
None brave her fury, when, with whirlwind breath
And earthquake step, she walks abroad with death :
O'er boundless plains she holds her fiery flight,
In terrible magnificence of light ;
At blazing noon pursues the evening breeze,
Through the dun gloom of realm-o'ershadowing trees,
Her thirst at Nile's mysterious fountain quells,
Or bathes in secrecy where Niger swells
An inland ocean, on whose jasper rocks
With shells and sea-flower wreaths she binds her locks :
She sleeps on isles of velvet verdure, placed
Midst sandy gulfs and shoals for ever waste ;
She guides her countless flocks to cherish'd rills ;
And feeds her cattle on a thousand hills ;
Her steps the wild bees welcome through the vale,
From every blossom that embalms the gale ;

The slow unwieldy river-horse she leads
Through the deep waters, o'er the pasturing meads ;
And climbs the mountains that invade the sky,
To soothe the eagle's nestlings when they cry.
At sunset, when voracious monsters burst
From dreams of blood, awaked by maddening thirst ;
When the lorn caves, in which they shrunk from light,
Ring with wild echoes through the hideous night ;
When darkness seems alive, and all the air
Is one tremendous uproar of despair,
Horror, and agony ;—on her they call ;
She hears their clamour, she provides for all,
Leads the light leopard on his eager way,
And goads the gaunt hyæna to his prey.

In these romantic regions man grows wild :
Here dwells the Negro, nature's outcast child,
Scorn'd by his brethren ; but his mother's eye,
That gazes on him from her warmest sky,
Sees in his flexile limbs untutor'd grace,
Power on his forehead, beauty in his face ;
Sees in his breast, where lawless passions rove,
The heart of friendship and the home of love ;
Sees in his mind, where desolation reigns,
Fierce as his clime, uncultured as his plains,
A soil where virtue's fairest flowers might shoot,
And trees of science bend with glorious fruit ;
Sees in his soul, involved with thickest night,
An emanation of eternal light,
Ordain'd, midst sinking worlds, his dust to fire,
And shine for ever when the stars expire.
Is he not *man*, though knowledge never shed
Her quickening beams on his neglected head ?
Is he not *man*, though sweet religion's voice
Ne'er made the mourner in his God rejoice ?
Is *he* not man, by sin and suffering tried ?
Is *he* not man, for whom the Saviour died ?
Belie the Negro's powers :—in headlong will,
Christian ! *thy* brother thou shalt prove him still !

Belie his virtues ; since his wrongs began,
His follies and his crimes have stamp't him Man.

The Spaniard found him such :—the island-race
His foot had spurn'd from earth's insulted face ;
Among the waifs and foundlings of mankind,
Abroad he look'd, a sturdier stock to find ;
A spring of life, whose fountains should supply
His channels as he drank the rivers dry :
That stock he found on Afric's swarming plains,
That spring he open'd in the negro's veins ;
A spring, exhaustless as his avarice drew,
A stock that like Prometheus' vitals grew
Beneath the eternal beak his heart that tore,
Beneath the insatiate thirst that drain'd his gore.
Thus, childless as the Charibbeans died,
Afric's strong sons the ravening waste supplied ;
Of hardier fibre to endure the yoke,
And self-renew'd beneath the severing stroke ;
As grim oppression crush'd them to the tomb,
Their fruitful parent's miserable womb
Teem'd with fresh myriads, crowded o'er the waves,
Heirs to their toil, their sufferings, and their graves.

Freighted with curses was the bark that bore
The spoilers of the west to Guinea's shore ;
Heavy with groans of anguish blew the gales
That swell'd that fatal bark's returning sails ;
Old Ocean shrunk as o'er his surface flew
The human cargo and the demon crew.
—Thenceforth, unnumber'd as the waves that roll
From sun to sun, or pass from pole to pole,
Outcasts and exiles, from their country torn,
In floating dungeons o'er the gulf were borne ;
—The valiant, seized in peril-daring fight ;
The weak, surprised in nakedness and night ;
Subjects by mercenary despots sold ;
Victims of justice prostitute for gold ;
Brothers by brothers, friends by friends betray'd ;
Snared in her lover's arms the trusting maid ;

The faithful wife by her false lord estranged,
 For one wild cup of drunken bliss exchanged ;
 From the brute-mother's knee, the infant boy,
 Kidnapp'd in slumber, barter'd for a toy ;
 The father, resting at *his* father's tree,
 Doom'd by the son to die beyond the sea :
 —All bonds of kindred, law, alliance broke,
 All ranks, all nations crouching to the yoke ;
 From fields of light, unshadow'd climes, that lie
 Panting beneath the sun's meridian eye ;
 From hidden Ethiopia's utmost land ;
 From Zaara's fickle wilderness of sand ;
 From Congo's blazing plains and blooming woods ;
 From Whidah's hills, that gush with golden floods ;
 Captives of tyrant power and dastard wiles,
 Dispeopled Africa, and gorged the isles.
 Loud and perpetual o'er the Atlantic waves.
 For guilty ages, roll'd the tide of slaves ;
 A tide that knew no fall, no turn, no rest,
 Constant as day and night from east to west ;
 Still widening, deepening, swelling in its course.
 With boundless ruin and resistless force.

Quickly, by Spain's alluring fortune fired,
 With hopes of fame, and dreams of wealth inspired,
 Europe's dread powers from ignominious ease
 Started : their pennons stream'd on every breeze :
 And still where'er the wide discoveries spread,
 The cane was planted, and the native bled ;
 While, nursed by fiercer suns, of nobler race,
 The negro toil'd and perish'd in his place.

First, Lusitania,—she whose prows had borne
 Her arms triumphant round the car of morn,
 —Turn'd to the setting sun her bright array,
 And hung her trophies o'er the couch of day.

Holland.—whose hardy sons roll'd back the sea,
 To build the halcyon-nest of liberty,
 Shameless abroad the enslaving flag unfurl'd,
 And reign'd a despot in the younger world.

Denmark,—whose roving hordes, in barbarous times,
Fill'd the wide North with piracy and crimes,
Awed every shore, and taught their keels to sweep
O'er every sea, the Arabs of the deep,
—Embark'd, once more to western conquest led
By Rollo's spirit, risen from the dead.

Gallia,—who vainly aim'd, in depth of night,
To hurl old Rome from her Tarpeian height,
(But lately laid, with unprevented blow,
The thrones of kings, the hopes of freedom low.)
—Rush'd o'er the theatre of splendid toils,
To brave the dangers and divide the spoils.

Britannia,—she who scathed the crest of Spain,
And won the trident sceptre of the main,
When to the raging wind and ravening tide
She gave the huge Armada's scatter'd pride,
Smit by the thunder-wielding hand that hurl'd
Her vengeance round the wave-encircled world;
—Britannia shared the glory and the guilt,—
By her were slavery's island-altars built,
And fed with human victims;—while the cries
Of blood demanding vengeance from the skies,
Assail'd her traders' grovelling hearts in vain,
—Hearts dead to sympathy, alive to gain,
Hard from impunity, with avarice cold,
Sordid as earth, insensible as gold.

Thus through a night of ages, in whose shade
The sons of darkness plied the infernal trade,
Wild Africa beheld her tribes, at home,
In battle slain; abroad, condemn'd to roam
O'er the salt waves, in stranger-isles to bear,
(Forlorn of hope, and sold into despair.)
Through life's slow journey, to its dolorous close,
Unseen, unwept, unutterable woes.

PART III.

ARGUMENT.—*The Love of Country, and of Home, the same in all Ages and among all Nations—The Negro's Home and Country—Mungo Park—Progress of the Slave Trade—The Middle Passage—The Negro in the West Indies—The Guinea Captain—The Creole Planter—The Moors of Barbary—Buccaneers—Maroons—St. Domingo—Hurricanes—The Yellow Fever.*

THERE is a land, of every land the pride,
 Beloved by Heaven o'er all the world beside ;
 Where brighter suns dispense serener light,
 And milder moons emparadise the night ;
 A land of beauty, virtue, valour, truth,
 Time-tutor'd age, and love-exalted youth ;
 The wandering mariner, whose eye explores
 The wealthiest isles, the most enchanting shores,
 Views not a realm so bountiful and fair,
 Nor breathes the spirit of a purer air ;
 In every clime the magnet of his soul,
 Touch'd by remembrance, trembles to that pole ;
 For in this land of Heaven's peculiar grace,
 The heritage of nature's noblest race,
 There is a spot of earth supremely blest,
 A dearer, sweeter spot than all the rest,
 Where man, creation's tyrant, casts aside
 His sword and sceptre, pageantry and pride,
 While in his soften'd looks benignly blend
 The sire, the son, the husband, brother, friend :
 Here woman reigns ; the mother, daughter, wife,
 Strews with fresh flowers the narrow way of life ;
 In the clear heaven of her delightful eye,
 An angel-guard of loves and graces lie ;
 Around her knees domestic duties meet,
 And fire-side pleasures gambol at her feet.
 "Where shall that *land*, that *spot of earth* be found ?"
 Art thou a man !—a patriot !—look around ;
 Oh, thou shalt find, howe'er thy footsteps roam,
 That land *thy* country, and that spot *thy* home !

On Greenland's rocks, o'er rude Kamschatka's plains,
In pale Siberia's desolate domains ;
When the wild hunter takes his lonely way,
Tracks through tempestuous snows his savage prey,
The reindeer's spoil, the ermine's treasure shares,
And feasts his famine on the fat of bears ;
Or, wrestling with the might of raging seas,
Where round the pole the eternal billows freeze,
Plucks from their jaws the stricken whale, in vain
Plunging down headlong through the whirling main ;
—His wastes of ice are lovelier in his eye
Than all the flowery vales beneath the sky ;
And dearer far than Cæsar's palace-dome,
His cavern-shelter, and his cottage-home.

O'er China's garden-fields and peopled floods ;
In California's pathless world of woods ;
Round Andes' heights, where Winter, from his throne,
Looks down in scorn upon the summer zone ;
By the gay borders of Bermuda's isles,
Where spring with everlasting verdure smiles ;
On pure Madeira's vine-robed hills of health ;
In Java's swamps of pestilence and wealth ;
Where Babel stood, where wolves and jackals drink,
Midst weeping willows, on Euphrates' brink ;
On Carmel's crest ; by Jordan's reverend stream,
Where Canaan's glories vanish'd like a dream :
Where Greece, a spectre, haunts her heroes' graves.
And Rome's vast ruins darken Tiber's waves ;
Where broken-hearted Switzerland bewails
Her subject mountains and dishonour'd vales ;
Where Albion's rocks exult amidst the sea,
Around the beauteous isle of liberty ;
—Man, through all ages of revolving time,
Unchanging man, in every varying clime,
Deems his own land of every land the pride,
Beloved by Heaven o'er all the world beside ;
His home the spot of earth supremely blest,
A dearer, sweeter spot than all the rest.

And is the Negro outlaw'd from his birth ?
Is he alone a stranger on the earth ?
Is there no shed, whose peeping roof appears
So lovely that it fills his eyes with tears ?
No land, whose name, in exile heard, will dart
Ice through his veins, and lightning through his heart ?
Ah ! yes ; beneath the beams of brighter skies,
His home amidst his father's country lies ;
There with the partner of his soul he shares
Love-mingled pleasures, love-divided cares :
There as with nature's warmest filial fire,
He soothes his blind, and feeds his helpless sire ;
His children sporting round his hut behold
How they shall cherish him when he is old,
Train'd by example from their tenderest youth
To deeds of charity and words of truth.⁴
—Is *he* not blest ? Behold, at closing day,
The negro-village swarms abroad to play ;
He treads the dance through all its rapturous rounds,
To the wild music of barbarian sounds ;
Or, stretch'd at ease, where broad palmettos shower
Delicious coolness in his shadowy bower,
He feasts on tales of witchcraft, that give birth
To breathless wonder, or ecstatic mirth :
Yet most delighted, when, in rudest rhymes
The minstrel wakes the song of elder times,
When men were heroes, slaves to beauty's charms,
And all the joys of life were love and arms.
—Is not the Negro blest ? His generous soil
With harvest-plenty crowns his simple toil ;
More than his wants his flocks and fields afford :
He loves to greet the stranger at his board :
"The winds were roaring, and the White Man fled,
The rains of night descended on his head ;
The poor White Man sat down beneath our tree,
Weary and faint, and far from home was he ;
For him no mother fills with milk the bowl,
No wife prepares the bread to cheer his soul ;

—Pity the poor White Man who sought our tree,
 No wife, no mother, and no home has he.”
 Thus sang the Negro’s daughters ;—once again,
 Oh that the poor White Man might hear that strain !
 —Whether the victim of the treacherous Moor,
 Or from the Negro’s hospitable door
 Spurn’d as a spy from Europe’s hateful clime,
 And left to perish for thy country’s crime ;
 Or destined still, when all thy wanderings cease,
 On Albion’s lovely lap to rest in peace ;
 Pilgrim ! in heaven or earth, where’er thou be,
 Angels of mercy guide and comfort thee !

Thus lived the Negro in his native land,
 Till Christian cruisers anchor’d on his strand :
 Where’er their grasping arms the spoilers spread,
 The Negro’s joys, the Negro’s virtues fled ;
 Till, far amidst the wilderness unknown,
 They flourish’d in the sight of Heaven alone :
 While from the coast, with wide and wider sweep,
 The race of Mammon dragg’d across the deep
 Their sable victims, to that western bourn,
 From which no traveller might e’er return,
 To blazon in the ears of future slaves
 The secrets of the world beyond the waves.

When the loud trumpet of eternal doom
 Shall break the mortal bondage of the tomb,
 When with a mother’s pangs the expiring earth
 Shall bring her children forth to second birth ;
 Then shall the sea’s mysterious caverns, spread
 With human relics, render up their dead :
 Though warm with life the heaving surges glow
 Where’er the winds of heaven were wont to blow,
 In sevenfold phalanx shall the rallying hosts
 Of ocean slumberers join their wandering ghosts,
 Along the melancholy gulf, that roars
 From Guinea to the Charibbean shores,
 Myriads of slaves, that perish’d on the way,
 From age to age the shark’s appointed prey,

By livid plagues, by lingering tortures slain,
Or headlong plunged alive into the main,
Shall rise in judgment from their gloomy beds,
And call down vengeance on their murderers' heads

Yet small the number, and the fortune blest,
Of those who in the stormy deep found rest,
Weigh'd with the unremember'd millions more,
That 'scaped the sea to perish on the shore,
By the slow pangs of solitary care,
The earth-devouring anguish of despair,
The broken heart, which kindness never heals,
The home-sick passion which the Negro feels,
When toiling, fainting in the land of canes,
His spirit wanders to his native plains ;
His little lovely dwelling there he sees,
Beneath the shade of his paternal trees,
The home of comfort :—then before his eyes
The terrors of captivity arise.

—'Twas night :—his babes around him lay at rest,
Their mother slumber'd on their father's breast :
A yell of murder rang around their bed ;
They woke ; their cottage blazed ; the victims fled ;
Forth sprang the ambush'd ruffians on their prey,
They caught, they bound, they drove them far away ;
The white man bought them at the mart of blood ;
In pestilential barks they cross'd the flood ;
Then were the wretched ones asunder torn,
To distant isles, to separate bondage borne,
Denied, though sought with tears, the sad relief
That misery loves,—the fellowship of grief.
The Negro, spoil'd of all that nature gave
To freeborn man, thus shrunk into a slave,
His passive limbs, to measured tasks confined,
Obey'd the impulse of another mind ;
A silent, secret, terrible control,
That ruled his sinews, and repress'd his soul.
Not for himself he waked at morning-light,
Toil'd the long day, and sought repose at night ;

His rest, his labour, pastime, strength, and health,
 Were only portions of a master's wealth;
 His love—oh, name not love, where Britons doom
 The fruit of love to slavery from the womb!

Thus spurn'd, degraded, trampled, and oppress'd,
 The Negro-exile languish'd in the West,
 With nothing left of life but hated breath
 And not a hope except the hope in death,
 To fly for ever from the Creole-strand,
 And dwell a freeman in his father-land.

Lives there a savage ruder than the slave?
 —Cruel as death, insatiate as the grave,
 False as the winds that round his vessel blow,
 Remorseless as the gulf that yawns below,
 Is he who toils upon the wafting flood,
 A Christian broker in the trade of blood;
 Boisterous in speech, in action prompt and bold,
 He buys, he sells,—he steals, he kills, for gold
 At noon, when sky and ocean, calm and clear,
 Bend round his bark, one blue unbroken sphere;
 When dancing dolphins sparkle through the brine,
 And sunbeam circles o'er the waters shine:
 He sees no beauty in the heaven serene,
 No soul-enchanting sweetness in the scene,
 But, darkly scowling at the glorious day;
 Curses the winds that loiter on their way.
 When swoln with hurricanes the billows rise,
 To meet the lightning midway from the skies;
 When from the unburden'd hold his shrieking slaves
 Are cast, at midnight, to the hungry waves;
 Not for his victims strangled in the deeps,
 Not for his crimes the harden'd pirate weeps,
 But grimly smiling, when the storm is o'er,
 Counts his sure gains, and hurries back for more.

Lives there a reptile baser than the slave?
 —Loathsome as death, corrupted as the grave,
 See the dull Creole, at his pompous board,
 Attendant vassals cringing round their lord:

Satiate with food, his heavy eyelids close,
Voluptuous minions fan him to repose ;
Prone on the noonday couch he lolls in vain,
Delirious slumbers rock his maudlin brain ;
He starts in horror from bewildering dreams ;
His bloodshot eye with fire and frenzy gleams :
He stalks abroad ; through all his wonted rounds,
The Negro trembles, and the lash resounds,
And cries of anguish, shrilling through the air,
To distant fields his dread approach declare.
Mark, as he passes, every head declined ;
Then slowly raised,—to curse him from behind.
This is the veriest wretch on nature's face,
Own'd by no country, spurn'd by every race ;
The tether'd tyrant of one narrow span,
The bloated vampire of a living man ;
His frame,—a fungous form, of dunghill birth,
That taints the air, and rots above the earth ;
His soul ;—has *he* a soul, whose sensual breast
Of selfish passions is a serpent's nest ?
Who follows, headlong, ignorant, and blind,
The vague, brute instinct of an idiot mind ;
Whose heart midst scenes of suffering senseless grown,
E'en from his mother's lap was chill'd to stone ;
Whose torpid pulse no social feelings move ;
A stranger to the tenderness of love,
His motley haram charms his gloating eye,
Where ebon, brown, and olive beauties vie ;
His children, sprung alike from sloth and vice,
Are born his slaves, and loved at market price :
Has *he* a soul ?—With his departing breath,
A form shall hail him at the gates of death,
The spectre Conscience,—shrieking through the gloom,
“Man, we shall meet again beyond the tomb.”
O Africa ! amidst thy children's woes,
Did earth and heaven conspire to aid thy foes ?
No, thou hadst vengeance.—From thy northern shores
Sallied the lawless corsairs of the Moors,

And back on Europe's guilty nations hurl'd
 Thy wrongs and sufferings in the sister world :
 Deep in thy dungeons Christians clank'd their chains,
 Or toil'd and perish'd on thy parching plains.

But where thine offspring crouch'd beneath the yoke,
 In heavier peals the avenging thunder broke.
 —Leagued with rapacious rovers of the main,
 Hayti's barbarian hunters harass'd Spain,
 A mammoth race, invincible in might,
 Rapine and massacre their dire delight,
 Peril their element ;—o'er land and flood
 They carried fire, and quench'd the flames with blood ;
 Despairing captives hail'd them from the coasts ;
 They rush'd to conquest, led by Charib ghosts.

Tremble, Britannia ! while thine islands tell
 The appalling mysteries of Obi's spell ;
 The wild Maroons, impregnable and free,
 Among the mountain-holds of liberty,
 Sudden as lightning darted on their foe,
 Seen like the flash, remember'd like the blow.

While Gallia boasts of dread Marengo's fight,
 And Hohenlinden's slaughter-deluged night,
 Her spirit sinks ;—the sinews of the brave
 That crippled Europe, shrunk before the slave ;
 The demon-spectres of Domingo rise,
 And all her triumphs vanish from her eyes.

God is a Spirit, veil'd from human sight,
 In secret darkness of eternal light ;
 Through all the glory of his works we trace
 The hidings of his counsel and his face ;
 Nature, and time, and change, and fate fulfil,
 Unknown, unknowing, his mysterious will ;
 Mercies and judgments mark him, every hour,
 Supreme in grace, and infinite in power :
 Oft o'er the Eden-islands of the West,
 In floral pomp and verdant beauty drest,
 Roll the dark clouds of his awaken'd ire :
 —Thunder and earthquake, whirlwind, flood, and fire,

Midst reeling mountains and disparting plains,
Tell the pale world—"The God of vengeance reigns."

Nor in the majesty of storms alone,
The Eternal makes his dread displeasure known;
At his command the pestilence abhorr'd
Spare the poor slave, and smites the haughty lord;
While to the tomb he sees his friend consign'd,
Foreboding melancholy sinks his mind,
Soon at his heart he feels the monster's fangs,
They tear his vitals with convulsive pangs:
The light is anguish to his eye, the air
Sepulchral vapours laden with despair;
Now frenzy-horrors rack his whirling brain,
Tremendous pulses throb through every vein;
The firm earth shrinks beneath his torture-bed,
The sky in ruins rushes o'er his head;
He rolls, he rages in consuming fires,
Till nature, spent with agony, expires.

PART IV.

ARGUMENT.—*The Moravian Brethren—Their Missions in Greenland, North America, and the West Indies—Christian Negroes—The Advocates of the Negroes in England—Granville Sharpe—Clarkson—Wilberforce—Pitt—Fox—The Nation itself—The Abolition of the Slave Trade—The future State of the West Indies—Of Africa—Of the Whole World—The Millennium.*

WAS there no mercy, mother of the slave!
No friendly hand to succour and to save,
While commerce thus thy captive tribes oppress'd,
And lowering vengeance linger'd o'er the west?
Yes, Africa! beneath the stranger's rod
They found the freedom of the sons of God.

When Europe languish'd in barbarian gloom,
Beneath the ghostly tyranny of Rome,
Whose second empire, cowl'd and mitred, burst
A phœnix from the ashes of the first;
From Persecution's piles, by bigots fired,
Among Bohemian mountains Truth retired;

There, midst rude rocks, in lonely glens obscure,
 She found a people scatter'd, scorn'd, and poor,
 A little flock through quiet valleys led,
 A Christian Israel in the desert fed,
 While ravening wolves, that scorn'd the shepherd's hand,
 Laid waste God's heritage through every land.
 With these the lovely exile sojourn'd long ;
 Soothed by her presence, solaced by her song,
 They toil'd through danger, trials, and distress,
 A band of Virgins in the wilderness,
 With burning lamps, amid their secret bowers,
 Counting the watches of the weary hours,
 In patient hope the Bridegroom's voice to hear,
 And see his banner in the clouds appear :
 But when the morn returning chased the night,
 These stars, that shone in darkness, sunk in light :
 Luther, like Phosphor, led the conquering day,
 His meek forerunners waned, and pass'd away.⁵
 Ages roll'd by, the turf perennial bloom'd
 O'er the lorn relics of those saints entomb'd ;
 No miracle proclaim'd their power divine,
 No kings adorn'd, no pilgrims kiss'd their shrine ;
 Cold and forgotten in the grave they slept :
 But God remember'd them :—their Father kept
 A faithful remnant ;—o'er their native clime
 His Spirit moved in his appointed time ;
 The race revived at his almighty breath,
 A seed to serve him, from the dust of death.

"Go forth, my sons, through heathen realms proclaim
 Mercy to sinners in a Saviour's name :"
 Thus spake the Lord ; they heard, and they obey'd :
 —Greenland lay wrapt in nature's heaviest shade ;
 Thither the ensign of the cross they bore ;
 The gaunt barbarians met them on the shore ;
 With joy and wonder hailing from afar,
 Through polar storms, the light of Jacob's star.
 Where roll Ohio's streams, Missouri's floods,
 Beneath the umbrage of eternal woods,

The Red Man roam'd, a hunter-warrior wild ;
On him the everlasting Gospel smiled ;
His heart was awed, confounded, pierced, subdued,
Divinely melted, moulded, and renew'd ;
The bold, base savage, nature's harshest clod,
Rose from the dust the image of his God.

And thou, poor Negro ! scorn'd of all mankind :
Thou dumb and impotent, and deaf and blind ;
Thou dead in spirit ! toil-degraded slave,
Crush'd by the curse on Adam to the grave ;
The messengers of peace, o'er land and sea,
That sought the sons of sorrow, stoop'd to thee.
—The captive raised his slow and sullen eye ;
He knew no friend, nor deem'd a friend was nigh,
Till the sweet tones of Pity touch'd his ears,
And Mercy bathed his bosom with her tears :
Strange were those tones, to him those tears were strange ;
He wept and wonder'd at the mighty change,
Felt the quick pang of keen compunction dart,
And heard a still small whisper in his heart,
A voice from heaven, that bade the outcast rise
From shame on earth to glory in the skies.

From isle to isle the welcome tidings ran ;
The slave that heard them started into man :
Like Peter, sleeping in his chains, he lay,—
The angel came, his night was turn'd to day :
“ Arise ! ” his fetters fall, his slumbers flee ;
He wakes to life, he springs to liberty.

No more to demon-gods, in hideous forms,
He pray'd for earthquakes, pestilence, and storms,
In secret agony devour'd the earth,
And, while he spared his mother, cursed his birth :
To Heaven the Christian Negro sent his sighs,
In morning vows and evening sacrifice ;
He pray'd for blessings to descend on those
That dealt to him the cup of many woes ;
Thought of his home in Africa forlorn ;
Yet, while he wept, rejoiced that he was born.

No longer burning with unholy fires
 He wallow'd in the dust of base desires ;
 Ennobling virtue fix'd his hopes above,
 Enlarged his heart, and sanctified his love ;
 With humble steps the paths of peace he trod,
 A happy pilgrim, for he walk'd with God.

Still slowly spread the dawn of life and day,
 In death and darkness pagan myriads lay :
 Stronger and heavier chains than those that bind
 The captive's limbs, enthrall'd his abject mind ;
 The yoke of man his neck indignant bore,
 The yoke of sin his willing spirit wore.

Meanwhile, among the great, the brave, the free,
 The matchless race of Albion and the sea,
 Champions arose to plead the Negro's cause ;
 In the wide breach of violated laws,
 Through which the torrent of injustice roll'd,
 They stood :—with zeal unconquerably bold,
 They raised their voices, stretch'd their arms to save
 From chains the freeman, from despair the slave ;
 The exile's heart-sick anguish to assuage,
 And rescue Afric from the spoiler's rage.
 She, miserable mother, from the shore,
 Age after age beheld the barks that bore
 Her tribes to bondage :—with distraction wrung,
 Wild as the lioness that seeks her young,
 She flash'd unheeded lightnings from her eyes ;
 Her inmost deserts echoing to her cries ;
 Till agony the sense of suffering stole,
 And stern unconscious grief benumb'd her soul.
 So Niobe, when all her race were slain,
 In ecstasy of wo forgot her pain :
 Cold in her eye serenest sorrow shone,
 While pitying Nature soothed her into stone.

Thus Africa, entranced with sorrow, stood,
 Her fix'd eye gleaming on the restless flood :
 —When Sharpe, on proud Britannia's charter'd shore,
 From Libyan limbs the unsanction'd fetters tore,

And taught the world, that while she rules the waves,
Her soil is freedom to the feet of slaves :

—When Clarkson his victorious course began,

Unyielding in the cause of God and man,

Wise, patient, persevering to the end,

No guile could thwart, no power his purpose bend ;

He rose o'er Afric like the sun in smiles,—

He rests in glory on the western isles :

—When Wilberforce, the minister of grace,

The new Las Casas of a ruin'd race,⁶

With angel-might opposed the rage of hell,

And fought like Michael, till the dragon fell :

—When Pitt, supreme amid the senate, rose

The Negro's friend, among the Negro's foes ;

Yet while his tones like heaven's high thunder broke

No fire descended to consume the yoke :

—When Fox, all-eloquent, for freedom stood,

With speech resistless as the voice of blood,

The voice that cries through all the patriot's veins.

When at his feet his country groans in chains ;

The voice that whispers in the mother's breast,

When smiles her infant in his rosy rest ;

Of power to bid the storm of passion roll,

Or touch with sweetest tenderness the soul.

He spake in vain ;—till, with his latest breath.

He broke the spell of Africa in death.

The Muse to whom the lyre and lute belong.

Whose song of freedom is her noblest song,

The lyre with awful indignation swept,

O'er the sweet lute in silent sorrow wept,

—When Albion's crimes drew thunder from her tongue,

—When Afric's woes o'erwhelm'd her while she sung.

Lamented Cowper ! in thy path I tread ;

O ! that on me were thy meek spirit shed !

The woes that wring my bosom once were thine ;

Be all thy virtues, all thy genius, mine !

Peace to thy soul ! thy God thy portion be ;

And in his presence may I rest with thee !

Quick at the call of Virtue, Freedom, Truth,
 Weak withering Age and strong aspiring Youth
 Alike the expanding power of Pity felt;
 The coldest, hardest hearts began to melt;
 From breast to breast the flame of justice glow'd:
 Wide o'er its banks the Nile of mercy flow'd:
 Through all the isle the gradual waters swell'd:
 Mammon in vain the encircling flood repell'd;
 O'erthrown at length, like Pharaoh and his host,
 His shipwreck'd hopes lay scatter'd round the coast.

High on her rock in solitary state,
 Sublimely musing, pale Britannia sate;
 Her awful forehead on her spear reclined,
 Her robe and tresses streaming with the wind;
 Chill through her frame foreboding tremors crept:
 The Mother thought upon her sons, and wept:
 —She thought of Nelson in the battle slain,
 And his last signal beaming o'er the main;*
 In Glory's circling arms the hero bled,
 While Victory bound the laurel on his head:
 At once immortal, in both worlds, became
 His soaring spirit and abiding name;
 —She thought of Pitt, heart-broken on his bier;
 And, "O my country!" echoed in her ear;
 —She thought of Fox;—she heard him faintly speak,
 His parting breath grew cold upon her cheek,
 His dying accents trembled into air:
 "Spare injured Africa! the Negro spare!"

She started from her trance!—and round the shore.
 Beheld her supplicating sons once more
 Pleading the suit so long, so vainly tried.
 Renew'd, resisted, promised, pledged, denied.
 The Negro's claim to all his Maker gave,
 And all the tyrant ravish'd from the slave.
 Her yielding heart confess'd the righteous claim.
 Sorrow had soften'd it, and love o'ercame;

* "England expects every man to do his duty."

Shame flush'd her noble cheek, her bosom burn'd :
 To helpless, hopeless Africa she turn'd :
 She saw her sister in the mourner's face,
 And rush'd with tears into her dark embrace :
 " All hail ! " exclaim'd the empress of the sea,—
 " Thy chains are broken—Africa, be free ! "

Muse ! take the harp of prophecy :—behold !
 The glories of a brighter age unfold :
 Friends of the outcast ! view the accomplish'd plan,
 The Negro towering to the height of man.
 The blood of Romans, Saxons, Gauls, and Danes,
 Swell'd the rich fountain of the Briton's veins :
 Unmingled streams a warmer life impart,
 And quicker pulses to the Negro's heart :
 A dusky race, beneath the evening sun,
 Shall blend their spousal currents into one :
 Is beauty bound to colour, shape, or air ?
 No ; God created all his offspring fair :
 Tyrant and slave their tribes shall never see,
 For God created all his offspring free ;
 Then Justice, leagu'd with Mercy, from above,
 Shall reign in all the liberty of love ;
 And the sweet shores beneath the balmy west
 Again shall be " the islands of the blest . "

Unutterable mysteries of fate
 Involve, O Africa ! thy future state.
 —On Niger's banks, in lonely beauty wild,
 A Negro-mother carols to her child :
 " Son of my widow'd love, my orphan joy !
 Avenge thy father's murder, O my boy ! "
 Along those banks the fearless *infant* strays,
 Bathes in the stream, among the eddies plays ;
 See the *boy* bounding through the eager race ;
 The fierce *youth*, shouting foremost in the chase,
 Drives the grim lion from his ancient woods,
 And smites the crocodile amidst his floods :
 To giant strength in unshorn *manhood* grown
 He haunts the wilderness, he dwells alone.

A tigress with her whelps to seize him sprung ;
He tears the mother, and he tames the young
In the drear cavern of their native rock :
Thither wild slaves and fell banditti flock ;
He heads their hordes ; they burst, like torrid rains,
In death and devastation o'er the plains ;
Stronger and bolder grows his ruffian band,
Prouder his heart, more terrible his hand,
He spreads his banner : crowding from afar,
Innumerable armies rush to war ;
Resistless as the pillar'd whirlwinds fly
O'er Libyan sands revolving to the sky,
In fire and wrath through every realm they run,
Where the noon-shadow shrinks beneath the sun ;
Till at the Conqueror's feet, from sea to sea,
A hundred nations bow the servile knee,
And throned in nature's unreveal'd domains,
The Jenghis Khan of Africa he reigns.

Dim through the night of these tempestuous years
A Sabbath dawn o'er Africa appears ;
Then shall her neck from Europe's yoke be freed,
And healing arts to hideous arms succeed ;
At home fraternal bonds her tribes shall bind,
Commerce abroad espouse them with mankind ;
While Truth shall build, and pure Religion bless,
The Church of God amidst the wilderness.

Nor in the isles and Africa alone
Be the Redeemer's cross and triumph known :
Father of Mercies ! speed the promised hour ;
Thy kingdom come with all-restoring power ;
Peace, virtue, knowledge, spread from pole to pole,
As round the world the ocean-waters roll !
—Hope waits the morning of celestial light ;
Time plumes his wings for everlasting flight ;
Unchanging seasons have their march begun ;
Millennial years are hastening to the sun ;
Seen through thick clouds, by Faith's transpiercing eyes,
The New Creation shines in purer skies.

—All hail!—the age of crime and suffering ends ;
The reign of righteousness from heaven descends ;
Vengeance for ever sheathes the afflicting sword ;
Death is destroy'd, and Paradise restored ;
Man, rising from the ruins of his fall,
Is one with God, and God is All in All.

PREFACE.

THERE is no authentic history of the world from the Creation to the Deluge, besides that which is found in the first chapters of Genesis. He, therefore, who fixes the date of a fictitious narrative within that period, is under obligation to no other authority whatever for conformity of manners, events, or even localities: he has full power to accommodate these to his peculiar purposes, observing only such analogy as shall consist with the brief information, contained in the sacred records, concerning mankind in the earliest ages. The present writer acknowledges, that he has exercised this undoubted right with great freedom. Success alone sanctions bold innovation; if he has succeeded in what he has attempted, he will need no arguments to justify it; if he has miscarried, none will avail him. Those who imagine that he has exhibited the antediluvians as more skilful in arts and arms than can be supposed, in their stage of society, may read the *Eleventh* Book of PARADISE LOST;—and those who think he has made the religion of the Patriarchs too evangelical, may read the *Twelfth*.

With respect to the personages and incidents of his story, the Author having deliberately adopted them, under the conviction, that in the characters of the one he was not stepping out of human nature, and in the construction of the other not exceeding the limits of poetical probability;—he asks no favour, he deprecates no censure, on behalf of either; nor shall the facility with which “much malice and a little wit” might turn into ridicule every line that he has written, deter him from leaving the whole to the mercy of general Readers.

But,—here is a large web of fiction involving a small fact of Scripture! Nothing could justify a work of this kind, if it were, in any way, calculated to impose on the credulity, pervert the principles, or corrupt the affections of its approvers. Here, then, the appeal lies to conscience rather than to taste, and the decision on this point is of infinitely more importance to the Poet than his name among men, or his interests on earth. It was his design, in this composition, to present a similitude of events, that might be imagined to have happened in the first age of the world, in which such Scripture-characters as are introduced would probably have acted and spoken as they are here made to act and speak. The story is told as a parable only; and its value, in this view, must be determined by its moral, or rather by its religious, influence on the mind and on the heart. Fiction though it be, it is the fiction that represents Truth; and that is Truth,—Truth in the essence, though not in the name; Truth in the spirit, though not in the letter.

No place having been found, in Asia, to correspond exactly with the Mosaic description of the site of Paradise, the Author has disregarded both the learned and the absurd hypotheses on the subject; and at once imagining an inaccessible tract of land, at the confluence of four rivers, which after their junction take the name of the largest, and become the Euphrates of the ancient world, he has placed “the happy garden” there. Milton’s noble fiction of the Mount of Paradise being removed by the Deluge, and push’d

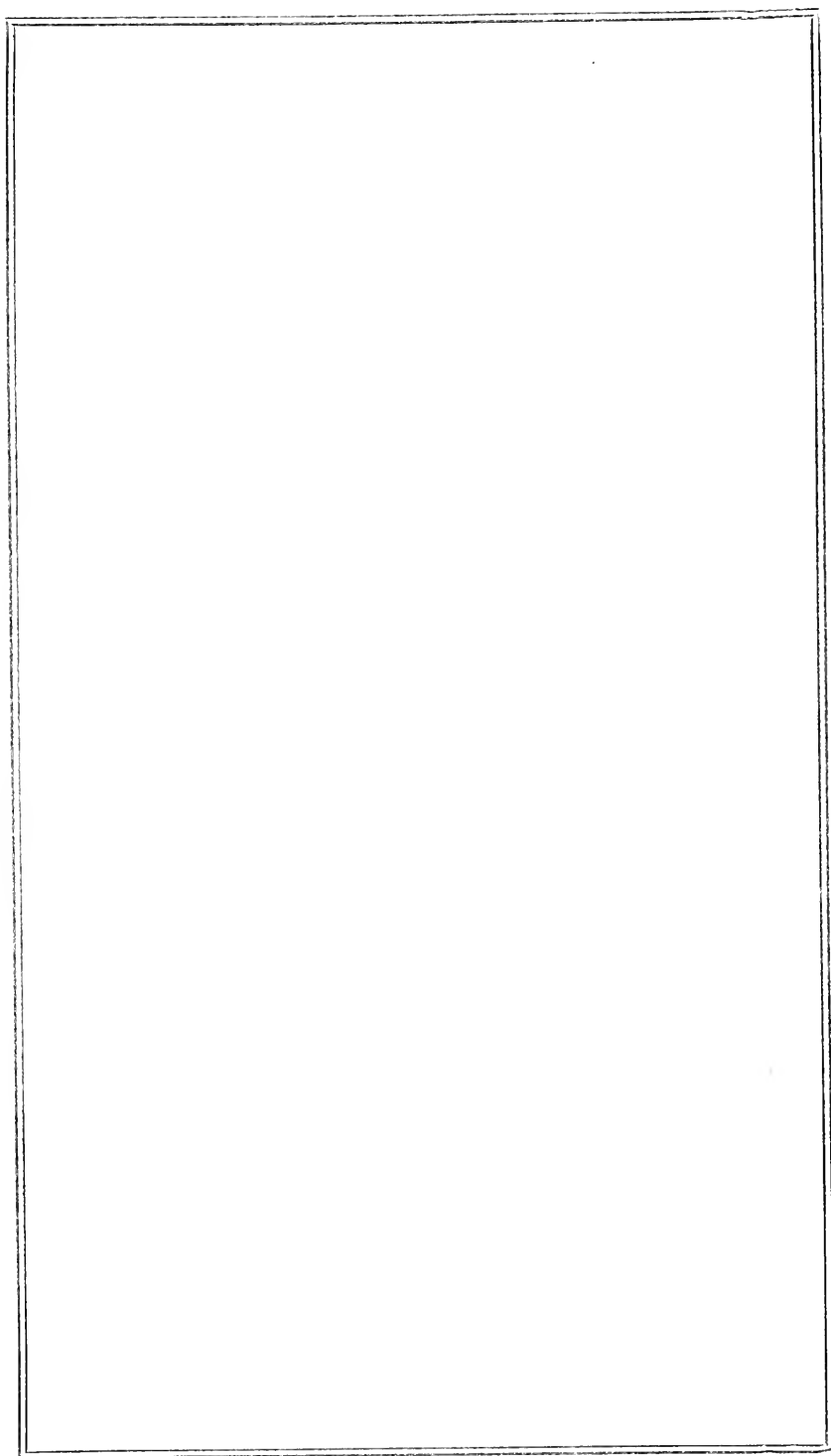
“Down the great river to the opening gulf”

and there converted into a barren isle, implies such a change in the water-courses as will, poetically at least, account for the difference between the scene of this story and the present face of the country at the point where the Tigris and Euphrates meet. On the eastern side of these waters, the Author supposes the descendants of the younger children of Adam to dwell, possessing the land of Eden: the rest of the world having been gradually colonized by emigrants from these, or peopled by the posterity of Cain. In process of time, after the Sons of God had formed connections with the daughters of men, and there were Giants in the earth, the latter assumed to be Lords and Rulers over mankind, till among themselves arose One, excelling all his brethren in knowledge and power, who became their King, and by their aid, in the course of a long life, subdued all the inhabited earth, except the land of Eden. This land, at the head of a mighty army, principally composed of the descendants of Cain, he has invaded and conquered, even to the banks of Euphrates, at the opening of the action of the Poem. It is only necessary to add, that, for the sake of distinction, the invaders are frequently denominated from Cain, as “the host of Cain,”—“the force of Cain,”—“the camp of Cain;”—and the remnant of the defenders of Eden are, in like manner, denominated from Eden.—The Jews have an ancient tradition, that some of the Giants, at the Deluge, fled to the top of a high mountain, and escaped the ruin that involved the rest of their kindred. In the tenth Canto of the following Poem, a hint is borrowed from this tradition, but it is made to yield to the superior authority of Scripture-testimony.

1813.

THE
WORLD BEFORE THE FLOOD.

A POEM, IN TEN CANTOS.



TO THE SPIRIT OF A DEPARTED FRIEND.*

MANY, my friend, have mourn'd for Thee,
And yet shall many mourn,
Long as thy name on earth shall be
In sweet remembrance borne,
By those who loved Thee here, and love
Thy spirit still in realms above.

For while thine absence they deplore,
'Tis for themselves they weep :
Though they behold thy face no more,
In peace thine ashes sleep,
And o'er the tomb they lift their eye,
—Thou *art* not dead, Thou couldst not die.

In silent anguish. O my friend !
When I recall thy worth,
Thy lovely life, thine early end,
I feel estranged from earth ;
My soul with thine desires to rest,
Supremely and for ever blest.

In loftier mood I fain would raise
With my victorious breath
Some fair memorial of thy praise,
Beyond the reach of Death ;
Proud wish, and vain !—I cannot give
The word, that makes the dead to live.

THOU art *not* dead, Thou couldst not die ;
To nobler life new-born,

* Daniel Parken, Esq., of Lincoln's Inn, a friend to whose critical taste Mr. Montgomery acknowledges himself to have been indebted while writing *The West Indies*, and the earlier parts of this poem. He died before *The World* before the Flood was finished.

Thou look'st in pity from the sky
 Upon a world forlorn,
 Where glory is but dying flame,
 And immortality a name.

Yet didst Thou prize the Poet's art;
 And when to Thee I sung,
 How pure, how fervent from the heart,
 The language of thy tongue!
 In praise or blame alike sincere,
 But still most kind when most severe.

When first this dream of ancient times
 Warm on my fancy glow'd,
 And forth in rude spontaneous rhymes
 The Song of Wonder flow'd;
 Pleased but alarm'd, I saw Thee stand,
 And check'd the fury of my hand.

That hand with awe resumed the lyre,
 I trembled, doubted, fear'd,
 Then did thy voice my hope inspire,
 My soul thy presence cheer'd;
 But suddenly the light was flown,
 I look'd, and found myself alone.

Alone, in sickness, care, and wo,
 Since that bereaving day,
 With heartless patience, faint and low,
 I trill'd the secret lay,
 Afraid to trust the bold design
 To less indulgent ears than thine.

'Tis done;—nor would I dread to meet
 The World's repulsive brow,
 Had I presented at thy feet
 The Muse's trophy now,
 And gain'd the smile I long'd to gain,
 The pledge of labour *not* in vain.

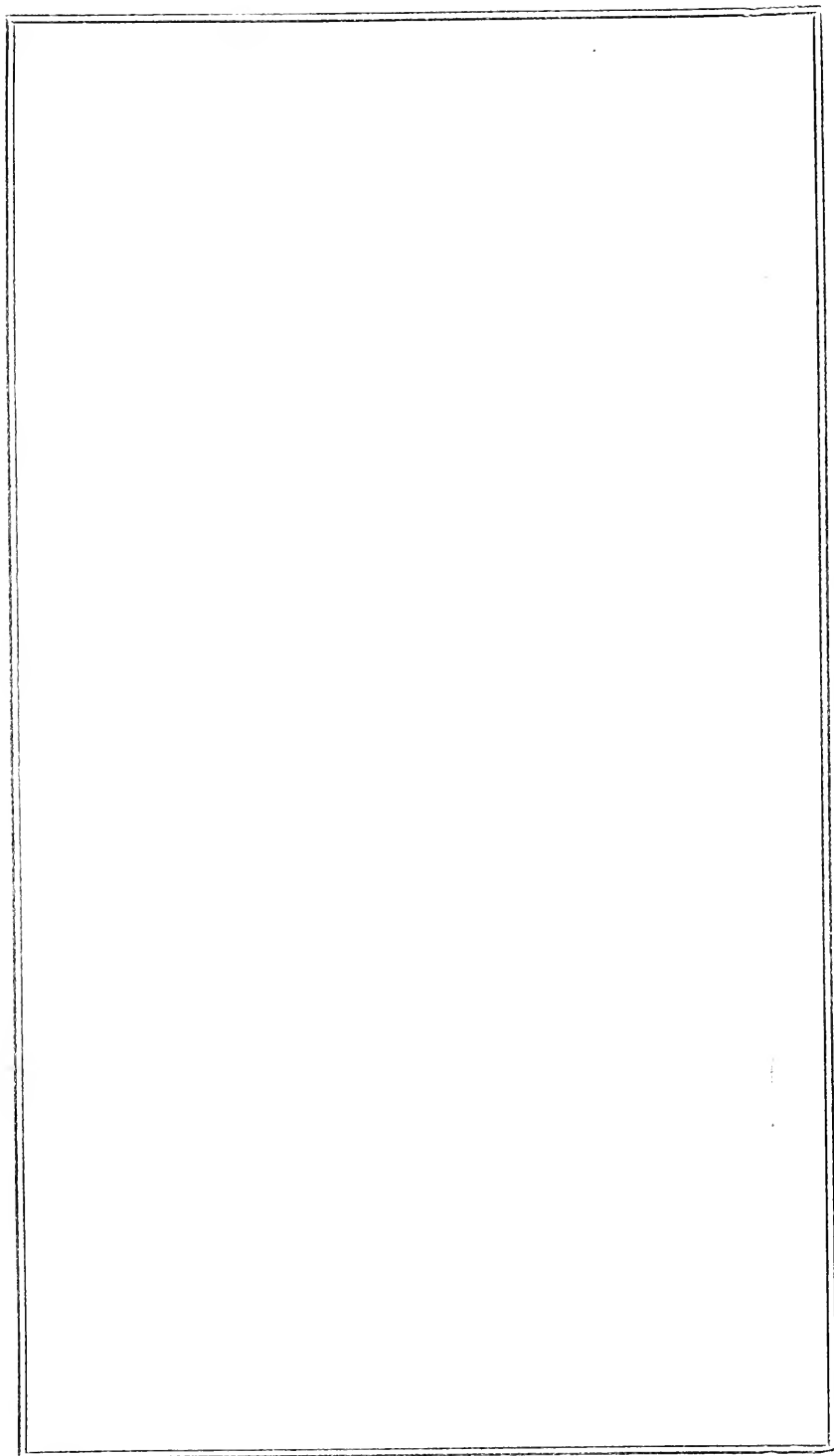
Full well I know, *if Thou wert here,*
A pilgrim still with me,—
Dear as my theme was once, and dear
As I was once to Thee,—
Too mean to yield Thee pure delight,
The strains that now the world invite.

Yet could they reach Thee *where Thou art,*
And sounds might spirits move,
Their better, their diviner part
Thou surely wouldst approve ;
Though heavenly thoughts are all thy joy,
And angel-songs thy tongue employ.

My task is o'er; and I have wrought
With self-rewarding toil
To raise the scatter'd seed of thought
Upon a desert soil :
O for soft winds and element showers !
I seek not fruit, I planted flowers.

Those flowers I train'd, of many a hue,
Along thy path to bloom,
And little thought that I must strew
Their leaves upon thy tomb :
—Beyond that tomb I lift mine eye,
Thou *art* not dead, Thou couldst not die.

Farewell, but not a long farewell ;
In heaven may I appear,
The trials of my faith to tell
In thy transported ear,
And sing with Thee the eternal strain,
“Worthy the Lamb that once was slain.”



THE WORLD BEFORE THE FLOOD.

CANTO FIRST.

The Invasion of Eden by the Descendants of Cain—The Flight of Javan from the Camp of the Invaders to the Valley where the Patriarchs dwelt—The Story of Javan's former Life.

EASTWARD of Eden's early peopled plain,
When Abel perish'd by the hand of Cain,
The murderer from his Judge's presence fled :
Thence to the rising sun his offspring spread :
But he, the fugitive of care and guilt,
Forsook the haunts he chose, the homes he built :
While filial nations hail'd him Sire and Chief,
Empire nor honour brought his soul relief ;
He found, where'er he roam'd, uncheer'd, unblest.
No pause from suffering, and from toil no rest.

Ages, meanwhile, as ages now are told,
O'er the young world in long succession roll'd :
For such the vigour of primeval man,
Through number'd centuries his period ran.
And the first Parents saw their hardy race,
O'er the green wilds of habitable space,
By tribes and kindred, scatter'd wide and far.
Beneath the track of every varying star.
But, as they multiplied from clime to clime,
Embolden'd by their elder brother's crime,
They spurn'd obedience to the Patriarch's yoke.
The bonds of Nature's fellowship they broke :
The weak became the victims of the strong,
And Earth was fill'd with violence and wrong.

Yet long on Eden's fair and fertile plain
A righteous nation dwelt, that knew not Cain :
There fruits and flowers, in genial light and dew,
Luxuriant vines, and golden harvests grew ;

By freshening waters flocks and cattle stray'd,
While youth and childhood watch'd them from the shade ;
Age, at his fig-tree, rested from his toil,
And manly vigour till'd the unfailing soil ;
Green sprang the turf, by holy foot-steps trod.
Round the pure altars of the living God ;
Till foul Idolatry those altars stain'd,
And lust and revelry through Eden reign'd.
Then fled the people's glory and defence,
The joys of home, the peace of innocence ;
Sin brought forth sorrows in perpetual birth.
And the last light from heaven forsook the earth.
Save in one forest-glen, remote and wild,
Where yet a ray of lingering mercy smiled,
Their quiet course where Seth and Enoch ran.
And God and angels deign'd to walk with man.

Now from the east, supreme in arts and arms,
The tribes of Cain, awakening war-alarms,
Full in the spirit of their father, came
To waste their brethren's lands with sword and flame.
In vain the younger race of Adam rose,
With force unequal, to repel their foes ;
Their fields in blood, their homes in ruins lay,
Their whole inheritance became a prey ;
The stars, to whom as gods they raised their cry,
Roll'd, heedless of their offerings, through the sky :
Till, urged on Eden's utmost bounds at length,
In fierce despair, they rallied all their strength.
They fought, but they were vanquish'd in the fight.
Captured, or slain, or scatter'd in the flight :
The morning battle-scene at eve was spread
With ghastly heaps, the dying and the dead :
The dead unmourn'd, unburied left to lie,
By friends and foes, the dying left to die.
The victim, while he groan'd his soul away,
Heard the gaunt vulture hurrying to his prey,
Then strengthless felt the ravening beak, that tore
His widen'd wounds, and drank the living gore.

One sole surviving remnant, void of fear,
Woods in their front, Euphrates in their rear,
Were sworn to perish at a glorious cost,
For all they once had known, and loved, and lost :
A small, a brave, a melancholy band,
The orphans and the childless of the land.
The hordes of Cain, by giant-chieftains led,
Wide o'er the north their vast encampments spread ;
A broad and sunny champaign stretch'd between ;
Westward a maze of waters girt the scene ;
There on Euphrates, in its ancient course,
Three beauteous rivers roll'd their confluent force,
Whose streams, while man the blissful garden trod,
Adorn'd the earthly paradise of God ;
But since he fell, within their triple bound,
Fenced a long region of forbidden ground ;
Meeting at once, where high athwart their bed
Repulsive rocks a curving barrier spread,
The embattled floods, by mutual whirlpools crost,
In hoary foam and surging mist were lost ;
Thence, like an Alpine cataract of snow,
White down the precipice they dash'd below ;
There, in tumultuous billows broken wide,
They spent their rage, and yoked their fourfold tide ;
Through one majestic channel, calm and free.
The sister-rivers sought the parent sea.

The midnight watch was ended ;—down the west
The glowing moon declined towards her rest ;
Through either host the voice of war was dumb ;
In dreams the hero won the fight to come ;
No sound was stirring, save the breeze that bore
The distant cataract's everlasting roar,
When, from the tents of Cain, a youth withdrew ;
Secret and swift, from post to post he flew,
And pass'd the camp of Eden, while the dawn
Gleam'd faintly o'er the interjacent lawn ;
Skirting the forest, cautiously and slow,
He fear'd at every step to start a foe ;

Oft leap'd the hare across his path, up sprung
The lark beneath his feet, and soaring sung :
What time, o'er eastern mountains seen afar,
With golden splendour rose the morning-star,
As if an Angel-sentinel of night,
From earth to heaven had wing'd his homeward flight,—
Glorious at first, but lessening by the way,
And lost insensibly in higher day.

From track of man and herd his path he chose,
Where high the grass, and thick the copsewood rose ;
Then by Euphrates' banks his course inclined,
Where the gray willows trembled to the wind ;
With toil and pain their humid shade he clear'd
When at the porch of heaven the sun appear'd,
Through gorgeous clouds that streak'd the orient sky,
And kindled into glory at his eye ;
While dark amidst the dews that glitter'd round,
From rock and tree, long shadows traced the ground.
Then climb'd the fugitive an airy height,
And resting, back o'er Eden cast his sight.

Far on the left, to man for ever closed,
The Mount of Paradise in clouds reposed :
The gradual landscape open'd to his view ;
From Nature's face the veil of mist withdrew,
And left, in clear and purple light reveal'd,
The radiant river and the tented field ;
The black pine-forest, in whose girdle lay
The patriot phalanx, hemm'd in close array ;
The verdant champaign narrowing to the north,
Whence from their dusky quarters sallied forth
The proud Invaders, early roused to fight,
Tribe after tribe emerging into light ;
Whose shields and lances, in the golden beams
Flash'd o'er the restless scene their flickering gleams,
As when the breakers catch the morning glow,
And ocean rolls in living fire below ;
So, round the unbroken border of the wood,
The Giants pour'd their army like a flood,

Eager to force the covert of their foe,
And lay the last defence of Eden low.

From that safe eminence, absorb'd in thought,
Even till the wind the shout of legions brought,
He gazed,—his heart recoil'd,—he turn'd his head,
And o'er the southern hills his journey sped.

Who was the fugitive?—In infancy
A youthful Mother's only hope was he,
Whose spouse and kindred, on a festal day,
Precipitate destruction swept away;
Earth trembled, open'd, and entomb'd them all;
She saw them sinking, heard their voices call
Beneath the gulf,—and agonized, aghast,
On the wild verge of eddying ruin cast,
Felt in one pang, at that convulsive close,
A Widow's anguish, and a Mother's throes:
A Babe sprang forth, an inauspicious birth,
Where all had perish'd that she loved on earth,
Forlorn and helpless, on the upriven ground,
The parent, with her offspring. Enoch found:
And thence with tender care and timely aid,
Home to the Patriarchs' glen his charge convey'd.

Restored to life, one pledge of former joy,
One source of bliss to come, remain'd—her boy!
Sweet in her eye the cherish'd infant rose,
At once the seal and solace of her woes;
When the pale widow clasp'd him to her breast,
Warm gush'd the tears, and would not be repress;
In lonely anguish, when the truant child
Leap'd o'er the threshold, all the mother smiled.
In him, while fond imagination view'd
Husband and parents, brethren, friends renew'd,
Each vanish'd look, each well-remember'd grace,
That pleased in them, she sought in Javan's face;
For quick his eye and changeable its ray,
As the sun glancing through a vernal day;
And like the lake, by storm or moonlight seen,
With darkening furrows o'er cerulean mien,

His countenance, the mirror of his breast,
The calm or trouble of his soul express'd.

As years enlarged his form, in moody hours
His mind betray'd its weakness with its powers ;
Alike his fairest hopes and strangest fears
Were nursed in silence, or divulged with tears :
The fulness of his heart repress'd his tongue,
Though none might rival Javan when he sung.
He loved, in lonely indolence reclined,
To watch the clouds and listen to the wind,
But from the north when snow and tempest came,
His nobler spirit mounted into flame ;
With stern delight he roam'd the howling woods,
Or hung in ecstasy o'er headlong floods.
Meanwhile excursive fancy long'd to view
The world, which yet by fame alone he knew :
The joys of freedom were his daily theme,
Glory the secret of his midnight dream ;
That dream he told not ; though his heart would ache,
His home was precious for his mother's sake.
With her the lowly paths of peace he ran,
His guardian angel, till he verged to man :
But when her weary eye could watch no more,
When to the grave her timeless corse he bore,
Not Enoch's counsels could his steps restrain ;
He fled, and sojourn'd in the land of Cain.
There, when he heard the voice of Jubal's lyre,
Instinctive genius caught the ethereal fire ;
And soon, with sweetly-modulating skill,
He learn'd to wind the passions at his will,
To rule the chords with such mysterious art,
They seem'd the life-strings of the hearer's heart.
Then Glory's opening field he proudly trod,
Forsook the worship and the ways of God,
Round the vain world pursued the phantom Fame,
And cast away his birthright for a name.

Yet no delight the Minstrel's bosom knew,
None save the tones that from his heart he drew.

And the warm visions of a wayward mind,
Whose transient splendour left a gloom behind,
Frail as the clouds of sunset, and as fair,
Pageants of light resolving into air.
The world, whose charms his young affections stole,
He found too mean for an immortal soul ;
Wound with his life, through all his feelings wrought,
Death and eternity possess'd his thought ;
Remorse impell'd him, unremitting care
Harass'd his path, and stung him to despair.
Still was the secret of his griefs unknown,
Amidst the universe he sigh'd alone ;
The fame he follow'd and the fame he found,
Heal'd not his heart's immedicable wound ;
Admired, applauded, crown'd where'er he roved,
The Bard was homeless, friendless, unbelov'd.
All else that breath'd below the circling sky
Were link'd to earth by some endearing tie ;
He only, like the ocean-weed uptorn,
And loose along the world of waters borne,
Was cast companionless, from wave to wave,
On life's rough sea,—and there was none to save.

The Giant King, who led the hosts of Cain,
Delighted in the Minstrel and his vein ;
No hand, no voice, like Javan's could control,
With soothing concords, his tempestuous soul,
With him the wandering Bard, who found no rest
Through ten years' exile, sought his native west :
There from the camp retiring, he pursued
His journey to the Patriarchs' solitude.
This son of peace no martial armour wore,
A scrip for food, a staff in hand he bore ;
Flaxen his robe ; and o'er his shoulder hung,
Broad as a warrior's shield, his harp unstrung,
A shell of tortoise, exquisitely wrought
With hieroglyphics of embodied thought :
Jubal himself enchased the polish'd frame ;
And Javan won it in the strife for fame

Among the sons of Music, when their Sire
To his victorious skill adjudged the lyre.

'Twas noon, when Javan climb'd the bordering hill,
By many an old remembrance hallow'd still,
Whence he beheld, by sloping woods enclosed,
The hamlet where his Parent's dust reposed,
His home of happiness in early years,
And still the home of all his hopes and fears,
When from ambition struggling to break free,
He mused on joys and sorrows yet to be.
Awhile he stood, with rumination pale,
Casting an eye of sadness o'er the vale,
When, suddenly abrupt, spontaneous prayer
Burst from his lips for One who sojourn'd there ;
For One, whose cottage, far appearing, drew,
Even from his Mother's grave, his transient view :
One, whose unconscious smiles were wont to dart
Ineffable emotion through his heart ;
A nameless sympathy, more sweet, more dear
Than friendship, solaced him when she was near,
And well he guess'd, while yet a timorous boy,
That Javan's artless songs were Zillah's joy.
But when ambition, with a fiercer flame
Than untold love, had fired his soul for fame,
This infant passion, cherish'd yet repress'd,
Lived in his pulse, but died within his breast ;
For oft in distant lands, when hope beat high,
Westward he turn'd his eager glistening eye,
And gazed in spirit on her absent form,
Fair as the moon emerging through the storm,
Till sudden, strange, bewildering horrors cross'd
His thought,—and every glimpse of joy was lost
Even then, when melancholy numb'd his brain,
And life itself stood still in every vein,
While his cold, quivering lips sent vows above,
—Never to curse her with his bitter love !
His heart, espoused with hers, in secret sware
To hold its truth unshaken by despair :

The vows dispersed that from those lips were borne,
But never, never was that heart forsworn ;
Throughout the world, the charm of Zillah's name
Repell'd the touch of every meaner flame.
Jealous and watchful of the sex's wiles,
He trembled at the light of woman's smiles !
So turns the mariner's mistrusting eye
From proud Orion bending through the sky,
Beauteous and terrible, who shines afar,
At once the brightest and most baneful star.

Where Javan from that eastern hill survey'd
The circling forest and embosom'd glade,
Earth wore one summer-robe of living green,
In heaven's blue arch the sun alone was seen ;
Creation slumber'd in the cloudless light,
And noon was silent as the depth of night.
Oh what a throng of rushing thoughts oppress'd,
In that vast solitude, his anxious breast !
—To wither in the blossom of renown,
And unrecorded to the dust go down,
Or for a name on earth to quit the prize
Of immortality beyond the skies,
Perplex'd his wavering choice :—when Conscience fail'd,
Love rose against the World, and Love prevail'd ;
Passion, in aid of Virtue, conquer'd Pride,
And Woman won the heart to Heaven denie l.

CANTO SECOND.

Javan, descending through the Forest, arrives at the Place where he had formerly parted with Zillah, when he withdrew from the Patriarchs' Glen—There he again discovers her in a Bower formed on the Spot—Their strange Interview, and abrupt Separation.

STEEP the descent, and wearisome the way ;
 The twisted boughs forbade the light of day ;
 No breath from heaven refresh'd the sultry gloom,
 The arching forest seem'd one pillar'd tomb,
 Upright and tall the trees of ages grow,
 While all is loneliness and waste below ;
 There, as the massy foliage, far aloof
 Display'd a dark impenetrable roof,
 So, gnarl'd and rigid, claspt and interwound,
 An uncouth maze of roots emboss'd the ground :
 Midway beneath, the sylvan wild assumed
 A milder aspect, shrubs and flowerets bloom'd ;
 Openings of sky, and little plots of green,
 And showers of sunbeams through the leaves were seen.

Awhile the traveller halted at the place
 Where last he caught a glimpse of Zillah's face,
 One lovely eve, when in that calm retreat
 They met, as they were often wont to meet,
 And parted, not as they were wont to part,
 With gay regret, but heaviness of heart ;
 Though Javan named for his return the night,
 When the new moon had roll'd to full-orbed light.
 She stood and gazed through tears, that forced their way,
 Oft as from steep to steep, with fond delay,
 Lessening at every view, he turn'd his head,
 Hail'd her with weaker voice, then forward sped.
 From that sad hour she saw his face no more
 In Eden's woods, or on Euphrates' shore ;
 Moons wax'd and waned ; to *her* no hope appear'd,
 Who much his death but more his falsehood fear'd.

Now, while he paused, the lapse of years forgot,
Remembrance eyed her lingering near the spot.
Onward he hasten'd; all his bosom burn'd,
As if that eve of parting were return'd;
And she, with silent tenderness of wo,
Clung to his heart, and would not let him go.
Sweet was the scene! apart the cedars stood,
A sunny islet open'd in the wood;
With vernal tints the wild-brier thicket glows,
For here the desert flourish'd as the rose;
From sapling trees, with lucid foliage crown'd,
Gay lights and shadows twinkled on the ground;
Up the tall stems luxuriant creepers run,
To hang their silver blossoms in the sun;
Deep velvet verdure clad the turf beneath,
Where trodden flowers their richest odours breathe:
O'er all the bees, with murmuring music, flew
From bell to bell, to sip the treasured dew;
While insect myriads, in the solar gleams,
Glanced to and fro, like intermingling beams;
So fresh, so pure, the woods, the sky, the air,
It seem'd a place where angels might repair,
And tune their harps beneath those tranquil shades,
To morning songs, or moonlight serenades.

He paused again, with memory's dream entranced,
Again his foot unconsciously advanced,
For now the laurel-thicket caught his view,
Where he and Zillah wept their last adieu.
Some curious hand, since that bereaving hour,
Had twined the copse into a covert bower,
With many a light and fragrant shrub between,
Flowering aloft amidst perennial green.
As Javan search'd this blossom-woven shade,
He spied the semblance of a sleeping maid;
'Tis she; 'tis Zillah, in her leafy shrine;
O'erwatch'd in slumber by a power divine,
In cool retirement from the heat of day.
Alone, unfeared, on the moss she lay.

Fair as the rainbow shines through darkening showers,
Pure as a wreath of snow on April flowers.

O youth! in later times, whose gentle ear
This tale of ancient constancy shall hear;
If thou hast known the sweetness and the pain
To love with secret hope, yet love in vain:
If months and years in pining silence worn,
Till doubt and fear might be no longer borne,
In evening shades thy faltering tongue confess'd
The last dear wish that trembled in thy breast,
While at each pause the streamlet purl'd along,
And rival woodlands echo'd song for song;
Recall the maiden's look;—the eye, the cheek,
The blush that spoke what language could not speak;
Recall her look, when at the altar's side
She seal'd her promise, and became thy bride,
Such were to Javan Zillah's form and face,
The flower of meekness on a stem of grace;
Oh, she was all that youth of beauty deems
All that to Love the loveliest object seems.

Moments there are, that, in their sudden flight,
Bring the slow mysteries of years to light;
Javan, in one transporting instant, knew
That all he wish'd, and all he fear'd, was true;
For while the harlot-world his soul possess'd,
Love seem'd a crime in his apostate breast;
How could he tempt her innocence to share
His poor ambition, and his fix'd despair!
But now the phantoms of a wandering brain,
And wounded spirit, cross'd his thoughts in vain:
Past sins and follies, cares and woes forgot,
Peace, virtue, Zillah, seem'd his present lot;
Where'er he look'd, around him or above,
All was the pledge of Truth, the work of Love,
At whose transforming hand, where last they stood,
Had sprung that lone memorial in the wood.

Thus on the slumbering maid while Javan gazed,
With quicker swell her hidden bosom raised

The shadowy tresses, that profusely shed
Their golden wreaths from her reclining head ;
A deeper crimson mantled o'er her cheek,
Her close lip quiver'd as in act to speak,
While broken sobs, and tremors of unrest,
The inward trouble of a dream express'd :
At length, amidst imperfect murmurs, fell
The name of "Javan !" and a low "farewell !"
Tranquil again, her cheek resumed its hue,
And soft as infancy her breath she drew.

When Javan's ear those startling accents thrill'd,
Wonder and ecstasy his bosom fill'd ;
But quick compunction humbler feelings wrought,
He blush'd to be a spy on Zillah's thought ;
He turn'd aside ; within the neighbouring brake,
Resolved to tarry till the nymph awake,
There, as in luxury of thought reclined,
A calm of tenderness composed his mind :
His stringless harp upon the turf was thrown,
And on a pipe of most mellifluous tone,
Framed by himself, the musing Minstrel play'd,
To charm the slumberer, cloister'd in the shade.
Jubal had taught the lyre's responsive string,
Beneath the rapture of his touch to sing ;
And bade the trumpet wake, with bolder breath,
The joy of battle in the field of death ;
But Javan first, whom pure affection fired,
With Love's clear eloquence the flute inspired ;
At once obedient to the lip and hand,
It utter'd every feeling at command.
Light o'er the stops his airy fingers flew,
A spirit spoke in every tone they drew ;
'Twas now the skylark on the wings of morn,
Now the night-warbler leaning on her thorn ;
Anon through every pulse the music stole,
And held sublime communion with the soul,
Wrung from the coyest breast the unprison'd sigh,
And kindled rapture in the coldest eye.

Thus on his dulcet pipe while Javan play'd,
Within her bower awoke the conscious maid ;
She, in her dream, by varying fancies crost,
Had hail'd her wanderer found, and mourn'd him lost :
In one wild vision, midst a land unknown,
By a dark river, as she sat alone,
Javan beyond the stream dejected stood ;
He spied her soon, and leapt into the flood ;
The thwarting current urg'd him down its course,
But Love repell'd it with victorious force ;
She ran to help him landing, where at length
He struggled up the bank with failing strength :
She caught his hand ;—when, downward from the day,
A water-monster dragg'd the youth away ;
She follow'd headlong, but her garments bore
Her form, light floating, till she saw no more :
For suddenly the dream's delusion changed,
And through a blooming wilderness she ranged ;
Alone she seem'd, but not alone she walk'd,
Javan, invisible, beside her talk'd.
He told, how he had journey'd many a year
With changing seasons in their swift career,
Danced with the breezes in the bowers of morn,
Slept in the valley where new moons are born,
Rode with the planets, on their golden cars,
Round the blue world inhabited by stars,
And, bathing in the sun's crystalline streams,
Became ethereal spirit in the beams,
Whence were his lineaments, from mortal sight,
Absorb'd in pure transparency of light ;
But now, his pilgrimage of glory past,
In Eden's vale he sought repose at last.
—The voice was mystery to Zillah's ear,
Not speech, nor song, yet full, melodious, clear ;
No sounds of winds or waters, birds or bees,
Were e'er so exquisitely tuned to please.
Then while she sought him with desiring eyes,
The airy Javan darted from disguise :



*Then in her own defence she said
I gave her hence because she was deceived
The World before the Flood, canto.*

Full on her view a stranger's visage broke ;
She fled, she fell, he caught her,—she awoke.

Awoke from sleep,—but in her solitude
Found the enchantment of her dream renew'd ;
That living voice, so full, melodious, clear,
That voice of mystery warbled in her ear.
Yet words no longer wing the trembling notes,
Unearthly, inexpressive music floats
In liquid tones so voluble and wild,
Her senses seem by slumber still beguiled :
Alarm'd, she started from her lonely den,
But blushing, instantly retired again ;
The viewless phantom came in sound so near,
The stranger of her dream might next appear.
Javan, conceal'd behind the verdant brake,
Felt his lip fail, and strength his hand forsake ;
Then dropt his flute, and while he lay at rest
Heard every pulse that travell'd through his breast.
Zillah, who deem'd the strange illusion fled,
Now from the laurel-arbour show'd her head,
Her eye quick-glancing round, as if, in thought,
Recoiling from the object that she sought :
By slow degrees, to Javan in the shade,
The emerging nymph her perfect shape display'd.
Time had but touch'd her form to finer grace,
Years had but shed their favours on her face,
While secret love, and unrewarded Truth,
Like cold, clear dew upon the rose of youth,
Gave to the springing flower a chasten'd bloom,
And shut from rifling winds its coy perfume.

Words cannot paint the wonder of her look,
When once again his pipe the minstrel took,
And soft in under-tones began to play,
Like the caged woodlark's low-lamenting lay :
Then loud and shrill, by stronger breath impell'd,
To higher strains the undaunted music swell'd,
Till new-born echoes through the forest rang,
And birds, at noon, in broken slumbers sang.

Bewildering transport, infantine surprise,
Throbb'd in her bosom, sparkled in her eyes.
O'er every feature every feeling shone,
Her colour changed as Javan changed his tone ;
While she between the bower and brake entranced
Alternately retreated or advanced ;
Sometimes the lessening cadence seem'd to fly,
Then the full melody came rolling nigh :
She shrunk, or follow'd still, with eye and feet,
Afraid to lose it, more afraid to meet ;
For yet through Eden's land, by fame alone,
Jubal's harmonious minstrelsy was known,
Though nobler songs than cheer'd the Patriarchs' glen
Never resounded from the lips of men.

Silence, at length, the listening maiden broke ;
The heart of Javan check'd him while she spoke :
Though sweeter than his pipe her accents stole,
He durst not learn the tumult of her soul,
But, closely cowering in his ambuscade,
With sprightlier breath and nimbler finger play'd.
—" 'Tis not the nightingale that sang so well
When Javan left me near this lonely cell :
'Tis not indeed the nightingale ;—her voice
Could never since that hour my soul rejoice :
Some bird from Paradise hath lost her way,
And carols here a long-forbidden lay ;
For ne'er since Eve's transgression mortal ear
Was privileged such heavenly sounds to hear ;
Perhaps an angel, while he rests his wings,
On earth alighting, here his descant sings ;
Methinks those tones, so full of joy and love,
Must be the language of the world above !
Within this brake he rests." With curious ken,
As if she fear'd to stir a lion's den,
Breathless, on tiptoe, round the copse she crept ;
Her heart beat quicker, louder as she stopt,
Till Javan rose, and fix'd on her his eyes,
In dumb embarrassment, and feign'd surprise ;

Upright she started at the sudden view,
 Back from her brow the scatter'd ringlets flew:
 Paleness a moment overspread her face;
 But fear to frank astonishment gave place,
 And, with the virgin-blush of innocence,
 She ask'd—"Who art thou, stranger, and from whence?"

With mild demeanour, and with downcast eye,
 Javan, advancing, humbly made reply;
 —"A wretch escaping from the tribes of men,
 Seeks an asylum in the Patriarchs' glen;
 As through the forest's breathless gloom I stray'd,
 Up sprang the breeze in this delicious shade;
 Then, while I sate beneath the rustling tree,
 I waked this pipe to wildest minstrelsy,
 Child of my fancy, framed with Jubal's art,
 To breathe at will the fulness of my heart:
 Fairest of women! if the clamour rude
 Hath scared the quiet of thy solitude,
 Forgive the innocent offence, and tell
 How far beyond these woods the righteous dwell."—

Though changed his voice, his look and stature changed,
 In air and garb, in all but love estranged,
 Still in the youthful exile Zillah sought
 A dear lost friend, for ever near her thought!
 Yet answer'd coldly,—jealous and afraid
 Her heart might be mistaken, or betray'd.
 —"Not far from hence the faithful race reside;
 Pilgrim! to whom shall I thy footsteps guide?
 Alike to all, if thou an alien be,
 My father's home invites thee; follow me."

She spoke with such a thought-divining look,
 Colour his lip, and power his tongue forsook;
 At length, in hesitating tone, and low.
 —"Enoch," said he, "the friend of God I know,
 To him I bear a message full of fear;
 I may not rest till he vouchsafe to hear."

He paused; his cheek with red confusion burn'd;
 Kindness through her relenting breast return'd:

—“Behold the path,” she cried, and led the way:
 Ere long the vale unbosom’d to the day:
 —“Yonder, where two embracing oaks are seen,
 Arch’d o’er a cottage-roof, that peeps between,
 Dwells Enoch; stranger! peace attend thee there.
 My father’s sheep demand his daughter’s care.”

Javan was so rebuked beneath her eye,
 She vanish’d ere he falter’d a reply,
 And sped, while he in cold amazement stood,
 Along the winding border of the wood;
 Now lost, now re-appearing, as the glade
 Shone to the sun, or darken’d in the shade,
 He saw, but might not follow, where her flock
 Were wont to rest at noon, beneath a rock.
 He knew the willowy champaign, and the stream,
 Of many an early lay the simple theme,
 Chanted in boyhood’s unsuspecting hours,
 When Zillah join’d the song, or praised his powers.
 Thither he watch’d her, while her course she bore,
 Nor ceased to gaze when she was seen no more.

CANTO THIRD.

Javan’s Soliloquy on Zillah’s Desertion of him—He reaches the Ruins of his Mother’s Cottage—Thence he proceeds to Enoch’s Dwelling—His Reception there—Enoch and Javan proceed together towards the Place of Sacrifice—Description of the Patriarchs’ Glen—Occasion of the Family of Seth retiring thither at first.

“Am I so changed by suffering, so forgot,
 That love disowns me, Zillah knows me not?
 Ah! no: she shrinks from my disastrous fate;
 She dare not love me, and she cannot hate:
 ’Tis just; I merit this:—When Nature’s womb
 Ingulf’d my kindred in one common tomb,
 Why was I spared?—A reprobate by birth,
 To heaven rebellious, unallied on earth,

Whither, oh whither shall the outcast flee !
There is no home, no peace, no hope for me.
I hate the worldling's vanity and noise,
I have no fellow-feeling in his joys ;
The saint's serener bliss I cannot share,
My soul, alas ! hath no communion there.
This is the portion of my cup below,
Silent, unmingled, solitary wo ;
To bear from clime to clime the curse of Cain,
Sin with remorse, yet find repentance vain ;
And cling, in blank despair, from breath to breath,
To nought in life, except the fear of death."—

While Javan gave his bitter passion vent,
And wander'd on, unheeding where he went,
His feet, instinctive, led him to the spot
Where rose the ruins of his childhood's cot :
Here, as he halted in abrupt surprise,
His mother seem'd to vanish from his eyes,
As if her gentle form, unmark'd before,
Had stood to greet him at the wonted door ;
Yet did the pale retiring Spirit dart
A look of tenderness that broke his heart :
'Twas but a thought, arrested on its flight,
And bodied forth with visionary light,
But chill the life-blood ran through every vein,
The fire of frenzy faded from his brain,
He cast himself in terror on the ground :
Slowly recovering strength, he gazed around,
In wistful silence, eyed those walls decay'd,
Between whose chinks the lively lizard play'd ;
The moss-clad timbers, loose and lapsed awry,
Threatening ere long in wider wreck to lie ;
The fractured roof, through which the sun-beams shone.
With rank, unflowering verdure overgrown ;
The prostrate fragments of the wicker-door,
And reptile traces on the damp green floor.
This mournful spectacle while Javan view'd,
Life's earliest scenes and trials were renew'd ;

O'er his dark mind the light of years gone by
Gleam'd, like the meteors of a northern sky.
He moved his lips, but strove in vain to speak,
A few slow tears stray'd down his cold, wan cheek,
Till from his breast a sigh convulsive sprung,
And "O my mother!" trembled from his tongue.
That name, though but a murmur, that dear name
Touch'd every kind affection into flame;
Despondency assumed a milder form,
A ray of comfort darted through the storm;
"O God! be merciful to me!"—He said,
Arose, and straight to Enoch's dwelling sped.

Enoch, who sate, to taste the freshening breeze,
Beneath the shadow of his cottage-trees,
Beheld the youth approaching; and his eye,
Instructed by the light of prophecy,
Knew from afar, beneath the stranger's air,
The orphan object of his tenderest care;
Forth, with a father's joy, the holy man
To meet the poor returning pilgrim ran,
Fell on his neck, and kiss'd him, wept, and cried
"My son! my son!"—but Javan shrunk aside;
The Patriarch raised, embraced him, oft withdrew
His head to gaze, then wept and clasp'd anew.
The mourner bow'd with agony of shame,
Clung round his knees, and call'd upon his name.
—"Father! behold a supplicant in me,
A sinner in the sight of heaven and thee;
Yet for thy former love, may Javan live;
Oh, for the mother's sake, the son forgive!—
The meanest office, and the lowest seat,
In Enoch's house be mine, at Enoch's feet."

"Come to my home, my bosom, and my rest,
Not as a stranger and way-faring guest;
My bread of peace, my cup of blessings share,
Child of my faith! and answer to my prayer!
Oh, I have wept through many a night for thee,
And watch'd through many a day *this* day to see.

Crown'd is the hope of my desiring heart,
I am resign'd, and ready to depart :
With joy I hail my course of nature run,
Since I have seen thy face, my son ! my son !"

So saying, Enoch led to his abode
The trembling penitent, along the road
That through the garden's gay enclosure wound ;
Midst fruits and flowers the Patriarch's spouse they found,
Plucking the purple clusters from the vine
To crown the cup of unfermented wine.
She came to meet them ;—but in strange surmise
Stopt, and on Javan fix'd her earnest eyes ;
He kneel'd to greet her hand with wonted grace—
Ah ! then she knew him !—as he bow'd his face,
His mother's features in a glimpse she caught,
And the son's image rush'd upon her thought ;
Pale she recoil'd with momentary fright,
As if a spirit had risen before her sight,
Returning, with a heart too full to speak,
She pour'd a flood of tears upon his cheek,
Then laugh'd for gladness,—but her laugh was wild :
—“ Where hast thou been, my own, my orphan child ?
Child of my soul ! bequeath'd in death to me
By her who had no other wealth than thee !”
She cried, and with a mother's love caress'd
The youth who wept in silence on her breast.

This hasty tumult of affection o'er,
They pass'd within the hospitable door ;
There on a grassy couch, with joy o'ercome,
Pensive with awe, with veneration dumb,
Javan reclined, while kneeling at his seat,
The humble Patriarch wash'd the traveller's feet.
Quickly the Spouse her plenteous table spread
With homely viands, milk and fruits and bread.
Ere long the guest, grown innocently bold,
With simple eloquence his story told ;
His sins, his follies, frankly were reveal'd,
And nothing but his nameless love conceal'd.

—“While thus,” he cried, “I proved the world a snare,
Pleasure a serpent, fame a cloud in air;
While with the sons of men my footsteps trod,
My home, my heart was with the sons of God.”

“Went not my spirit with thee,” Enoch said,
“When from the mother’s grave the orphan fled?
Others believed thee slain by beasts of blood,
Or self-devoted to the strangling flood,
(Too plainly in thy grief-bewilder’d mien,
By every eye, a breaking heart was seen;)
I mourn’d in secret thine apostasy,
Nor ceased to intercede with Heaven for thee.
Strong was my faith, in dreams or waking thought,
Oft as thine image o’er my mind was brought,
I deem’d thee living by this conscious sign,
The deep communion of my soul with thine.
This day a voice, that thrill’d my breast with fear,
(Methought ’twas Adam’s) whisper’d in mine ear,
—‘Enoch, ere thrice the morning meet the sun,
Thy joy shall be fulfill’d, thy rest begun.’—
While yet those tones were murmuring in air,
I turn’d to look,—but saw no speaker there:
Thought I not then of thee, my long-lost joy?
Leapt not my heart abroad to meet my boy?
Yes! and while still I sate beneath the tree,
Revolving what the signal meant to me,
I spied thee coming, and with eager feet
Ran, the returning fugitive to greet:
Nor less the welcome art thou, since I know
By this high warning, that from earth I go:
My days are number’d; peace on thine attend!
The trial comes,—be faithful to the end.”

“Oh live the years of Adam!” cried the youth;
“Yet seem thy words to breathe prophetic truth;
Sire! while I roam’d the world, a transient guest,
From sunrise to the ocean of the west,
I found that sin, where’er the foot of man
Nature’s primeval wilderness o’er-ran,

Had track'd his steps, and through advancing time
Urged the deluded race from crime to crime,
Till wrath and strife, in fratricidal war,
Gather'd the force of nations from afar,
To deal and suffer death's unheeded blow,
As if the curse on Adam were too slow,
Even now an host, like locusts on their way,
That desolate the earth, and dim the day,
Led by a giant-king, whose arm hath broke
Remotest realms to wear his iron yoke,
Hover o'er Eden, resolute to close
His final triumph o'er his latest foes ;
A feeble band, that in their covert lie,
Like cowering doves beneath the falcon's eye.
That easy and ignoble conquest won,
There yet remains one fouler deed undone ;
Oft have I heard the tyrant in his ire
Devote this glen to massacre and fire,
And swear to root, from earth's dishonour'd face,
The last, least relic of the faithful race ;
Thenceforth he hopes, on God's terrestrial throne
To rule the nether universe alone.
Wherefore, O Sire ! when evening shuts the sky,
Fly with thy kindred, from destruction fly ;
Far to the south, unpeopled wilds of wood
Skirt the dark borders of Euphrates' flood ;
There shall the Patriarchs find secure repose,
Till Eden rest, forsaken of her foes."

At Javan's speech the Matron's cheek grew pale,
Her courage, not her faith, began to fail ;
Eve's youngest daughter she ; the silent tear
Witness'd her patience, but betray'd her fear.
Then answer'd Enoch, with a smile serene,
That shed celestial beauty o'er his mien ;
"Here is mine earthly habitation ; here
I wait till my Redeemer shall appear ;
Death and the face of man I dare not shun,
God is my refuge, and His will be done."

The Matron check'd her uncomplaining sigh,
 And wiped the drop that trembled in her eye.
 Javan with shame and self-abasement blush'd,
 But every care at Enoch's smile was hush'd :
 He felt the power of truth ; his heart o'erflow'd,
 And in his look sublime devotion glow'd.
 Westward the Patriarch turn'd his tranquil face ;
 " The Sun," said he, " hath well-nigh run his race ;
 I to the yearly sacrifice repair,
 Our Brethren meet me at the place of prayer."

" I follow : O my father ! I am thine ;
 Thy God, thy people, and thine altar mine !"
 Exclaim'd the youth, on highest thoughts intent,
 And forth with Enoch through the valley went.

Deep was that valley, girt with rock and wood,
 In rural groups the scatter'd hamlet stood ;
 Tents, arbours, cottages adorn'd the scene,
 Gardens and fields, and shepherds' walks between ;
 Through all, a streamlet, from its mountain-source,
 Seen but by stealth, pursued its willowy course.

When first the mingling sons of God and man
 The demon-sacrifice of war began,
 Self-exiled here, the family of Seth
 Renounced a world of violence and death,
 Faithful alone amidst the faithless found,*
 And innocent while murder cursed the ground.
 Here, in retirement from profane mankind,
 They worshipp'd God with purity of mind,
 Fed their small flocks, and till'd their narrow soil,
 Like parent Adam, with submissive toil,
 —Adam, whose eyes their pious hands had closed,
 Whose bones beneath their quiet turf reposed.
 No glen like this, unstain'd with human blood,
 Could youthful nature boast before the flood ;

* " So spake the Seraph Abdiel, faithful found
 Among the faithless, faithful only he "

Paradise Lost, book vi.

Far less shall Earth, now hastening to decay,
A scene of sweeter loneliness display,
Where nought was heard but sounds of peace and love.
Nor seen but woods around, and heaven above.

Yet not in cold and unconcern'd content
Their years in that delicious range were spent;
Oft from their haunts the fervent Patriarchs broke,
In strong affection to their kindred spoke.
With tears and prayers reprov'd their growing crimes,
Or told the impending judgments of the times.
In vain; the world despised the warning word,
With scorn belied it, or with mockery heard,
Forbade the zealous monitors to roam,
And stoned or chased them to their forest home.
There, from the depth of solitude, their sighs
Pleaded with Heaven in ceaseless sacrifice,
And long did righteous Heaven the guilty spare,
Won by the holy violence of prayer.

Yet sharper pangs of unavailing wo,
Those sires in secrecy were doom'd to know;
Oft by the world's alluring snares misled,
Their youth from that sequester'd valley fled,
Join'd the wild herd, increased the godless crew,
And left the virtuous remnant weak and few.

CANTO FOURTH.

Enoch relates to Javan the Circumstances of the Death of Adam, including his Appointment of an Annual Sacrifice on the Day of his Transgression and Fall in Paradise.

Thus through the valley while they held their walk,
Enoch of former days began to talk,
—“Thou know’st our place of sacrifice and prayer,
Javan! for thou wert wont to worship there :
Built by our father’s venerable hands,
On the same spot our ancient altar stands,
Where, driven from Eden’s hallow’d groves, he found
A home on earth’s unconsecrated ground ;
Whence, too, his pilgrimage of trial o’er,
He reach’d the rest which sin can break no more.
Oft hast thou heard our elder Patriarchs tell
How Adam once by disobedience fell ;
Would that my tongue were gifted to display
The terror and the glory of that day,
When, seized and stricken by the hand of Death,
The first transgressor yielded up his breath !
Nigh threescore years, with interchanging light,
The host of heaven have measured day and night,
Since we beheld the ground, from which he rose,
On his returning dust in silence close.

“With him his noblest sons might not compare,
In godlike feature and majestic air ;
Not out of weakness rose his gradual frame,
Perfect from his Creator’s hand he came ;
And as in form excelling, so in mind
The Sire of men transcended all mankind :
A soul was in his eye, and in his speech
A dialect of heaven no art could reach ;
For oft of old to him the evening breeze
Had borne the voice of God among the trees ;
Angels were wont their songs with his to blend,
And talk with him as their familiar friend.

But deep remorse, for that mysterious crime
Whose dire contagion through elapsing time
Diffused the curse of death beyond control,
Had wrought such self-abasement in his soul,
That he, whose honours were approach'd by none,
Was yet the meekest man beneath the sun.
From sin, as from the serpent that betray'd
Eve's early innocence, he shrunk afraid;
Vice he rebuked with so austere a frown,
He seem'd to bring an instant judgment down;
Yet while he chid, compunctious tears would start,
And yearning tenderness dissolve his heart!
The guilt of all his race became his own,
He suffer'd as if *he* had sinn'd alone.
Within our glen, to filial love endear'd,
Abroad for wisdom, truth, and justice fear'd,
He walk'd so humbly in the sight of all,
The vilest ne'er reproach'd him with his fall.
Children were his delight;—they ran to meet
His soothing hand, and clasp his honour'd feet;
While midst their fearless sports, supremely blest,
He grew in heart a child among the rest:
Yet as a Parent, nought beneath the sky
Touch'd him so quickly as an infant's eye:
Joy from its smile of happiness he caught:
Its flash of rage sent horror through his thought:
His smitten conscience felt as fierce a pain
As if he fell from innocence again.

One morn I track'd him on his lonely way,
Pale as the gleam of slow-awakening day;
With feeble step he climb'd yon craggy height,
Thence fix'd on distant Paradise his sight;
He gazed awhile in silent thought profound,
Then falling prostrate on the dewy ground,
He pour'd his spirit in a flood of prayer,
Bewail'd his ancient crime with self-despair,
And claim'd the pledge of reconciling grace,
The promised Seed, the Saviour of his race.

Wrestling with God, as nature's vigour fail'd,
His faith grew stronger and his plea prevail'd;
The prayer from agony to rapture rose,
And sweet as angel accents fell the close.
I stood to greet him: when he raised his head,
Divine expression o'er his visage spread;
His presence was so saintly to behold,
He seem'd in sinless Paradise grown old.

“—‘This day,’ said he, ‘in Time’s star-lighted round,
Renews the anguish of that mortal wound
On me inflicted, when the Serpent’s tongue
My Spouse with his beguiling falsehood stung.
Though years of grace through centuries have pass’d
Since my transgression, this may be my last;
Infirmities without, and fears within,
Foretell the consummating stroke of sin;
The hour, the place, the form to me unknown,
But God, who lent me life, *will* claim his own:
Then, lest I sink as suddenly in death
As quicken’d into being by his breath,
Once more I climb’d these rocks with weary pace,
And but once more, to view my native place,
To bid yon garden of delight farewell,
The earthly Paradise from which I fell.
This mantle, Enoch! which I yearly wear
To mark the day of penitence and prayer,—
These skins, the covering of my first offence,
When, conscious of departed innocence,
Naked and trembling from my Judge I fled,
A hand of mercy o’er my vileness spread;—
Enoch! this mantle thus vouchsafed to me,
At my dismissal I bequeath to thee;
Wear it in sad memorial on this day,
And yearly at mine earliest altar slay
A lamb immaculate, whose blood be spilt
In sign of wrath removed and cancell’d guilt:
So be the sins of all my race confest,
So on their heads may peace and pardon rest.’

—Thus spake our Sire, and down the steep descent,
 With strengthen'd heart, and fearless footstep went :
 O Javan ! when we parted at his door,
 I loved him as I never loved before.

“ Ere noon, returning to his bower, I found
 Our father labouring in his harvest ground,
 (For yet he till'd a little plot of soil,
 Patient and pleased with voluntary toil) ;
 But oh how changed from him whose morning eye
 Outshone the star that told the sun was nigh !
 Loose in his feeble grasp the sickle shook ;
 I mark'd the ghastly colour of his look,
 And ran to help him ; but his latest strength
 Fail'd ;—prone upon his sheaves he fell at length :
 I strove to raise him ; sight and sense were fled,
 Nerveless his limbs, and backward sway'd his head.
 Seth pass'd ; I call'd him, and we bore our Sire
 To neighbouring shades from noon's afflictive fire :
 Ere long he woke to feeling, with a sigh,
 And half unclosed his hesitating eye ;
 Strangely and timidly he peer'd around,
 Like men in dreams whom sudden lights confound :
 —‘ Is this a new Creation ?—Have I pass'd
 The bitterness of death ?’—He look'd aghast,
 Then sorrowful !—‘ No ; men and trees appear ;
 'Tis not a new Creation—pain is here :
 From Sin's dominion is there no release ?
 Lord ; let thy Servant *now* depart in peace.’
 —Hurried remembrance crowding o'er his sight
 He knew us ; tears of consternation stole
 Down his pale cheeks :—‘ Seth !—Enoch !—Where is Eve ?
 How could the spouse her dying consort leave ?’

“ Eve look'd that moment from their cottage-door
 In quest of Adam, where he toil'd before ;
 He was not there ; she call'd him by his name ;
 Sweet to his ear the well-known accents came ;
 —‘ Here am I,’ answer'd he, in tone so weak,
 That we who held him scarcely heard him speak

But, resolutely bent to rise, in vain
He struggled till he swoon'd away with pain.
Eve call'd again, and, turning towards the shade,
Helpless as infancy, beheld him laid ;
She sprang, as smitten with a mortal wound,
Forward, and cast herself upon the ground
At Adam's feet ; half rising in despair,
Him from our arms she wildly strove to tear ;
Repell'd by gentle violence, she press'd
His powerless hand to her convulsive breast,
And kneeling, bending o'er him, full of fears,
Warm on his bosom shower'd her silent tears.
Light to his eyes at that refreshment came,
They open'd on her in a transient flame ;
—' And art thou here, my Life ! my Love !' he cried,
' Faithful in death to this congenial side ?
Thus let me bind thee to my breaking heart,
One dear, one bitter moment, ere we part.'
—' Leave me not, Adam ! leave me not below ;
With thee I tarry, or with thee I go,'
She said, and yielding to his faint embrace,
Clung round his neck, and wept upon his face.
Alarming recollection soon return'd,
His fever'd frame with growing anguish burn'd :
Ah ! then, as Nature's tenderest impulse wrought,
With fond solicitude of love she sought
To soothe his limbs upon their grassy bed,
And make the pillow easy to his head,
She wiped his reeking temples with her hair ;
She shook the leaves to stir the sleeping air ;
Moisten'd his lips with kisses : with her breath
Vainly essay'd to quell the fire of Death,
That ran and revell'd through his swollen veins
With quicker pulses, and severer pains.

“ The sun, in summer majesty on high,
Darted his fierce effulgence down the sky ;
Yet dimm'd and blunted were the dazzling rays,
His orb expanded through a dreary haze,

And, circled with a red, portentous zone,
He look'd in sickly horror from his throne :
The vital air was still ; the torrid heat
Oppressed our hearts, that labour'd hard to beat.
When higher noon had shrunk the lessening shade,
Thence to his home our father we convey'd,
And stretch'd him, pillow'd with his latest sheaves,
On a fresh couch of green and fragrant leaves.
Here, though his sufferings through the glen were known,
We chose to watch his dying bed alone,
Eve, Seth, and I.—In vain he sigh'd for rest,
And oft his meek complainings thus express'd :
—'Blow on me, Wind ! I faint with heat ! oh bring
Delicious water from the deepest spring ;
Your sunless shadows o'er my limbs diffuse,
Ye Cedars ! wash me cold with midnight dews.
—Cheer me, my friends ! with looks of kindness cheer :
Whisper a word of comfort in mine ear ;
Those sorrowing faces fill my soul with gloom ;
This silence is the silence of the tomb.
Thither I hasten ; help me on my way ;
O sing to soothe me, and to strengthen pray !'
We sang to soothe him,—hopeless was the song ;
We pray'd to strengthen him,—he grew not strong.
In vain from every herb, and fruit, and flower,
Of cordial sweetness, or of healing power,
We press'd the virtue ; no terrestrial balm
Nature's dissolving agony could calm.
Thus, as the day declined, the fell disease
Eclipsed the light of life by slow degrees :
Yet while his pangs grew sharper, more resign'd,
More self-collected grew the sufferer's mind ;
Patient of heart, though rack'd at every pore,
The righteous penalty of sin he bore ;
Not his the fortitude that mocks at pains,
But that which feels them most, and yet sustains.
—'Tis just, 'tis merciful,' we heard him say ;
'Yet wherefore hath he turn'd his face away ?

I see Him not ; I hear Him not ; I call ;
My God ! my God ! support me, or I fall.'

“The sun went down amidst an angry glare
Of flushing clouds, that crimson'd all the air ;
The winds brake loose ; the forest boughs were torn,
And dark aloof the eddying foliage borne ;
Cattle to shelter scudded in affright ;
The florid evening vanish'd into night ;
Then burst the hurricane upon the vale,
In peals of thunder, and thick-vollied hail ;
Prone rushing rains with torrents whelm'd the land,
Our cot amidst a river seem'd to stand ;
Around its base, the foamy-crested streams
Flash'd through the darkness to the lightning's gleams,
With monstrous throes an earthquake heaved the ground,
The rocks were rent, the mountains trembled round ;
Never since Nature into being came,
Had such mysterious motion shook her frame ;
We thought, ingulf'd in floods, or wrapt in fire,
The world itself would perish with our Sire.

“Amidst this war of elements, within
More dreadful grew the sacrifice of sin,
Whose victim on his bed of torture lay,
Breathing the slow remains of life away.
Erewhile, victorious faith sublimer rose
Beneath the pressure of collected woes :
But now his spirit waver'd, went and came,
Like the loose vapour of departing flame,
Till at the point, when comfort seem'd to die
For ever in his fix'd, unclosing eye,
Bright through the smouldering ashes of the man
The saint brake forth, and Adam thus began :

“—O ye, that shudder at this awful strife,
This wrestling agony of Death and Life,
Think not that He, on whom my soul is cast,
Will leave me thus forsaken to the last ;
Nature's infirmity alone you see ;
My chains are breaking, I shall soon be free ;

Though firm in God the Spirit holds her trust,
 The flesh is frail, and trembles into dust.
 Horror and anguish seize me ;—'tis the hour
 Of darkness, and I mourn beneath its power ;
 The Tempter plies me with his direst art,
 I feel the Serpent coiling round my heart ;
 He stirs the wound he once inflicted there,
 Instils the deadening poison of despair,
 Belies the truth of God's delaying grace,
 And bids me curse my Maker to his face.
 —I will not curse Him, though his grace delay :
 I will not cease to trust Him, though He slay ;
 Full on his promised mercy I rely,
 For God hath spoken,—God, who cannot lie.
 —THOU, of my faith the Author and the End !
 Mine early, late, and everlasting Friend !
 The joy, that once thy presence gave, restore
 Ere I am summon'd hence, and seen no more :
 Down to the dust returns this earthly frame,
 Receive my Spirit, Lord ! from whom it came ;
 Rebuke the Tempter, show thy power to save,
 O let thy glory light me to the grave,
 That these, who witness my departing breath,
 May learn to triumph in the grasp of Death.'

“ He closed his eyelids with a tranquil smile,
 And seem'd to rest in silent prayer awhile :
 Around his couch with filial awe we kneel'd,
 When suddenly a light from heaven reveal'd
 A Spirit, that stood within the unopen'd door ;—
 The sword of God in his right hand he bore ;
 His countenance was lightning, and his vest
 Like snow at sunrise on the mountain's crest ;
 Yet so benignly beautiful his form,
 His presence still'd the fury of the storm ;
 At once the winds retire, the waters cease ;
 His look was love, his salutation 'Peace !'

“ Our mother first beheld him, sore amazed,
 But terror grew to transport while she gazed :

—‘Tis He, the Prince of Seraphim, who drove
Our banish’d feet from Eden’s happy grove ;*
Adam, my Life, my Spouse, awake !’ she cried :
‘Return to Paradise ; behold thy Guide !
O let me follow in this dear embrace !’
She sunk, and on his bosom hid her face.
Adam look’d up ; his visage changed its hue,
Transform’d into an angel’s at the view :
‘I come !’ he cried, with faith’s full triumph fired,
And in a sigh of ecstasy expired.
The light was vanish’d, and the vision fled ;
We stood alone, the living with the dead ;
The ruddy embers, glimmering round the room,
Display’d the corpse amidst the solemn gloom ;
But o’er the scene a holy calm reposed,
The gate of heaven had open’d there, and closed.
“Eve’s faithful arm still clasp’d her lifeless Spouse ;
Gently I shook it from her trance to rouse ;
She gave no answer ; motionless and cold,
It fell like clay from my relaxing hold ;
Alarm’d, I lifted up the locks of gray
That hid her cheek ; her soul had pass’d away :
A beauteous corse she graced her partner’s side,
Love bound their lives, and Death could not divide.
“Trembling astonishment of grief we felt,
Till Nature’s sympathies began to melt ;
We wept in stillness through the long, dark night ;
—And oh how welcome was the morning light !”

* Paradise Lost, book xi. v. 238.



1887 L. A.

W. D. K. Miller

"Our Withers' a child him was, dead,
 But here, now, transport, white, he stand
 To be, the Prince of Seraphim."
 The Death-Dealer, 1887, 1888, 1889.

CANTO FIFTH.

The Burying-place of the Patriarchs—The Sacrifice on the Anniversary of the Fall of Adam—Enoch's Prophecy.

“AND here,” said Enoch, with dejected eye,
“Behold the grave in which our Parents lie.”
They stopp’d, and o’er the turf-enclosure wept,
Where, side by side, the First-Created slept :
It seem’d as if a voice, with still small sound,
Heard in their bosoms, issued from that mound :
—“From earth we came, and we return’d to earth :
Descendants ! spare the Dust that gave you birth ;
Though Death, the pain for our transgression due,
By sad inheritance we left to you,
Oh let our Children bless us in our grave,
And man forgive the wrong that God forgave !”
Thence to the altar Enoch turn’d his face ;
But Javan linger’d in that burying-place,
A scene sequester’d from the haunts of men,
The loveliest nook of all that lovely glen,
Where weary pilgrims found their last repose :
The little heaps were ranged in comely rows,
With walks between, by friends and kindred trod.
Who dress’d with duteous hands each hallow’d sod :
No sculptured monument was taught to breathe
His praises, whom the worm devour’d beneath ;
The high, the low, the mighty, and the fair,
Equal in death, were undistinguish’d there ;
Yet not a hillock moulder’d near that spot,
By one dishonour’d or by all forgot ;
To some warm heart, the poorest dust was dear,
From some kind eye, the meanest claim’d a tear.
And oft the living, by affection led,
Were wont to walk in spirit with their dead,
Where no dark cypress cast a doleful gloom,
No blighting yew shed poison o’er the tomb,

But, white and red with intermingling flowers,
The graves look'd beautiful in sun and showers.
Green myrtles fenced it, and beyond their bound
Ran the clear rill with ever-murmuring sound ;
'Twas not a scene for Grief to nourish care,
It breathed of Hope, and moved the heart to prayer.

Why linger'd Javan in that lone retreat ?
The shrine of her that bare him drew his feet ;
Trembling he sought it, fearing to behold
A bed of thistles, or unsightly mould ;
But, lo ! the turf, which his own hands had piled,
With choicest flowers, and richest verdure smiled :
By all the glen, his mother's couch of rest,
In his default, was visited and blest.
He kneel'd, he kiss'd it, full of love and woe ;
His heart was where his treasure lay, below ;
And long he tarried, ere, with heav'nward eyes,
He rose, and hasten'd to the sacrifice.

Already on a neighbouring mount, that stood
Apart amidst the valley, girt with wood,
Whose open summit rising o'er the trees,
Caught the cool fragrance of the evening breeze,
The Patriarchal Worshippers were met ;
The Lamb was brought, the wood in order set
On Adam's rustic altar, moss-o'ergrown,
An unwrought mass of earth-embedded stone,
Long known and hallow'd, where, for man's offence,
The earth first drank the blood of innocence,
When God himself ordain'd the typic rite
To Eden's Exiles, resting on their flight.
Foremost, amidst the group, was Enoch seen,
Known by his humble port, and heavenly mien :
On him the Priest's mysterious office lay,
For 'twas the eve of Man's transgression-day,
And him had Adam, with expiring breath,
Ordain'd to offer yearly, from his death.
A victim on that mountain, whence the skies
Had first inhaled the fumes of sacrifice.

In Adam's coat of skins array'd he stands,
Spreading to heaven his supplicating hands,
Ere from his robe the deadly steel he drew
To smite the victim, sporting in his view.
Behind him Seth, in majesty confess'd,
The World's great Elder, tower'd above the rest.
Serenely shone his sweet and solemn eye,
Like the sun reigning in the western sky ;
Though nine slow centuries by stealth had shed
Gray hairs, the crown of glory, on his head,
In hardy health, he rear'd his front sublime,
Like the green aloe, in perennial prime,
When full of years it shoots forth all its bloom,
And glads the forest through the inmost gloom ;
So, in the blossom of a good old age,
Flourish'd amidst his sons that peerless sage.

Around him, in august succession, stood
The fathers of the world before the Flood :
—Enos ; who taught mankind, on solemn days,
In sacred groves, to meet for prayer and praise,
And warn'd idolaters to lift their eye,
From sun and stars, to him who made the sky ;
—Canaan and Malabel ; of whom alone
Their age, of all that once they were, is known :
—Jared ; who, full of hope beyond the tomb,
Hallow'd his offspring from the Mother's womb,
And heaven received *the Son* that Parent gave,
He walk'd with God, and overstepp'd the grave ;
—A mighty pilgrim in the vale of tears,
Born to the troubles of a thousand years,
Methuselah, whose feet unhalting ran
To the last circle of the life of man :
—Lamech ; from infancy inured to toil,
To wring slow blessings from the accursed soil,
Ere yet to dress his vineyards, reap his corn,
And comfort him in care, was Noah born,
Who, in a later age, by signal grace,
Survived to renovate the human race ;

Both worlds, by sad reversion, were his due,
The Orphan of the old, the Father of the new.
These, with their families, on either hand,
Aliens and exiles in their native land,
The few who loved their Maker from their youth,
And worshipp'd God in spirit and in truth :
These stood with Enoch :—all had fix'd their eyes
On him, and on the Lamb of sacrifice,
For now with trembling hand he shed the blood,
And placed the slaughter'd victim on the wood ;
Then kneeling, as the sun went down, he laid
His hand upon the hallow'd pyre and pray'd :—
“ Maker of heaven and earth ! supreme o'er all
That live, and move, and breathe, on Thee we call :
Our father sinn'd and suffer'd ;—we, who bear
Our father's image, his transgression share ;
Humbled for his offences, and our own,
Thou, who art holy, wise, and just alone,
Accept, with free confession of our guilt,
This victim slain, this blood devoutly spilt,
While through the veil of sacrifice we see
Thy mercy smiling, and look up to Thee ;
Oh grant forgiveness ; power and grace are thine ;
God of salvation ! cause thy face to shine ;
Hear us in heaven ! fulfil our souls' desire,
God of our father ! answer now with fire.”

He rose : no light from heaven around him shone,
No fire descended from the eternal throne :
Cold on the pile the offer'd victim lay,
Amidst the stillness of expiring day ;
The eyes of all that watch'd in vain to view
The wonted sign, distractedly withdrew ;
Fear clipp'd their breath, their doubling pulses raised,
And each by stealth upon his neighbour gazed ;
From heart to heart a strange contagion ran,
A shuddering instinct crowded man to man ;
Even Seth with secret consternation shook,
And cast on Enoch an imploring look.

Enoch, in whose sublime, unearthly mien,
No change of hue, no cloud of care was seen,
Full on the mute assembly turn'd his face,
Clear as the sun prepared to run his race :
He spoke ; his words, with awful warning fraught,
Rallied and fix'd the scatter'd powers of thought.

“ Men, brethren, fathers ! wherefore do you fear ?
Hath God departed from us ?—God is here ;
Present in every heart, with sovereign power,
He tries, he proves his people in this hour ;
Naked as light to his all-searching eye,
The thoughts that wrong, the doubts that tempt Him lie ;
Yet slow to anger, merciful as just,
He knows our frame, remembers we are dust,
And spares our weakness :—in his truth believe,
Hope against hope, and ask till ye receive.
What though no flame on Adam's altar burn,
No signal of acceptance yet return,
God is not man, who to our father swore,
All times, in every place, to answer prayer ;
He cannot change : though heaven and earth decay,
The word of God shall never pass away.

“ But mark the season :—from the rising sun,
Westward the race of Cain the world o'er-run ;
Their monarch, mightiest of the sons of men,
Hath sworn destruction to the Patriarchs' glen ;
Hither he hastens ; carnage strews his path ;
—Who will await the giant in his wrath ?
Or who will take the wings of silent night,
And seek deliverance from his sword by flight ?
Thus saith the Lord :—Ye weak of faith and heart !
Who dare not trust the living God, depart ;
The angel of his presence leads your way,
Your lives are safe, and given you as a prey :
But ye, who, unappall'd at earthly harm,
Lean on the strength of his Almighty arm ;
Prepared for life or death, with firm accord,
—Stand still, and see the glory of the Lord.”

A pause, a dreary pause ensued:—then cried
 The holy man,—“On either hand divide;
 The feeble fly; with me the valiant stay;
 Choose now your portion; whom will ye obey,
 God or your fears? His counsel or your own?”
 —“The LORD; the LORD; for HE IS GOD ALONE!”
 Exclaim'd at once, with consentaneous choice,
 The whole assembly, heart, and soul, and voice.
 Then light from heaven with sudden beauty came,
 Pure on the altar blazed the unkindled flame,
 And upwards to their glorious source return'd
 The sacred fires in which the victim burn'd:
 While through the evening gloom, to distant eyes
 Morn o'er the Patriarchs' mountains seem'd to rise.

Awe-struck the congregation kneel'd around,
 And worshipp'd with their faces to the ground;
 The peace of God, beyond expression sweet,
 Fill'd every spirit humbled at his feet,
 And love, joy, wonder, deeply mingling there,
 Drew from the heart unutterable prayer.

They rose;—as if his soul had pass'd away,
 Prostrate before the altar Enoch lay,
 Entranced so deeply all believed him dead:
 At length he breathed, he moved, he raised his head;
 To heaven in ecstasy he turn'd his eyes;
 —With such a look the dead in Christ shall rise,
 When the last trumpet calls them from the dust,
 To join the resurrection of the just:—
 Yea, and from earthly grossness so refined,
 (As if the soul had left the flesh behind,
 Yet wore a mortal semblance,) upright stood
 The great Evangelist before the Flood;
 On him the vision of the Almighty broke,
 And future times were present while he spoke.*
 “The Saints shall suffer; righteousness shall fail;
 O'er all the world iniquity prevail;

* Numbers xxiv. 4.

Giants, in fierce contempt of man and God,
 Shall rule the nations with an iron rod ;
 On every mountain idol groves shall rise,
 And darken heaven with human sacrifice ;
 But God, the Avenger, comes,—a judgment-day,
 A flood, shall sweep his enemies away.
 How few, whose eyes shall then have seen the sun,
 —One righteous family, and only one,—
 Saved from that wreck of Nature, shall behold
 The new Creation rising from the old !

“ Oh that the world of wickedness, destroy'd,
 Might live for ever without form and void !
 Or that the earth, to innocence restored,
 Might flourish as the garden of the Lord !
 It will not be :—among the sons of men,
 The Giant-Spirit will go forth again,
 From clime to clime shall kindle murderous rage,
 And spread the plague of sin from age to age ;
 Yet shall the God of mercy, from above,
 Extend the golden sceptre of his love,
 And win the rebels to his righteous sway,
 Till every mouth confess, and heart obey.

“ Amidst the visions of ascending years,
 What mighty Chief, what Conqueror appears ;*
 His garments roll'd in blood, his eyes of flame,
 And on his thigh the unutterable name †
 —‘Tis I that bring deliverance : strong to save,
 I pluck'd the prey from death, and spoil'd the grave.
 —Wherefore, O Warrior ! are thy garments red,
 Like those whose feet amidst the vintage tread ?
 —‘ I trod the wine-press of the field alone ;
 I look'd around for succour ; there was none ;
 Therefore my wrath sustain'd me while I fought,
 And mine own arm my Saints' salvation wrought.
 —Thus may thine arm for evermore prevail ;
 Thus may thy foes, O Lord ! for ever fail ;

* Isa. lxxiii. 1—6.

† Rev. xix. 12.

Captive by thee captivity be led ;
Seed of the woman ! bruise the serpent's head ;
Redeemer ! promised since the world began,
Bow the high heavens, and condescend to man.

“ Hail to the Day-spring ; dawning from afar,
Bright in the east I see his natal star :
Prisoners of hope ! lift up your joyful eyes ;
Welcome the King of Glory from the skies :
Who is the King of Glory ?—Mark his birth :
In deep humility he stoops to earth,
Assumes a servant's form, a Pilgrim's lot,
Comes to his own, his own receive him not,
Though angel-choirs his peaceful advent greet,
And Gentile sages worship at his feet.

“ Fair as that sovereign Plant, whose scions shoot
With healing verdure, and immortal fruit,
The Tree of Life, beside the stream that laves
The fields of Paradise with gladdening waves ;
Behold him rise from infancy to youth,
The Father's image, full of grace and truth ;
Tried, tempted, proved in secret, till the hour,
When, girt with meekness, but array'd with power
Forth in the spirit of the Lord at length,
Like the sun shining in meridian strength,
He goes :—to preach good tidings to the poor ;
To heal the wounds that nature cannot cure ;
To bind the broken-hearted ; to control
Disease and death ; to raise the sinking soul :
Unbar the dungeon, set the captive free,
Proclaim the joyous year of liberty,
And, from the depth of undiscover'd night,
Bring life and immortality to light.

“ How beauteous on the mountains are thy feet,
Thy form how comely, and thy voice how sweet,
Son of the Highest !—Who can tell thy fame ?
The Deaf shall hear it while the Dumb proclaim !
Now bid the Blind behold their Saviour's light,
The Lame go forth rejoicing in their might ;

Cleanse with a touch yon kneeling Leper's skin ;
Cheer this pale Penitent, forgive her sin ;
Oh, for that Mother's faith, her Daughter spare ;
Restore the Maniac to a Father's prayer ;
Pity the tears those mournful Sisters shed,
And BE THE RESURRECTION OF THE DEAD !

“ What scene is this ?—Amidst involving gloom
The moonlight lingers on a lonely tomb ;
No noise disturbs the garden's hallow'd bound,
But the watch walking on their midnight round :
Ah ! who lies here, with marr'd and bloodless mien,
In whom no form or comeliness is seen ;
His livid limbs with nails and scourges torn,
His side transpierced, his temples wreathed with thorn ?
'Tis He, the Man of Sorrows ! He who bore
Our sins and chastisement :—His toils are o'er ;
On earth erewhile a suffering life he led,
Here hath he found a place to lay his head ;
Rank'd with transgressors he resign'd his breath,
But with the rich he made his bed in death.
Sweet is the grave where Angels watch and weep ;
Sweet is the grave, and sanctified his sleep ;
Rest, O my spirit ! by this martyr'd form,
This wreck, that sunk beneath the Almighty storm,
When floods of wrath that weigh'd the world to hell,
On him alone in righteous vengeance fell ;
While men derided, demons urged his woes,
And God forsook him,—till the awful close ;
Then, in triumphant agony, he cried,
—'Tis finish'd !—bow'd his sacred head, and died.
Death, as he struck that noblest victim, found
His sting was lost for ever in the wound ;
The Grave, that holds his corse, her richest prize,
Shall yield him back, victorious, to the skies.
He lives : ye bars of steel ! ye gates of brass !
Give way and let the King of Glory pass :—
He lives : ye golden portals of the spheres !
Open, the Sun of Righteousness appears.

But, ah ! my spirit faints beneath the blaze,
That breaks, and brightens o'er the latter days,
When every tongue his trophies shall proclaim,
And every knee shall worship at his name ;
For he shall reign with undivided power,
To Earth's last bounds, to Nature's final hour.

“ 'Tis done :—again the conquering Chief appears
In the dread vision of dissolving years ;
His vesture dipp'd in blood, his eyes of flame,
The WORD OF GOD his everlasting name :”
Throned in mid-heaven, with clouds of glory spread,
He sits in judgment on the quick and dead ;
Strong to deliver ; Saints ! your songs prepare ;
Rush from your tombs to meet him in the air :
But terrible in vengeance ; Sinners ! bow†
Your haughty heads, the grave protects not now :
He who alone in mortal conflict trod
The mighty wine-press of the wrath of God,
Shall fill the cup of trembling to his foes,
The unmingled cup of inexhausted woes ;
The proud shall drink it in that dreadful day,
While earth dissolves, and heaven is roll'd away.”

Here ceased the Prophet :—from the altar broke
The last dim wreaths of fire-illumined smoke ;
Darkness had fallen around ; but o'er the streams
The Moon, new-ris'n, diffused her brightening beams :
Homeward, with tears, the worshippers return'd,
Yet while they wept their hearts within them burn'd.

* Rev. xix. 13.

June 14—16.

CANTO SIXTH.

Javan's second Interview with Zillah—He visits the various Dwellings scattered throughout the Glen, and in the Evening sings to his Harp, amidst the assembled Inhabitants:—Address to Twilight; Jubal's Song of the Creation—the Power of Music exemplified.

SPENT with the toils of that eventful day,
 All night in dreamless slumber Javan lay;
 But early springing from his bed of leaves,
 Waked by the songs of swallows on the eaves.
 From Enoch's cottage, in the cool, gray hour,
 He wander'd forth to Zillah's woodland bower:
 There, in his former covert, on the ground,
 The frame of his forsaken harp he found:
 He smote the boss; the convex orb unstrung.
 Instant with sweet reverberation rung;
 The minstrel smiled, at that sonorous stroke,
 To find the spell of harmony unbroke;
 Trickling with dew, he bore it to the cell;
 There, as with leaves he dried the sculptured shell.
 He thought of Zillah, and resolved too late
 To plead his constancy, and know his fate.

She from the hour, when, in a pilgrim's guise,
 Javan return'd,—a stranger to her eyes,
 Not to her heart,—from anguish knew no rest,
 Love, pride, resentment, struggling in her breast.
 All day she strove to hide her misery,
 In vain:—a mother's eye is quick to see,
 Slow to rebuke a daughter's bashful fears,
 And Zillah's mother only chid with tears:
 Night came, but Javan came not with the night:
 Light vanish'd. Hope departed with the light;
 Her lonely couch conceal'd her sleepless woes.
 But with the morning star the maiden rose.
 The soft refreshing breeze, the orient beams.
 The dew, the mist unrolling from the streams,

The light, the joy, the music of the hour,
 Stole on her spirit with resistless power,
 With healing sweetness soothed her fever'd brain,
 And woke the pulse of tenderness again.
 Thus while she wander'd, with unconscious feet,
 Absent in thought she reach'd her sylvan seat :
 The youth descried her not amidst the wood,
 Till, like a vision, at his side she stood.
 Their eyes encounter'd ; both at once exclaim'd,
 "Javan !" and "Zillah !" —each the other named ;
 Those sounds were life or death to either heart ;
 He rose ; she turn'd in terror to depart ;
 He caught her hand :—" Oh do not, do not flee !"
 —It was a moment of eternity,
 And now or never must he plight his vow,
 Win or abandon her for ever now.

" Stay :—hear me, Zillah !—every power above,
 Heaven, earth, thyself, bear witness to my love !
 Thee have I loved from earliest infancy,
 Loved with supreme affection only thee.
 Long in these shades my timid passion grew,
 Through every change, in every trial true ;
 I loved thee through the world in dumb despair.
 Loved *thee*, that I might love no other fair ;
 Guilty, yet faithful still, to thee I fly,
 Receive me, love me, Zillah ! or I die."

Thus Javan's lips, so long in silence seal'd,
 With sudden vehemence his soul reveal'd ;
 Zillah meanwhile recover'd power to speak,
 While deadly paleness overcast her cheek :
 —" Say not, ' I love thee !'—Witness every tree
 Around this bower, thy cruel scorn of me !
 Could Javan love me through the world, yet leave
 Her whom he loved, for hopeless years, to grieve ?
 Returning, could he find her here alone,
 Yet pass her by, unknowing, as unknown ?
 All day was she forsaken, or forgot ?
 Did Javan seek her at her father's cot ?

That cot of old so much his soul's delight,
His mother's seem'd not fairer in his sight :
No : Javan mocks me ; none could love so well,
So long, so painfully,—and never tell.”
“ Love owns no law,” rejoin'd the pleading youth.
“ Except obedience to eternal truth :
Deep streams are silent ; from the generous breast,
The dearest feelings are the last confest :
Erewhile I strove in vain to break my peace,
Now I could talk of love and never cease :
—Still had my trembling passion been conceal'd ;
Still but in parables by stealth reveal'd,
Had not thine instantaneous presence wrung,
By swift surprise, the secret from my tongue.
Yet hath Affection language of her own,
And mine in every thing but words was shown ;
In childhood, as the bird of nature free,
My song was gladness, when I sung to thee :
In youth, whene'er I mourn'd a bosom flame,
And praised a maiden whom I durst not name,
Couldst thou not then my hidden thought divine ?
Didst thou not feel that I was wholly thine ?
When for vain glory I forsook thee here,
Dear as thou wert, unutterably dear,
From virtue, truth, and innocence estranged,
To thee, thee only, was my heart unchanged ;
And as I loved without a hope before,
Without a hope I loved thee yet the more.
At length, when, weary of the ways of men,
Refuge I sought in this maternal glen,
Thy sweet remembrance drew me from afar,
And Zillah's beauty was my leading star.
Here when I found thee, fear itself grew bold,
Methought my tale of love already told ;
But soon thine eyes the dream of folly broke,
And I from bliss, as they from slumber, woke ;
My heart, my tongue, were chill'd to instant stone,
I darst not speak thy name, nor give my own.

When thou wert vanish'd, horror and affright
 Seized me, my sins uprose before my sight ;
 Like fiends they rush'd upon me ; but Despair
 Wrung from expiring Faith a broken prayer ;
 Strength came ; the path to Enoch's bower I trod ;
 He saw me, met me, led me back to God.
 O Zillah ! while I sought my Maker's grace,
 And flesh and spirit fail'd before His face,
 Thy tempting image from my breast I drove,
 It was no season then for earthly love."

"For earthly love it is no season now,"
 Exclaim'd the maiden with reproachful brow,
 And eyes through tears of tenderness that shone,
 And voice, half peace, half anger, in its tone :
 "Freely thy past unkindness I forgive ;
 Content to perish here, so Javan live ;
 The tyrant's menace to our tribe we know :
 The Patriarchs never seek, nor shun a foe ;
 Thou, while thou may'st, from swift destruction fly !
 I and my father's house resolve to die."

"With thee and with thy father's house, to bear
 Death or captivity, is Javan's prayer :
 Remorse for ever be the recreant's lot :
 If I forsake thee now, I love thee not."

Thus while he vow'd, a gentle answer sprung
 To Zillah's lips, but died upon her tongue ;
 Trembling she turn'd, and hasten'd to the rock,
 Beyond those woods, that hid her folded flock.
 Whose bleatings reach'd her ear, with loud complaint
 Of her delay ; she loosed them from restraint ;
 Then bounding headlong forth, with antic glee,
 They roam'd in all the joy of liberty.
 Javan beside her walk'd as in a dream,
 Nor more of love renew'd the fruitless theme.

Forthwith from home, to home, throughout the glen,
 The friends whom once he knew he sought again ;
 Each hail'd the stranger welcome at his board,
 As lost but found, as dead to life restored.

From Eden's camp no tidings came ; the day
In awful expectation pass'd away.
At eve his harp the fond enthusiast strung,
On Adam's mount, and to the Patriarchs sung ;
While youth and age, an eager throng, admire
The mingling music of the voice and lyre.

“ I love thee, Twilight ! as thy shadows roll,
The calm of evening steals upon my soul,
Sublimely tender, solemnly serene,
Still as the hour, enchanting as the scene.
I love thee, Twilight ! for thy gleams impart
Their dear, their dying influence to my heart.
When o'er the harp of thought thy passing wind
Awakens all the music of the mind,
And Joy and Sorrow, as the spirit burns,
And Hope and Memory sweep the chords by turns,
While Contemplation, on seraphic wings,
Mounts with the flame of sacrifice, and sings.
Twilight ! I love thee ; let thy glooms increase
Till every feeling, every pulse is peace ;
Slow from the sky the light of day declines,
Clearer within the dawn of glory shines,
Revealing, in the hour of Nature's rest,
A world of wonders in the poet's breast ;
Deeper, O Twilight ! then thy shadows roll,
An awful vision opens on my soul.

“ On such an evening, so divinely calm,
The woods all melody, the breezes balm,
Down in a vale, where lucid waters stray'd,
And mountain-cedars stretch'd their downward shade,
Jubal, the Prince of Song, (in youth unknown.)
Retired to commune with his harp alone ;
For still he nursed it, like a secret thought,
Long cherish'd and to late perfection wrought ;—
And still with cunning hand, and curious ear,
Enrich'd, ennobled, and enlarged its sphere.
Till he had compass'd, in that magic round,
A soul of harmony, a heaven of sound.

Then sang the minstrel, in his laurel bower,
 Of Nature's origin, and music's power.
 — He spake, and it was done :—Eternal Night,
 At God's command, awaken'd into light ;
 He call'd the elements, Earth, Ocean, Air,
 He call'd them when they were not, and they were :
 He look'd through space, and kindling o'er the sky,
 Sun, moon, and stars, came forth to meet his eye :
 His spirit moved upon the desert earth,
 And sudden life through all things swarm'd to birth ;
 Man from the dust he raised to rule the whole ;
 He breathed, and man became a living soul :
 Through Eden's groves the Lord of Nature trod,
 Upright and pure, the image of his God.
 Thus were the heavens and all their host display'd,
 In wisdom thus were earth's foundations laid ;
 The glorious scene a holy Sabbath closed,
 Amidst his works the Omnipotent reposed ;
 And while he view'd, and bless'd them from his seat,
 All worlds, all beings worshipp'd at his feet ;
 The morning stars in choral concert sang,
 The rolling deep with hallelujahs rang,
 Adoring angels from their orbs rejoice,
 The voice of music was Creation's voice.

“ Alone along the lyre of Nature sigh'd
 The master-chord, to which no chord replied :
 For Man, while bliss and beauty reign'd around,
 For Man alone no fellowship was found,
 No fond companion, in whose dearer breast
 His heart, repining in his own, might rest ;
 For, born to love, the heart delights to roam,
 A kindred bosom is its happiest home.
 On earth's green lap, the Father of mankind,
 In mild dejection, thoughtfully reclined ;
 Soft o'er his eyes a sealing slumber crept,
 And Fancy soothed him while Reflection slept.
 Then God—who thus would make his counsel known,
 Counsel that will'd not man to dwell alone—

Created Woman with a smile of grace,
 And left the smile that made her on her face.
 The Patriarch's eyelids open'd on his bride,
 —The morn of beauty risen from his side!
 He gazed with new-born rapture on her charms,
 And Love's first whispers won her to his arms,
 Then, tuned through all the chords supremely sweet,
 Exulting nature found her lyre complete,
 And from the key of each harmonious sphere
 Struck music worthy of her Maker's ear.'

“ Here Jubal paused; for grim before him lay,
 Crouch'd like a lion watching for his prey,
 With blood-red eye of fascinating fire,
 Fix'd, like the gazing serpent's, on the lyre,
 An awful form, that through the gloom appear'd,
 Half brute, half human; whose terrific beard,
 And hoary flakes of long, dishevell'd hair,
 Like eagle's plumage ruffled by the air,
 Veil'd a sad wreck of grandeur and of grace,
 Limbs worn and wounded, a majestic face,
 Deep-plough'd by Time, and ghastly pale with woes,
 That goaded till remorse to madness rose;
 Haunted by phantoms, he had fled his home,
 With savage beasts in solitude to roam;
 Wild as the waves, and wandering as the wind.
 No art could tame him, and no chains could bind:
 Already seven disastrous years had shed
 Mildew and blast on his unshelter'd head;
 His brain was smitten by the sun at noon,
 His heart was wither'd by the cold night-moon.

“ 'Twas Cain, the sire of nations:—Jubal knew
 His kindred looks, and tremblingly withdrew;
 He, darting like a blaze of sudden fire,
 Leap'd o'er the space between, and grasp'd the lyre:
 Sooner with life the struggling bard would part,
 And, ere the fiend could tear it from his heart,
 He hurl'd his hand with one tremendous stroke,
 O'er all the strings; whence in a whirlwind broke

Such tones of terror, dissonance, despair,
As till that hour had never jarr'd in air.
Astonish'd into marble at the shock,
Backward stood Cain, unconscious as a rock,
Cold, breathless, motionless through all his frame ;
But soon his visage quicken'd into flame,
When Jubal's hand the crashing jargon changed
To melting harmony, and nimbly ranged
From chord to chord, ascending sweet and clear,
Then rolling down in thunder on the ear ;
With power the pulse of anguish to restrain,
And charm the evil spirit from the brain.

“ Slowly recovering from that trance profound,
Bewilder'd, touch'd, transported with the sound,
Cain view'd himself, the bard, the earth, the sky,
While wonder flash'd and faded in his eye,
And reason, by alternate frenzy cross,
Now seem'd restored, and now for ever lost.
So shines the moon, by glimpses, through her shrouds,
When windy Darkness rides upon the clouds,
Till through the blue, serene, and silent night,
She reigns in full tranquillity of light.
Jubal, with eager hope, beheld the chase
Of strange emotions hurrying o'er his face,
And waked his noblest numbers to control
The tide and tempest of the maniac's soul :
Through many a maze of melody they flew,
They rose like incense, they distill'd like dew.
Pour'd through the sufferer's breast delicious balm,
And soothed remembrance till remorse grew calm,
Till Cain forsook the solitary wild,
Led by the minstrel like a weaned child.
Oh! had you seen him to his home restored,
How young and old ran forth to meet their lord ;
How friends and kindred on his neck did fall,
Weeping aloud, while Cain outwept them all :
But hush!—thenceforward when recoiling care
Lower'd on his brow, and sadden'd to despair,

The lyre of Jubal, with divinest art,
 Repell'd the demon, and revived his heart.
 Thus Song, the breath of heaven, had power to bind
 In chains of harmony the mightiest mind ;
 Thus Music's empire in the soul began,
 The first-born Poet ruled the first-born Man."

While Javan sang, the shadows fell around,
 The moving glow-worm brighten'd on the ground :
 He ceased : the mute assembly rose in tears ;
 Delight and wonder were chastised with fears ;
 That heavenly harmony, unheard before,
 Awoke the feeling,—“ Who shall hear it more ?”
 The sun had set in glory on their sight,
 For them in vain might morn restore the light ;
 Though self-devoted, through each mortal frame,
 At thought of death, a cold, sick shuddering came,
 Nature's infirmity ;—but faith was given,
 The flame that lifts the sacrifice to heaven :
 Through doubt and darkness then beyond the skies,
 Eternal prospects open'd on their eyes ;
 Already seem'd the immortal spirit free,
 And Death was swallow'd up in victory.

CANTO SEVENTH.

The Patriarchs and their Families carried away captive by a Detachment from the Army of the Invaders—The Tomb of Abel: his Murder by Cain described—The Origin of the Giants: the Infancy and early Adventures of their King: the Leader of their Host encamped in Eden.

THE flocks and herds throughout the glen reposed ;
 No human eyelid there in slumber closed ;
 None, save the infant's on the mother's breast ;—
 With arms of love caressing and carest ;
 She, while her elder offspring round her clung,
 Each eye intent on hers, and mute each tongue,
 The voice of Death in every murmur heard,
 And felt his touch in every limb that stirr'd.

At midnight, down the forest hills, a train
 Of eager warriors from the host of Cain,
 Burst on the stillness of the scene :—they spread
 In bands, to clutch the victims ere they fled :
 Of flight unmindful, at their summons, rose
 Those victims, meekly yielding to their foes ;
 Though woman wept to leave her home behind,
 The weak were comforted, the strong resign'd,
 And ere the moon descending o'er the vale,
 Grew, at the bright approach of morning, pale,
 Collected thus, the patriarchal clan,
 With strengthen'd confidence their march began,
 Since not in ashes were their dwellings laid,
 And death, though threaten'd still, was still delay'd.
 Struck with their fearless innocence, they saw
 Their fierce assailants check'd with sacred awe ;
 The foe became a phalanx of defence,
 And brought them, like a guard of angels, thence.
 A vista-path, that through the forest led,
 (By Javan shunn'd when from the camp he fled,)
 The pilgrims track'd till on the mountain's height
 They met the sun new risen, in glorious light ;
 Empurpled mists along the landscape roll'd,
 And all the orient flamed with clouds of gold.

Here, while they halted, on their knees they raise
 To God the sacrifice of prayer and praise ;
 —“ Glory to Thee, for every blessing shed,
 In days of peace, on our protected head ;
 Glory to Thee, for fortitude to bear
 The wrath of man, rejoicing o'er despair ;
 Glory to Thee, whatever ill befall,
 For faith on thy victorious name to call ;
 Thine own eternal purposes fulfil ;
 We come, O God ! to suffer all thy will.”

Refresh'd and rested, on their course they went,
 Ere the clouds melted from the firmament ;
 Odours abroad the wings of morning breathe,
 And fresh with dew the herbage sprang beneath ;

Down from the hills, that gently sloped away
To the broad river shining into day,
They pass'd, along the brink the path they kept,
Where high aloof o'er-arching willows wept,
Whose silvery foilage glisten'd in the beam,
And floating shadows fringed the chequer'd stream.

Adjacent rose a myrtle-planted mound,
Whose spiry top, a granite fragment crown'd ;
Tinctured with many colour'd moss, the stone,
Rich as a cloud of summer-evening, shone
Amidst encircling verdure, that array'd
The beauteous hillock with a cope of shade.

"Javan!" said Enoch, "on this spot began
The fatal curse;—man perish'd here by man;
The earliest death a son of Adam died
Was murder, and that murder fratricide!
Here Abel fell a corse along this shore;
Here Cain's recoiling footsteps reek'd with gore;
Horror upraised his locks, unloosed his knees;
He heard a voice; he hid among the trees:
—'Where is thy brother?'—From the whirlwind came
The voice of God amidst enfolding flame:
—'Am I my brother's keeper?'—hoarse and low,
Cain mutter'd from the copse,—'that I should know?'
—'What hast thou done?'—For vengeance to the skies,
Lo! from the dust the blood of Abel cries:
Curst from the earth that drank his blood, with toil
Thine hand shall plough in vain her barren soil,
An exile and a wanderer thou shalt be;
A brother's eye shall never look on thee.'—

"The shuddering culprit answer'd in despair,
—'Greater the punishment than flesh can bear.'
—'Yet shalt thou bear it; on thy brow reveal'd,
Thus be thy sentence and thy safeguard seal'd.'
Silently, swiftly as the lightning's blast,
A hand of fire athwart his temples pass'd:
He ran, as in the terror of a dream,
To quench his burning anguish in the stream;

But bending o'er the brink, the swelling wave
 Back to the eye his branded visage gave ;
 As soon on murder'd Abel durst he look ;
 Yet power to fly his palsied limbs forsook ;
 There turn'd to stone for his presumptuous crime,
 A monument of wrath to latest time,
 Might Cain have stood : but Mercy raised his head
 In prayer for help,—his strength return'd,—he fled.
 That mound of myrtles o'er their favourite child,
 Eve planted, and the hand of Adam piled ;
 Yon mossy stone, above his ashes raised,
 His altar once, with Abel's offering blazed,
 When God well pleased beheld the flames arise,
 And smiled acceptance on the sacrifice."

Enoch to Javan, walking at his side,
 Thus held discourse apart : the youth replied :
 "Relieved from toil, though Cain is gone to rest,
 And the turf flowers on his disburden'd breast,
 Amongst his race the murdering spirit reigns,
 But riots fiercest in the giants' veins. [combined
 —Sprung from false leagues, when monstrous love
 The sons of God and daughters of mankind,
 Self-styled the progeny of heaven and earth,
 Eden first gave the world's oppressors birth ;
 Thence far away, beneath the rising moon,
 Or where the shadow vanishes at noon,
 The adulterous mothers from the sires withdrew :
 —Nurst in luxuriant climes their offspring grew ;
 Till, as in stature o'er mankind they tower'd,
 And giant-strength all mortal strength o'erpower'd,
 To heaven the proud blasphemers raise their eyes,
 And scorn'd the tardy vengeance of the skies :
 On earth invincible, they sternly broke
 Love's willing bonds, and Nature's kindred yoke,
 Mad for dominion, with remorseless sway,
 Compell'd their reptile-brethren to obey,
 And doom'd their human herds, with thankless toil,
 Like brutes, to grow and perish on the soil,

Their sole inheritance, through lingering years,
The bread of misery and the cup of tears,
The tasks of oxen, with the hire of slaves,
Dishonour'd lives, and desecrated graves.

“ When war, that self-inflicted scourge of man,
His boldest crime and bitterest curse,—began ;
As lions fierce, as forest-cedars tall,
And terrible as torrents, in their fall,
Headlong from rocks, through vales and vineyards hurl'd,
These men of prey laid waste the eastern world ;
They taught their tributary hordes to wield
The sword, red-flaming, through the death-strown field,
With strenuous arm the uprooted rock to throw,
Glance the light arrow from the bounding bow,
Whirl the broad shield to meet the darted stroke,
And stand to combat, like the unyielding oak.
Then eye from eye with fell suspicion turn'd,
In kindred breasts unnatural hatred burn'd :
Brother met brother in the lists of strife,
The son lay lurking for the father's life ;
With rabid instinct, men who never knew
Each other's face before, each other slew ;
All tribes, all nations learn'd the fatal art,
And every hand was arm'd to pierce a heart.
Nor man alone the giants' might subdued ;
—The camel wean'd from quiet solitude,
Grazed round their camps, or slow along the road,
Midst marching legions bore the servile load.
With flying forelock and dishevell'd mane,
They caught the wild steed prancing o'er the plain,
For war or pastime rein'd his fiery force ;
Fleet as the wind he stretch'd along the course,
Or loudly neighing at the trumpet's sound,
With hoofs of thunder smote the indented ground.
The enormous elephant obey'd their will,
And, tamed to cruelty with direst skill,
Roar'd for the battle, when he felt the goad,
And his proud lord his sinewy neck bestrode,

Through crashing ranks resistless havoc bore,
And writhed his trunk, and bathed his tusks in gore.

“Thus while the giants trampled friends and foes,
Amongst their tribe a mighty chieftain rose ;
His birth mysterious, but traditions tell
What strange events his infancy befell.

“A goat-herd fed his flock on many a steep,
Where Eden’s rivers swell the southern deep ;
A melancholy man, who dwelt alone,
Yet far abroad his evil fame was known,
The first of woman born, that might presume
To wake the dead bones mouldering in the tomb,
And, from the gulf of uncreated night,
Call phantoms of futurity to light.
’Twas said his voice could stay the falling flood,
Eclipse the sun, and turn the moon to blood,
Roll back the planets on their golden cars,
And from the firmament unfix the stars.
Spirits of fire and air, of sea and land,
Came at his call, and flew at his command ;
His spells so potent, that his changing breath
Open’d or shut the gates of life and death.
O’er Nature’s powers he claim’d supreme control,
And held communion with all Nature’s soul :
The name and place of every herb he knew,
Its healing balsam, or pernicious dew :
The meanest reptile, and the noblest birth
Of ocean’s caverns, or the living earth,
Obey’d his mandate :—lord of all the rest,
Man more than all his hidden art confess’d,
Cringed to his face, consulted, and revered
His oracles,—detested him and fear’d.

“Once by the river, in a waking dream,
He stood to watch the ever-running stream,
In which, reflected upwards to his eyes,
He giddily look’d down upon the skies.
For thus he feign’d in his ecstatic mood,
To summon divination from the flood.

His steady view, a floating object cross'd ;
His eye pursued it till the sight was lost,—
An outcast infant in a fragile bark !
The river whirl'd the willow-woven ark
Down tow'rds the deep ; the tide returning bore
The little voyager unharm'd to shore ;
Him in his cradle-ship securely bound
With swathing skins at eve the goatherd found.
Nurst by that foster-sire, austere and rude,
Midst rocks and glens, in savage solitude,
Among the kids, the rescued foundling grew,
Nutrition from whose shaggy dams he drew,
Till baby-curls his broader temples crown'd,
And torrid suns his flexile limbs embrown'd :
Then as he sprang from green to florid age,
And rose to giant-stature, stage by stage,
He roam'd the valleys with his browsing flock,
And leapt in joy of youth from rock to rock ;
Climb'd the sharp precipice's steepest breast,
And rent his way through matted woods, to tear
The skulking panther from his hidden lair.
A trodden serpent, horrible and vast,
Sprang on the heedless rover as he pass'd ;
Limb lock'd o'er limb, with many a straitening fold
Of orbs inextricably involved, he roll'd
On earth in vengeance, broke the twisted toils,
Strangled the hissing fiend, and wore the spoils.
With hardy exercise, and cruel art,
To nerve the frame, and petrify the heart,
The wizard train'd his pupil, from a span,
To thrice the bulk and majesty of man.
His limbs were sinewy strength ; commanding grace,
And dauntless spirit sparkled in his face ;
His arm could pluck the lion from his prey,
And hold the horn'd rhinoceros at bay ;
His feet o'er highest hills pursue the hind,
Or tire the ostrich buoyant on the wind.

“Yet 'twas the stripling's chief delight to brave
The rivers' wrath, and wrestle with the wave ;
When torrent rains had swoln the furious tide,
Light on the foamy surge he loved to ride ;
When calm and clear the stream was wont to flow,
Fearless he dived to search the caves below.
His childhood's story, often told, had wrought
Sublimest hopes in his aspiring thought.

—Once on a cedar, from its mountain-throne
Pluckt by the tempest, forth he sail'd alone,
And reach'd the gulf :—with eye of eager fire,
And flushing cheek, he watch'd the shores retire,
Till sky and water wide around were spread ;
—Straight to the sun he thought his voyage led,
With shouts of transport hail'd its setting light,
And follow'd all the long and lonely night
But ere the morning-star expired, he found
His stranded bark once more on earthly ground.
Tears, wrung from secret shame, suffused his eyes,
When in the east he saw the sun arise ;
Pride quickly check'd them—young ambition burn'd
For bolder enterprise, as he return'd.

“Through snares and deaths pursuing fame and power.
He scorn'd his flock from that adventurous hour,
And, leagued with monsters of congenial birth,
Began to scourge and subjugate the earth.
Meanwhile the sons of Cain, who till'd the soil,
By noble arts had learn'd to lighten toil ;
Wisely their scatter'd knowledge he combined ;
Yet had an hundred years matured his mind,
Ere with the strength that laid the forest low,
And skill that made the iron furnace glow,
His genius launch'd the keel, and sway'd the helm.
(His throne and sceptre on the watery realm.)
While from the tent of his expanded sail,
He eyed the heavens and flew before the gale,
The first of men whose courage knew to guide
The bounding vessel through the reflux tide.

Then swore the giant, in his pride of soul,
 To range the universe from pole to pole,
 Rule the remotest nations with his nod,
 To live a hero, and to die a god.

“This is the king that wars in Eden:—now
 Fulfill'd at length he deems his early vow;
 His foot hath over-run the world,—his hand
 Smitten to dust the pride of every land:
 The Patriarchs last, beneath his impious rod,
 He dooms to perish or abjure their God.
 —O God of truth! rebuke the tyrant's rage,
 And save the remnant of thine heritage.”

When Javan ceased, they stood upon the height,
 Where first he rested on his lonely flight,
 Whence to the sacred mountain far away,
 The land of Eden in perspective lay.
 'Twas noon;—they tarried there, till milder hours
 Woke with light airs the breath of evening flowers.

CANTO EIGHTH.

The Scene changes to a Mountain, on the Summit of which, beneath the Shade of ancient Trees, the Giants are assembled round their King—A Minstrel sings the Monarch's Praises, and describes the Destruction of the Remnant of the Force of his Enemies, in an Assault, by Land and Water, on their Encampment, between the Forest on the eastern Plain of Eden and the River to the West—The Captive Patriarchs are presented before the King and his Chieftains.

“THERE is a living spirit in the Lyre,
 A breath of music and a soul of fire;
 It speaks a language to the world unknown;
 It speaks that language to the Bard alone;
 While warbled symphonies entrance his ears,
 That spirit's voice in every tone he hears:
 'Tis his the mystic meaning to rehearse,
 To utter oracles in glowing verse.
 Heroic themes from age to age prolong,
 And make the dead in nature live in song,

Though graven rocks the warrior's deeds proclaim,
And mountains, hewn to statues, wear his name ;
Though, shrined in adamant, his relics lie
Beneath a pyramid, that scales the sky ;
All that the hand hath fashion'd shall decay ;
All that the eye admires shall pass away ;
The mouldering rocks, the hero's hope shall fail,
Earthquakes shall heave the mountains to the vale,
The shrine of adamant betray its trust,
And the proud pyramid resolve to dust ;
The Lyre alone immortal fame secures,
For Song alone through Nature's change endures, —
Transfused like life, from breast to breast it glows,
From sire to son by sure succession flows,
Speeds its unceasing flight from clime to clime,
Outstripping Death upon the wings of Time.

“Soul of the Lyre ! whose magic power can raise
Inspiring visions of departed days ;—
Or, with the glimpses of mysterious rhyme,
Dawn on the dreams of unawaken'd Time ;
Soul of the Lyre ! instruct thy bard to sing
The latest triumph of the Giant-king,
Who sees this day his orb of glory fill'd :
—In what creative numbers shall I build,
With what exalted strains of music crown,
His everlasting pillar of renown ?
Though, like the rainbow, by a wondrous birth,
He sprang to light, the joy of heaven and earth ;
Though, like the rainbow,—for he cannot die,—
His form shall pass unseen into the sky ;
Say, shall the hero share the coward's lot,
Vanish from earth ingloriously forgot ?
No ! the divinity that rules the Lyre,
And clothes these lips with eloquence of fire,
Commands the song to rise in quenchless flame,
And light the world for ever with his fame.”

Thus on a mountain's venerable head,
Where trees, coeval with creation, spread

Their massy-twisted branches, green and gray,
Mature below, their tops in dry decay,
A bard of Jubal's lineage proudly sung,
Then stay'd awhile the raptures of his tongue ;
A shout of horrible applause, that rent
The echoing hills and answering firmament,
Burst from the Giants,—where, in barbarous state,
Flush'd with new wine, around their king they sate ;
A chieftain each, who, on his brazen car,
Had led an host of meaner men to war ;
And now from recent fight on Eden's plain,
Where fell their foes, in helpless conflict slain,
Victoriously return'd, beneath the trees
They rest from toil, carousing at their ease.

Adjacent, where the mountain's spacious breast
Open'd in airy grandeur to the west,
Huge piles of fragrant cedars, on the ground,
As altars blaz'd, while victims bled around,
To gods, whose worship vanish'd with the Flood,
—Divinities of brass, and stone, and wood,
By man himself in his own image made ;
The fond creator to the creature pray'd !
And he, who from the forest or the rock
Hew'd the rough mass, adored the shapen block !
Then seem'd his flocks ignoble in his eyes,
His choicest herds too mean for sacrifice,
He pour'd his brethren's blood upon the pyre,
And pass'd his sons to demons through the fire.

Exalted o'er the vassal chiefs, behold
Their sovereign, cast in Nature's mightiest mould ;
Beneath an oak, whose woven boughs display'd
A verdant canopy of light and shade,
Throned on a rock the Giant-king appears,
In the full manhood of five hundred years ;
His robe, the spoils of lions, by his might
Dragg'd from their dens, or slain in chase or fight :
His raven locks, unblanch'd by withering Time,
Amplly dishevell'd o'er his brow sublime ;

His dark eyes, flush'd with restless radiance, gleam
Like broken moonlight rippling on the stream.
Grandeur of soul, which nothing might appal,
And nothing satisfy if less than all,
Had stamp'd upon his air, his form, his face,
The character of calm and awful grace ;
But direst cruelty, by guile repress,
Lurk'd in the dark volcano of his breast,
In silence brooding, like the secret power
That springs the earthquake at the midnight hour.

From Eden's summit, with obdurate pride,
Red from afar, the battle-scene he eyed,
Where late he crush'd, with one remorseless blow,
The remnant of his last and noblest foe ;
At hand he view'd the trophies of his toils,
Herds, flocks, and steeds, the world's collected spoils ;
Below, his legions march'd in war array,
Unstain'd with blood in that unequal fray :
—An hundred tribes, whose sons their arms had borne
Without contention, from the field at morn,
Their bands dividing, when the fight was won,
Darken'd the region tow'rd the slanting sun,
Like clouds, whose shadows o'er the landscape sail.
—While to their camp, that fill'd the northern vale,
A waving sea of tents, immensely spread,
The trumpet summon'd, and the banners led.
With these a train of captives, sad and slow,
Moved to a death of shame, or life of woe,
A death on altars hateful to the skies,
Or life in chains, a slower sacrifice.
Fair smiled the face of Nature ;—all serene
And lovely, Evening tranquillized the scene ;
The furies of the fight were gone to rest,
The cloudless sun grew broader down the west,
The hills beneath him melted from the sight,
Receding through the heaven of purple light ;
Along the plain the maze of rivers roll'd,
And verdant shadows gleam'd in waves of gold.

Thus while the tyrant cast his haughty eye
O'er the broad landscape and incumbent sky,
His heart exulting whisper'd—"All is mine,"
And heard a voice from all things answer "Thine."
Such was the matchless chief, whose name of yore
Fill'd the wide world:—his name is known no more:
O that for ever from the rolls of fame,
Like his, had perish'd every conqueror's name!
Then had mankind been spared, in after-times,
Their greatest sufferings and their greatest crimes.
The hero scourges not his age alone,
His curse to late posterity is known:
He slays his thousands with his living breath,
His tens of thousands by his fame in death.
Achilles quench'd not all his wrath on Greece,
Through Homer's songs its miseries never cease;
Like Phœbus' shafts, the bright contagion brings
Plagues on the people for the feuds of kings.
'Twas not in vain the son of Philip sigh'd
For worlds to conquer,—o'er the western tide,
His spirit, in the Spaniard's form, o'erthrew
Realms that the Macedonian never knew.
The steel of Brutus struck not Cæsar dead;
Cæsar in other lands hath raised his head,
And fought, of friends and foes, on many a plain,
His millions, captured, fugitive, and slain;
Yet seldom suffer'd, where his country died,
A Roman vengeance for his parricide.

The sun was sunk; the sacrificial pyres
From smouldering ashes breathed their last blue fires,
The smiling star, that lights the world to rest,
Walk'd in the rosy gardens of the west,
Like Eve erewhile through Eden's blooming bowers,
A lovelier star amidst a heaven of flowers.
Now in the freshness of the falling shade,
Again the minstrel to the monarch play'd.
—"Where is the youth renown'd!—the youth whose voice
Was wont to make the listening camp rejoice,

When to his harp, in many a peerless strain,
 He sang the wonders of the Giant's reign:
 Oh where is Javan?"—Thus the bard renew'd
 His lay, and with a rival's transport view'd
 The cloud of sudden anger, that o'ercame
 The tyrant's countenance at Javan's name;
 Javan, whose song was once his soul's delight,
 Now doom'd a traitor recreant by his flight.
 The envious minstrel smiled; then boldly ran
 His prelude o'er the chords, and thus began:—
 " 'Twas on the morn that faithless Javan fled,
 To yonder plain the king of nations led
 His countless hosts, and stretch'd their wide array
 Along the woods, within whose shelter lay
 The sons of Eden:—these, with secret pride,
 In ambush thus the Invincible defied:
 —'Girt with the forest wherefore should we fear?
 The Giant's sword shall never reach us here:
 Behind, the river rolls its deep defence;
 The Giant's hand shall never pluck us hence.'
 Vain boast of fools! who to that hand prepare
 For their own lives the inevitable snare:
 His legions smote the standards of the wood,
 And with their prostrate strength controll'd the flood;
 Lopt off their boughs, and jointed beam to beam,
 The pines and oaks were launch'd upon the stream,
 An hundred rafts.—Yet still within a zone
 Of tangled coppices,—a waste, o'ergrown
 With briars and thorns,—the dauntless victims lie,
 Scorn to surrender, and prepare to die.
 The second sun went down; the monarch's plan
 Was perfected: the dire assault began.
 " Marshall'd by twilight, his obedient bands
 Engirt the wood, with torches in their hands;
 The signal given, they shoot them through the air;
 The blazing brands in rapid volleys glare,

* Vide Canto I. p. 118, and Canto III. p. 139.

Descending through the gloom with spangled light,
As if the stars were falling through the night.
Along the wither'd grass the wild-fire flew,
Higher and hotter with obstruction grew ;
The green wood hiss'd ; from crackling thickets broke
Light-glancing flame, and heavy-rolling smoke ;
Till all the breadth of forest seem'd to rise
In blazing conflagration to the skies.
Fresh o'er our heads the winds propitious blow,
But roll the fierce combustion on the foe.
Awhile they paused, of every hope bereft,
Choice of destruction all their refuge left ;
If from the flames they fled, behind them lay
The river roaring to receive his prey ;
If through the stream they sought the farther strand,
Our rafts were moor'd to meet them ere they land ;
With triple death environ'd thus they stood,
Till nearer peril drove them to the flood.
Safe on a hill, where sweetest moonlight slept,
As o'er the changing scene my watch I kept,
I heard their shrieks of agony ; I hear
Those shrieks still ring in my tormented ear ;
I saw them leap the gulf with headlong fright ;
Oh that mine eyes could now forget that sight !
They sank in multitude ; but prompt to save,
Our warriors snatch'd the stragglers from the wave.
And on their rafts a noble harvest bore
Of rescued heroes, captive to the shore.

“ One little troop their lessening ground maintain'd
Till space to perish in alone remain'd ;
Then with a shout that rent the echoing air,
More like the shout of victory than despair,
Wedge'd in a solid phalanx, man by man,
Right through the scorching wilderness they ran.
Where half extinct the smouldering fuel glow'd,
And levell'd corses strew'd the open road.
Unharm'd as spirits while they seem'd to pass,
Their lighted features flared like molten brass.

Around the flames in writhing volumes spread,
Thwarted their path, or mingled o'er their head ;
Beneath their feet the fires to ashes turn'd,
But in their wake with mounting fury burn'd.
Our host recoil'd from that amazing sight ;
Scarcely the king himself restrain'd their flight ;
He, with his chiefs, in brazen armour, stood
Unmoved, to meet the maniacs from the wood.
Dark as a thunder-cloud their phalanx came,
But split like lightning into forms of flame ;
Soon as in purer air their heads they raised
To taste the breath of heaven, their garments blazed :
Then blind, distracted, weaponless, yet flush'd
With dreadful valour, on their foes they rushed ;
The Giants met them midway on the plain ;
'Twas but the struggle of a moment ;—slain,
They fell ; their relics, to the flames return'd,
As offerings to the immortal gods were burn'd ;
And never did the light of morning rise
Upon the clouds of such a sacrifice."

Abruptly here the minstrel ceased to sing,
And every face was turn'd upon the king ;
He, while the stoutest hearts recoil'd with fear,
And Giants trembled their own deeds to hear,
Unmoved and unrelenting, in his mind
Deeds of more impious enterprise design'd :
A dire conception labour'd in his breast ;
His eye was sternly pointed to the west,
Where stood the mount of Paradise sublime,
Whose guarded top, since man's presumptuous crime,
By noon, a dusky cloud appear'd to rise,
But blazed a beacon through nocturnal skies.
As *Ætna*, view'd from ocean far away,
Slumbers in blue revolving smoke by day,
Till darkness, with terrific splendour, shows
The eternal fires that crest the eternal snows ;
So where the cherubim in vision turn'd
Their flaming swords, the summit lower'd or burn'd.

And now conspicuous through the twilight gloom,
The glancing beams the distant hills illumine,
And, as the shadows deepen o'er the ground,
Scatter a red and wavering lustre round.

Awhile the monarch, fearlessly amazed,
With jealous anger on the glory gazed ;
Already had his arm in battle hurl'd
His thunders round the subjugated world ;
Lord of the nether universe, his pride
Was rein'd, while Paradise his power defied.
An upland isle, by meeting streams embraced,
It tower'd to heaven amidst a sandy waste ;
Below, impenetrable woods display'd
Depths of mysterious solitude and shade ;
Above, with adamantine bulwarks crown'd,
Primeval rocks in hoary masses frown'd ;
O'er all were seen the cherubim of light,
Like pillar'd flames amidst the falling night ;
So high it rose, so bright the mountain shone,
It seem'd the footstool of Jehovah's throne.

The Giant panted with intense desire
To scale those heights, and storm the walls of fire :
His ardent soul, in ecstasy of thought,
Even now with Michael and his angels fought,
And saw the seraphim, like meteors, driven
Before his banners through the gates of heaven,
While he secure the glorious garden trod,
And sway'd his sceptre from the mount of God.

When suddenly the bard had ceased to sing,
While all the chieftains gazed upon their king,
Whose changing looks a rising storm bespoke,
Ere from his lips the dread explosion broke,
The trumpets sounded, and before his face
Were led the captives of the Patriarchs' race,
—A lovely and a venerable band
Of young and old, amidst their foes they stand ;
Unawed they see the fiery trial near ;
They fear'd their God, and knew no other fear.

To light the dusky scene, resplendent fires,
 Of pine and cedar, blazed in lofty pyres ;
 While from the east the moon with doubtful gleams
 Now tipt the hills, now glanced athwart the streams,
 Till, darting through the clouds her beauteous eye,
 She open'd all the temple of the sky ;
 The Giants, closing in a narrower ring,
 By turns survey'd the prisoners and the king.
 Javan stood forth ;—to all the youth was known,
 And every eye was fix'd on him alone.

CANTO NINTH.

The King's Determination to sacrifice the Patriarchs and their Families to his Demon-Gods—His Sentence on Javan—Zillah's Distress—The Sorcerer pretends to declare the Secret of the Birth of the King, and proposes his Deification—Enoch appears.

A GLEAM of joy, at that expected sight,
 Shot o'er the monarch's brow with baleful light :
 "Behold," thought he, "the great decisive hour ;
 Ere morn, these sons of God shall prove my power :
 Offer'd by me their blood shall be the price
 Of demon-aid to conquer Paradise."
 Thus while he threaten'd, Javan caught his view,
 And instantly his visage changed its hue ;
 Inflamed with rage past utterance, he frown'd,
 He gnash'd his teeth, and wildly glared around,
 As one who saw a spectre in the air,
 And durst not look upon it, nor forbear ;
 Still on the youth, his eye, wherever cast,
 Abhorrently return'd, and fix'd at last :
 "Slaves ! smite the traitor ; be his limbs consign'd
 To flames, his ashes scatter'd to the wind !"
 He cried in tones so vehement, so loud,
 Instinctively recoil'd the shuddering crowd ;

And ere the guards to seize their victim rush'd,
The youth was pleading—every breath was hush'd ;
Pale, but undauntedly, he faced his foes ;
Warm as he spoke his kindling spirit rose ;
Well pleased, on him the Patriarch-fathers smiled,
And every mother loved him as her child.

“ Monarch ! to thee no traitor, here I stand ;
These are my brethren, this my native land ;
My native land, by sword and fire consumed,
My brethren captive, and to death foredoom'd ;
To these indeed a rebel in my youth,
A fugitive apostate from the truth,
Too late repentant, I confess my crime,
And mourn o'er lost irrevocable time.
—When from thy camp by conscience urged to flee,
I plann'd no wrong, I laid no snare for thee :
Did I provoke these sons of innocence,
Against thine arms, to rise in vain defence ?
No ; I conjured them, ere this threaten'd hour,
In sheltering forests to escape thy power ;
Firm in their rectitude, they scorn'd to fly ;
Thy foes they were not.—they resolved to die.
Yet think not thou, amidst thy warlike bands,
They lie beyond redemption in thine hands :
The God in whom they trust may help them still,
They know he *can* deliver, and HE WILL ;
Whether by life or death, afflicts them not,
On his decree, not thine, they rest their lot.
For me, unworthy with the just to share
Death or deliverance, this is Javan's prayer :
Mercy, O God ! to these in life be shown,
I die rejoicing, if I die alone.”

“ Thou shalt not die alone,” a voice replied,
A well-known voice—'twas Zillah at his side ;
She, while he spake, with eagerness to hear,
Step after step, unconsciously drew near ;
Her bosom with severe compunction wrung,
Pleased or alarm'd, on every word she hung.

He turn'd his face ;—with agonizing air,
 In all the desolation of despair,
 She stood ; her hands to heaven uplift and clasp'd,
 Then suddenly unloosed, his arm she grasp'd,
 And thus, in wild apostrophes of wo,
 Vented her grief while tears refused to flow.

“ Oh I have wrong'd thee, Javan !—Let us be
 Espoused in death :—No, I will die for thee.
 —Tyrant ! behold thy victim ; on my head
 Be all the bitterness of vengeance shed,
 But spare the innocent ; let Javan live,
 Whose crime was love :—Can Javan too forgive
 Love's lightest, fondest weakness, maiden-shame,
 —It was not pride,—that hid my bosom-flame ?
 And wilt thou mourn the poor transgressor's death,
 Who says, ' I love thee,' with her latest breath ?
 And when thou think'st of days and years gone by,
 Will thoughts of Zillah sometimes swell thine eye ?
 If ever thou hast cherish'd in thine heart
 Visions of hope in which I bore a part ;
 If ever thou hast long'd with me to share
 One home-born joy, one home-endearing care ;
 If thou didst ever love me ;—speak the word,
 Which late with feign'd indifference I heard ;
 Tell me, thou lov'st me still ;—haste, Javan, mark,
 How high those ruffians pile the faggots,—hark,
 How the flames crackle,—see, how fierce they glare,
 Like fiery serpents hissing through the air ;
 Farewell ; I fear them not.—Now seize me, bind
 These willing limbs,—ye cannot touch the mind ;
 Unawed, I stand on Nature's failing brink :
 —Nay, look not on me, Javan, lest I shrink ;
 Give me thy prayers, but turn away thine eye,
 That I may lift my soul to Heaven, and die.”

Thus Zillah raved in passionate distress,
 Till frenzy soften'd into tenderness ;
 Sorrow and love, with intermingling grace,
 Terror and beauty, lighten'd o'er her face ;

Her voice, her eye, in every soul was felt,
And Giant-hearts were moved, unwont to melt.
Javan, in wonder, pity, and delight,
Almost forgot his being at the sight ;
That bending form, those suppliant accents, seem
The strange illusions of a lover's dream ;
And while she clung upon his arm, he found
His limbs, his lips, as by enchantment, bound ;
He dare not touch her, lest the charm should break,
He dare not move, lest he himself should wake.

But when she ceased to speak, and he to hear,
The silence startled him ;—cold, shivering fear
Crept o'er his nerves ;—in thought he cast his eye
Back on the world, and heaved a bitter sigh,
Thus from life's sweetest pleasures to be torn,
Just when he seem'd to new existence born,
And cease to feel, when feeling ceased to be
A fever of protracted misery,
And cease to love, when love no more was pain ;
'Twas but a pang of transient weakness :—“ Vain
Are all thy sorrows,” falteringly he said ;
“ Already I am number'd with the dead ;
But long and blissfully may Zillah live !
—And canst thou 'Javan's cruel scorn' forgive ?
And wilt thou mourn the poor transgressor's death,
Who says, 'I love thee,' with his latest breath ?
And when thou think'st of days and years gone by,
Will thoughts of Javan sometimes swell thine eye ?
Ah ! while I wither'd in thy chilling frown,
'Twas easy then to lay life's burden down ;
When singly sentenced to these flames, my mind
Gloried in leaving all I loved behind ;
How hast thou triumph'd o'er me in this hour !
One look hath crush'd my soul's collected power ;
Thy scorn I might endure, thy pride defy,
But oh thy kindness makes it hard to die !”
“ Then we will die together.”—“ Zillah ! no,
Thou shalt not perish ; let me, let me go ;

Behold thy parents! calm thy father's fears;
Thy mother weeps; canst thou resist her tears?"
"Away with folly!" in tremendous tone,
Exclaim'd a voice, more horrid than the groan
Of famish'd tiger leaping on his prey;
—Crouch'd at the monarch's feet the speaker lay;
But starting up, in his ferocious mien
That monarch's ancient foster-sire was seen,
The goatherd,—he who snatch'd him from the flood,
The sorcerer, who nursed him up to blood:
Who, still his evil genius, fully bent
On one bold purpose, went where'er he went;
That purpose, long in his own bosom seal'd,
Ripe for fulfilment now, he thus reveal'd.
Full in the midst he rush'd; alarm'd, aghast,
Giants and captives trembled as he pass'd,
For scarcely seem'd he of the sons of earth;
Unchronicled the hour that gave him birth;
Though shrunk his cheek, his temples deeply plough'd,
Keen was his vulture-eye, his strength unbow'd;
Swarthy his features; venerably gray
His beard dishevell'd o'er his bosom lay:
Bald was his front; but, white as snow behind,
His ample locks were scatter'd to the wind;
Naked he stood, save round his loins a zone
Of shagged fur, and o'er his shoulders thrown
A serpent's skin, that cross'd his breast, and round
His body thrice in glittering volumes wound.
All gazed with horror,—deep, unutter'd thought
In every muscle of his visage wrought;
His eye, as if his eye could see the air,
Was fix'd: up-writhing rose his horrent hair:
His limbs grew dislocate, convulsed his frame:
Deep from his chest mysterious noises came;
Now purring, hissing, barking, then they swell'd
To hideous dissonance; he shriek'd, he yell'd,
As if the Legion-fiend his soul possess'd,
And a whole hell were worrying in his breast:

Then down he dash'd himself on earth, and roll'd
In agony, till powerless, stiff, and cold,
With face upturn'd to heaven, and arms outspread,
A ghastly spectacle, he lay as dead :
The living too stood round like forms of death,
And every pulse was hush'd, and every breath.

Meanwhile the wind arose, the clouds were driven
In watery masses through the waste of heaven,
The groaning woods foretold a tempest nigh,
And silent lightning skirmish'd in the sky.

Ere long the wizard started from the ground,
Giddily reel'd, and look'd bewilder'd round,
Till on the king he fix'd his hideous gaze ;
Then rapt with ecstasy, and broad amaze,
He kneel'd in adoration, humbly bow'd
His face upon his hands, and cried aloud ;
Yet so remote and strange his accents fell,
They seem'd the voice of an invisible :
— Hail ! king and conqueror of the peopled earth,
And more than king or conqueror ! Know thy birth :
Thou art a ray of uncreated fire,
The sun himself is thy celestial sire ;
The moon thy mother, who to me consign'd
Her babe in secrecy, to bless mankind.
These eyes have watch'd thee rising, year by year,
More great, more glorious in thine high career.
As the young eagle plies his growing wings
In bounded flights, and sails in wider rings,
Till to the fountain of meridian day,
Full plumed and perfected, he soars away ;
Thus have I mark'd thee, since thy course begun,
Still upward tending to thy sire the sun :
Now midway meet him : from yon flaming height,
Chase the vain phantoms of cherubic light :
There build a tower, whose spiral top shall rise,
Circle o'er circle lessening to the skies :
The stars, thy brethren, in their spheres shall stand
To hail thee welcome to thy native land :

The moon shall clasp thee in her glad embrace,
The sun behold his image in thy face,
And call thee, as his offspring and his heir,
His throne, his empire, and his orb to share."

Rising and turning his terrific head,
That chill'd beholders, thus the enchanter said :
—"Prepare, prepare the piles of sacrifice,
The power that rules the earth shall rule the skies ;
Hither, O chiefs ! the captive Patriarchs bring,
And pour their blood an offering to your king ;
He, like his sire the sun, in transient clouds,
His veil'd divinity from mortals shrouds,
Too pure to shine till these his foes are slain,
And conquer'd Paradise hath crown'd his reign.
Haste, heap the fallen cedars on the pyres,
And give the victims living to the fires :
Shall He, in whom they vainly trust, withstand
Your sovereign's wrath, or pluck them from his hand ?
We dare Him ;—if He saves his servants now,
To Him let every knee in nature bow,
For HE is GOD"—at that most awful name,
A spasm of horror wither'd up his frame,
Even as he stood and look'd ;—he looks, he stands.
With heaven-defying front, and clenched hands,
And lips half-open'd, eager from his breast
To bolt the blasphemy, by force repress ;
For not in feign'd abstraction, as before,
He practised foul deceit by damned lore ;
A frost was on his nerves, and in his veins
A fire, consuming with infernal pains ;
Conscious, though motionless, his limbs were grown :
Alive to suffering, but alive in stone.

In silent expectation, sore amazed,
The king and chieftains on the sorcerer gazed ;
Awhile no sound was heard, save through the woods
The wind deep-thundering, and the dashing floods :
At length, with solemn step, amidst the scene,
Where that false prophet show'd his frantic mien,

Where lurid flames from green-wood altars burn'd,
 Enoch stood forth;—on him all eyes were turn'd;
 O'er his dim form and saintly visage fell
 The light that glared upon that priest of hell.
 Unutterably awful was his look;
 Through every joint the Giant-monarch shook;
 Shook like Belshazzar, in his festive hall,
 When the hand wrote his judgment on the wall;†
 Shook, like Eliplaz, with dissolving fright,‡
 In thoughts amidst the visions of the night,
 When as the spirit pass'd before his face,
 Nor limb, nor lineament his eye could trace;
 A form of mystery, that chill'd his blood,
 Close at his couch in living terror stood,
 And death-like silence, till a voice more dear,
 More dreadful than the silence, reach'd his ear:
 Thus from surrounding darkness Enoch brake,
 And thus the Giant trembled while he spake.

CANTO TENTH.

The Prophecy of Enoch concerning the Sorcerer, the King, and the Flood—His Translation to Heaven—The Conclusion.

“THE Lord is jealous:—He, who reigns on high,
 Upholds the earth, and spreads abroad the sky;
 His voice the moon and stars by night obey,
 He sends the sun his servant forth by day:
 From Him all beings came, on Him depend,
 To Him return, their Author, Sovereign, End.
 Who shall destroy when He would save? or stand,
 When He destroys, the stroke of his right hand?
 With none His name and power will He divide,
 For HE is GOD, and there is none beside.
 “The proud shall perish;—mark how wild his air
 In impotence of malice and despair,

† Dan. v. 1—21.

‡ Job iv. 13—21.

What frenzy fires the bold blasphemer's cheek !
 He looks the curses which he cannot speak.
 A hand hath touch'd him that he once defied ;
 Touch'd, and for ever crush'd him in his pride ;
 Yet shall he live, despised as fear'd before ;
 The great deceiver shall deceive no more ;
 Children shall pluck the beard of him whose arts
 Palsied the boldest hands, the stoutest hearts ;
 His vaunted wisdom fools shall laugh to scorn,
 When muttering spells, a spectacle forlorn,
 A drivelling idiot, he shall fondly roam
 From house to house, and never find a home."

The wizard heard his sentence, nor remain'd
 A moment longer ; from his trance unchain'd,
 He plunged into the woods ;—the Prophet then
 Turn'd, and took up his parable again.

“The proud shall perish :—monarch ! know thy doom :
 Thy bones shall lack the shelter of a tomb ;
 Not in the battle-field thine eyes shall close,
 Slain upon thousands of thy slaughter'd foes ;
 Not on the throne of empire, nor the bed
 Of weary Nature, thou shalt bow thine head :
 Death lurks in ambush ; Death without a name,
 Shall pluck thee from thy pinnacle of fame ;
 At eve, rejoicing o'er thy finish'd toil,
 Thy soul shall deem the universe her spoil ;
 The dawn shall see thy carcass cast away,
 The wolves, at sunrise, slumber on their prey.
 Cut from the living, whither dost thou go ?
 Hades is moved to meet thee from below ;¹
 The kings thy sword had slain, the mighty dead,
 Start from their thrones at thy descending tread ;
 They ask in scorn,—‘ Destroyer ! is it thus ?
 Art thou,—thou too,—become like one of us ?
 Torn from the feast of music, wine, and mirth,
 The worms thy covering, and thy couch the earth.
 How art thou fall'n from thine ethereal height,
 Son of the morning ! sunk in endless night :

How art thou fall'n, who said'st in pride of soul,
I will ascend above the starry pole,
Thence rule the adoring nations with my nod,
And set my throne above the Mount of God !
Spilt in the dust, thy blood pollutes the ground ;
Sought by the eyes that fear'd thee, yet not found ;
Thy chieftains pause, they turn thy relics o'er,
Then pass thee by,—for thou art known no more.
Hail to thine advent ! Potentate, in hell,
Unfear'd, unflatter'd, undistinguish'd dwell ;
On earth thy fierce ambition knew no rest,
A worm, a flame, for ever in thy breast ;
Here feel the rage of unconsuming fire,
Intense, eternal, impotent desire ;
Here lie, the deathless worm's unwasting prey,
In chains of darkness till the judgment-day.'

“ Thus while the dead thy fearful welcome sing,
Thy living slaves bewail their vanish'd king.
Then, though thy reign with infamy expire,
Fulfill'd in death shall be thy vain desire ;
The traitors, reeking with thy blood, shall swear,
They saw their sovereign ravish'd through the air,
And point thy star revolving o'er the night,
A baleful comet with portentous light,
Midst clouds and storms denouncing from afar
Famine, and havoc, pestilence and war.
Temples, not tombs, thy monuments shall be,
And altars blaze on hills and groves to thee ;
A pyramid shall consecrate thy crimes,
Thy name and honours to succeeding times ;
There shall thine image hold the highest place
Among the gods of man's revolted race !

“ That race shall perish :—Men and Giants, all
Thy kindred and thy worshippers shall fall.
The babe, whose life with yesterday began,
May spring to youth, and ripen into man ;
But ere his locks are tinged with fading gray,
This world of sinners shall be swept away.

Jehovah lifts his standard to the skies,
Swift at the signal winds and vapours rise ;
The sun in sackcloth veils his face at noon,—
The stars are quench'd, and turn'd to blood the moon.
Heaven's fountains open, clouds dissolving roll
In mingling cataracts from pole to pole,
Earth's central sluices burst, the hills uptorn,
In rapid whirlpools down the gulf are borne :
The voice that taught the Deep his bounds to know,
'Thus far, O Sea ! nor farther shalt thou go,'—
Sends forth the floods commission'd to devour
With boundless license, and resistless power ;
They own no impulse but the tempest's sway,
Nor find a limit but the light of day.

“The vision opens :—sunk beneath the wave,
The guilty share an universal grave ;
One wilderness of water rolls in view,
And heaven and ocean wear one turbid hue ;
Still stream unbroken torrents from the skies,
Higher beneath the inundations rise ;
A lurid twilight glares athwart the scene,
Low thunders peal, faint lightnings flash between.
—Methinks I see a distant vessel ride,
A lonely object on the shoreless tide ;
Within whose ark the innocent have found
Safety, while stay'd Destruction ravens round ;
Thus, in the hour of vengeance, God, who knows
His servants, spares them, while He smites his foes.

“Eastward I turn ;—o'er all the deluged lands,
Unshaken yet, a mighty mountain stands,
Where Seth, of old, his flock to pasture led,
And watch'd the stars at midnight from its head :
An island now, its dark, majestic form
Scowls through the thickest ravage of the storm ;
While on its top, the monument of fame,
Built by thy murderers to adorn thy name,
Defies the shock ;—a thousand cubits high,
The sloping pyramid ascends the sky.

Thither, their latest refuge in distress,
 Like hunted wolves, the rallying Giants press ;
 Round the broad base of that stupendous tower
 The shuddering fugitives collect their power,
 Cling to the dizzy cliff, o'er ocean bend,
 And howl with terror as the deeps ascend.
 The mountain's strong foundations still endure,
 The heights repel the surge.—Awhile secure,
 And cheer'd with frantic hope, thy votaries climb
 The fabric, rising step by step, sublime.
 Beyond the clouds they see the summit glow
 In heaven's pure daylight, o'er the gloom below ;
 There too thy worshipp'd image shines like fire,
 In the full glory of thy fabled sire.
 They hail the omen, and with heart and voice
 Call on thy name, and in thy smile rejoice :
 False omen ! on thy name in vain they call ;
 Fools in their joy ;—a moment and they fall.
 Rent by an earthquake of the buried plain,
 And shaken by the whole disrupted main,
 The mountain trembles on its failing base,
 It slides, it stoops, it rushes from its place ;
 From all the Giants bursts one drowning cry ;
 Hark ! 'tis thy name,—they curse it as they die ;
 Sheer to the lowest gulf the pile is hurl'd,
 The last sad wreck of a devoted world.

.. So fall transgressors :—'Tyrant ! now fulfil
 Thy secret purposes, thine utmost will ;
 Here crown thy triumphs :—life or death decree,
 The weakest here disdains thy power and thee."

Thus when the Patriarch ceased, and every ear
 Still listen'd in suspense of hope and fear,
 Sublime, ineffable, angelic grace
 Beam'd in his meek and venerable face ;
 And sudden glory, streaming round his head,
 O'er all his robes with lambient lustre spread ;
 His earthly features grew divinely bright,
 His essence seem'd transforming into light.

Brief silence, like the pause between the flash
 At midnight, and the following thunder-crash,
 Ensued :—Anon, with universal cry,
 The Giants rush'd upon the Prophet,—“ Die !”
 The king leapt foremost from his throne ;—he drew
 His battle-sword, as on his mark he flew ;
 With aim unerring, and tempestuous sound,
 The blade descended deep along the ground :
 The foe was fled, and, self-o'erwhelm'd, his strength
 Hurl'd to the earth his Atlantean length ;
 But ere his chiefs could stretch the helping arm,
 He sprang upon his feet in pale alarm ;
 Headlong and blind with rage he search'd around,
 But *Enoch walk'd with God, and was not found.*

Yet where the captives stood, in holy awe,
 Rapt on the wings of cherubin, they saw
 Their sainted sire ascending through the night ;
 He turn'd his face to bless them in his flight,
 Then vanish'd :—Javan caught the Prophet's eye,
 And snatch'd his mantle falling from the sky ;
 O'er him the Spirit of the Prophet came,
 Like rushing wind awakening hidden flame :
 “ Where is the God of Enoch now ?” he cried,*
 “ Captives, come forth ! Despisers, shrink aside.”
 He spake, and bursting through the Giant-throng,
 Smote with the mantle as he moved along :
 A power invisible their rage controll'd,
 Hither and thither as he turn'd they roll'd ;
 Unawed, unharm'd, the ransom'd prisoners pass'd
 Through ranks of foes astonied and aghast :
 Close in the youth's conducting steps they trod :
 —So Israel march'd when Moses raised his rod,
 And led their host, enfranchised, through the wave,
 The people's safeguard, the pursuers' grave.

Thus from the wolves this little flock was torn,
 And sheltering in the mountain-caves till morn,

* 2 Kings ii. 14.

They join'd to sing, in strains of full delight,
Songs of deliverance through the dreary night.

The Giants' frenzy, when they lost their prey,
No tongue of man or angel might portray ;
First on their idol-gods their vengeance turn'd,
Those gods on their own altar-piles they burn'd ;
Then, at their sovereign's mandate, sallied forth
To rouse their host to combat, from the north ;
Eager to risk their uttermost emprise,
Perish ere morn, or reign in Paradise.
Now the slow tempest, that so long had lower'd,
Keen in their faces sleet and hailstones shower'd ;
The winds blew loud, the waters roar'd around,
An earthquake rock'd the agonizing ground ;
Red in the west the burning mount, array'd
With tenfold terror by incumbent shade,
(For moon and stars were wrapt in dunest gloom,)
Glared like a torch amidst creation's tomb :
So Sinai's rocks were kindled when they felt
Their Maker's footstep, and began to melt ;
Darkness was his pavilion, whence He came,
Hid in the brightness of descending flame,
While storm, and whirlwind, and the trumpet's blast,
Proclaim'd his law in thunder, as He pass'd.

The Giants reach'd their camp :—the night's alarms
Meanwhile had startled all their slaves to arms :
They grasp'd their weapons as from sleep they sprang.
From tent to tent the brazen clangor rang :
The hail, the earthquake, the mysterious light
Unmerv'd their strength, o'erwhelm'd them with affright.
" Warriors ! to battle ;—summon all your powers ;
Warriors ! to conquest ;—Paradise is ours,"
Exclaim'd their monarch ;—not an arm was raised,
In vacancy of thought, like men amazed,
And lost amidst confounding dreams, they stood,
With palsied eyes, and horror-frozen blood.
The Giants' rage to instant madness grew ;
The king and chiefs on their own legions flew,

Denouncing vengeance ;—then had all the plain
 Been heap'd with myriads by their leaders slain ;
 But ere a sword could fall,—by whirlwinds driven,
 In mighty volumes, through the vault of heaven,
 From Eden's summit, o'er the camp accurst,
 The darting fires with noon-day splendour burst ;
 And fearful grew the scene above, below
 With sights of mystery, and sounds of woe.
 The embattled cherubim appear'd on high,
 And coursers, wing'd with lightning, swept the sky ;
 Chariots, whose wheels with living instinct roll'd,
 Spirits of unimaginable mould,
 Powers, such as dwell in heaven's serenest light,
 Too pure, too terrible for mortal sight,
 From depth of midnight suddenly reveal'd,
 In arms, against the Giants took the field.
 On such an host Elisha's servant gazed,
 When all the mountain round the prophet blazed ;*
 With such an host, when war in heaven was wrought,
 Michael against the Prince of Darkness fought.

Roused by the trumpet that shall wake the dead,
 The torpid foe in consternation fled ;
 The Giants headlong in the uproar ran,
 The king himself the foremost of the van,
 Nor e'er his rushing squadrons led to fight
 With swifter onset, than he led that flight.
 Homeward the panic-stricken legions flew ;
 Their arms, their vestments, from their limbs they threw ;
 O'er shields and helms the reinless camel strode,
 And gold and purple strew'd the desert road.
 When through the Assyrian army, like a blast,
 At midnight, the destroying angel pass'd,
 The tyrant that defied the living God,
 Precipitately thus his steps retrod ;
 Even by the way he came, to his own land,
 Return'd, to perish by his offspring's hand.†

* 2 Kings vi. 17.

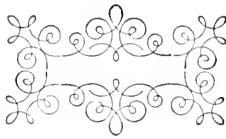
† 2 Kings xiv. 33—37.

So fled the Giant-monarch ;—but unknown
The hand that smote his life ;—he died alone ;
Amidst the tumult treacherously slain ;
At morn his chieftains sought their lord in vain,
Then, reckless of the harvest of their toils,
Their camp, their captives, all their treasured spoils,
Renew'd their flight o'er eastern hills afar,
With life alone escaping from that war,
In which their king had hail'd his realm complete,
The world's last province bow'd beneath his feet.

As, when the waters of the Flood declined,
Rolling tumultuously before the wind,
The proud waves shrunk from low to lower beds,
And high the hills and higher raised their heads,
Till ocean lay, enchased with rock and strand,
As in the hollow of the Almighty's hand,
While earth with wrecks magnificent was strew'd,
And stillness reign'd o'er Nature's solitude.
—Thus in a storm of horror and dismay,
All night the Giant-army sped away ;
Thus on a lonely, sad, and silent scene,
The morning rose in majesty serene.

Early and joyful o'er the dewy grass,
Straight to their glen the ransom'd Patriarchs pass :
As doves released their parent dwelling find,
They fly for life, nor cast a look behind ;
And when they reach'd the dear sequester'd spot,
Enoch alone of all their train "*was not.*"
With them the bard, who from the world withdrew,
Javan, from folly and ambition flew ;
Though poor his lot, within that narrow bound,
Friendship, and home, and faithful love he found :
There did his wanderings and afflictions cease,
His youth was penitence, his age was peace.
Meanwhile the scatter'd tribes of Eden's plain
Turn'd to their desolated fields again,
And join'd their brethren, captives once in fight,
But left to freedom in that dreadful flight :

Thenceforth redeem'd from war's unnumber'd woes,
Rich with the spoils of their retreated foes,
By Giant-tyranny no more opprest,
The people flourish'd, and the land had rest.



GREENLAND.

A POEM, IN FIVE CANTOS.

PREFACE.

IN the following Poem the Author frankly acknowledges that he has so far failed, as to be under the necessity of sending it forth incomplete, or suppressing it altogether. Why he has not done the latter is of little importance to the public, which will assuredly award him no more credit than his performance, taken as it is, can command; while the consequences of his temerity, or his misfortune, must remain wholly with himself.

The original plan was intended to embrace the most prominent events in the annals of ancient and modern Greenland;—incidental descriptions of whatever is sublime or picturesque in the seasons and scenery, or peculiar in the superstitions, manners, and character of the natives,—with a rapid retrospect of that moral revolution which the Gospel has wrought among these people by reclaiming them, almost universally, from dark idolatry and savage ignorance.

Of that part of the projected poem which is here exhibited, the first three cantos contain a sketch of the history of the ancient Moravian Church, its revival in the early part of the eighteenth century, the origin of the missions by that people to Greenland, and the voyage of the first three brethren who went thither in 1733. The fourth canto refers principally to traditions concerning the Norwegian colonies, which are said to have existed, on both shores of Greenland, from the tenth century to the fifteenth. In the fifth canto the author has attempted, in a series of episodes, to sum up and exemplify the chief causes of the extinction of those colonies, and the abandonment of Greenland for several centuries by European voyagers. Although this canto is entirely a work of imagination, the fiction has not been adopted merely as a substitute for lost facts, but as a vehicle for illustrating some of the most splendid and striking phenomena of the climate, for which a more appropriate place might not have been found, even if the poem had been carried to a successful conclusion.

The principal subjects introduced in the course of the poem will be found in Crantz's histories of the Brethren and of Greenland, or in Risler's Narratives, extracted from the records of the ancient *Unitas Fratrum*, or United Brethren. To the accounts of Iceland, by various travellers, the author is also much indebted.

Sheffield, March 27, 1819.

GREENLAND.

CANTO FIRST.

The first three Moravian Missionaries are represented as on their Voyage to Greenland, in the Year 1733—Sketch of the Descent, Establishment, Persecutions, Extinction, and Revival of the Church of the United Brethren from the tenth to the beginning of the eighteenth Century—The Origin of their Missions to the West Indies and to Greenland.

THE moon is watching in the sky ; the stars
Are swiftly wheeling on their golden cars ;
Ocean out-treacht with infinite expanse,
Serenely slumbers in a glorious trance ;
The tide o'er which no troubling spirits breathe,
Reflects a cloudless firmament beneath ;
Where, poised as in the centre of a sphere,
A ship above and ship below appear ;
A double image, pictured on the deep,
The vessel o'er its shadow seems to sleep ;
Yet, like the host of heaven, that never rest,
With evanescent motion to the west.
The pageant glides through loneliness and night,
And leaves behind a rippling wake of light.
Hark ! through the calm and silence of the scene,
Slow, solemn, sweet, with many a pause between,
Celestial music swells along the air !
—No!—'tis the evening hymn of praise and prayer
From yonder deck ; where, on the stem retired,
Three humble voyagers, with looks inspired,
And hearts enkindled with a holier flame
Than ever lit to empire or to fame,
Devoutly stand :—their choral accents rise
On wings of harmony beyond the skies ;
And midst the songs, that Seraph-Minstrels sing,
Day without night, to their immortal King,

These simple strains,—which erst Bohemian hills
 Echo'd to pathless woods and desert rills ;
 Now heard from Shetland's azure bound,—are known
 In heaven ; and He, who sits upon the throne
 In human form, with mediatorial power,
 Remembers Calvary, and hails the hour,
 When, by the Almighty Father's high decree,
 The utmost north to Him shall bow the knee,
 And, won by love, an untamed rebel-race
 Kiss the victorious Sceptre of his grace.
 Then to *His* eye, whose instant glance pervades
 Heaven's heights, Earth's circle, Hell's profoundest shades,
 Is there a group more lovely than those three
 Night-watching Pilgrims on the lonely sea ?
 Or to *His* ear, that gathers in one sound
 The voices of adoring worlds around,
 Comes there a breath of more delightful praise
 Than the faint notes his poor disciples raise,
 Ere on the treacherous main they sink to rest,
 Secure as leaning on their Master's breast ?

They sleep : but memory wakes ; and dreams array
 Night in a lively masquerade of day ;
 The land they seek, the land they leave behind.
 Meet on mid-ocean in the plastic mind :
 One brings forsaken home and friends so nigh,
 That tears in slumber swell th' unconscious eye ;
 The other opens, with prophetic view,
 Perils, which e'en their fathers never knew,
 (Though school'd by suffering, long inured to toil,
 Outcasts and exiles from their natal soil :)
 —Strange scenes, strange men ; untold, untried distress :
 Pain, hardships, famine, cold, and nakedness,
 Diseases ; death in every hideous form,
 On shore, at sea, by fire, by flood, by storm ;
 Wild beasts and wilder men ;—unmoved with fear,
 Health, comfort, safety, life, they count not dear,
 May they but hope a Saviour's love to show,
 And warn one spirit from eternal wo ;

Nor will they faint ; nor can they strive in vain,
 Since thus—to live is Christ, to die is gain.

'Tis morn :—the bathing moon her lustre shrouds ;
 Wide o'er the East impends an arch of clouds,
 That spans the ocean ;—while the infant dawn
 Peeps through the portal o'er the liquid lawn,
 That ruffled by an April gale appears,
 Between the gloom and splendour of the spheres,
 Dark-purple as the moorland-heath, when rain
 Hangs in low vapours o'er the autumnal plain :
 Till the full Sun, resurgent from the flood,
 Looks on the waves, and turns them into blood ;
 But quickly kindling, as his beams aspire,
 The lambent billows play in forms of fire.
 —Where is the Vessel ?—Shining through the light,
 Like the white sea-fowl's horizontal flight,
 Yonder she wings, and skims, and cleaves her way
 Through reflux foam and iridescent spray.

Lo ! on the deck, with patriarchal grace,
 Heaven in his bosom opening o'er his face,
 Stands CHRISTIAN DAVID ;—venerable name !
 Bright in the records of celestial fame,
 On earth obscure ;—like some sequester'd star,
 That rolls in its Creator's beams afar,
 Unseen by man ; till telescopic eye,
 Sounding the blue abysses of the sky,
 Draws forth its hidden beauty into light,
 And adds a jewel to the crown of night.
 Though hoary with the multitude of years,
 Unshorn of strength, between his young compeers,
 He towers ;—with faith, whose boundless glance can see
 Time's shadows brightening through eternity ;
 Love,—God's own love in his pure breast enshrined ;
 Love,—love to man the magnet of his mind ;
 Sublimier schemes maturing in his thought
 Than ever statesman plann'd or warrior wrought ;
 While with rejoicing tears, and rapturous sighs,
 To heaven ascends their morning sacrifice.

Whence are the pilgrims? whither would they roam?
Greenland their port;—Moravia *was* their home.
Sprung from a race of martyrs; men who bore
The cross on many a Golgotha, of yore;
When first Slavonian tribes the truth received,
And princes at the price of thrones believed;
—When WALDO, flying from th' apostate west,
In German wilds his righteous cause confess'd;
—When WICKLIFFE, like a rescuing Angel, found
The dungeon where the word of God lay bound,
Unboosed its chains, and led it by the hand,
In its own sunshine, through his native land:
—When HUSS, the victim of perfidious foes,
To heaven upon a fiery chariot rose;
And ere he vanish'd, with a prophet's breath,
Foretold th' immortal triumphs of his death:
—When ZISKA, burning with fanatic zeal,
Exchanged the Spirit's sword for patriot steel,
And through the heart of Austria's thick array
To Tabor's summit stabb'd resistless way;
But there (as if transfigured on the spot
The world's Redeemer stood) his rage forgot:
Deposed his arms and trophies in the dust,
Wept like a babe, and placed in God his trust,
While prostrate warriors kiss'd the hallow'd ground,
And lay, like slain, in silent ranks around:
—When mild GREGORIUS, in a lowlier field,
As brave a witness, as unwont to yield
As ZISKA's self, with patient footsteps trod
A path of suffering, like the Son of God,
And nobler palms, by meek endurance won,
Than if his sword had blazed from sun to sun:
Though nature fail'd him on the racking wheel,
He felt the joys which parted spirits feel:
Rapt into bliss from ecstasy of pain,
Imagination wander'd o'er a plain:
Fair in the midst, beneath a morning sky,
A tree its ample branches bore on high.

With fragrant bloom, and fruit delicious hung,
 While birds beneath the foliage fed and sung ;
 All glittering to the sun with diamond dew,
 O'er sheep and kine a breezy shade it threw ;
 A lovely boy, the child of hope and prayer,
 With crook and shepherd's pipe, was watching there ;
 At hand three venerable forms were seen,
 In simple garb, with apostolic mien,
 Who mark'd the distant fields convulsed with strife,
 —The guardian Cherubs of that Tree of Life ;
 Not armed like Eden's host, with flaming brands,
 Alike to friends and foes they stretch their hands,
 In sign of peace, and while Destruction spread
 His path with carnage, welcomed all who fled :
 —When poor COMENIUS, with his little flock,
 Escaped the wolves, and from the boundary rock
 Cast o'er Moravian hills a look of wo,
 Saw the green vales expand, the waters flow,
 And happier years revolving in his mind,
 Caught every sound that murmur'd on the wind ;
 As if his eye could never thence depart,
 As if his ear were seated in his heart,
 And his full soul would thence a passage break,
 To leave the body, for his country's sake ;
 While on his knees he pour'd the fervent prayer,
 That God would make that martyr-land his care,
 And nourish in its ravaged soil a root
 Of GREGOR's Tree, to bear perennial fruit.¹

His prayer was heard:—that Church, through ages past,
 Assail'd and rent by persecution's blast ;
 Whose sons no yoke could crush, no burden tire,
 Unawed by dungeons, tortures, sword, and fire,
 (Less proof against the world's alluring wiles,
 Whose frowns have weaker terrors than its smiles ;)
 —That Church o'erthrown, dispersed, unpeopled, dead,
 Oft from the dust of ruin raised her head,
 And rallying round her feet, as from their graves,
 Her exiled orphans, hid in forest-caves ;

Where, midst the fastnesses of rocks and glens,
 Banded like robbers, stealing from their dens,
 By night they met, their holiest vows to pay,
 As if their deeds were dark, and shunn'd the day ;
 While Christ's revilers, in his seamless robe,
 And parted garments, flaunted round the globe ;
 From east to west while priestcraft's banners flew,
 And harness'd kings his iron chariot drew :
 —That Church advanced triumphant, o'er the ground,
 Where all her conquering martyrs had been crown'd,
 Fearless her foe's whole malice to defy,
 And worship God in liberty,—or die :
 For truth and conscience oft she pour'd her blood,
 And firmest in the fiercest conflicts stood,
 Wrestling from bigotry the proud control
 Claim'd o'er the sacred empire of the soul,
 Where God, the judge of all, should fill the throne,
 And reign, as in his universe, alone.

'Twas thus through centuries she rose and fell ;
 At length victorious seem'd the gates of hell ;
 But founded on a rock, which cannot move—
 Th' eternal rock of her Redeemer's love—
 That Church, which Satan's legions thought destroy'd,
 Her name extinct, her place for ever void,
 Alive once more, respired her native air,
 But found no freedom for the voice of prayer :
 Again the cowl'd oppressor clank'd his chains,
 Flourish'd his scourge, and threaten'd bonds and pains
 (His arm enfeebled could no longer kill,
 But in his heart he was a murderer still :)
 Then CHRISTIAN DAVID, strengthen'd from above,
 Wise as the serpent, harmless as the dove ;
 Bold as a lion on his Master's part,
 In zeal a seraph, and a child in heart :
 Pluck'd from the gripe of antiquated laws,
 (—Even as a mother from the felon jaws
 Of a lean wolf, that bears her babe away,
 With courage beyond nature, rends the prey.)

The little remnant of that ancient race :
 —Far in Lusatian woods they found a place ;
There—where the sparrow builds her busy nest,
 And the clime-changing swallow loves to rest,
 Thine altar, God of Hosts !—*there* still appear
 The tribes to worship, unassail'd by fear ;
 Not like their fathers, vex'd from age to age
 By blatant Bigotry's insensate rage,
 Abroad in every place,—in every hour
 Awake, alert, and ramping to devour.
 No ; peaceful as the spot where Jacob slept,
 And guard all night the journeying angels kept,
 Herrnhut yet stands amidst her shelter'd bowers :
 —The Lord hath set his watch upon her towers.

Soon, homes of humble form, and structure rude,
 Raised sweet society in solitude :
 And the lorn traveller there, at fall of night,
 Could trace from distant hills the spangled light,
 Which now from many a cottag' window stream'd,
 Or in full glory round the chapel beam'd ;
 While hymning voices, in the silent shade,
 Music of all his soul's affections made ;
 Where through the trackless wilderness erewhile,
 No hospitable ray was known to smile ;
 Or if a sudden splendour kindled joy,
 'Twas but a meteor dazzling to destroy :
 While the wood echoed to the hollow owl,
 The fox's cry, or wolf's lugubrious howl.

Unwearied as the camel, day by day,
 Tracks through unwater'd wilds his doleful way,
 Yet in his breast a cherish'd draught retains,
 To cool the fervid current in his veins,
 While from the sun's meridian realms he brings
 The gold and gems of Ethiopian kings :
 So CHRISTIAN DAVID, spending yet unspent,
 On many a pilgrimage of mercy went ;
 Through all their haunts his suffering brethren sought,
 And safely to that land of promise brought ;

While in his bosom, on the toilsome road,
A secret well of consolation flow'd,
Fed from the fountain near th' eternal throne,
—Bliss to the world unyielded and unknown.

In stillness thus the little Zion rose ;
But scarcely found those fugitives repose,
Ere to the West with pitying eyes they turn'd ;
Their love to Christ beyond th' Atlantic burn'd.
Forth sped their messengers, content to be
Captives themselves, to cheer captivity ;
Soothe the poor Negro with fraternal smiles,
And preach deliverance in those prison-isles,
Where man's most hateful forms of being meet,
—The tyrant and the slave that licks his feet.

O'er Greenland next two youths in secret wept ;
And where the sabbath of the dead was kept,
With pious forethought, while their hands prepare
Beds which the living and unborn shall share,
(For man so surely to the dust is brought,
His grave before his cradle may be wrought,)
They told their purpose, each o'erjoy'd to find
His own idea in his brother's mind.
For counsel in simplicity they pray'd,
And vows of ardent consecration made :
—Vows heard in heaven ; from that accepted hour,
Their souls were clothed with confidence and power,
Nor hope deferr'd could quell their hearts' desire ;
The bush once kindled grew amidst the fire ;
But ere its shoots a tree of life became,
Congenial spirits caught the electric flame ;
And for that holy service, young and old,
Their plighted faith and willing names enroll'd :
Eager to change the rest, so lately found,
For life-long labours on barbarian ground ;
To break, through barriers of eternal ice,
A vista to the gates of Paradise ;
And light beneath the shadow of the pole
The tenfold darkness of the human soul ;

To man,—a task more hopeless than to bless
With Indian fruits that arctic wilderness ;
With God,—as possible when unbegun
As though the destined miracle were done.

Three chosen candidates at length went forth,
Heralds of mercy to the frozen north ;
Like mariners with seal'd instructions sent,
They went in faith, (as childless Abram went
To dwell by sufferance in a land, decreed
The future birthright of his promised seed,)
Unknowing whither ;—uninquiring why
Their lot was cast beneath so strange a sky,
Where cloud nor star appear'd, to mortal sense
Pointing the hidden path of Providence,
And all around was darkness to be felt ;
—Yet in that darkness light eternal dwelt ;
They knew,—and 'twas enough for them to know,
The still small voice that whisper'd them to go ;
For He, who spake by that mysterious voice,
Inspired their will, and made His call their choice.

See the swift vessel bounding o'er the tide,
That wafts, with CHRISTIAN DAVID for their guide,
Two young Apostles on their joyful way
To regions in the twilight verge of day :
Freely they quit the clime that gave them birth,
Home, kindred, friendship, all they loved on earth ;
What things were gain before, accounting loss,
And glorying in the shame, they bear the cross ;
—Not as the Spaniard, on his flag unfurl'd,
A bloody omen through a Pagan world :
—Not the vain image, which the Devotee
Clasps as the God of his idolatry ;
But in their hearts, to Greenland's western shore,
That dear memorial of their Lord they bore ;
Amidst the wilderness to lift the sign
Of wrath appeased by sacrifice divine ;
And bid a serpent-stung and dying race
Look on their Healer, and be saved by grace.

CANTO SECOND.

Hopes and Fears—The Brethren pursue their Voyage—A Digression on Iceland.

WHAT are thine hopes, Humanity!—thy fears?
 Poor voyager, upon this flood of years,
 Whose tide, unturning, hurries to the sea
 Of dark, unsearchable eternity,
 The fragile skiffs, in which thy children sail
 A day, an hour, a moment, with the gale,
 Then vanish;—gone like eagles on the wind,
 Or fish in waves, that yield and close behind?
 Thine Hopes,—lost anchors buried in the deep,
 That rust, through storm and calm, in iron sleep;
 Whose cables, loose aloft and fix'd below,
 Rot with the sea-weed, floating to and fro!
 Thy Fears,—are wrecks that strew the fatal surge,
 Whose whirlpools swallow, or whose currents urge,
 Adventurous barks on rocks, that lurk at rest,
 Where the blue halcyon builds her foam-light nest;
 Or strand them on illumined shoals, that gleam
 Like drifted gold in summer's cloudless beam:
 Thus would thy race, beneath their parent's eye,
 Live without knowledge, without prospect die.
 But when Religion bids her spirit breathe,
 And opens bliss above and wo beneath;
 When God reveals his march through Nature's night
 His steps are beauty, and his presence light,
 His voice is life:—the dead in conscience start;
 They feel a new creation in the heart.
 Ah! then Humanity, thy hopes, thy fears,
 How changed, how wondrous!—On this tide of years,
 Though the frail barks, in which thine offspring sail
 Their day, their hour, their moment with the gale,
 Must perish;—Shipwreck only sets them free;
 With joys unmeasured as eternity,
 They ply on seas of glass their golden oars,
 And pluck immortal fruits along the shores;

Nor shall *their* cables fail, *their* anchors rust,
Who wait the resurrection of the just :
Moor'd on the Rock of Ages, though decay
Moulder the weak terrestrial frame away,
The trumpet sounds,—and lo ! wherever spread,
Earth, air, and ocean render back their dead ;
And souls with bodies, spiritual, and divine,
In the new heavens, like stars, for ever shine.
These are thine Hopes :—thy Fears what tongue can tell ?
Behold them graven on the gates of Hell :
“ The wrath of God abideth here : his breath
Kindled the flames :—*this* is the second death.”
’Twas Mercy wrote the lines of judgment there ;
None who from earth can read them may despair !
Man !—let the warning strike presumption dumb ;—
Awake, arise, escape the wrath to come ;
No resurrection from *that* grave shall be ;
The worm within is—immortality.

The terrors of Jehovah, and his grace,
The Brethren bear to earth’s remotest race.
And now, exulting on their swift career,
The northern waters narrowing in the rear,
They rise upon th’ Atlantic flood, that rolls
Shoreless and fathomless between the poles,
Whose waves the east and western world divide,
Then gird the globe with one circumfluent tide ;
For mighty Ocean, by whatever name
Known to vain man, is everywhere the same,
And deems all regions by his gulfs embraced
But vassal tenures of his sovereign waste.
Clear shines the sun ; the surge, intensely blue,
Assumes by day heaven’s own aerial hue :
Buoyant and beautiful, as through a sky,
On balanced wings, behold the vessel fly !
Invisibly impell’d, as though it felt
A soul, within its heart of oak that dwelt,
Which broke the billows with spontaneous force,
Ruled the free elements, and chose its course.

Not so:—and yet along the trackless realm,
 A hand unseen directs th' unconscious helm ;
 The Power that sojourn'd in the cloud by day,
 And fire by night, on Israel's desert way ;
 That Power the obedient vessel owns :—His will,
 Tempest and calm, and death and life, fulfil.

Day following day the current smoothly flows ;
 Labour is but refreshment from repose ;
 Perils are vanish'd ; every fear resign'd ;
 Peace walks the waves, Hope carols on the wind ;
 And time so sweetly travels o'er the deep,
 They feel his motion like the fall of sleep
 On weary limbs, that, stretch'd in stillness, seem
 To float upon the eddy of a stream,
 Then sink,—to wake in some transporting dream.
 Thus, while the Brethren far in exile roam,
 Visions of Greenland show their future home.
 —Now a dark speck, but brightening as it flies,
 A vagrant sea-fowl glads their eager eyes ;
 How lovely, from the narrow deck to see
 The meanest link of nature's family,
 Which makes us feel, in dreariest solitude,
 Affinity with all that breathe renew'd :
 At once a thousand kind emotions start,
 And the blood warms and mantles round the heart !
 —O'er the ship's lee, the waves in shadow seen,
 Change from deep indigo to beryl green,
 And wreaths of frequent weed, that slowly float,
 Land to the watchful mariner denote :
 Ere long the pulse beats quicker through his breast,
 When, like a range of evening clouds at rest,
 Iceland's gray cliffs and ragged coast he sees,
 But shuns them, leaning on the southern breeze ;
 And while they vanish far in distance, tells
 Of lakes of fire and necromancers' spells.

Strange Isle ! a moment to poetic gaze
 Rise in thy majesty of rocks and bays,

Glens, fountains, caves, that seem not things of earth,
 But the wild shapes of some prodigious birth;
 As if the kraken, monarch of the sea,
 Wallowing abroad in his immensity,
 By polar storms and lightning shafts assail'd,
 Wedged with ice-mountains, here had fought and fail'd;
 Perish'd—and in the petrifying blast,
 His hulk became an island rooted fast!
 —Rather, from ocean's dark foundation hurl'd,
 Thou art a type of his mysterious world,
 Buoy'd on the desolate abyss, to show
 What wonders of creation hide below.

Here Hecla's triple peaks, with meteor lights,
 Nature's own beacons, cheer hybernal nights:
 But when the orient flames in red array,
 Like ghosts the spectral splendours flee the day;
 Morn at her feet beholds supinely spread
 The carcass of the old chimera dead,
 That wont to vomit flames and molten ore,
 Now cleft asunder to the inmost core;
 In smouldering heaps, wide wrecks and cinders strown,
 Lie like the walls of Sodom overthrown,
 (Ere from the face of blushing Nature swept,
 And where the city stood the Dead Sea slept;)
 While inaccessible, tradition feigns,
 To human foot the guarded top remains,
 Where birds of hideous shape and doleful note,
 Fate's ministers, in livid vapours float.

Far off, amid the placid sunshine, glow
 Mountains with hearts of fire and crests of snow,
 Whose blacken'd slopes with deep ravines entrench'd,
 Their thunders silenced, and their lightnings quench'd,
 Still the slow heat of spent eruptions breathe,
 While embryo earthquakes swell their wombs beneath.

Hark! from yon caldron cave, the battle sound
 Of fire and water warring under ground;
 Rack'd on the wheels of an ebullient tide,
 Here might some spirit, fallen from bliss, abide,

Such fitful wailings of intense despair,
Such emanating splendours fill the air.
—He comes, he comes; the infuriate Geyser springs
Up to the firmament on vapoury wings;
With breathless awe the mounting glory view;
White, whirling clouds his steep ascent pursue.
But lo! a glimpse;—refulgent to the gale,
He starts all naked through his riven veil;
A fountain-column, terrible and bright,
A living, breathing, moving form of light;
From central earth to heaven's meridian thrown,
The mighty apparition towers alone,
Rising, as though for ever he could rise,
Storm and resume his palace in the skies.
All foam, and turbulence, and wrath below;
Around him beams the reconciling bow;
(Signal of peace, whose radiant girdle binds,
Till nature's doom, the waters and the winds;)
While mist and spray, condensed to sudden dews,
The air illumine with celestial hues,
As if the bounteous sun were raining down
The richest gems of his imperial crown.
In vain the spirit wrestles to break free,
Foot-bound to fathomless captivity;
A power unseen, by sympathetic spell
For ever working,—to his flinty cell,
Recalls him from the ramparts of the spheres;
He yields, collapses, lessens, disappears;
Darkness receives him in her vague abyss,
Around whose verge light froth and bubbles hiss,
While the low murmurs of the reflux tide
Far into subterranean silence glide,
The eye still gazing down the dread profound,
When the bent ear hath wholly lost the sound.
—But is he slain or sepulchred?—Again
The deathless giant sallies from his den,
Scales with recruited strength the ethereal walls,
Struggles afresh for liberty—and falls.

Yes, and for liberty the fight renew'd,
 By day, by night, undaunted, unsubdued,
 He shall maintain, till Iceland's solid base
 Fail, and the mountains vanish from its face.

And can these fail?—Of Alpine height and mould
 Schapta's unshaken battlements behold;
 His throne an hundred hills; his sun-crown'd head
 Resting on clouds; his robe of shadow spread
 O'er half the isle; he pours from either hand
 An unexhausted river through the land,
 On whose fair banks, through valleys warm and green,
 Cattle and flocks, and homes, and spires are seen.
 Here Nature's earthquake pangs were never felt;
 Here in repose hath man for ages dwelt;
 The everlasting mountain seems to say,
 "I am,—and I shall never pass away."

Yet fifty winters, and with huge uproar,
 Thy pride shall perish;—thou shalt be no more;
 Amidst chaotic ruins on the plain,
 Those cliffs, these waters shall be sought in vain!
 —Through the dim vista of unfolding years,
 A pageant of portentous wo appears.
 You rosy groups, with golden locks at play,
 I see them,—few, decrepit, silent, gray;
 Their fathers all at rest beneath the sod,
 Whose flowerless verdure marks the House of God,
 Home of the living and the dead;—where meet
 Kindred and strangers, in communion sweet,
 When dawns the Sabbath on the block-built pile;
 The kiss of peace, the welcome, and the smile
 Go round; till comes the Priest, a father there,
 And the bell knolls his family to prayer;
 Angels might stoop from thrones in heaven, to be
 Co-worshippers in such a family,
 Whom from their nooks and dells, where'er they roam,
 The Sabbath gathers to their common home.
 Oh! I would stand a keeper at this gate
 Rather than reign with kings in guilty state;

A day in such serene enjoyment spent
Were worth an age of splendid discontent !
—But whither am I hurried from my theme ?
Schapta returns on the prophetic dream.

From eve till morn strange meteors streak the pole ;
At cloudless noon mysterious thunders roll,
As if below both shore and ocean hurl'd
From deep convulsions of the nether world ;
Anon the river, boiling from its bed,
Shall leap its bounds and o'er the lowlands spread,
Then waste in exhalation,—leaving void
As its own channel, utterly destroy'd,
Fields, gardens, dwellings, churches, and their graves,
All wreck'd or disappearing with the waves,
The fugitives that 'scape this instant death
Inhale slow pestilence with every breath ;
Mephitic steams from Schapta's mouldering breast
With livid horror shall the air infest :
And day shall glare so foully on the sight,
Darkness were refuge from the curse of light.
Lo ! far among the glaciers, wrapt in gloom,
The red precursors of approaching doom,
Scatter'd and solitary founts of fire,
Unlock'd by hands invisible, aspire ;
Ere long more rapidly than eye can count,
Above, beneath, they multiply, they mount,
Converge, condense,—a crimson phalanx form,
And range aloft in one unbounded storm ;
From heaven's red roof the fierce reflections throw
A sea of fluctuating light below.
—Now the whole army of destroyers, fleet
As whirlwinds, terrible as lightnings, meet ;
The mountains melt like wax along their course,
When downward, pouring with resistless force,
Through the void channel where the river roll'd,
To ocean's verge their flaming march they hold ;
While blocks of ice, and crags of granite rent,
Half-fluid ore, and rugged minerals blent,

Float on the gulf, till molten or immersed,
Or in explosive thunderbolts dispersed,
Thus shall the Schapta, towering on the brink
Of unknown jeopardy, in ruin sink ;
And this wild paroxysm of frenzy past,
At her own work shall Nature stand aghast.

Look on this desolation :—mark you brow,
Once adamant, a cone of ashes now :
Here rivers swampt ; there valleys levell'd, plains
O'erwhelm'd ;—one black-red wilderness remains,
One crust of lava, through whose cinder-heat
The pulse of buried streams is felt to beat ;
These from the frequent fissures, eddying white,
Sublimed to vapour, issue forth like light
Amidst the sulphury fumes, that, drear and dun,
Poison the atmosphere and blind the sun.
Above, as if the sky had felt the stroke
Of that volcano, and consumed to smoke,
One cloud appears in heaven, and one alone,
Hung round the dark horizon's craggy zone,
Forming at once the vast encircling wall,
And the dense roof of some Tartarean hall,
Propt by a thousand pillars, huge and strange,
Fantastic forms that every moment change,
As hissing, surging from the floor beneath,
Volumes of steam th' imprison'd waters breathe.
Then should the sun, ere evening gloom ascend,
Quick from the west the murky curtain rend,
And pour the beauty of his beams between
These hideous arches, and light up the scene ;
At the sweet touch of his transforming rays
With amber lustre all the columns blaze,
And the thick folds of cumbrous fog aloof
Change to rich drapery of celestial woof :
With such enchantment air and earth were fraught,
Beyond the colouring of the wealthiest thought
That Iceland Scalds, transported at the view,
Might deem the legends of their fathers true,

And here behold, illumining the waste,
 The palace of immortal Odin placed ;
 Till rapt imagination joy'd to hear
 The neigh of steeds, the clank of armour near,
 And saw, in barbarous state, the tables spread
 With shadowy food, and compass'd with the dead,
 Weary from conflicts,—still the fierce delight
 Of spectre-warriors, in the daily fight :
 Then while they quaff'd the mead from skulls of foes,
 By whirlwind gusts the din of battle rose ;
 The strife of tongues, the tournament of words
 Following the shock of shields, the clash of swords ;
 Till, gorged and drunken at th' enormous feast,
 Awhile their revels and their clamours ceased ;
 Ceased to the eye and ear ;—yet where they lay,
 Like sleeping lions, surfeited with prey,
 In tawny groups, recumbent through the den,
 In dreams the heroes drank and fought again.

Away with such Divinities ! their birth
 Man's brain-sick superstition, and their mirth
 Lust, rapine, cruelty :—their fell employ
 God's works and their own votaries to destroy.
 —The Runic Bard to nobler themes shall string
 His ancient harp, and mightier triumphs sing :
 For glorious days are risen on Iceland :—clear
 The gospel-trumpet sounds to every ear,
 And deep in many a heart the Spirit's voice
 Bids the believing soul in hope rejoice.
 O'er the stern face of this tempestuous isle,
 Though briefly Spring, and Autumn never, smile,
 Truth walks with naked foot th' unyielding snows,
 And the glad desert blossoms like the rose.
 Though earthquakes heave, though torrents drown his cot,
 Volcanoes waste his fields.—the peasant's lot
 Is blest beyond the destiny of kings :
 —Lifting his eyes above sublunar things,
 Like dying Stephen, when he saw in prayer
 Heaven open'd, and his Saviour beckoning there,

He cries, and clasps his Bible to his breast,
 "Let the earth perish,—*here* is not my rest."

CANTO THIRD.

The Voyage to Greenland concluded—A Fog at Sea—Ice-fields—Eclipse of the Sun—The Greenland Fable of Malina and Aninga—A Storm—The Ice-blink—Northern Lights—The Brethren land.

How speed the faithful witnesses, who bore
 The Bible and its hopes to Greenland's shore?
 —Like Noah's ark, alone upon the wave
 (Of one lost world the immeasurable grave),
 Yonder the ship, a solitary speck,
 Comes bounding from the horizon; while on deck
 Again imagination rests her wing,
 And smooths her pinions, while the Pilgrims sing
 Their vesper oraisons.—The Sun retires,
 Not as he wont, with clear and golden fires;
 Bewilder'd in a labyrinth of haze,
 His orb redoubled, with discolour'd rays,
 Struggles and vanishes:—along the deep,
 With slow array, expanding vapours creep,
 Whose folds, in twilight's yellow glare uncurl'd,
 Present the dreams of an unreal world;
 Islands in air suspended; marching ghosts
 Of armies, shapes of castles, winding coasts,
 Navies at anchor, mountains, woods, and streams,
 Where all is strange, and nothing what it seems;
 Till deep involving gloom, without a spark
 Of star, moon, meteor, desolately dark,
 Seals up the vision:—then, the Pilot's fears
 Slacken his arm; a doubtful course he steers,
 Till morning comes, but comes not clad in light;
 Uprisen day is but a paler night
 Revealing not a glimpse of sea or sky;
 The ship's circumference bounds the sailor's eye.

So cold and dense the impervious fog extends,
He might have touch'd the point where being ends ;
His bark is all the universe ; so void
The scene,—as though creation were destroy'd,
And he and his few mates, of all their race,
Were here becalm'd in everlasting space.

Silent and motionless, above, below,
The sails all struck, the waves unheard to flow,
In this drear blank of utter solitude,
Where life stands still, no faithless fears intrude ;
Through that impervious veil the Brethren see
The face of omnipresent Deity :
Nor Him alone ;—whate'er his hand hath made ;
His glory in the firmament display'd ;
The sun majestic in his course, and sole ;
The moon and stars rejoicing round the pole ;
Earth o'er its peopled realms and wastes unknown,
Clad in the wealth of every varying zone ;
Ocean through all the enchantment of his forms,
From breathing calms to devastating storms ;
Heaven in the vision of eternal bliss,
Death's terrors, hell's unsearchable abyss ;
—Though rapt in secrecy from human eye,
These in the mind's profound sensorium lie.
And, with their Maker, by a glance of thought,
Are in a moment to remembrance brought ;
Then most, when most restrain'd, th' imperfect sight.
God and his works shine forth in His own light.
Yet clearest through that veil the Pilgrims trace
Their Father's image in their Saviour's face ;
A sigh can waft them to his feet in prayer,
Not Gabriel bends with more acceptance there,
Nor to the throne from heaven's pure altar rise
The odours of a sweeter sacrifice,
Than when before the mercy-seat they kneel,
And tell Him all they fear, or hope, or feel ;
Perils without, and enemies within,
Satan, the world, temptation, weakness, sin ;

Yet rest unshaken on his sure defence,
 Invincible through his omnipotence :
 "Oh! step by step," they cry, "direct our way,
 And give thy grace, like manna, day by day ;
 The store of yesterday will not suffice,
 To-morrow's sun to us may never rise ;
 Safe only when our souls are stay'd on Thee ;
 Rich only when we know our poverty."

And step by step the Lord those suppliants led ;
 He gave them daily grace like daily bread ;
 By sea, on shore, through all their pilgrimage,
 In rest and labour, to their latest age,
 Sharp though their trials, and their comforts scant,
 God was their refuge, and they knew not want.

On rustling pinions, like an unseen bird,
 Among the yards a stirring breeze is heard ;
 The conscious vessel wakes as from a trance,
 Her colours float, the filling sails advance ;
 White from her prow the murmuring surge recedes :
 —So the swan, startled from her nest of reeds,
 Swells into beauty, and with curving chest,
 Cleaves the blue lake, with motion soft as rest.
 Light o'er the liquid lawn the pageant glides ;
 Her helm the well-experienced pilot guides,
 And while he threads the mist-enveloped maze,
 Turns to the magnet his inquiring gaze,
 In whose mute oracle, where'er he steers,
 The pointing hand of Providence appears ;
 With this, though months of gloom the main enrobe,
 His keel might plough a furrow round the globe.

Again the night ascends without a star :
 Low sounds come booming o'er the waves afar,
 As if conflicting navies shook the flood,
 With human thunders in the strife of blood,
 That slay more victims in one brief campaign,
 Than heaven's own bolt through centuries have slain.
 The seaman hearkens ;—colour flies his cheek.
 His stout heart throbs with fears he dares not speak ;

No lightning-splendours streak the unbroken gloom ;
 —His bark may shoot the gulf beyond the tomb,
 And he, if e'er it come, may meet a light,
 Which never yet hath dawn'd on living sight.
 Fresher and fresher blows the insurgent gale ;
 He reefs his tops, he narrows sail by sail,
 Yet feels the ship with swifter impulse sweep
 O'er mightier billows, the recoiling deep ;
 While still, with doleful omen on his ear,
 Come the deaf echoes of those sounds of fear,
 Distant,—yet every volley rolls more near.

Oh ! in that agony of thought forlorn,
 How longs th' impatient mariner for morn !
 She wakes,—his eyes are wither'd to behold
 The scene which her disastrous beams unfold :
 The fog is vanish'd, but the welkin lowers,
 Sharp hail descends, and sleet in blinding showers ;
 Ocean one bed of foam, with fury tost,
 In undistinguishable whiteness lost,
 Save where vast fields of ice their surface show,
 Buoyant, but many a fathom sunk below :
 Changing his station as the fragments pass,
 Death stands the pilot of each ponderous mass ;
 Gathering his brow into the darkest frown,
 He bolts his raft to run the victim down,
 But shoots astern :—the shock the vessel feels,
 A moment in the giddy whirlpool reels,
 Then like an arrow soars, as through the air,
 So high the salient waves their burden bear.

Quick skirmishes with floating batteries past,
 Ruin inevitable threats at last :
 Athwart the north, like ships of battle spread,
 Winter's flotilla, by their captain led,
 (Who boasts with these to make his prowess known,
 And plant his foot beyond the arctic zone.)
 Islands of ice, so wedged and grappled lie,
 One moving continent appals the eye,

And to the ear renews those notes of doom,
That brought portentous warnings through the gloom ;
For loud and louder, with explosive shocks,
Sudden convulsions split the frost-bound rocks,
And launch loose mountains on the frothing ooze,
As pirate-barks, on summer seas to cruize,
In front this perilous array ;—behind,
Borne on the surges, driven by the wind,
The vessel hurries to the brink of fate ;
All efforts fail,—but prayer is not too late :
Then, in the imminent and ghastly fall
Foul on destruction,—the disciples call
On Him, their Master, who, in human form,
Slept in the lap of the devouring storm ;
On Him, who in the midnight watch was seen,
Walking the gulf, ineffably serene,
At whose rebuke the tempest ceased to roar,
The winds caress'd the waves, the waves the shore.
On Him they call :—their prayer, in faith preferr'd,
Amidst the frantic hurricane is heard ;
He gives the sign, by none in earth or heaven
Known, but by him to whom the charge is given,
The Angel of the Waters ;—he, whose wrath
Had hurl'd the vessel on that shipwreck path,
Becomes a minister of grace ;—his breath
Blows,—and the enemies are scatter'd,—Death,
Refit of his quarry, plunges through the wave,
Buried himself where he had mark'd their grave.
The line of battle broken, and the chain
Of that armada, which oppress'd the main,
Snapt hopelessly asunder, quickly all
The enormous masses in disruption fall.
And the weak vessel, through the chaos wild
Led by the mighty Angel,—as a child,
Snatch'd from its crib, and in the mother's arms
Borne through a midnight tumult of alarms,—
Escapes the wrecks : nor slackens her career,
Till sink the forms, and cease the sounds of fear,

And He, who rules the universe at will,
Saith to the reinless elements, "Be still."

Then rise sweet hymns of gratulation : praise
From hearts and voices, in harmonious lays ;—
So Israel sang deliverance, when he stood
By the Red Sea, and saw the morning-flood,
That in its terrible embraces bore
The slain pursuers and their spoils on shore.

Light-breathing gales awhile their course propel,
The billows roll with pleasurable swell,
Till the seventh dawn ; when o'er the pure expanse
The sun, like lightning, throws his earliest glance,
"Land ! Land !" exclaims the ship-boy from the mast,
"Land ! Land !" with one electric shock hath pass'd
From lip to lip, and every eye hath caught
The cheering glimpse so long, so dearly sought ;
Yet must imagination half supply
The doubtful streak, dividing sea and sky :
Not clearly known, till in sublimer day,
From icy cliffs refracted splendours play,
And clouds of sea-fowl high in ether sweep,
Or fall like stars through sunshine on the deep.
'Tis Greenland ! but so desolately bare,
Amphibious life alone inhabits there ;
'Tis Greenland ! yet so beautiful the sight,
The Brethren gaze with undisturb'd delight :
In silence (as before the throne), they stand,
And pray, in prospect of that promised land,
That He, who sends them thither may abide
Through the waste howling wilderness their guide ;
And the good shepherd seek his straying flocks,
Lost on those frozen waves and herbless rocks,
By the still waters of his comforts lead,
And in the pastures of salvation feed.

Their faith must yet be tried :—the sun at noon
Shrinks from the shadow of the passing moon,
Till, ray by ray, of all his pomp bereft
(Save one slight ring of quivering lustre left),

Total eclipse involves his peerless eye :
Portentous twilight creeps around the sky ;
The frightened sea-birds to their haunts repair ;
There is a freezing stillness in the air,
As if the blood through Nature's veins ran cold,
A prodigy so fearful to behold ;
A few faint stars gleam through the dread serene,
Trembling and pale spectators of the scene ;
While the rude mariners, with stern amaze,
As on some tragic execution gaze,
When calm but awful guilt is stretcht to feel
The torturing fire, or dislocating wheel,
And life, like light from yonder orb, retires,
Spark after spark, till the whole man expires.
Yet may the darken'd sun and mourning skies
Point to a higher, holier sacrifice ;
The Brethren's thoughts to Calvary's brow ascend,
Round the Redeemer's Cross their spirits bend,
And while heaven frowns, earth shudders, graves disclose
The forms of sleepers, startled from repose,
They catch the blessing of his latest breath,
Mark his last look, and through th' eclipse of death
See lovelier beams than Tabor's vision shed,
Wreath a meek halo round his sacred head.
To Greenland then, with quick compassion, turn
Their deepest sympathies ; their bosoms burn,
To her barbarian race, with tongues of flame,
His love, his grief, his glory to proclaim.

Oh could they view, in this alarming hour,
Those wretched ones, themselves beneath the power
Of darkness, while the shadow clips the sun !
How to their dens the fierce sea-hunters run,
Who death in every shape of peril brave,
By storms and monsters, on the faithless wave,
But now in speechless horror lie aghast,
Till the malignant prodigy be past :
While bolder females, with tormenting spells,
Consult their household dogs as oracles,

And by the yelping of their curs divine
That still the earth may stand, the sun may shine.
Then forth they creep, and to their offspring tell
What fate of old a youth and maid befell:
How, in the age of night, ere day was born
On the blue hills of undiscover'd morn;
Where one pale cresset twinkled through the shade,
MALINA and her gay companions play'd
A thousand mimic sports, as children wont;
They hide, they seek, they shoot, harpoon and hunt;
When lo! ANINGA, passionate and young,
Keen as a wolf, upon his sister sprung,
And pounced his victim;—gentler way to woo
He knew not, or he scorn'd it if he knew:
MALINA snatch'd her lamp, and in the dark
Dash'd on his felon-front a hideous mark,
Slipt from his foul embrace (and laugh'd aloud),
Soft as the rainbow melting from the cloud;
Then shot to heaven, and in her wondrous flight
Transform'd her image, sparkled into light,
Became the sun, and through the firmament,
Forth in the glory of a goddess went.
ANINGA baffled, madden'd, unsubdued,
By her own beams the fugitive pursued,
And when she set, his broad, disfigur'd mien
As the dim moon among the stars was seen;
Thenceforward doom'd his sister's steps to chase,
But ne'er o'ertake in heaven's eternal race.
Yet when his vanish'd orb might seem to sleep,
He takes his monthly pastime on the deep,
Through storms, o'er cataracts, in his Kayak sails,
Strikes with unerring dart the polar whales,
Or o'er ice-mountains, in his dog-drawn car,
Pursues the rein-deer to the farthest star.
But when eclipse his baleful disk invades,
He prowls for prey among the Greenland maids,
Till roaring drums, belabouring sticks, and cries
Repel the errant Demon to the skies.

The sun hath cast aside his veil ;—he shines
With purest splendour till his orb declines ;
Then landward, marshalling in black array,
Eruptive vapours drive him from the day ;
And night again, with premature control,
Binds light in chains of darkness o'er the pole ;
Heaven in one ebon mass of horror scowls :
—Anon a universal whirlwind howls,
With such precipitation dash'd on high,
Not from one point, but from the whole dark sky,
The surges at the onset shrink aghast,
Borne down beneath the paralyzing blast ;
But soon the mad tornado slants its course,
And rolls them into mountains by main force,
Then utterly embroil'd, through clouds and waves,
As 'twixt two oceans met in conflict, raves.
Now to the passive bark, alternate tost,
Above, below, both sea and sky are lost,
All but the giddy summit, where her keel
Hangs in light balance on the billowy wheel :
Then, as the swallow in his windward flight,
Quivers the wing, returns, and darts downright,
She plunges through the blind abyss, and o'er
Her groaning masts the cavern'd waters roar.
Ruled by the hurricane, no more the helm
Obeys the pilot ;—seas on seas o'erwhelm
The deck ; where oft embattled currents meet,
Foam in white whirlpools, flash to spray, retreat,
And rack the vessel with their huge turmoils,
Like the cork float around the fisher's toils.
Three days of restless agony, that seem
Of one delirious night the waking dream,
The mariners in vain their labours ply,
Or sick at heart in pale despondence lie.
The Brethren weak, yet firm as when they faced
Winter's ice-legions on his own bleak waste,
In patient hope, that utters no complaint,
Pray without ceasing ; pray, and never faint ;

Assured that He, who from the tempest's neck
 Hath loosed his grasp, still holds it at his beck,
 And with a pulse too deep for mortal sense,
 The secret pulse of his omnipotence,
 That beats through every motion of the storm,
 —Can check destruction in its wildest form :
 Bow'd to his will,—their lot how truly blest,
 Who live to serve Him, and who die to rest !

To live and serve Him is their Lord's decree ;
 He curbs the wind, He calms th' infuriate sea ;
 The sea and wind their Maker's yoke obey,
 And wait his servants on their destined way.
 Though many a league by that disaster driven
 Thwart from their course ; with planks and cordage riven,
 With hands disabled, and exhausted strength,
 The active crew refit their bark at length ;
 Along the placid gulf, with heaving sails,
 That catch from every point propitious gales,
 Led like the moon, from infancy to age,
 Round the wide zodiac of her pilgrimage,
 Onward and smooth their voyage they pursue
 Till Greenland's coast again salutes their view.

'Tis sunset : to the firmament serene,
 Th' Atlantic wave reflects a gorgeous scene ;
 Broad in the cloudless west a belt of gold
 Girds the blue hemisphere ; above unroll'd
 The keen, clear air grows palpable to sight,
 Embodied in a flush of crimson light,
 Through which the evening star, with milder gleam,
 Descends, to meet her image in the stream.
 Far in the east, what spectacle unknown
 Allures the eye to gaze on it alone ?
 —Amidst black rocks, that lift on either hand
 Their countless peaks, and mark receding land ;
 Amidst a tortuous labyrinth of seas,
 That shine around the arctic Cyclades ;
 Amidst a coast of dreariest continent,
 In many a shapeless promontory rent ;

—O'er rocks, seas, islands, promontories spread,
 The Ice-Blink rears its undulated head,
 On which the sun, beyond th' horizon shrined,
 Hath left his richest garniture behind ;
 Piled on a hundred arches, ridge by ridge,
 O'er fix'd and fluid strides the Alpine bridge,
 Whose blocks of sapphire seem to mortal eye
 Hewn from cerulean quarries of the sky ;
 With glacier-battlements, that crowd the spheres,
 The slow creation of six thousand years,
 Amidst immensity it towers sublime,
 —Winter's eternal palace, built by Time :
 All human structures by his touch are borne
 Down to the dust ;—mountains themselves are worn
 With his light footsteps ; *here* for ever grows,
 Amid the region of unmelting snows,
 A monument ; where every flake that falls
 Gives adamantine firmness to the walls.
 The sun beholds no mirror, in his race,
 That shows a brighter image of his face ;
 The stars, in their nocturnal vigils, rest
 Like signal fires on its illumined crest ;
 The gliding moon around the ramparts wheels,
 And all its magic lights and shades reveals ;
 Beneath, the tide with idle fury raves
 To undermine it through a thousand caves ;
 Rent from its roof, though thundering fragments oft
 Plunge to the gulf ; immovable aloft,
 From age to age, in air, o'er sea, on land,
 Its turrets heighten and its piers expand.
 Midnight hath told his hour ; the moon yet young,
 Hangs in the argent west her bow unstrung ;
 Larger and fairer, as her lustre fades.
 Sparkle the stars amidst the deepening shades ;
 Jewels more rich than night's regalia gem
 The distant Ice-Blink's spangled diadem ;
 Like a new morn from orient darkness, there
 Phosphoric splendours kindle in mid air,

As though from heaven's self-opening portals came
Legions of spirits in an orb of flame,
—Flame, that from every point an arrow sends,
Far as the concave firmament extends:
Spun with the tissue of a million lines,
Glistening like gossamer the welkin shines:
The constellations in their pride look pale
Through the quick trembling brilliance of that veil;
Then suddenly converged, the meteors rush
O'er the wide south; one deep vermilion blush
O'erspreads Orion glaring on the flood,
And rabid Sirius foams through fire and blood;
Again the circuit of the pole they range,
Motion and figure every moment change,
Through all the colours of the rainbow run,
Or blaze like wrecks of a dissolving sun;
Wide ether burns with glory, conflict, flight,
And the glad ocean dances in the light.

The seaman's jealous eye askance surveys
This pageantry of evanescent rays,
While in the horror of misgiving fear
New storms already thunder on his ear:
But morning comes, and brings him sweet release;
Day shines and sets; at evening all is peace;
Another and another day is past;
The fourth appears,—the loveliest and the last;
The sails are furl'd; the anchor drags the sand;
The boat hath cross'd the creek;—the Brethren land.

CANTO FOURTH.

Retrospect of ancient Greenland—The Discovery of Iceland, of Greenland, of Winland—The Norwegian Colonies on the Eastern and Western Coasts of Greenland—The Appearance of the Skraelings, or modern Greenlanders, in the West, and the Destruction of the Norwegian Settlers in that Quarter.

HERE while in peace the weary Pilgrims rest,
 Turn we our voyage from the new-found west,
 Sail up the current of departed time,
 And seek along its banks that vanish'd clime,
 By ancient scalds in Runic verse renown'd,
 Now like old Babylon no longer found.
 —“ Oft was I weary when I toil'd at thee ;”
 This, on an oar abandon'd to the sea,
 Some hand had graven:—from what founder'd boat
 It fell ;—how long on ocean's waves afloat ;
 —Who mark'd it with that melancholy line ;
 No record tells :—Greenland ! such fate was thine ;
 Whate'er thou wast, of thee remains no more
 Than a brief legend on a foundling oar ;
 And he, whose song would now revive thy fame,
 Grasps but the shadow of a mighty name.

From Asia's fertile womb, when Time was young,
 And earth a wreck, the sires of nations sprung ;
 In Shinar's land of rivers, Babel's tower
 Stood the lorn relic of their scatter'd power ;
 A broken pillar, snapt as from the spheres,
 Slow-wasting through the silent lapse of years,
 While o'er the regions, by the flood destroy'd,
 The builders breathed new life throughout the void,
 Soul, passion, intellect ; till blood of man
 Through every artery of Nature ran ;
 O'er eastern islands pour'd its quickening stream,
 Caught the warm crimson of the western beam,
 Beneath the burning line made fountains start
 In the dry wilderness of Afric's heart,
 And through the torpid north, with genial heat,
 Taught love's exhilarating pulse to beat ;

Till the great sun, in his perennial round,
 Man, of all climes the restless native, found,
 Pursuing folly in his vain career,
 As if existence were immortal here :
 While on the fathers' graves the sons, untaught
 By their mischance, the same illusions sought,
 By gleams and shadows measured wo and bliss,
 As though unborn for any world but this.

Five thousand years, unvisited, unknown,
 Greenland lay slumbering in the frozen zone,—
 While heaven's resplendent host pursued their way
 To light the wolf and eagle to their prey,
 And tempests o'er the main their terrors spread
 To rock Leviathan upon his bed :—
 Ere Ingolf his undaunted flag unfurl'd
 To search the secrets of the polar world.
 'Twas liberty, that fires the coldest veins,
 And exile, famine, death, prefers to chains ;
 'Twas liberty, through floods unplough'd before,
 That led his gallant crew from Norway's shore ;
 They cut their cable, and in thunder broke
 With their departing oars the tyrant's yoke ;
 The deep their country, and their bark their home,
 A floating isle, on which they joy'd to roam
 Amidst immensity : with waves and wind,
 Now sporting and now wrestling ;—unconfined,
 Save by the blue surrounding firmament,
 Full, yet for ever widening as they went :
 Thus sail'd those mariners, unheeding where
 They found a port, if Freedom anchor'd there.

By stars that never set, their course they steer'd,
 And northward with indignant impulse veer'd,
 For sloth had lull'd and luxury o'errun,
 And bondage seized, the realms that loved the sun.
 At length by mountain-ice, with perils strange,
 Menaced, repell'd, and forced their track to change,
 They bade the unimprison'd raven fly,
 A living compass through the chartless sky ;

Up to the zenith, swift as fire, he soar'd,
Through the clear boundless atmosphere explored
The dim horizon stretch'd beneath his sight ;
Then to the west full-onward shot his flight :
Thither they follow ; till from Thule's rocks,
Around the bird of tempests rose the flocks
Of screaming sea-fowl, widening ring o'er ring,
Till heaven grew dark ; then wheeling on the wing
Landward they whiten all the rocks below,
Or diving melt into the gulf like snow.
Pleased with the proud discovery, Ingolf gave
His lintel and his doorposts to the wave,
Divining, as they drifted to the strand,
The will of destiny,—the place to land.
There on a homeless soil his foot he placed,
Framed his hut-palace, colonized the waste,
And ruled his horde with patriarchal sway :
—Where justice reigns, 'tis freedom to obey :
And there his race, in long succession blest,
(Like generations in the eagle's nest,
Upon their own hereditary rock,)
Flourish'd, invincible to every shock
Of time, chance, foreign force, or civil rage,—
A noble dynasty from age to age ;
And Iceland shone for generous lore renown'd,
A northern light, when all was gloom around.
Ere long, by brave adventurers on the tide,
A new Hesperian region was descried,
Which fancy deem'd, or fable feign'd, so fair,
Fleets from old Norway pour'd their settlers there,
Who traced and peopled far that double shore,
Round whose repelling rocks two oceans roar,
Till at the southern promontory, tost
By tempests, each is in its rival lost.
Thus Greenland (so that arctic world they named)
Was planted, and to utmost Calpe famed
For wealth exhaustless, which her seas could boast,
And prodigies of Nature on her coast ;

Where, in the green recess of every glen,
The House of Prayer o'ertopt th' abodes of men,
And flocks and cattle grazed by summer-streams,
That track'd the valleys with meandering gleams :
While on the mountains ice eternal frown'd,
And growing glaciers deepen'd tow'rd's the ground
Year after year, as centuries roll'd away,
Nor lost one moment till that judgment-day
When eastern Greenland from the world was rent
Ingulf'd,—or fix'd one frozen continent.

'Twere long and dreary to recount in rhyme
The crude traditions of that long-lost clime :
To sing of wars, by barbarous chieftains waged,
In which as fierce and noble passions raged,
Heroes as subtle, bold, remorseless, fought,
And deeds as dark and terrible were wrought,
As round Troy-walls became the splendid themes
Of Homer's song, and Jove's Olympian dreams ;
When giant-prowess, in the iron field,
With single arm made phalanx'd legions yield ;
When battle was but massacre,—the strife
Of murderers,—steel to steel, and life to life.
—Who follows Homer takes the field too late ;
Though stout as Hector, sure of Hector's fate,
A wound as from Achilles' spear he feels,
Falls, and adorns the Grecian's chariot-wheels.

Nor stay we monkish legends to rehearse ;
To build their cloister-walls in Gothic verse ;
Of groves and gardens, wine and music tell ;
Fresh roses breathing round the hermit's cell,
And baths, in which Diana's nymphs might lave,
—From earth's self-opening veins the blood-warm wave,
Whose genial streams, amidst departed ice,
Made laps of verdure,—like those isles of spice
In eastern seas ; or rich oases, graced
With flowers and fountains, in the Lybian waste.

Rather the muse would stretch a mightier wing,
Of a new world the earliest dawn to sing ;

How,—long ere Science, in a dream of thought,
Earth's younger daughter to Columbus brought,
And sent him, like the Faerie Prince, in quest
Of *that* "bright vestal throned in the west,"²
—Greenland's bold sons, by instinct, sallied forth
On barks, like icebergs, drifting from the north,
Cross'd without magnet undiscover'd seas,
And, all surrendering to the stream and breeze,
Touch'd on the line of that twin-bodied land,
That stretches forth to either pole a hand,
From arctic wilds that see no winter-sun,
To where the oceans of the world are one,
And round Magellan's straits, Fuego's shore,
Atlantic, Indian, and Pacific roar.

Regions of beauty there these rovers found,
The flowery hills with emerald woods were crown'd ;
Spread o'er the vast savannahs, buffalo herds
Ranged without master ; and the bright-wing'd birds
Made gay the sunshine as they glanced along,
Or turn'd the air to music with their song.

Here from his mates a German youth had stray'd,
Where the broad river cleft the forest glade ;
Swarming with alligator-shoals, the flood
Blazed in the sun, or moved in clouds of blood ;
The wild boar rustled headlong through the brake ;
Like a live arrow leap'd the rattle-snake ;
The uncouth shadow of the climbing bear
Crawl'd on the grass, while he aspired in air ;
Anon with hoofs, like hail, the greenwood rang,
Among the scattering deer a panther sprang :
The stripling fear'd not,—yet he trod with awe,
As if enchantment breathed o'er all he saw,
Till in his path uprose a wilding vine ;
—Then o'er his memory rush'd the noble Rhine ;
Home and its joys, with fulness of delight,
So rapt his spirit, so beguiled his sight,
That, in those glens of savage solitude,
Vineyards and corn-fields, towns and spires he view'd,

And through the image-chamber of his soul
The days of other years like shadows stole ;
All that he once had been, again he grew,
Through every stage of life he pass'd anew ;
The playmates of his infancy were there,
With dimpled cheeks, blue eyes, and flaxen hair ;
The blythe companions of his riper youth,
And one whose heart was love, whose soul was truth.
—When the quick-mingling pictures of that dream
(Like broken scenery on a troubled stream,
Where sky and landscape, light and darkness, run
Through widening circles,) harmonized in one,
His father's cot appeared, with vine-leaves drest,
And clusters pendent round the swallow's nest ;
In front the little garden, at whose gate,
Amidst their progeny, his parents sate,
He only absent ;—but his mother's eye
Look'd through a tear ;—she reach'd him with a sigh :
Then in a moment vanish'd time and space,
And with a shout he rush'd to her embrace ;
Round hills and dales the joyful tidings spread,
All ran to welcome TYRKEK from the dead.
With bliss inebriate, in that giddy trance,
He led his waltzing partner through the dance ;
And while he pluck'd the grapes that blush'd at hand,
Trode the rich wine-press in his native land,
Quaff'd the full flowing goblet, loosed his tongue,
And songs of vintage, harvest, battle sung,
At length his shipmates came : their laughter broke
The gay delusion ; in alarm he woke :
Transport to silent melancholy changed ;
At once from love, and joy, and hope estranged,
O'er his blank mind, with cold, bereaving spell,
Came that heart-sickness which no tongue can tell :
—Felt when, in foreign climes, midst sounds unknown,
We hear the speech or music of our own,
Roused to delight, from drear abstraction start,
And feel our country beating at our heart ;

The rapture of a moment ;—in its birth
It perishes for ever from the earth :
And dumb, like shipwreck'd mariners, we stand,
Eyeing by turns the ocean and the land,
Breathless ;—till tears the struggling thought release,
And the lorn spirit weeps itself to peace.

Winland the glad discoverers call'd that shore,
And back the tidings of its riches bore ;
But soon return'd with colonizing bands,
—Men that at home would sigh for unknown lands ;
Men of all weathers, fit for every toil,
War, commerce, pastime, peace, adventure, spoil ;
Bold master-spirits, where they touch'd they gain'd
Ascendance ; where they fix'd their foot they reign'd.
Both coasts they long inherited, though wide
Dissever'd ; stemming to and fro the tide,
Free as the Syrian dove explores the sky,
Their helm their hope, their compass in their eye,
They found at will, where'er they pleased to roam,
The ports of strangers or their northern home,
Still midst tempestuous seas and zones of ice,
Loved as their own, their *unlost* Paradise.
Yet was their Paradise for ever lost :
War, famine, pestilence, the power of frost,
Their woes combining, wither'd from the earth
This late creation, like a timeless birth,
The fruit of age and weakness, forced to light.
Breathing awhile,—relapsing into night.

Ages had seen the vigorous race, that sprung
From Norway's stormy forelands, rock'd when young
In ocean's cradle, hardening as they rose,
Like mountain-pines amidst perennial snows
—Ages had seen these sturdiest sons of Time
Strike root and flourish in that ruffian clime,
Commerce, with lovelier lands and wealthier hold,
Yet spurn the lures of luxury and gold ;
Beneath the umbrage of the Gallic vine,
For moonlight snows and cavern-shelter pine :

Turn from Campanian fields a lofty eye
 To gaze upon the glorious Alps, and sigh,
 Remembering Greenland; more and more endear'd,
 As far and farther from its shores they steer'd;
 Greenland their world,—and all was strange beside;
 Elsewhere they wander'd; here they lived and died.

At length a swarthy tribe, without a name,
 Unknown the point of windward whence they came;
 The power by which stupendous gulfs they cross'd,
 Or compass'd wilds of everlasting frost,
 Alike mysterious;—found their sudden way
 To Greenland; pour'd along the western bay
 Their straggling families; and seized the soil
 For their domain, the ocean for their spoil.

Skraellings the Normans call'd these hordes in scorn,
 That seem'd created on the spot,—though born
 In trans-Atlantic climes, and thither brought
 By paths as covert as the birth of thought;
 They were at once;—the swallow-tribes in spring
 Thus daily multiply upon the wing,
 As if the air, their element of flight,
 Brought forth new broods from darkness every night;
 Slipt from the secret hand of Providence,
 They come we see not how, nor know we whence.

A stunted, stern, uncouth, amphibious stock,
 Hewn from the living marble of the rock,
 Or sprung from mermaids, and in ocean's bed,
 With orcs and seals, in sunless caverns bred,
 They might have held, from unrecorded time,
 Sole patrimony in that hideous clime,
 So lithe their limbs, so fenced their frames to bear
 The intensest rigours of the polar air;
 Nimble, and muscular, and keen to run
 The rein-deer down a circuit of the sun;
 To climb the slippery cliffs, explore their cells,
 And storm and sack the sea-birds' citadels;
 In bands, through snows, the mother-bears to trace,
 Slay with their darts the cubs in her embrace,

And, while she lick'd their bleeding wounds, to brave
Her deadliest vengeance in her inmost cave :
Train'd with inimitable skill to float,
Each, balanced in his bubble of a boat,
With dexterous paddle steering through the spray,
With poised harpoon to strike his plunging prey,
As though the skiff, the seaman, car, and dart
Were one compacted body, by one heart
With instinct, motion, pulse, empower'd to ride
A human Nautilus upon the tide ;
Or with a fleet of Kayaks to assail
The desperation of the stranded whale,
When wedged 'twixt jagged rocks he writhes and rolls
In agony among the ebbing shoals,
Lashing the waves to foam, until the flood,
From wounds, like geysers, seems a bath of blood,
Echo all night dumb-pealing to his roar,
Till morn beholds him slain along the shore.

Of these,—hereafter should the lyre be strung
To arctic themes.—may glorious days be sung ;
Now be our task the sad reverse to tell,
How in their march the nobler Normans fell ;³
—Whether by dire disease, that turn'd the breath
Of bounteous heaven to pestilence and death,
In number, strength, and spirit worn away,
Their lives became the cool assassin's prey ;
—Or in the battle-field, as Skraellings boast,
These pigmies put to flight their giant-host,
When front to front on scowling cliffs they stood,
And shot their barbs athwart the parting flood ;
Arrow smote arrow, dart encounter'd dart,
From hand to hand, inpaling heart for heart ;
Till spent their missiles : quick as in a dream
The images are changed ; across the stream
The Skraellings rush'd, the precipices scaled ;
—O'erwhelm'd by multitude, the Normans fail'd :
A scatter'd remnant to the south retired,
But one by one along their route expired :

They perish'd ;—History can no more relate
 Of their obscure and unlamented fate :
 They perish'd ;—yet along that western shore,
 Where Commerce spread her colonies of yore,
 Ruins of temples and of homes are traced,
 —Steps of magnificence amidst the waste
 Where Time hath trod, and left those wrecks to show
 That life hath been, where all is Death below.

CANTO FIFTH.

*The Depopulation of the Norwegian Colonies on the Eastern Coast of Greenland,
 and the Abandonment of Intercourse with it from Europe, in consequence of the
 Increase of the Arctic Ices, about the Beginning of the Fifteenth Century.*

LAUNCH on the gulf, my little Greenland bark !
 Bear me through scenes unutterably dark ;
 Scenes with the mystery of Nature seal'd,
 Nor till the day of doom to be reveal'd.
 What though the spirits of the arctic gales
 Freeze round thy prow, or fight against thy sails,
 Safe as Arion, whom the dolphin bore,
 Enamour'd of his music, to the shore,
 On thee adventuring o'er an unknown main,
 I raise to warring elements a strain
 Of kindred harmony :—Oh, lend your breath,
 Ye tempests ! while I sing this reign of death :
 Utter dark sayings of the days of old ;
 In parables upon my harp unfold
 Deeds perish'd from remembrance ; truth, array'd,
 Like heaven by night, in emblematic shade,
 When shines the horoscope, and star on star,
 By what they are not lead to what they are ;
 Atoms, that twinkle in an infant's eye,
 Are worlds, suns, systems in th' unbounded sky :
 Thus the few fabled woes my strains create
 Are hieroglyphics in a book of Fate ;

And while the shadowy symbols I unroll,
Imagination reads a direr scroll.
Wake, ye wild visions! o'er the northern deep,
On clouds and winds, like warrior-spectres sweep;
Show by what plagues and hurricanes destroy'd,
A breathing realm became a torpid void.
The floods are raging, and the gales blow high,
Low as a dungeon-roof impends the sky;
Prisoners of hope, between the clouds and waves,
Six fearless sailors man yon boat, that braves
Peril redoubling upon peril past:
—From childhood nurslings of the wayward blast,
Aloft as o'er a buoyant arch they go,
Whose keystone breaks;—as deep they plunge below;
Unyielding, though the strength of man be vain;
Struggling, though borne like surf along the main;
In front, a battlement of rocks; in rear,
Billow on billow bounding: near, more near,
They verge to ruin:—life and death depend
On the next impulse;—shrieks and prayers ascend;
When, like the fish that mounts on drizzling wings,
Sheer from the gulf th' ejected vessel springs,
And grounds on inland ice, beyond the track
Of hissing foam-wreaths, whence the tide roll'd back;
Then ere that tide, returning to the charge,
Swallows the wreck, the captives are at large.
On either hand steep hills obstruct their path;
Behind, the ocean roaring in his wrath,
Mad as a Libyan wilderness by night,
With all its lions up, in chase or fight,
The fugitives right onward shun the beach,
Nor tarry till the inmost cove they reach,
Reclused in the labyrinthine dell,
Like the last hollow of a spiral shell.
There, with the axe or knife which haste could save,
They build a house:—perhaps they dig a grave:
Of solid snow, well-squared, and piled in blocks,
Brilliant as hewn from alabaster rocks,

Their palace rises, narrowing to the roof,
 And freezes into marble, tempest-proof;
 Night closing round, within its shade they creep,
 And weary Nature sinks at once to sleep.

Oh! could we walk amid-t their dreams, and see
 All that they have been, are, or wish to be,
 In fancy's world!—each at his own fireside:
 One greets a parent; one a new-made bride;
 Another clasps his babe with fond embrace,
 A smile in slumber mantling o'er his face;
 All dangers are forgotten in a kiss,
 Or but remember'd to exalt the bliss.
 —One wounded sufferer wakes, with pain opprest,
 Yet are his thoughts at home among the rest;
 Then beams his eye, his heart dilated burns,
 Till the dark vigil to a vision turns,
 That vision to reality: and home
 Is so endear'd, he vows no more to roam.
 Ha! suddenly he starts: with trembling lips,
 Salt shower drops oozing through the roof, he sips:
 Aware that instant, yet alarm'd too late,
 —The sea hath burst its barrier, fix'd their fate;
 Escape impossible: the tempests urge
 Through the deep dell the inundating surge:
 Nor wall nor roof th' impetuous flood controls;
 Above, around, within, the deluge rolls:
 He calls his comrades;—ere their doom be known,
 'Tis past;—the snow-house utterly o'erthrown,
 Its inmates vanish; never to be found,
 Living or dead, on habitable ground.

There is a beauteous hamlet in the vale;
 Green are the fields around it; sweetly sail
 The twilight shadows o'er the darkening scene,
 Earth, air, and ocean, all alike serene;
 Dipt in the hues of sunset, wreath'd in zones,
 The clouds are resting on their mountain-thrones;
 One peak alone exalts its glacier crest,
 A golden paradise, above the rest;

Thither the day with lingering steps retires,
And in its own blue element expires :
Thus Aaron laid his gorgeous robes aside
On Horeb's consecrated top, and died.
The moon, meanwhile, o'er ocean's sombre bed,
New-risen, a thousand glow-worm lights hath spread ;
From east to west the wildfire splendours glance,
And all the billows in her glory dance ;
Till, in mid-heaven, her orb might seem the eye
Of Providence, wide-watching from the sky,
While nature slumbers :—emblem of *His* grace
Whose presence fills the infinite of space.
The clouds have left the mountains ; coldly bright,
Their icy summits shed cerulean light ;
The steep declivities between assume
A horror of unfathomable gloom :
The village sleeps ;—from house to house, the ear
Of yonder sentinel no sound can hear :
A maniac ;—he, while calmer heads repose,
Takes his night round, to tell the stars his woes ;
Woes, which his noble heart to frenzy stung ;
—*He* hath no bard, and *they* remain unsung.
A warrior once, victorious arms he bore,
And bears them still, although his wars are o'er ;
For 'tis his boast, with shield and sword in hand,
To be the guardian angel of the land.
Mark with what stern solemnity he stalks,
And to himself as to a legion talks :
Now deep in council with his chiefs ; anon
He starts, as at the trumpet ; leads them on,
And wins the day :—his battle-shout alarms
None but the infant in the nurse's arms :
Soon hush'd, but closer to her side, it sleeps ;
While he abroad his watch in silence keeps.
At every door he halts, and brings a sigh,
But leaves a blessing, when he marches by ;
He stops ; from that low roof, a deadly groan
Hath made unutterable anguish known ;

A spirit into eternity hath pass'd ;
A spouse, a father, there hath breathed his last.
The widow and her little ones weep *not* ;
In its excess their misery is forgot,
One dumb, dark moment ;—then from all their eyes
Rain the salt tears, and loud their wailings rise :
Ah ! little think that family forlorn
How brief the parting ;—they shall meet ere morn !
For lo ! the witness of their pangs hath caught
A sight that startles madness into thought :
Back from their gate unconsciously he reels ;
A resurrection of his soul he feels.
There is a motion in the air : his eye
Blinks as it fear'd the falling of the sky.
The splendid peak of adamantine ice,
At sunset like an earthly paradise,
And in the moon of such empyrean hue,
It seem'd to bring the unseen world to view ;
—That splendid peak, the Power (which to the spheres
Had piled its turrets through a thousand years)
Touches, as lightly as the passing wind,
And the huge mass, o'erbalanced, undermined,
And dislocated from its base of snow,
Slides down the slope, majestically slow,
Till o'er the precipice, down headlong sent,
And in ten thousand thousand spangles rent,
It piles a hill where spread a vale before :
—From rock to rock the echoes round the shore
Tell with their deep artillery the fate
Of the whole village crush'd beneath its weight.
—The sleepers wake,—their homes in ruins hurl'd,—
They wake—from death into another world.
The gazing maniac, palsied into stone,
Amidst the wreck of ice, survives alone ;
A sudden interval of reason gleams,
Steady and clear, amidst his wildering dreams,
But shows reality in such a shape,
'Twere rapture back to frenzy to escape.

Again the clouds of desolation roll,
Blotting all old remembrance from his soul:
Whate'er his sorrows or his joys have been,
His spirit grows imbodied through *this* scene;
With eyes of agony, and clenching hands,
Fix'd in recoil, a frozen form he stands,
And, smit with wonder at his people's doom,
Becomes the monument upon their tomb.

Behold a scene, magnificent and new;
Nor land nor water meet th' excursive view;
The round horizon girds one frozen plain,
The mighty tombstone of the buried main,
Where, dark and silent, and unfelt to flow,
A dead sea sleeps with all its tribes below.
But heaven is still itself; the deep blue sky
Comes down with smiles to meet the glancing eye,
Though if a keener sight its bound would trace,
The arch recedes through everlasting space.
The sun, in morning glory, mounts his throne,
Nor shines he here in solitude unknown;
North, south, and west, by dogs or reindeer drawn,
Careering sledges cross th' unbroken lawn,
And bring from bays and forelands round the coast,
Youth, beauty, valour, Greenland's proudest boast,
Who thus, in winter's long and social reign,
Hold feasts and tournaments upon the main,
When, built of solid floods, his bridge extends
A highway o'er the gulf to meeting friends,
Whom rocks impassable, or winds and tide,
Fickle and false, in summer months divide.

The scene runs round with motion, rings with mirth,
—No happier spot upon the peopled earth;
The drifted snow to dust the travellers beat,
Th' uneven ice is flint beneath their feet.
Here tents, a gay encampment, rise around,
Where music, song, and revelry resound;
There the blue smoke upwreathes a hundred spires,
Where humbler groups have lit their pine-wood fires.

Ere long they quit the tables ; knights and dames
Lead the blithe multitude to boisterous games.
Bears, wolves, and lynxes, yonder head the chase ;
Here start the harness'd rein-deer in the race ;
Borne without wheels, a flight of rival cars
Track the ice-firmament, like shooting stars,
Right to the goal, converging as they run,
They dwindle through the distance into one.
Where smoother waves have form'd a sea of glass,
With pantomimic change the skaters pass ;
Now toil like ships 'gainst wind and stream ; then wheel
Like flames blown suddenly asunder ; reel
Like drunkards ; then dispersed in tangents wide,
Away with speed invisible they glide.
Peace in their hearts, death-weapons in their hands,
Fierce in mock-battle meet fraternal bands,
Whom the same chiefs erewhile to conflict led,
When friends by friends, by kindred kindred bled.
Here youthful rings with pipe and drum advance,
And foot the mazes of the giddy dance ;
Gray-beard spectators, with illumined eye,
Lean on their staves, and talk of days gone by ;
Children, who mimic all, from pipe and drum
To chase and battle, dream of years to come :
Those years to come the young shall ne'er behold ;
The days gone by no more rejoice the old.

There is a boy, a solitary boy,
Who takes no part in all this whirl of joy,
Yet, in the speechless transport of his soul
He lives, and moves, and breathes throughout the whole :
Him should destruction spare, the plot of earth,
That forms his play-ground, gave a poet birth,
Who, on the wings of his immortal lays,
Thine heroes, Greenland ! to the stars shall raise.
It must not be :—abruptly from the show
He turns his eyes, his thoughts are gone below
To sound the depths of ocean, where his mind
Creates the wonders which it cannot find.

Listening, as oft he listens in a shell
To the mock tide's alternate fall and swell,
He kneels upon the ice,—inclines his ear,
And hears,—or does he only seem to hear?—
A sound, as though the Genius of the deep
Heaved a long sigh, awakening out of sleep.
He starts;—'twas but a pulse within his brain!
No;—for he feels it beat through every vein;
Groan following groan, (as from a giant's breast,
Beneath a burying mountain, ill at rest.)
With awe ineffable his spirit thrills,
And rapture fires his blood, while terror chills.
The keen expression of his eye alarms
His mother; she hath caught him in her arms,
And learn'd the cause;—that cause, no sooner known,
From lip to lip, o'er many a league is flown;
Voices to voices, prompt as signals, rise
In shrieks of consternation to the skies:
Those skies, meanwhile, with gathering darkness scowl;
Hollow and wintery the bleak winds howl.
—From morn till noon had ether smiled serene,
Save one black-belted cloud, far eastward seen,
Like a snow-mountain;—there in ambush lay
Th' undreaded tempest, panting for his prey;
That cloud by stealth hath through the welkin spread,
And hangs in meteor-twilight over-head;
At foot, beneath the adamantine floor,
Loose in their prison-house the surges roar:
To every eye, ear, heart, th' alarm is given,
And landward crowds, (like flocks of sea-fowl driven,
When storms are on the wing,) in wild affright,
On foot, in sledges, urge their panic flight,
In hope the refuge of the shore to gain
Ere the disruption of the struggling main,
Foretold by many a stroke, like lightning sent
In thunder, through th' unstable continent,
Which now, elastic on the swell below,
Rolls high in undulation to and fro.

Men, reindeer, dogs, the giddy impulse feel,
 And, jostling headlong, back and forward reel :
 While snow, sleet, hail, or whirling gusts of wind,
 Exhaust, bewilder, stop the breath, and blind.
 All is dismay and uproar ; some have found
 Death for deliverance, as they leap'd on ground,
 Swept back into the flood :—but hope is vain :
 Ere half the fugitives the beach can gain,
 The fix'd ice, severing from the shore, with shocks
 Of earthquake violence, bounds against the rocks ;
 Then suddenly, while on the verge they stand,
 The whole recoils for ever from the land,
 And leaves a gulf of foam along the shore,
 In which whoever plunge are seen no more.

Ocean, meanwhile, abroad hath burst the roof
 That sepulchred his waves ; he bounds aloof.
 In boiling cataracts, as volcanoes spout
 Their fiery fountains, gush the waters out ;
 The frame of ice with dire explosion rends,
 And down th' abyss the mingled crowd descends.
 Heaven ! from this closing horror hide thy light ;
 Cast thy thick mantle o'er it, gracious Night !
 These screams of mothers with their infants lost,
 These groans of agony from wretches tost
 On rocks and whirlpools,—in thy storms be drown'd,
 The crash of mountain-ice to atoms ground,
 And rage of elements !—while winds, that yell
 Like demons, peal the universal knell,
 The shrouding waves around their limbs shall spread,
 “And Darkness be the burier of the dead.”
 Their pangs are o'er :—at morn the tempests cease,
 And the freed ocean rolls himself to peace :
 Broad to the sun his heaving breast expands,
 He holds his mirror to a hundred lands ;
 While cheering gales pursue the eager chase
 Of billows round immeasurable space.⁴

Where are the multitudes of yesterday ?
 At morn they came ; at eve they pass'd away.

Yet some survive ;—yon castellated pile
Floats on the surges, like a fairy isle ;
Pre-eminent upon its peak, behold,
With walls of amethyst and roofs of gold,
The semblance of a city ; towers and spires
Glance in the firmament with opal fires :
Prone from those heights pellucid fountains flow
O'er pearly meads, through emerald vales below.
No lovelier pageant moves beneath the sky,⁵
Nor one so mournful to the nearer eye ;
Here, when the bitterness of death had pass'd
O'er others, with their sledge and reindeer cast,
Ere wretched ones, in dumb dependence wait
The lingering issue of a nameless fate ;
A bridal party :—mark yon reverend sage
In the brown vigour of autumnal age ;
His daughter in her prime ; the youth, who won
Her love by miracles of prowess done ;
With these, two meet companions of their joy,
Her younger sister, and a gallant boy,
Who hoped, like *him*, a gentle heart to gain
By valorous enterprise on land or main.
—These, when the ocean-pavement fail'd their feet,
Sought on a glacier's crags a safe retreat ;
But in the shock, from its foundations torn,
That mass is slowly o'er the waters borne,
An ice-berg !—on whose verge all day they stand,
And eye the blank horizon's ring for land.
All night around a dismal flame they weep :
Their sledge, by piecemeal, lights the hoary deep.
Morn brings no comfort ; at her dawn expire
The latest embers of their latest fire ;
For warmth and food the patient reindeer bleeds.
Happier in death than those he warms and feeds.
—How long, by that precarious raft upbuoy'd,
They blindly drifted on a shoreless void ;
How long they suffer'd, or how soon they found
Rest in the gulf, or peace on living ground ;

—Whether, by hunger, cold, and grief consumed,
 They perish'd miserably—and unentomb'd
 (While on that frigid bier their corpses lay),
 Became the sea-fowl's or the sea-bear's prey :
 —Whether the wasting mound, by swift degrees,
 Exhaled in mist and vanish'd from the seas,
 While they, too weak to struggle even in death,
 Lock'd in each other's arms, resign'd their breath,
 And their white skeletons, beneath the wave,
 Lie intertwined in one sepulchral cave ;
 —Or meeting some Norwegian bark at sea,
 They deem'd its deck a world of liberty ;
 —Or sunward sailing, on green Erin's sod,
 They kneel'd and worshipp'd a delivering God,
 Where yet the blood they brought from Greenland runs
 Among the noblest of our sister's sons,
 —Is all unknown :—their ice-berg disappears
 Amidst the flood of unreturning years.

 Ages are fled ; and Greenland's hour draws nigh ;
 Seal'd is the judgment ; all her race must die ;
 Commerce forsakes th' unvoyageable seas,
 That year by year with keener rigour freeze ;
 Th' embargoed waves in narrower channels roll
 To blue Spitzbergen and the utmost pole ;
 A hundred colonies, erewhile that lay
 On the green marge of many a shelter'd bay,
 Lapse to the wilderness ; their tenants throng
 Where streams in summer, turbulent and strong,
 With molten ice from inland Alps supplied,
 Hold free communion with the breathing tide,
 That from the heart of ocean sends the flood
 Of living water round the world, like blood ;
 But Greenland's pulse shall slow and slower beat,
 Till the last spark of genial warmth retreat,
 And, like a palsied limb of Nature's frame,
 Greenland be nothing but a place and name.
 That crisis comes ; the wafted fuel fails ;⁶
 The cattle perish ; famine long prevails :

With torpid sloth, intenser seasons bind
The strength of muscle and the spring of mind ;
Man droops, his spirits waste, his powers decay,
—His generation soon shall pass away.

At moonless midnight, on this naked coast,
How beautiful in heaven the starry host !
With lambent brilliance o'er these cloister-walls,
Slant from the firmament a meteor falls ;
A steadier flame from yonder beacon streams,
To light the vessel, seen in golden dreams
By many a pining wretch, whose slumbers feign
The bliss for which he looks at morn in vain.
Two years are gone, and half expired a third
(The nation's heart is sick with hope deferr'd),
Since last for Europe sail'd a Greenland prow,
Her whole marine,—so shorn is Greenland now,
Though once, like clouds in ether unconfined,
Her naval wings were spread to every wind.
The monk, who sits, the weary hours to count,
In the lone block-house on the beacon-mount,
Watching the east, beholds the morning star
Eclipsed at rising o'er the waves afar,
As if—for so would fond expectance think—
A sail had cross'd it on the horizon's brink.
His fervent soul, in ecstasy outdrawn,
Glow with the shadows kindling through the dawn,
Till every bird that flashes through the brine
Appears an arm'd and gallant brigantine ;
And every sound along the air that comes,
The voice of clarions and the roll of drums.
—'Tis she ! 'tis she ! the well-known keel at last,
With Greenland's banner streaming at the mast ;
The full-swoln sails, the spring-tide, and the breeze.
Waft on her way the pilgrim of the seas.
The monks at matins issuing from their cells,
Spread the glad tidings ; while their convent-bells
Wake town and country, sea and shore, to bliss
Unknown for years on any morn but this.

Men, women, children throng the joyous strand,
Whose mob of moving shadows o'er the sand
Lengthen to giants, while the hovering sun
Lights up a thousand radiant points from one.
The pilots launch their boats :—a race ! a race !
The strife of oars is seen in every face ;
Arm against arm puts forth its might to reach.
And guide the welcome stranger to the beach.
—Shouts from the shore, the cliffs, the boats, arise :
No voice, no signal from the ship replies ;
Nor on the deck, the yards, the bow, the stern,
Can keenest eye a human form discern.
Oh ! that those eyes were open'd, there to see,
How, in serene and dreadful majesty,
Sits the destroying Angel at the helm !
—He, who hath lately march'd from realm to realm.
And from the palace to the peasant's shed,
Made all the living kindred to the dead :
Nor man alone, dumb nature felt his wrath.
Drought, mildew, murrain, strew'd his carnage-path ;
Harvest and vintage cast their timeless fruit,
Forests before him wither'd from the root.
To Greenland now, with unexhausted power.
He comes commission'd ; and in evil hour
Propitious elements prepare his way :
His day of landing is a festal day.

A boat arrives ;—to those who scale the deck.
Of life appears but one disastrous wreck ;
Fallen from the rudder, which he fain had grasp'd.
But stronger Death his wrestling hold unclasp'd ;
The film of darkness freezing o'er his eyes,
A lukewarm corpse, the brave commander lies :
Survivor sole of all his buried crew,
Whom one by one the rife contagion slew,
Just when the cliffs of Greenland cheer'd his sight.
Even from their pinnacle his soul took flight.
Chill'd at the spectacle, the pilots gaze
One on another, lost in blank amaze :

But from approaching boats, when rivals throng,
They seize the helm, in silence steer along,
And cast their anchor, midst exulting cries,
That make the rocks the echoes of the skies,
Till the mysterious signs of woes to come,
Circled by whispers, strike the uproar dumb.
Rumour affirms, that by some heinous spell
Of Lapland witches, crew and captain fell ;
None guess the secret of perfidious fate,
Which all shall know too soon,—yet know too late.

The monks, who claim the ship, divide the stores
Of food and raiment at their convent-doors.
—A mother, hastening to her cheerless shed,
Breaks to her little ones untasted bread ;
Clamorous as nestling birds, the hungry band
Receive a mortal portion at her hand :
On each would equal love the best confer.
Each by distinct affection dear to her ;
One the first pledge that to her spouse she gave.
And one unborn till he was in his grave ;
This was *his* darling, that to *her* most kind ;
A fifth was once a twin, the sixth is blind :
In each she lives :—in each by turns she dies :
Smitten by pestilence before her eyes,
Three days, and all are slain ;—the heaviest doom
Is hers ; their ice-barr'd cottage is their tomb.
—The wretch, whose limbs are impotent with cold,
In the warm comfort of a mantle roll'd,
Lies down to slumber on his soul's desire :
But wakes at morn, as wrapt in flames of fire :
Not Hercules, when from his breast he tore
The cloak envenom'd with the Centaur's gore,
Felt sharper pangs than he, who, mad with rage,
Dives in the gulf, or rolls in snow t' assuage
His quenchless agony ; the rankling dart
Within him burns till it consumes his heart.
From vale to vale th' affrighted victims fly,
But catch or give the plague with every sigh :

A touch contaminates the purest veins,
Till the *Black Death* through all the region reigns.⁷

Comes there no ship again to Greenland's shore ?
There comes another :—there shall come no more ;
Nor this shall reach a haven :—What are these
Stupendous monuments upon the seas ?
Works of Omnipotence, in wondrous forms,
Immovable as mountains in the storms ?
Far as Imagination's eye can roll,
One range of Alpine glaciers to the pole
Flanks the whole eastern coast ; and, branching wide,
Arches o'er many a league th' indignant tide,
That works and frets, with unavailing flow,
To mine a passage to the beach below ;
Thence from its neck that winter yoke to rend,
And down the gulf the crashing fragments send.
There lies a vessel in this realm of frost,
Not wreck'd, nor stranded, yet for ever lost ;
Its keel embedded in the solid mass ;
Its glistening sails appear expanded glass ;
The transverse ropes with pearls enormous strung ;
The yards with icicles grotesquely hung.
Wrapt in the topmost shrouds there rests a boy,
His old sea-faring father's only joy ;
Sprung from a race of rovers, ocean-born,
Nursed at the helm, he trod dry land with scorn ;
Through fourscore years from port to port he veer'd,
Quicksand, nor rock, nor foe, nor tempest fear'd ;
Now cast ashore, though like a hulk he lie,
His son at sea is ever in his eye,
And his prophetic thought, from age to age,
Esteems the waves his offspring's heritage ;
He ne'er shall know, in his Norwegian cot,
How brief that son's career, how strange his lot ;
Writhed round the mast, and sepulchred in air,
Him shall no worm devour, no vulture tear ;
Congeal'd to adamant, his frame shall last,
Though empires change, till time and tide be past.

On deck, in groups embracing as they died,
Singly, erect, or slumbering side by side,
Behold the crew!—They sail'd, with hope elate,
For eastern Greenland; till, ensnared by fate,
In toils that mock'd their utmost strength and skill,
They felt, as by a charm, their ship stand still:
The madness of the wildest gale that blows
Were mercy to that shudder of repose,
When withering horror struck from heart to heart
The blunt rebound of Death's benumbing dart,
And each, a petrification at his post,
Look'd on yon father, and gave up the ghost;⁸
He, meekly kneeling, with his hands upraised,
His beard of driven snow, eyes fix'd and glazed,
Alone among the dead shall yet survive,
—Th' imperishable dead, that seem alive;
—Th' immortal dead, whose spirits, breaking free,
Bore his last words into eternity,
While with a seraph's zeal, a Christian's love,
Till his tongue fail'd, he spoke of joys above.
Now motionless, amidst the icy air,
He breathes from marble lips unutter'd prayer,
The clouds condensed, with dark, unbroken hue
Of stormy purple, overhang his view,
Save in the west, to which he strains his sight,
One golden streak, that grows intensely bright,
Till thence th' emerging sun, with lightning blaze,
Pours the whole quiver of his arrowy rays;
The smitten rocks to instant diamond turn,
And round th' expiring saint such visions burn,
As if the gates of Paradise were thrown
Wide open to receive his soul;—'tis flown.
The glory vanishes, and over all
Cimmerian darkness spreads her funeral pall.
Morn shall return, and noon, and eve, and night
Meet here with interchanging shade and light;
But from this bark no timber shall decay,
Of these cold forms no feature pass away;

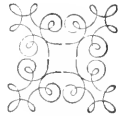
Perennial ice around th' incrusted bow,
 The peopled deck, and full-rigg'd masts shall grow,
 Till from the sun himself the whole be hid,
 Or spied beneath a crystal pyramid ;
 As in pure amber, with divergent lines,
 A rugged shell emboss'd with sea-weed shines.
 From age to age increased with annual snow,
 This new *Mont Blanc* among the clouds may glow.
 Whose conic peak, that earliest greets the dawn,
 And latest from the sun's shut eye withdrawn,
 Shall from the zenith, through incumbent gloom,
 Burn like a lamp upon this naval tomb.
 But when th' archangel's trumpet sounds on high,
 The pile shall burst to atoms through the sky,
 And leave its dead, upstarting at the call,
 Naked and pale, before the Judge of all.

Once more to Greenland's long-forsaken beach,
 Which foot of man again shall never reach,
 Imagination wings her flight, explores
 The march of Pestilence along the shores,
 And sees how Famine in his steps hath paced,
 While Winter laid the soil for ever waste.
 Dwellings are heaps of fallen or falling stones,
 The charnel-houses of unburied bones,
 On which obscene and prowling monsters fed,
 But with the ravin in their jaws fell dead.
 Thus while Destruction, blasting youth and age,
 Raged till it wanted victims for its rage ;
 Love, the last feeling that from life retires,
 Blew the faint sparks of his unfuell'd fires.
 In the cold sunshine of yon narrow dell
 Affection lingers :—*there* two lovers dwell,
 Greenland's whole family ; nor long forlorn,
 There comes a visitant ; a babe is born.
 O'er his meek helplessness the parents smiled ;
 'Twas Hope ;—for Hope is every mother's child :
 Then seem'd they, in that world of solitude,
 The Eve and Adam of a race renew'd.

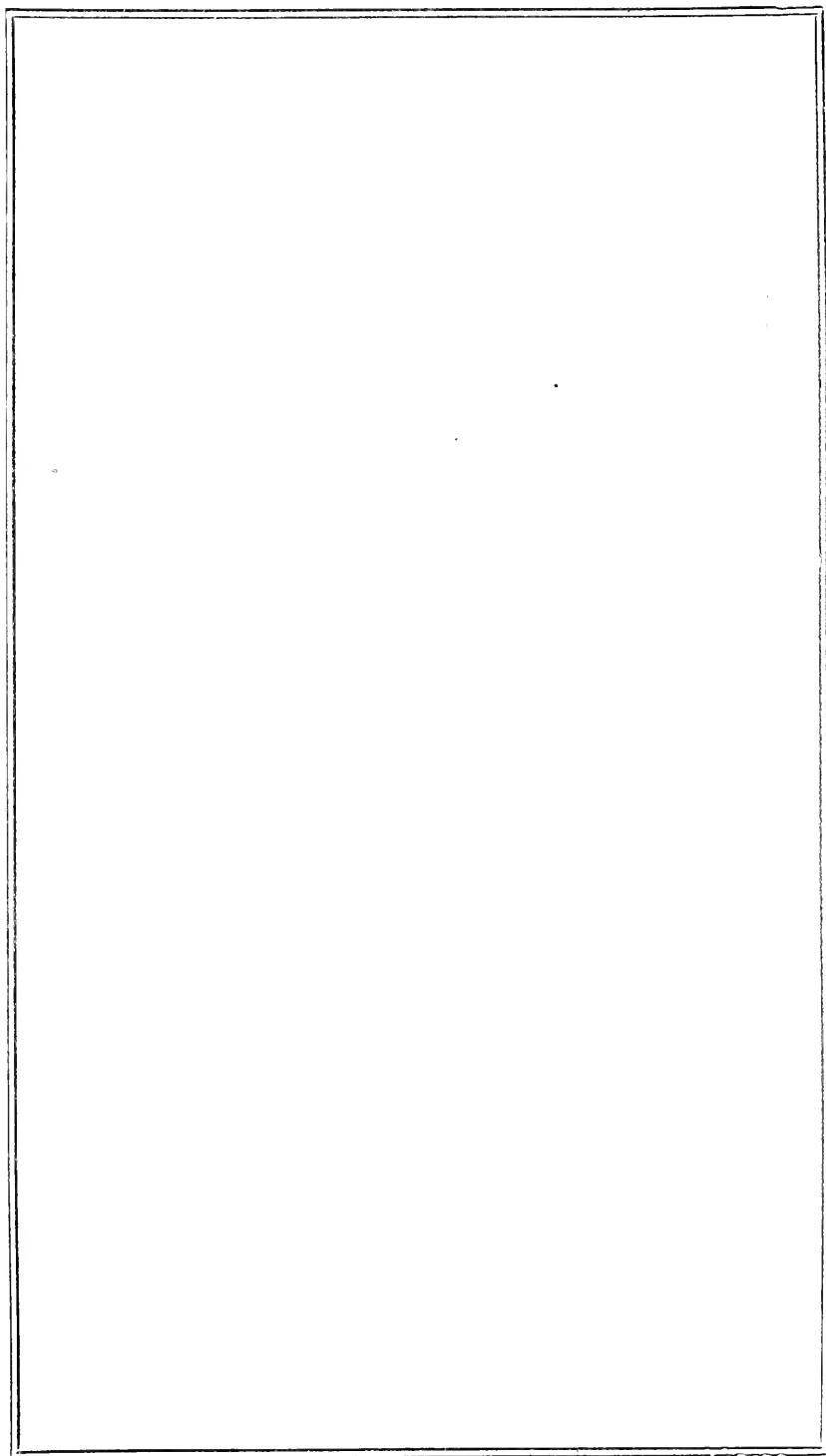
Brief happiness ! too perilous to last ;
The moon hath wax'd and waned, and all is past ;
Behold the end :—one morn, athwart the wall,
They mark'd the shadow of a reindeer fall,
Bounding in tameless freedom o'er the snow ;
The father track'd him, and with fatal bow
Smote down the victim ; but before his eyes,
A rabid she-bear pounced upon the prize ;
A shaft into the spoiler's flank he sent,
She turn'd in wrath, and limb from limb had rent
The hunter ; but his dagger's plunging steel,
With riven bosom, made the monster reel :
Unvanquish'd, both to closer combat flew,
Assailants each, till each the other slew ;
Mingling their blood from mutual wounds, they lay
Stretch'd on the carcass of their antler'd prey.

Meanwhile his partner waits, her heart at rest,
No burden but her infant on her breast :
With him she slumbers, or with him she plays,
And tells him all her dreams of future days ;
Asks him a thousand questions, feigns replies,
And reads whate'er she wishes in his eyes.
—Red evening comes ; no husband's shadow falls,
Where fell the reindeer's o'er the latticed walls :
'Tis night ; no footstep sounds towards her door ;
The day returns,—but he returns no more.
In frenzy forth she sallies ; and with cries,
To which no voice except her own replies
In frightful echoes, startling all around,
Where human voice again shall never sound,
She seeks him, finds him not ; some angel-guide
In mercy turns her from the corpse aside ;
Perhaps his own freed spirit, lingering near,
Who waits to waft her to a happier sphere,
But leads her first, at evening, to their cot
Where lies the little one, all day forgot ;
Imparadised in sleep she finds him there,
Kisses his cheek, and breathes a mother's prayer.

Three days she languishes, nor can she shed
One tear, between the living and the dead ;
When her lost spouse comes o'er the widow's thought,
The pangs of memory are to madness wrought ;
But when her suckling's eager lips are felt,
Her heart would fain—but oh ! it cannot melt ;
At length it breaks, while on her lap he lies,
With baby wonder gazing in her eyes.
Poor orphan ! mine is not a hand to trace
Thy little story, last of all thy race !
Not long thy sufferings ; cold and colder grown,
The arms that clasp thee chill thy limbs to stone.
—'Tis done :—from Greenland's coast, the latest sigh
Bore infant innocence beyond the sky.



THE PELICAN ISLAND.



The following FAC SIMILE is from a copy
of the *Pitcairn Island*, sent by
MR. MONTGOMERY
TO THE REV. GEORGE BOURNE.

Time grows not old with length of years;
Changes he brings, but changes not
New-born: each in our utter spheres;
— We new comers are and are forgot.

Stars in perennial rounds return;
As from eternity they came,
And to eternity rush them,
— We are not for one hour the same

Spring-flowers renew their old perfume,
But ere a second spring they fly;
Our life is longer than their bloom,
Our bloom is sweeter, — yet we die.

Yet stars like flowers have but their day,
And time, like stars, shall cease to roll;
We have what heaven can decay,
— His is and mine, or he or soul.

Lord God, her hire shall end in flight,
Stars set and flowers revive no more;
May we behold thy face in light
Thy love in Christ may we adore.

I signed, *Montgomery*.
Oct. 4, 1848.

THE PELICAN ISLAND.

CANTO FIRST.

METHOUGHT I lived through ages, and beheld
Their generations pass so swiftly by me,
That years were moments in their flight, and hours
The scenes of crowded centuries reveal'd ;
While Time, Life, Death, the world's great actors, wrought
New and amazing changes :—these I sing.

Sky, sun, and sea were all the universe ;
The sky, one blue, interminable arch,
Without a breeze, a wing, a cloud : the sun
Sole in the firmament, but in the deep
Redoubled ; where the circle of the sea,
Invisible with calmness, seem'd to lie
Within the hollow of a lower heaven.

I was a Spirit in the midst of these,
All eye, ear, thought ; existence was enjoyment ;
Light was an element of life, and air
The clothing of my incorporeal form,—
A form impalpable to mortal touch,
And volatile as fragrance from the flower,
Or music in the woodlands. What the soul
Can make itself at pleasure, that I was ;
A child in feeling and imagination,
Learning new lessons still, as Nature wrought
Her wonders in my presence. All I saw
(Like Adam when he walk'd in Paradise)
I knew and named by secret intuition.
Actor, spectator, sufferer, each in turn,
I ranged, explored, reflected. Now I sail'd,
And now I soar'd ; anon expanding, seem'd

Diffused into immensity, yet bound
Within a space too narrow for desire ;
The mind, the mind perpetual themes must task,
Perpetual power impel, and hope allure.
I and the silent sun were here alone,
But not companions ; high and bright he held
His course ; I gazed with admiration on him,—
There all communion ended ; and I sigh'd,
In loneliness unutterable sigh'd,
To feel myself a wanderer without aim,
An exile amidst splendid desolation,
A prisoner with infinity surrounded.
The sun descended, dipp'd, and disappear'd ;
Then sky and sea were all the universe,
And I the only being in existence !
So thought I, and the thought, like ice and fire,
Went freezing, burning, withering, thrilling through me :
Annihilation then had been deliverance,
While that eternity of solitude
Lay on my heart, hard struggling to break free,
As from a dream, when mountains press the sleeper.
Darkness, meanwhile, disguised in twilight, crept
O'er air and ocean ; drearier gloom involved
My fainting senses, till a sudden ray
Of pensile lustre sparkled from the west ;
I flew to meet it, but drew never nearer,
While, vanishing and re-appearing oft,
At length it trembled out into a star.
My soul revived, and could I then have wept,
(Methought I did,) with tears of fond delight,
How had I hail'd the gentle apparition,
As second life to me ; so sweetly welcome
The faintest semblance of society,
Though but a point to rest the eye upon,
To him who hath been utterly bereaved !
—Star after star, from some unseen abyss,
Came through the sky, like thoughts into the mind,
We know not whence ; till all the firmament

Was throng'd with constellations, and the sea
Strown with their images. Amidst a sphere
Of twinkling lights, like living eyes, that look'd
At once on me from every side, I stood,
(Motion and rest with me were mere volition,
Myself perhaps a star among the rest !
But here again I found no fellowship ;
Sight could not reach, nor keenest thought conceive
Their nature or their offices. To me
They were but what they seem'd, and yet I felt
They must be more ; the mind hath no horizon,
It looks beyond the eye, and seeks for mind
In all it sees, or all it sees o'erruling.

Low in the east, ere long, the morning dawn
Shot upward, onward, and around the pole,
With arrowy glimpses traversing the shade.
Night's train, as they had kindled one by one,
Now one by one withdrew, reversing order,
Where those that came the latest, earliest went :
Day rose triumphant, and again to me
Sky, sun, and sea were all the universe ;
But ah ! the glory had departed, and I long'd
For some untried vicissitude :—it came.

A breeze sprang up, and with careering wing
Play'd like an unseen being on the water.
Slowly from slumber 'woke the unwilling main,
Curling and murmuring, till the infant waves
Leap'd on his lap, and laugh'd in air and sunshine.
Then all was bright and beautiful emotion,
And sweet accordance of susurrant sounds.
I felt the gay delirium of the scene ;
I felt the breeze and billow chase each other,
Like bounding pulses in my human veins :
For, though impassive to the elements,
The form I wore was exquisitely tuned
To Nature's sympathies ; joy, fear, hope, sorrow,
(As though I yet were in the body,) moved,
Elated, shook, or tranquillized my soul.

Thus pass'd the day : night followed, deck'd with stars
 Innumerable, and the pale new moon,
 Beneath her feet, a slight inverted crescent,
 Soon disappearing.

Time flew on, and brought
 Alternate morn and eve. The sun, the stars,
 The moon through all her phases, waxing, waning,
 The planets seeking rest, and finding none,
 —These were the only objects in mine eye,
 The constant burden of my thoughts, perplex'd
 With vain conjectures why they were created.

Once, at high noon, amidst a sultry calm,
 Looking around for comfort, I descried,
 Far on the green horizon's utmost verge,
 A wreath of cloud ; to me a glad discovery.
 For each new image sprang a new idea,
 The germ of thoughts to come, that could not die.
 The little vapour rapidly expanded,
 Lowering and thickening till it hid the sun,
 And threw a starless night upon the sea.
 Eagerly, tremblingly, I watch'd the end.
 Faint gleam'd the lightning, follow'd by no peal ;
 Dreary and hollow moans foretold a gale ;
 Nor long the issue tarried ; then the wind,
 Unprison'd, blew its trumpet loud and shrill ;
 Out flash'd the lightnings gloriously ; the rain
 Came down like music, and the full-toned thunder
 Roll'd in grand harmony throughout high heaven :
 Till ocean, breaking from his black supineness,
 Drown'd in his own stupendous uproar all
 The voices of the storm beside ; meanwhile
 A war of mountains raged upon the surface ;
 Mountains each other swallowing, and again
 New Alps and Andes, from unfathom'd valleys
 Upstarting, join'd the battle ; like those sons
 Of earth,—Giants, rebounding as new-born
 From every fall on their unwearied mother.
 I glow'd with all the rapture of the strife :

Beneath was one wild whirl of foaming surges ;
Above, the array of lightnings, like the swords
Of cherubim, wide-brandish'd, to repel
Aggression from heaven's gates ; their flaming strokes
Quench'd momentarily in the vast abyss.

The voice of Him who walks upon the wind,
And sets his throne upon the floods, rebuked
The headlong tempest in its mid-career,
And turn'd its horrors to magnificence.
The evening sun broke through the embattled clouds,
And threw round sky and sea, as by enchantment,
A radiant girdle, binding them to peace,
In the full rainbow's harmony of beams ;
No brilliant fragment, but one sevenfold circle,
That spann'd the horizon, meted out the heavens,
And underarch'd the ocean. 'Twas a scene,
That left itself for ever on my mind.

Night, silent, cool, transparent, crown'd the day ;
The sky receded further into space,
The stars came lower down to meet the eye,
Till the whole hemisphere, alive with light,
Twinkled from east to west by one consent.
The constellations round the arctic pole,
That never set to us, here scarcely rose,
But in their stead, Orion through the north
Pursued the Pleiads ; Sirius, with his keen,
Quick scintillations, in the zenith reign'd.
The south unveil'd its glories :—there the Wolf,
With eyes of lightning, watch'd the Centaur's spear ;
Through the clear hyaline, the Ship of Heaven
Came sailing from eternity ; the Dove,
On silver pinions, wing'd her peaceful way ;
There, at the footstool of JENOVAN'S throne,
The Altar, kindled from His presence, blazed ;
There, too, all else excelling, meekly shone
The Cross, the symbol of redeeming love :
The Heavens declared the glory of the LORD,
The firmament display'd his handiwork.

With scarce inferior lustre gleam'd the sea,
Whose waves were spangled with phosphoric fire,
As though the lightnings there had spent their shafts,
And left the fragments glittering on the field.

Next morn, in mockery of a storm, the breeze
And waters skirmish'd ; bubble-armies fought
Millions of battles on the crested surges.
And where they fell, all cover'd with their glory,
Traced, in white foam on the cerulean main,
Paths, like the milky-way among the stars.
Charm'd with the spectacle, yet deeply touch'd
With a forlorn and not untender feeling—
“ Why,” said my thoughts within me, “ why this waste
Of loveliness and grandeur unenjoy'd ?
Is there no life throughout this fair existence ?
Sky, sun, and sea, the moon, the stars, the clouds,
Wind, lightning, thunder, are but ministers ;
They know not what they are, nor what they do :
Oh for the beings for whom these were made !”

Light as a flake of foam upon the wind,
Keel upward from the deep emerged a shell,
Shaped like the moon ere half her horn is filled ;
Fraught with young life, it righted as it rose,
And moved at will along the yielding water.
The native pilot of this little bark
Put out a tier of oars on either side,
Spread to the wafting breeze a twofold sail,
And mounted up and glided down the billow
In happy freedom, pleased to feel the air,
And wander in the luxury of light.
Worth all the dead creation in that hour,
To me appeared this lonely Nautilus,
My fellow-being, like myself *alive*.
Entranced in contemplation vague yet sweet,
I watch'd its vagrant course and rippling wake,
Till I forgot the sun amidst the heavens.

It closed, sunk, dwindled to a point, then nothing ;
While the last bubble crown'd the dimpling eddy,

Through which mine eye still giddily pursued it,
A joyous creature vaulted through the air,—
The aspiring fish that fain would be a bird,
On long, light wings, that flung a diamond shower
Of dew-drops round its evanescent form,
Sprang into light, and instantly descended.
Ere I could greet the stranger as a friend,
Or mourn his quick departure,—on the surge,
A shoal of Dolphins, tumbling in wild glee.
Glow'd with such orient tints, they might have been
The rainbow's offspring, when it met the ocean
In that resplendent vision I had seen.
While yet in ecstasy I hung o'er these,
With every motion pouring out fresh beauties,
As though the conscious colours came and went
At pleasure, glorying in their subtle changes.—
Enormous o'er the flood, Leviathan
Look'd forth, and from his roaring nostrils sent
Two fountains to the sky, then plunged amain
In headlong pastime through the closing gulf.
These were but preludes to the revelry
That reign'd at sunset: then the deep let loose
Its blithe adventurers to sport at large,
As kindly instinct taught them; buoyant shells,
On stormless voyages, in fleets or single,
Wherried their tiny mariners; aloof,
On wing-like fins, in bow-and-arrow figures,
The flying fishes darted to and fro:
While spouting Whales projected watery columns.
That turn'd to arches at their height, and seem'd
The skeletons of crystal palaces,
Built on the blue expanse, then perishing,
Frail as the element which they were made of:
Dolphins, in gambols, lent the lucid brine
Hues richer than the canopy of eve,
That overhung the scene with gorgeous clouds,
Decaying into gloom more beautiful
Than the sun's golden liveries which they lost:

Till light that hides, and darkness that reveals
 The stars,—exchanging guard, like sentinels
 Of day and night,—transform'd the face of nature :
 Above was wakefulness, silence around,
 Beneath repose,—repose that reach'd even me.
 Power, will, sensation, memory, fail'd in turn ;
 My very essence seem'd to pass away,
 Like a thin cloud that melts across the moon,
 Lost in the blue immensity of heaven.

CANTO SECOND.

LIFE's intermitting pulse again went on :
 I woke amidst the beauty of a morn,
 That shone as bright within me as around.
 The presence-chamber of the soul was full
 Of fitting images and rapturous thoughts ;
 For mind and eye were open'd to explore
 The secrets of the abyss erewhile conceal'd.
 The floor of ocean, never trod by man,
 Was visible to me as heaven's round roof,
 Which man hath never touch'd ; the multitude
 Of living things in that new hemisphere,
 Gleam'd out of darkness, like the stars at midnight,
 When moon nor clouds, with light or shade, obscure them.
 For, as in hollows of the tide-worn reef,
 Left at low water glistening in the sun,
 Pellucid pools and rocks in miniature,
 With their small fry of fishes, crusted shells,
 Rich mosses, tree-like sea-weed, sparkling pebbles,
 Enchant the eye, and tempt the eager hand
 To violate the fairy paradise,
 —So to my view the deep disclosed its wonders.
 In the free element beneath me swam,
 Flounder'd, and dived, in play, in chase, in battle.

Fishes of every colour, form, and kind,
(Strange forms, resplendent colours, kinds unnumber'd,) Which language cannot paint, and mariner Hath never seen ;—from dread Leviathan To insect millions peopling every wave ; And nameless tribes, half-plant, half-animal. Rooted and slumbering through a dream of life. The livelier inmates to the surface sprang, To taste the freshness of heaven's breath, and feel That light is pleasant, and the sunbeam warm. Most in the middle region sought their prey. Safety, or pastime ; solitary some, And some in pairs affectionately join'd ; Others in shoals immense, like floating islands. Led by mysterious instinct through that waste And trackless region, though on every side Assaulted by voracious enemies, —Whales, sharks, and monsters, arm'd in front or jaw, With swords, saws, spiral horns, or hooked fangs. While ravening Death of slaughter ne'er grew weary, Life multiplied the immortal meal as fast. War, reckless, universal war, prevail'd ; All were devourers, all in turn devour'd ; Yet every unit in the uncounted sum Of victims had its share of bliss, its pang, And but a pang, of dissolution ; each Was happy till its moment came, and then Its first, last suffering, unforeseen, unfear'd, Closed, with one struggle, pain and life for ever. So He ordain'd, whose way is in the sea, His path amidst great waters, and his steps Unknown ;—whose judgments are a mighty deep. Where plummet of Archangel's intellect Could never yet find soundings, but from age To age let down, drawn up, then thrown again. With lengthen'd line and added weight, still fails ; And still the cry in Heaven is, "Oh the depth !" Thus, while bewilder'd with delight I gazed

On life in every shape it here assumed,
 Congenial feeling made me follow it,
 And try to be whatever I beheld ;
 By mental transmigration thus I pass'd
 Through many a body, and in each essay'd
 New instincts, powers, enjoyments, death itself ;
 Till, weary with the fanciful pursuit,
 I started from that idle reverie.
 Then grew my heart more desolate than ever ;
 Here had I found the beings which I sought,
 —Beings for whom the universe was made,
 Yet none of kindred with myself. In vain
 I strove to waken sympathy in breasts
 Cold as the element in which they moved,
 And inaccessible to fellowship
 With me, as sun and stars, as winds and vapours :
 Sense had they, but no more ; mind was not there.
 They roam'd, they fed, they slept, they died, and left
 Race after race, to roam, feed, sleep, then die,
 And leave their like through endless generations ;
 —Incessant change of actors, none of scene,
 Through all that boundless theatre of strife !
 Shrinking into myself again, I cried,
 In bitter disappointment,—“ Is this all ? ”

I sent a glance at random from the cloud,
 In which I then lay floating through mid-heaven,
 To ocean's innermost recess ;—when, lo !
 Another seal of Nature's book was open'd,
 Which held transported thought so deep entranced,
 That Time, though borne through mightiest revolutions,
 Seem'd, like the earth in motion, to stand still.
 The works of ages grew beneath mine eye ;
 As rapid intellect calls up events,
 Combines, compresses, moulds them, with such power,
 That, in a little page of memory,
 An empire's annals lie,—a nation's fortunes
 Pass in review, as motes through sunbeams pass,
 Glistening and vanishing in quick succession,

Yet each distinct as though there were but one ;
—So thrice a thousand years, with all their issues,
Hurried before me, through a gleam of Time,
Between the clouds of two eternities,—
That whence they came, and that to which they tended.

Immeasurable continents beneath
The expanse of animated waters lay,
Not strown,—as I have *since* discern'd the tracks
Of voyagers,—with shipwrecks and their spoils,
The wealth of merchants, the artillery
Of war, the chains of captives, and the gems
That glow'd upon the brow of beauty ; crowns
Of monarchs, swords of heroes, anchors lost,
That never had let go their hold in storms ;
Helms, sunk in ports, that steer'd adventurous barks
Round the wide world ; bones of dead men, that made
A hidden Golgotha where they had fallen,
Unseen, unsepulchred, but not unwept
By lover, friend, relation, far away,
Long waiting their return to home and country,
And going down into their fathers' graves
With their gray hairs or youthful locks in sorrow,
To meet no more till seas give up their dead :
Some too—ay thousands—whom none living mourn'd.
None miss'd,—waifs in the universe, the last,
Lorn links of kindred chains for ever sunder'd.

Not such the spectacle I now survey'd :
No broken hearts lay here ; no aching heads,
For whose vast schemes the world was once too small.
And life too short, in Death's dark lap found rest
Beneath the unresting wave ;—but skeletons
Of whales and krakens here and there were scatter'd,
The prey when dead of tribes, their prey when living :
And, seen by glimpses, but awakening thoughts
Too sad for utterance,—relics huge and strange
Of the old world that perish'd by the flood.
Kept under chains of darkness till the judgment.
—Save these, lay ocean's bed, as from the hand

Of its Creator, hollow'd and prepared
For his unfathomable counsels there,
To work slow miracles of power divine,
From century to century,—nor less
Incomprehensible than heaven and earth
Form'd in six days by His commanding word.
With God a thousand years are as one day ;
He in one day can sum a thousand years :
All acts with Him are equal ; for no more
It costs Omnipotence to build a world,
And set a sun amidst the firmament,
Than mould a dew-drop, and light up its gem.

This was the landscape stretch'd beneath the flood :
—Rocks, branching out like chains of Alpine mountains ;
Gulfs intervening, sandy wildernesses,
Forests of growth enormous, caverns, shoals ;
Fountains upspringing, hot and cold, and fresh
And bitter, as on land ; volcanic fires
Fiercely out-flashing from earth's central heart,
Nor soon extinguish'd by the rush of waters
Down the rent crater to the unknown abyss
Of Nature's laboratory, where she hides
Her deeds from every eye except her Maker's :
—Such were the scenes which ocean open'd to me ;
Mysterious regions, the recluse abode
Of unapproachable inhabitants,
That dwelt in everlasting darkness there.
Unheard by them the roaring of the wind,
The elastic motion of the wave unfelt ;
Still life was theirs, well pleasing to themselves,
Nor yet unuseful, as my song shall show.

Here, on a stony eminence, that stood,
Girt with inferior ridges, at the point,
Where light and darkness meet in spectral gloom,
Midway between the height and depth of ocean,
I mark'd a whirlpool in perpetual play,
As though the mountain were itself alive,
And catching prey on every side, with feelers

Countless as sunbeams, slight as gossamer ;
Ere long transfigured, each fine film became
An independent creature, self-employ'd,
Yet but an agent in one common work,
The sum of all their individual labours.
Shapeless they seem'd, but endless shapes assumed ;
Elongated like worms, they writhed and shrunk
Their tortuous bodies to grotesque dimensions ;
Compress'd like wedges, radiated like stars,
Branching like sea-weed, whirl'd in dazzling rings ;
Subtle and variable as flickering flames,
Sight could not trace their evanescent changes,
Nor comprehend their motions, till minute
And curious observations caught the clew
To this live labyrinth,—where every one,
By instinct taught, perform'd its little task ;
—To build its dwelling and its sepulchre,
From its own essence exquisitely modell'd ;
There breed, and die, and leave a progeny,
Still multiplied beyond the reach of numbers,
To frame new cells and tombs ; then breed and die
As all their ancestors had done,—and rest,
Hermetically seal'd, each in its shrine,
A statue in this temple of oblivion !
Millions of millions thus, from age to age,
With simplest skill, and toil unwearable,
No moment and no movement unimproved,
Laid line on line, on terrace terrace spread,
To swell the heightening, brightening gradual mound,
By marvellous structure climbing tow'rd's the day.
Each wrought alone, yet all together wrought,
Unconscious, not unworthy instruments,
By which a hand invisible was rearing
A new creation in the secret deep.
Omnipotence wrought in them, with them, by them ;
Hence what Omnipotence alone could do
Worms did. I saw the living pile ascend,
The mausoleum of its architects,

Still dying upwards as their labours closed :
Slime the material, but the slime was turn'd
To adamant, by their petrific touch ;
Frail were their frames, ephemeral their lives.
Their masonry imperishable. All
Life's needful functions, food, exertion, rest,
By nice economy of Providence
Were overruled to carry on the process,
Which out of water brought forth solid rock.

Atom by atom thus the burden grew,
Even like an infant in the womb, till Time
Deliver'd ocean of that monstrous birth,
—A coral island, stretching east and west,
In God's own language to its parent saying,
“ Thus far, nor farther, shalt thou go ; and here
Shall thy proud waves be stay'd : ”—A point at first
It peer'd above those waves ; a point so small,
I just perceived it, fix'd where all was floating ;
And when a bubble cross'd it, the blue film
Expanded like a sky above the speck ;
That speck became a hand-breadth ; day and night
It spread, accumulated, and ere long
Presented to my view a dazzling plain,
White as the moon amid the sapphire sea ;
Bare at low water, and as still as death,
But when the tide came gurgling o'er the surface,
'Twas like a resurrection of the dead :
From graves innumerable, punctures fine
In the close coral, capillary swarms
Of reptiles, horrent as Medusa's snakes,
Cover'd the bald-pate reef ; then all was life,
And indefatigable industry ;
The artisans were twisting to and fro,
In idle-seeming convolutions ; yet
They never vanish'd with the ebbing surge,
Till pellicle on pellicle, and layer
On layer, was added to the growing mass.
Ere long the reef o'ertopt the spring-flood's height,

And mock'd the billows when they leapt upon it,
Unable to maintain their slippery hold,
And falling down in foam-wreaths round its verge.
Steep were the flanks, with precipices sharp,
Descending to their base in ocean-gloom.
Chasms few, and narrow, and irregular,
Form'd harbours, safe at once and perilous,—
Safe for defence, but perilous to enter.
A sea-lake shone amid the fossil isle,
Reflecting in a ring its cliffs and caverns,
With heaven itself seen like a lake below.

Compared with this amazing edifice,
Raised by the weakest creatures in existence,
What are the works of intellectual man ?
Towers, temples, palaces, and sepulchres ;
Ideal images in sculptured forms,
Thoughts hewn in columns, or in domes expanded,
Fancies through every maze of beauty shown ;
Pride, gratitude, affection, turn'd to marble,
In honour of the living or the dead ;
What are they ?—fine-wrought miniatures of art,
Too exquisite to bear the weight of dew,
Which every morn lets fall in pearls upon them,
Till all their pomp sinks down in mouldering relics,
Yet in their ruin lovelier than their prime !
—Dust in the balance, atoms in the gale,
Compared with these achievements in the deep,
Were all the monuments of olden time,
In days when there were giants on the earth :
—Babel's stupendous folly, though it aim'd
To scale heaven's battlements, was but a toy,
The plaything of the world in infancy :—
The ramparts, towers, and gates of Babylon,
Built for eternity,—though, where they stood,
Ruin itself stands still for lack of work,
And Desolation keeps unbroken sabbath ;—
Great Babylon, in its full moon of empire,
Even when its " head of gold" was smitten off,

And from a monarch changed into a brute ;—
Great Babylon was like a wreath of sand,
Left by one tide, and cancell'd by the next :—
Egypt's dread wonders, still defying Time,
Where cities have been crumbled into sand.
Scatter'd by winds beyond the Libyan desert,
Or melted down into the mud of Nile,
And cast in tillage o'er the corn-sown fields,
Where Memphis flourish'd, and the Pharaohs reign'd ;—
Egypt's gray piles of hieroglyphic grandeur,
That have survived the language which they speak,
Preserving its dead emblems to the eye,
Yet hiding from the mind what these reveal ;
—Her pyramids would be mere pinnacles,
Her giant statues, wrought from blocks of granite,
But puny ornaments for such a pile
As this stupendous mound of catacombs,
Fill'd with dry mummies of the builder-worms.

Thus far, with undiverted thought, and eye
intensely fix'd on ocean's concave mirror,
I watch'd the process to its finishing stroke :
Then starting suddenly, as from a trance,
Once more to look upon the blessed sun,
And breathe the gladdening influence of the wind,
Darkness fell on me ; giddily my brain
Whirl'd like a torch of fire that seems a circle,
And soon to me the universe was nothing.

CANTO THIRD.

NINE times the age of man that coral reef
Had bleach'd beneath the torrid noon, and borne
The thunder of a thousand hurricanes,
Raised by the jealous ocean, to repel
That strange encroachment on his old domain.
His rage was impotent; his wrath fulfill'd
The counsels of eternal Providence,
And 'stablish'd what he strove to overturn :
For every tempest threw fresh wrecks upon it ;
Sand from the shoals, exuviae from the deep,
Fragments of shells, dead sloughs, sea-monsters' bones,
Whales stranded in the shallows, hideous weeds
Hurl'd out of darkness by the uprooting surges ;
These, with unutterable relics more,
Heap'd the rough surface, till the various mass,
By Nature's chemistry combined and purged,
Had buried the bare rock in crumbling mould,
Not unproductive, but from time to time
Impregnated with seeds of plants, and rife
With embryo animals, or torpid forms
Of reptiles, shrouded in the clefts of trees,
From distant lands, with branches, foliage, fruit,
Pluck'd up and wafted hither by the flood.
Death's spoils, and life's hid treasures, thus enrich'd
And colonized the soil ; no particle
Of meanest substance but in course was turn'd
To solid use or noble ornament.
All seasons were propitious ; every wind,
From the hot Siroc to the wet Monsoon,
Temper'd the crude materials ; while heaven's dew
Fell on the sterile wilderness as sweetly
As though it were a garden of the LORD ;
Nor fell in vain ; each drop had its commission,
And did its duty, known to Him who sent it.

Such time had past, such changes had transfigured
The aspect of that solitary isle,
When I again in spirit, as before,
Assumed mute watch above it. Slender blades
Of grass were shooting through the dark brown earth,
Like rays of light, transparent in the sun,
Or after showers with liquid gems illumined ;
Fountains through filtering sluices sallied forth,
And led fertility where'er they turn'd ;
Green herbage graced their banks, resplendent flowers
Unlock'd their treasures, and let flow their fragrance.
Then insect legions, prank'd with gaudiest hues,
Pearl, gold, and purple, swarm'd into existence ;
Minute and marvellous creations these !
Infinite multitudes on every leaf,
In every drop, by me discern'd at pleasure,
Were yet too fine for unenlighten'd eye,
—Like stars, whose beams have never reach'd our world,
Though science meets them midway in the heaven
With prying optics, weighs them in her scale,
Measures their orbs, and calculates their courses :—
Some barely visible, some proudly shone,
Like living jewels ; some grotesque, uncouth,
And hideous,—giants of a race of pigmies ;
These burrow'd in the ground, and fed on garbage,
Those lived deliciously on honey-dews,
And dwelt in palaces of blossom'd bells ;
Millions on millions, wing'd, and plumed in front,
And arm'd with stings for vengeance or assault,
Fill'd the dim atmosphere with hum and hurry ;
Children of light, and air, and fire they seem'd,
Their lives all ecstasy and quick, cross motion.
Thus throve this embryo universe, where all
That was to be was unbegun, or now
Beginning ; every day, hour, instant, brought
Its novelty, though how or whence I knew not ;
Less than omniscience could not comprehend
The causes of effects that seem'd spontaneous,

And sprang in infinite succession, link'd
With kindred issues infinite as they,
For which almighty skill had laid the train
Even in the elements of chaos,—whence
The unravelling clew not for a moment lost
Hold of the silent hand that drew it out.
Thus He who makes and peoples worlds still works
In secrecy, behind a veil of light ;
Yet through that hiding of his power, such glimpses
Of glory break as strike presumption blind,
But humble and exalt the humbled soul,
Whose faith the things invisible discerns,
And God informing, guiding, ruling all :—
He speaks, 'tis done ; commands, and it stands fast.
He calls an island from the deep,—it comes ;
Ordains it culture,—soil and seed are there ;
Appoints inhabitants,—from climes unknown,
By undiscoverable paths, they flock
Thither ;—like passage-birds to us in spring ;
They were not yesterday,—and lo ! to-day
They are,—but what keen eye beheld them coming ?

Here was the infancy of life, the age
Of gold in that green isle, itself new-born,
And all upon it in the prime of being,
Love, hope, and promise : 'twas in miniature
A world unsoil'd by sin ; a Paradise
Where Death had not yet entered : Bliss had newly
Alighted, and shut close his rainbow wings,
To rest at ease, nor dread intruding ill.
Plants of superior growth now sprang apace,
With moon-like blossoms crown'd, or starry glories ;
Light, flexile shrubs among the greenwood play'd
Fantastic freaks,—they crept, they climb'd, they budded,
And hung their flowers and berries in the sun ;
As the breeze taught, they danced, they sung, they twined
Their sprays in bowers, or spread the ground with network.
Through the slow lapse of undivided time,
Silently rising from their buried germs,

Trees lifted to the skies their stately heads,
Tufted with verdure, like depending plumage,
O'er stems unknotted, waving to the wind :
Of these in graceful form, and simple beauty,
The fruitful cocoa and the fragrant palm
Excell'd the wilding daughters of the wood,
That stretch'd unwieldy their enormous arms,
Clad with luxuriant foliage, from the trunk,
Like the old eagle, feather'd to the heel :
While every fibre, from the lowest root
To the last leaf upon the topmost twig,
Was held by common sympathy, diffusing
Through all the complex frame unconscious life.
Such was the locust, with his hydra boughs,
A hundred heads on one stupendous trunk :
And such the mangrove, which, at full-moon flood,
Appear'd itself a wood upon the waters,
But when the tide left bare its upright roots,
A wood on piles suspended in the air :
Such too the Indian fig, that built itself
Into a sylvan temple, arch'd aloof
With airy aisles and living colonnades,
Where nations might have worshipp'd God in peace,
From year to year their fruits ungather'd fell ;
Not lost, but quickening where they lay, they struck
Root downward, and brake forth on every hand,
Till the strong saplings, rank and file, stood up,
A mighty army, which o'erran the isle,
And changed the wilderness into a forest.

All this appear'd accomplish'd in the space
Between the morning and the evening star :
So, in his third day's work, JEUOVAN spake,
And Earth, an infant, naked as she came
Out of the womb of chaos, straight put on
Her beautiful attire, and deck'd her robe
Of verdure with ten thousand glorious flowers,
Exhaling incense : crown'd her mountain-heads
With cedars, train'd her vines around their girdles,

And pour'd spontaneous harvests at their feet.

Nor were those woods without inhabitants

Besides the ephemera of earth and air ;

—Where glid the sunbeams through the latticed boughs,

And fell like dew-drops on the spangled ground,

To light the diamond beetle on his way ;

—Where cheerful openings let the sky look down

Into the very heart of solitude,

On little garden-plots of social flowers,

That crowded from the shades to peep at daylight :

—Or where impermeable foliage made

Midnight at noon, and chill, damp horror reign'd

O'er dead, fall'n leaves and slimy funguses :

—Reptiles were quicken'd into various birth.

Loathsome, unsightly, swoln to obscene bulk,

Lurk'd the dark toad beneath the infected turf ;

The slow-worm crawl'd, the light cameleon climb'd,

And changed his colour as his place he changed ;

The nimble lizard ran from bough to bough,

Glancing through light, in shadow disappearing ;

The scorpion, many-eyed, with sting of fire,

Bred there,—the legion-fiend of creeping things,

Terribly beautiful, the serpent lay,

Wreath'd like a coronet of gold and jewels,

Fit for a tyrant's brow ; anon he flew

Straight as an arrow shot from his own rings,

And struck his victim, shrieking ere it went

Down his strain'd throat, that open sepulchre.

Amphibious monsters haunted the lagoon ;

The hippopotamus, amidst the flood,

Flexile and active as the smallest swimmer ;

But on the bank, ill-balanced and infirm,

He grazed the herbage, with huge head declined,

Or lean'd to rest against some ancient tree.

The crocodile, the dragon of the waters,

In iron panoply, fell as the plague,

And merciless as famine, cranch'd his prey,

While from his jaws, with dreadful fangs all serried,

The life-blood dyed the waves with deadly streams.
 The seal and the sea-lion, from the gulf,
 Came forth, and couching with their little ones,
 Slept on the shelving rocks that girt the shore,
 Securing prompt retreat from sudden danger :
 The pregnant turtle, stealing out at eve,
 With anxious eye, and trembling heart, explored
 The loneliest coves, and in the loose, warm sand
 Deposited her eggs, which the sun hatch'd :
 Hence the young brood, that never knew a parent,
 Unburrow'd and by instinct sought the sea ;
 Nature herself, with her own gentle hand,
 Dropping them one by one into the flood,
 And laughing to behold their antic joy,
 When launch'd in their maternal element.

The vision of that brooding world went on ;
 Millions of beings yet more admirable
 Than all that went before them now appear'd ;
 Flocking from every point of heaven, and filling
 Eye, ear, and mind with objects, sounds, emotions
 Akin to livelier sympathy and love
 Than reptiles, fishes, insects, could inspire.
 —Birds, the free tenants of land, air, and ocean,
 Their forms all symmetry, their motions grace ;
 In plumage, delicate and beautiful,
 Thick without burden, close as fishes' scales,
 Or loose as full-blown poppies to the breeze ;
 With wings that might have had a soul within them,
 They bore their owners by such sweet enchantment ;
 —Birds, small and great, of endless shapes and colours,
 Here flew and perch'd, there swam and dived at pleasure ;
 Watchful and agile, uttering voices wild
 And harsh, yet in accordance with the waves
 Upon the beach, the winds in caverns moaning,
 Or winds and waves abroad upon the water.
 Some sought their food among the finny shoals,
 Swift darting from the clouds, emerging soon
 With slender captives glittering in their beaks ;

These in recesses of steep crags constructed
Their eyries inaccessible, and train'd
Their hardy broods to forage in all weathers ;
Others, more gorgeously apparell'd, dwelt
Among the woods, on Nature's dainties feeding,
Herbs, seeds, and roots ; or, ever on the wing,
Pursuing insects through the boundless air :
In hollow trees or thickets these conceal'd
Their exquisitely woven nests ; where lay
Their callow offspring, quiet as the down
On their own breasts, till from her search the dam
With laden bill return'd, and shared the meal
Among her clamorous suppliants, all agape ;
Then, cowering o'er them with expanded wings,
She felt how sweet it is to be a mother.
Of these, a few, with melody untaught,
Turn'd all the air to music within hearing,
Themselves unseen ; while bolder quiristers
On loftiest branches strain'd their clarion-pipes,
And made the forest echo to their screams
Discordant,—yet there was no discord there,
But temper'd harmony ; all tones combining,
In the rich confluence of ten thousand tongues,
To tell of joy and to inspire it. Who
Could hear such concert, and not join in chorus ?
Not I ;—sometimes entranced, I seem'd to float
Upon a buoyant sea of sounds ; again
With curious ear I tried to disentangle
The maze of voices, and with eye as nice
To single out each minstrel, and pursue
His little song through all its labyrinth,
Till my soul enter'd into him, and felt
Every vibration of his thrilling throat,
Pulse of his heart, and flutter of his pinions.
Often, as one among the multitude,
I sang from very fulness of delight ;
Now like a winged fisher of the sea,
Now a recluse among the woods,—enjoying

The bliss of all at once, or each in turn.

In storm and calm, through every change of season,
Long flourish'd thus that era of our isle ;
It could not last for ever : mark the end.

A cloud arose amid the tranquil heaven,
Like a man's hand, but held a hurricane
Within its grasp. Compress'd into a point,
The tempest struggled to break loose. No breath
Was stirring, yet the billows roll'd aloof,
And the air moan'd portentously ; ere long
The sky was hidden, darkness to be felt
Confounded all things ; land and water vanish'd,
And there was silence through the universe ;
Silence, that made my soul as desolate
As the blind solitude around. Methought
That I had pass'd the bitterness of death
Without the agony,—had, unaware,
Enter'd the unseen world, and in the gap
Between the life that is and that to come,
Awaited judgment. Fear and trembling seized
All that was mortal or immortal in me :
A moment, and the gates of Paradise
Might open to receive, or Hell be moved
To meet me. Strength and spirit fail'd ;
Eternity enclosed me, and I knew not,
Knew not, even then, my destiny. To doubt
Was to despair ;—I doubted and despair'd.
Then horrible delirium whirl'd me down
To ocean's nethermost recess ; the waves
Disparting freely, let me fall, and fall,
Lower and lower, passive as a stone,
Yet rack'd with miserable pangs, that gave
The sense of vain but violent resistance :
And still the depths grew deeper ; still the ground
Receded from my feet as I approach'd it.
Oh how I long'd to light on rocks, that sunk
Like quicksands ere I touch'd them ; or to hide
In caverns ever open to engulf me,

But, like the horizon's limit, never nearer !

Meanwhile the irrepressible tornado
Burst, and involved the elements in chaos ;
Wind, rain, and lightning, in one vast explosion,
Rush'd from the firmament upon the deep.
Heaven's adamant arch seem'd rent asunder,
And following in a cataract of ruins
My swift descent through bottomless abysses,
Where ocean's bed had been absorb'd in nothing.
I know no farther. When again I saw
The sun, the sea, the island, all was calm,
And all was desolation : not a tree,
Of thousands flourishing erewhile so fair,
But now was split, uprooted, snapt in twain,
Or hurl'd with all its honours to the dust.
Heaps upon heaps, the forest giants lay,
Even like the slain in battle, fallen to rise
No more, till heaven, and earth, and sea, with all
Therein, shall perish, as to me they seem'd
To perish in that ruthless hurricane.

CANTO FOURTH.

NATURE and Time were twins. Companions still.
Their unretarded, unreturning flight
They hold together. Time, with one sole aim,
Looks ever onward, like the moon through space
With beaming forehead, dark and bald behind,
Nor ever lost a moment in his course.
Nature looks all around her, like the sun,
And keeps her works, like his dependent worlds,
In constant motion. She hath never missed
One step in her victorious march of change,
For chance she knows not ; He who made her, gave

His daughter power o'er all except Himself,
 —Power in whate'er she does to do *his* will,
 Behold the true, the royal law of Nature!—
 Hence failures, hinderances, and devastations
 Are turn'd to trophies of exhaustless skill,
 That out of ruin brings forth strength and beauty,
 Yea, life and immortality from death.

I gazed in consternation on the wreck
 Of that fair island, strown with prostrate trees,
 The soil plough'd up with horrid inundations,
 The surface black with sea-weed, not a glimpse
 Of verdure peeping; stems, boughs, foliage lay
 Rent, broken, clotted, perishing in slime.
 "How are the mighty fallen!" I exclaimed;
 "Surely the feller hath come up among ye,
 And with a stroke invisible hewn down
 The growth of centuries in one dark hour!
 Is this the end of all perfection? This
 The abortive issue of a new creation,
 Erewhile so fruitful in abounding joys,
 And hopes fulfilling more than all they promised?
 Ages to come can but repair this ravage;
 The past is lost for ever. Reckless Time
 Stays not; astonied Nature stands aghast,
 And wrings her hands in silent agony,
 Amidst the annihilation of her works."

Thus raved I; but I wrong'd thee, glorious Nature!
 With whom adversity is but transition.
 Thou never didst despair, wert never foil'd,
 Nor weary with exhaustion, since the day,
 When, at the word, "Let there be light," light sprang,
 And show'd thee rising from primeval darkness,
 That fell back like a veil from thy young form,
 And Chaos fled before the apparition.

While yet mine eye was mourning o'er the scene,
 Nature and Time were working miracles:
 The isle was renovated; grass and flowers
 Crept quietly around the fallen trees;

A deeper soil embedded them, and o'er
The common sepulchre of all their race
Threw a rich covering of embroider'd turf,
Lovely to look on as the tranquil main,
When, in his noonward track, the unclouded sun
Tints the green waves with every hue of heaven,
More exquisitely brilliant and aërial
Than morn or evening's gaudier pageantry.
Amidst that burial of the mighty dead,
There was a resurrection from the dust
Of lowly plants, impatient for the light,
Long interrupted by o'ershadowing woods,
While in the womb of earth their embryos tarried,
Unfructifying, yet imperishable.
Huge remnants of the forest stood apart,
Like Tadmor's pillars in the wilderness,
Startling the traveller 'midst his thoughts of home ;
—Bare trunks of broken trees, that gave their heads
To the wind's axe, but would not yield their roots
To the uptearing violence of the floods.
From these a slender race of scions sprang,
Which with their filial arms embraced and sheltered
The monumental relics of their sires ;
But, limited in number, scatter'd wide,
And slow of growth, they overran no more
The Sun's dominions in that open isle.

Meanwhile the sea-fowl, that survived the storm,
Whose rage had fleck'd the waves with shatter'd plumes
And weltering carcasses, the prey of sharks,
Came from their fastnesses among the rocks,
And multiplied like clouds when rains are brooding,
Or flowers, when clear warm sunshine follows rain.
The inland birds had perish'd, nor again,
By airy voyages from shores unknown,
Was silence broken on the unwooded plains :
Another race of wing'd inhabitants
Ere long possess'd and peopled all the soil.

The sun had sunk where sky and ocean meet,

And each might seem the other ; sky below,
 With richest garniture of clouds inlaid ;
 Ocean above with isles and continents,
 Illumined from a source no longer seen :
 Far in the east, through heaven's intenser blue,
 Two brilliant sparks, like sudden stars, appear'd.
 Not stars, indeed, but birds of mighty wing,
 Retorted neck, and javelin-pointed bill,
 That made the air sigh as they cut it through.
 They gain'd upon the eye, and as they came,
 Enlarged, grew brighter, and display'd their forms,
 Amidst the golden evening ; pearly white,
 But ruby-tinctured. On the loftiest cliff
 They settled, hovering ere they touch'd the ground,
 And uttering, in a language of their own,
 Yet such as every ear might understand,
 And every bosom answer, notes of joy,
 And gratulation for that resting-place.
 Stately and beautiful they stood, and clapt
 Their van-broad pinions, streak'd their ruffled plumes,
 And ever and anon broke off to gaze,
 With yearning pleasure, toid in gentle murmurs,
 On that strange land, their destined home and country.
 Night round them threw her brown transparent gloom,
 Through which their lonely images yet shone,
 Like things unearthly, while they bow'd their heads
 On their full bosoms, and reposed till morn.
 I knew the Pelicans, and cried—" All hail !
 Ye future dwellers in the wilderness !"

At early dawn I mark'd them in the sky,
 Catching the morning colours on their plumes ;
 Not in voluptuous pastime revelling there,
 Among the rosy clouds, while orient heaven
 Flamed like the opening gates of Paradise,
 Whence issued forth the Angel of the sun,
 And gladden'd Nature with returning day :
 —Eager for food, their searching eyes they fix'd
 On ocean's unroll'd volume, from a height

That brought immensity within their scope ;
Yet with such power of vision look'd they down,
As though they watch'd the shell-fish slowly gliding
O'er sunken rocks, or climbing trees of coral.
On indefatigable wing upheld,
Breath, pulse, existence, seem'd suspended in them ;
They were as pictures painted on the sky ;
Till suddenly, aslant, away they shot,
Like meteors changed from stars to gleams of lightning,
And struck upon the deep ; where, in wild play,
Their quarry flounder'd, unsuspecting harm,
With terrible voracity, they plunged
Their heads among the affrighted shoals, and beat
A tempest on the surges with their wings,
Till flashing clouds of foam and spray conceal'd them.
Nimble they seized and secreted their prey,
Alive and wriggling in the elastic net,
Which Nature hung beneath their grasping beaks ;
Till, swoln with captures, the unwieldy burden
Clogg'd their slow flight, as heavily to land
These mighty hunters of the deep return'd.
There on the cragg'd cliffs they perch'd at ease,
Gorging their hapless victims one by one ;
Then full and weary, side by side, they slept,
Till evening roused them to the chase again.

Harsh seems the ordinance, that life by life
Should be sustain'd, and yet when all must die,
And be like water spilt upon the ground,
Which none can gather up, the speediest fate,
Though violent and terrible, is best.
O with what horrors would creation groan,—
What agonies would ever be before us,
Famine and pestilence, disease, despair,
Anguish and pain in every hideous shape,
Had all to wait the slow decay of Nature !
Life were a martyrdom of sympathy,
Death, lingering, raging, writhing, shrieking torture ;
The grave would be abolished ; this gay world

A valley of dry bones, a Golgotha,
In which the living stumbled o'er the dead,
Till they could fall no more, and blind perdition
Swept frail mortality away for ever.
'Twas wisdom, mercy, goodness, that ordain'd
Life in such infinite profusion,—Death
So sure, so prompt, so multifarious to those
That never sinn'd, that know not guilt, that fear
No wrath to come, and have no heaven to lose.

Love found that lonely couple on their isle,
And soon surrounded them with blithe companions.
The noble birds, with skill spontaneous, framed
A nest of reeds among the giant-grass,
That waved in lights and shadows o'er the soil.
There, in sweet thralldom, yet unweening why,
The patient dam, who ne'er till now had known
Parental instinct, brooded o'er her eggs,
Long ere she found the curious secret out,
That life was hatching in their brittle shells.
Then, from a wild rapacious bird of prey,
Tamed by the kindly process, she became
That gentlest of all living things—a mother ;
Gentlest while yearning o'er her naked young,
Fiercest when stirr'd by anger to defend them.
Her mate himself the softening power confess'd,
Forgot his sloth, restrain'd his appetite,
And ranged the sky and fish'd the stream for her ;
Or, when o'erwearied Nature forced her off
To shake her torpid feathers in the breeze,
And bathe her bosom in the cooling flood,
He took her place, and felt through every nerve,
While the plump nestlings throbb'd against his heart,
The tenderness that makes the vulture mild ;
Yea, half unwillingly his post resign'd,
When, home-sick with the absence of an hour,
She hurried back, and drove him from her seat
With pecking bill, and cry of fond distress,
Answer'd by him with murmurs of delight,

Whose gutturals harsh, to her were love's own music.
Then, settling down, like foam upon the wave,
White, flickering, effervescent, soon subsiding,
Her ruffled pinions smoothly she composed ;
And, while beneath the comfort of her wings,
Her crowded progeny quite fill'd the nest,
The halcyon sleeps not sounder, when the wind
Is breathless, and the sea without a curl,
—Nor dreams the halcyon of serener days,
Or nights more beautiful with silent stars,
Than, in that hour, the mother Pelican,
When the warm tumults of affection sunk
Into calm sleep, and dreams of what they were,
—Dreams more delicious than reality.
—He sentinel beside her stood, and watch'd,
With jealous eye, the raven in the clouds,
And the rank sea-mews wheeling round the cliffs.
Wo to the reptile then that ventured nigh ;
The snap of his tremendous bill was like
Death's scythe, down-cutting every thing it struck.
The heedless lizard, in his gambols, peep'd
Upon the guarded nest, from out the flowers,
But paid the instant forfeit of his life ;
Nor could the serpent's subtilty elude
Capture, when gliding by, nor in defence
Might his malignant fangs and venom save him.

Erelong the thriving brood outgrew their cradle,
Ran through the grass, and dabbled in the pools ;
No sooner denizens of earth than made
Free both of air and water ; day by day,
New lessons, exercises, and amusements
Employ'd the old to teach, the young to learn.
Now floating on the blue lagoon behold them ;
The Sire and Dam in swanlike beauty steering,
Their Cygnets following through the foamy wake,
Picking the leaves of plants, pursuing insects,
Or catching at the bubbles as they broke :
Till on some minor fry, in reedy shallows,

With flapping pinions and unsparing beaks,
 The well-taught scholars plied their double art,
 To fish in troubled waters, and secure
 The petty captives in their maiden pouches ;
 Then hurry with their banquet to the shore,
 With feet, wings, breast, half-swimming and half-flying.
 But when their pens grew strong to fight the storm,
 And buff'et with the breakers on the reef,
 The Parents put them to severer proof :
 On beetling rocks the little ones were marshall'd ;
 There, by endearments, stripes, example urged
 To try the void convexity of heaven
 And plough the ocean's horizontal field.
 Timorous at first, they flutter'd round the verge,
 Balanced and furl'd their hesitating wings,
 Then put them forth again with steadier arm ;
 Now, gaining courage as they felt the wind
 Dilate their feathers, fill their airy frames
 With buoyancy that bore them from their feet,
 They yielded all their burden to the breeze,
 And sail'd and soar'd where'er their guardians led ;
 Ascending, hovering, wheeling, or alighting,
 They search'd the deep in quest of nobler game
 Than yet their inexperience had encounter'd ;
 With these they battled in that element,
 Where wings or fins were equally at home,
 Till, conquerors in many a desperate strife,
 They dragg'd their spoils to land, and gorged at leisure
 Thus perfected in all the arts of life,
 That simple Pelicans require,—save one,
 Which mother-bird did never teach her daughter,
 —The inimitable art to build a nest :
 Love, for his own delightful school, reserving
 That mystery which novice never fail'd
 To learn infallibly when taught by him :
 —Hence that small masterpiece of Nature's art,
 Still unimpair'd, still unimproved, remains
 The same in site, material, shape, and texture.

While every kind a different structure frames,
All build alike of each peculiar kind :
The nightingale, that dwelt in Adam's bower,
And pour'd her stream of music through his dreams ;
The soaring lark, that led the eye of Eve
Into the clouds, her thoughts into the heaven
Of heavens, where lark nor eye can penetrate ;
The dove, that perch'd upon the Tree of Life,
And made her bed amongst the thickest leaves ;
All the wing'd habitants of Paradise,
Whose songs once mingled with the songs of Angels,
Wove their first nests as curiously and well
As the wood-minstrels in our evil day,
After the labours of six thousand years,
In which their ancestors have fail'd to add,
To alter or diminish, any thing
In that, of which Love only knows the secret,
And teaches every mother for herself,
Without the power to impart it to her offspring :
—Thus perfected in all the arts of life,
That simple Pelicans require, save this,
Those Parents drove their young away ; the young
Gaily forsook their parents. Soon enthrall'd
With love-alliances among themselves,
They built their nests, as happy instinct wrought
Within their bosoms, wakening powers unknown,
Till sweet necessity was laid upon them ;
They bred, and rear'd their little families,
As they were train'd and disciplined before.
Thus wings were multiplied from year to year,
And ere the patriarch-twain, in good old age,
Resign'd their breath beside that ancient nest,
In which themselves had nursed a hundred broods,
The isle was peopled with their progeny.

CANTO FIFTH.

MEANWHILE, not idle, though unwatch'd by me,
The coral architects in silence rear'd
Tower after tower beneath the dark abyss.
Pyramidal in form the fabrics rose,
From ample basements narrowing to the height,
Until they pierced the surface of the flood,
And dimpling eddies sparkled round their peaks.
Then (if great things with small may be compared)
They spread like water-lilies, whose broad leaves
Make green and sunny islets on the pool,
For golden flies, on summer-days, to haunt,
Safe from the lightning-seizure of the trout ;
Or yield their laps to catch the minnow springing
Clear from the stream to 'scape the ruffian pike,
That prowls in disappointed rage beneath,
And wonders where the little wretch found refuge.
One headland topt the waves, another follow'd ;
A third, a tenth, a twentieth soon appear'd,
Till the long barren gulf in travail lay
With many an infant struggling into birth.
Larger they grew and lovelier, when they breathed
The vital air, and felt the genial sun ;
As though a living spirit dwelt in each,
Which, like the inmate of a flexile shell,
Moulded the shapeless slough with its own motion,
And painted it with colours of the morn.
Amidst that group of younger sisters stood
The Isle of Pelicans, as stands the moon
At midnight, queen among the minor stars,
Differing in splendour, magnitude, and distance.
So look'd that archipelago ; small isles,
By interwinding channels link'd, yet sunder'd ;
All flourishing in peaceful fellowship,
Like forest oaks that love society :
—Of various growth and progress ; here, a rock

On which a single palm-tree waved its banner ;
There sterile tracts unmoulder'd into soil ;
Yonder, dark woods whose foliage swept the water,
Without a speck of turf, or line of shore,
As though their roots were anchor'd in the ocean.
But most were gardens redolent with flowers,
And orchards bending with Hesperian fruit,
That realized the dreams of olden time.

Throughout this commonwealth of sea-sprung lands,
Life kindled in ten thousand happy forms ;
Earth, air, and ocean were all full of life.
Still highest in the rank of being, soar'd
The fowls amphibious, and the inland tribes
Of dainty plumage or melodious song.
In gaudy robes of many colour'd patches,
The parrots swung like blossoms on the trees,
While their harsh voices undecieved the ear.
More delicately pencill'd, finer drawn
In shape and lineament : too exquisite
For gross delights ; the Birds of Paradise
Floated aloof, as though they lived on air,
And were the orient progeny of heaven,
Or spirits made perfect veil'd in shining raiment.
From flower to flower, where wild bees flew and sung,
As countless, small, and musical as they,
Showers of bright humming-birds came down, and plied
The same ambrosial task, with slender bill
Extracting honey, hidden in those bells,
Whose richest blooms grew pale beneath the blaze
Of twinkling winglets hovering o'er their petals.
Brilliant as raindrops, when the western sun
Sees his own miniature of beams in each.

High on the cliffs, down on the shelly reef,
Or gliding like a silver-shaded cloud
Through the blue heaven, the mighty albatross
Inhaled the breezes, sought his humble food,
Or, where his kindred like a flock reposed,
Without a shepherd, on the grassy downs,

Smooth'd his white fleece, and slumber'd in their midst.

Wading through marshes, where the rank sea-weed
With spongy moss and flaccid lichens strove,
Flamingoes, in their crimson tunics, stalk'd
On stately legs, with far-exploring eye ;
Or fed and slept, in regimental lines,
Watch'd by their sentinels, whose clarion-screams
All in an instant woke the startled troop,
That mounted like a glorious exhalation,
And vanish'd through the welkin far away,
Nor paused till, on some lonely coast alighting,
Again their gorgeous cohort took the field.

The fierce sea-eagle, humble in attire,
In port terrific, from his lonely eyrie
(Itself a burden for the tallest tree)
Look'd down o'er land and sea as his dominions :
Now, from long chase, descending with his prey,
Young seal or dolphin, in his deadly clutch,
He fed his eaglets in the noonday sun :
Nor less at midnight ranged the deep for game ;
At length entrapp'd with his own talons, struck
Too deep to be withdrawn, where a strong shark,
Roused by the anguish, with impetuous plunge,
Dragg'd his assailant down into the abyss,
Struggling in vain for liberty and life ;
His young ones heard their parent's dying shrieks,
And watch'd in vain for his returning wing.

Here ran the stormy petrels on the waves,
As though they were the shadows of themselves
Reflected from a loftier flight through space.
The stern and gloomy raven haunted here,
A hermit of the atmosphere, on land
Among vociferating crowds a stranger,
Whose hoarse, low, ominous croak disclaim'd communion
With those, upon the offal of whose meals
He gorged alone, or tore their own rank corpses :
The heavy penguin, neither fish nor fowl,
With scaly feathers and with finny wings,

Plump'd stone-like from the rock into the gulf,
Rebounding upward swift as from a sling,
Through yielding water as through limpid air,
The cormorant, Death's living arrow, flew,
Nor ever miss'd a stroke, or dealt a second,
So true the infallible destroyer's aim.

Millions of creatures such as these, and kinds
Unnamed by man, possess'd those busy isles ;
Each in its brief existence, to itself,
The first, last being in the universe,
With whom the whole began, endured, and ended :
Blest ignorance of bliss, not made for them !
Happy exemption from the fear of death,
And that which makes the pangs of death immortal,
The undying worm, the fire unquenchable,
—Conscience, the bosom-hell of guilty man !
The eyes of all look'd up to Him, whose hand
Had made them, and supplied their daily need ;
Although they knew Him not, they look'd to Him ;
And He, whose mercy is o'er all his works,
Forgot not one of his large family,
But cared for each as for an only child.
They plough'd not, sow'd not, gather'd not in barns,
Thought not of yesterday, nor knew to-morrow ;
Yet harvests inexhaustible they reap'd
In the prolific furrows of the main ;
Or from its sunless caverns brought to light
Treasures for which contending kings might war,—
Gems, for which queens would yield their hands to slaves,—
By them despised as valueless and naught ;
From the rough shell they pick'd the luscious food,
And left a prince's ransom in the pearl.

Nature's prime favourites were the Pelicans ;
High-fed, long-lived, and sociable and free,
They ranged in wedded pairs, or martial bands,
For play or slaughter. Oft have I beheld
A little army take the watery field,
With outstretch'd pinions form a spacious ring,

Then pressing to the centre, through the waves,
Enclose thick shoals within their narrowing toils,
Till multitudes entangled fell a prey :
Or, when the flying-fish in sudden clouds
Burst from the sea, and flutter'd through the air,
These giant fowlers snapt them like mosquitoes
By swallows hunted through the summer sky.

I turn'd again to look upon that isle,
Whence from one pair those colonies had issued
That through these Cyclades at freedom roved,
Fish'd every stream, and fed on every shore ;
When, lo ! a spectacle of strange extremes
Awaken'd sweet and melancholy thoughts :
All that is helpless, beautiful, endearing
In infancy, in prime of youth, in love ;
All that is mournful in decay, old age,
And dissolution ; all that awes the eye,
And chills the bosom, in the sad remains
Of poor mortality, which last awhile,
To show that life hath been, but is no longer ;
—All these in blended images appear'd,
Exulting, brooding, perishing before me.
It was a land of births.—Unnumber'd nests,
Of reeds and rushes, studded all the ground,
A few were desolate and fallen to ruin ;
Many were building from those waste materials ;
On some the dams were sitting, till the stroke
Of their quick bills should break the prison-shells,
And let the little captives forth to light,
With their first breath demanding food and shelter ;
In others I beheld the brood new fledged,
Struggling to clamber out, take wing and fly
Up to the heavens, or fathom the abyss.
Meanwhile the parent from the sea supplied
A daily feast, and from the pure lagoon
Brought living water in her sack, to cool
The impatient fever of their clamorous throats.
No need had she, as hieroglyphics feign,

(A mystic lesson of maternal love,)

To pierce her breast, and with the vital stream,
Warm from its fountain, slake their thirst in blood,
—The blood which nourish'd them ere they were hatch'd,
While the crude egg within herself was forming.

It was a land of death.—Between those nests
The quiet earth was feather'd with the spoils
Of aged Pelicans, that hither came
To die in peace, where they had spent in love
The sweetest periods of their long existence.
Where they were wont to build, and breed their young.
There they lay down to rise no more for ever,
And close their eyes upon the dearest sight
On which their living eyes had loved to dwell,
—The nest where every joy to them was centred.
There rife corruption tainted them so lightly,
The moisture seem'd to vanish from their relics,
As dew from gossamer, that leaves the net-work
Spread on the ground, and glistening in the sun :
Thus when a breeze the ruffled plumage stirr'd.
That lay like drifted snow upon the soil,
Their slender skeletons were seen beneath,
So delicately framed, and half transparent,
That I have marvell'd how a bird so noble,
When in his full, magnificent attire,
With pinions wider than the king of vultures,
And down elastic, thicker than the swan's,
Should leave so small a cage of ribs to mark
Where vigorous life had dwelt a hundred years.

Such was that scene ; the dying and the dead,
Next neighbours to the living and the unborn.
Oh how much happiness was here enjoy'd !
How little misery had been suffer'd here !
Those humble Pelicans had each fulfill'd
The utmost purpose of its span of being,
And done its duty in its narrow circle,
As surely as the sun, in his career,
Accomplishes the glorious end of his.

CANTO SIXTH.

"AND thus," methought, "ten thousand suns may lead
 The stars to glory in their annual courses ;
 Moons without number thus may wax and wane,
 And winds alternate blow in cross-monsoons,
 While here—through self-beginning rounds, self-ending,
 Then self-renew'd, without advance or failure,—
 Existence fluctuates only like the tide,
 Whose everlasting changes bring no change,
 But billow follows billow to the shore,
 Recoils, and billow out of billow swells ;
 An endless whirl of ebbing, flowing foam,
 Where every bubble is like every other,
 And Ocean's face immutable as Heaven's.
 Here is no progress to sublimer life ;
 Nature stands still,—stands at the very point,
 Whence from a vantage-ground her bolder steps
 Might rise resplendent on the scale of being ;
 Rank over rank, awakening with her tread,
 Inquisitive, intelligent ; aspiring
 Each above other, all above themselves,
 Till every generation should transcend
 The former, as the former all the past.

.. Such, such alone were meet inhabitants
 For these fair isles, so wonderfully form'd
 Amidst the solitude of sea and sky,
 On which my wandering spirit first was cast,
 And still beyond whose girdle, eye nor wing
 Can carry me to undiscover'd climes,
 Where many a nobler race may dwell ; whose waifs
 And exiles, toss'd by tempests on the flood,
 Hither might drift upon their native trees ;
 Or, like their own free birds, on fearless pinions,
 Make voyages amidst the pathless heaven,
 And, lighting, colonize these fertile tracts,
 Recover'd from the barrenness of ocean,

Whose wealth might well repay the brave adventure.
—Hath Nature spent her strength? Why stopp'd she here?
Why stopp'd not lower, if to rise no higher?
Can she not summon from more ancient regions,
Beyond the rising or the setting sun,
Creatures, as far above the mightiest here
As yonder eagle, flaming at high noon,
Outsoars the bat that flutters through the twilight?
Or as the tender Pelican excels
The anomalous abortion of the rock,
In which plant, fossil, animal unite?

“But changes here may happen—changes must!
What hinders that new shores should yet ascend
Out of the bosom of the deep, and spread
Till all converge, from one circumference,
Into a solid breadth of table-land,
Bound by the horizon, canopied with heaven,
And ocean in its own abyss absorb'd?”

While these imaginations cross'd the mind,
My thoughts fulfill'd themselves before mine eyes;
The islands moved like circles upon water,
Expanding till they touch'd each other, closed
The interjacent straits, and thus became
A spacious continent which fill'd the sea.
That change was total, like a birth, a death;
—Birth, that from native darkness brings to light
The young inhabitant of this gay world;
Death, that from seen to unseen things removes,
And swallows time up in eternity.
That which had been, for ever ceased to be,
And that which follow'd was a new creation
Wrought from the disappearance of the old.
So fled that pageant universe away,
With all its isles and waters. So I found
Myself translated to that other world,
By sleight of fancy, like the unconscious act
Of waking from a pleasant dream, with sweet
Relapse into a more transporting vision.

The nursery of brooding Pelicans,
The dormitory of their dead, had vanish'd,
And all the minor spots of rock and verdure,
The abodes of happy millions, were no more :
But in their place a shadowy landscape lay,
On whose extremest western verge, a gleam
Of living silver, to the downward sun
Intensely glittering, mark'd the boundary line,
Which ocean, held by chains invisible,
Fretted and foam'd in vain to overleap.
Woods, mountains, valleys, rivers, glens, and plains
Diversified the scene :—that scene was wild,
Magnificent, deform'd, or beautiful,
As framed expressly for all kinds of life,
With all life's labours, sufferings, and enjoyments,
Untouch'd as yet by any meaner hand
Than His who made it, and pronounced it good.
And good it was ;—free as light, air, fire, water,
To every thing that breathed upon its surface,
From the small worm that crept abroad at midnight
To sip cool dews, and feed on sleeping flowers,
Then slunk into its hole, the little vampire !
Through every species which I yet had seen,
To animals, of tribes and forms unknown
In the lost islands ;—beasts that ranged the forests,
Grazed in the valleys, bounded o'er the hills,
Reposed in rich savannas, from gray rocks
Pick'd the thin herbage sprouting through their fissures ;
Or in waste howling deserts found oases,
And fountains pouring sweeter streams than nectar,
And more melodious than the nightingale,
—So to the faint and perishing they seem'd.
I gazed on ruminating herds of kine,
And sheep for ever wandering ; goats that swung
Like spiders on the crags, so slight their hold ;
Deer, playful as their fawns, in peace, but fell,
As battling bulls, in wars of jealousy :
Through flowery champagnes roam'd the fleet gazelles,

Of many a colour, size, and shape,—all graceful ;
In every look, step, attitude prepared,
Even at the shadow of a cloud, to vanish,
And leave a solitude where thousands stood,
With heads declined, and nibbling eagerly
As locusts when they light on some new soil,
And move no more till they have shorn it bare.
On these, with famine unappeasable,
Lithe, muscular, huge-boned and limb'd for leaping,
The brindled tyrants of brute nature prey'd :
The weak and timid bow'd before the strong,
The many by the few were hourly slaughter'd,
Where power was right, and violence was law.

Here couch'd the panting tiger, on the watch ;
Impatient but unmoved, his fire-ball eyes
Made horrid twilight in the sunless jungle,
Till on the heedless buffalo he sprang,
Dragg'd the low-bellowing monster to his lair,
Crash'd through the ribs at once into its heart,
Quaff'd the hot blood, and gorged the quivering flesh,
Till drunk he lay, as powerless as the carcass.

There, to the solitary lion's roar
So many echoes answer'd, that there seem'd,
Ten in the field for one ;—where'er they turn'd,
The flying animals, from cave to cave,
Heard his voice issuing ; and recoil'd aghast,
Only to meet it nearer than before,
Or, ere they saw his shadow or his face,
Fall dead beneath his thunder-striking paw.

Calm amidst scenes of havoc, in his own
Huge strength impregnable, the elephant
Offended none, but led his quiet life
Among his old contemporary trees,
Till Nature laid him gently down to rest
Beneath the palm, which he was wont to make
His prop in slumber ; there his relics lay
Longer than life itself had dwelt within them.
Bees in the ample hollow of his skull

Piled their wax-citadels, and stored their honey ;
Thence sallied forth to forage through the fields,
And swarm'd in emigrating legions thence :
There, little burrowing animals threw up
Hillocks beneath the overarching ribs ;
While birds, within the spinal labyrinth,
Contrived their nests :—so wandering Arabs pitch
Their tents amidst Palmyra's palaces ;
So Greek and Roman peasants build their huts
Beneath the shadow of the Parthenon
Or on the ruins of the Capitol.

But unintelligent creation soon
Fail'd to delight ; the novelty departed,
And all look'd desolate ; my eye grew weary
Of seeing that which it might see for ever
Without a new idea or emotion ;
The mind within me panted after mind,
The spirit sigh'd to meet a kindred spirit,
And in my human heart there was a void,
Which nothing but humanity could fill.
At length, as though a prison-door were open'd,
Chains had fall'n off, and by an angel-guide
Conducted, I escaped that desert-bourne ;
And instantaneously I travell'd on,
Yet knew not how, for wings nor feet I plied,
But with a motion, like the iapse of thought,
O'er many a vale and mountain I was carried,
Till in the east, above the ocean's brim,
I saw the morning sun, and stay'd my course,
Where vestiges of rude but social life
Arrested and detain'd attention long.

Amidst the crowd of grovelling animals,
A being more majestic stood before me ;
I met an eye that look'd into my soul,
And seem'd to penetrate mine inmost thoughts.
Instinctively I turn'd away to hide them,
For shame and quick compunction came upon me,
As though detected on forbidden ground,

Gazing on things unlawful: but my heart
Relented quickly, and my bosom throbb'd
With such unutterable tenderness,
That every sympathy of human nature
Was by the beating of a pulse enkindled,
And flash'd at once throughout the mind's recesses,
As in a darken'd chamber, objects start
All round the walls, the moment light breaks in.
The sudden tumult of surprise awoke
My spirit from that trance of vague abstraction,
Wherein I lived through ages, and beheld
Their generations pass so swiftly by me,
That years were moments in their flight, and hours
The scenes of crowded centuries reveal'd;
I sole spectator of the wondrous changes,
Spell-bound as in a dream, and acquiescing
In all that happen'd, though perplex'd with strange
Conceit of something wanting through the whole.
That spell was broken, like the vanish'd film
From eyes born blind, miraculously open'd;—
'Twas gone, and I became myself again,
Restored to memory of all I knew
From books or schools, the world or sage experience;
With all that folly or misfortune taught me,—
Each hath her lessons,—wise are they that learn.
Still the mysterious revery went on,
And I was still sole witness of its issues,
But with clear mind and disenchanting sight,
Beholding, judging, comprehending all;
Not passive and bewilder'd as before.

What was the being which I then beheld?
—Man going forth amidst inferior creatures:
Not as he rose in Eden out of dust,
Fresh from the moulding hand of Deity;
Immortal breath upon his lips; the light
Of uncreated glory in his soul;
Lord of the nether universe, and heir
Of all above him,—all above the sky,

The sapphire pavement of his future palace :
 Not so ;—but rather like that morning star,
 Which from the highest empyrean fell
 Into the bottomless abyss of darkness ;
 There flaming only with malignant beams
 Among the constellations of his peers,
 The third part of heaven's host, with him cast down
 To irretrievable perdition,—thence,
 Amidst the smoke of unilluminated fires,
 Issuing like horrid sparks to blast creation :
 —Thus, though in dim eclipse, before me stood,
 As from a world invisible call'd up,
 Man, in the image of his Maker form'd,
 Man, to the image of his tempter fall'n ;
 Yet still as far above infernal fiends,
 As once a little lower than the angels.
 I knew him, own'd him, loved him, and exclaim'd,
 “ Bone of my bone, flesh of my flesh, my Brother !
 Hail in the depth of thy humiliation ;
 For dear thou art, amidst unconscious ruin,—
 Dear to the kindest feelings of my soul,
 As though one womb had borne us, and one mother
 At her sweet breasts had nourish'd us as twins.”

I saw him sunk in loathsome degradation,
 A naked, fierce, ungovernable savage,
 Companion to the brutes, himself more brutal ;
 Superior only in the craft that made
 The serpent subtlest beast of all the field,
 Whose guile unparadised the world, and brought
 A curse upon the earth which God had blessed.
 That curse was here, without the mitigation
 Of healthful toil, that half redeems the ground
 Whence man was taken, whither he returns,
 And which repays him bread for patient labour,
 —Labour, the symbol of his punishment,
 —Labour, the secret of his happiness.
 The curse was here ; for thorns and briers o'erran
 The tangled labyrinth, yet briers bare roses.

And thorns threw out their annual snow of blossoms :
 The curse was here ; and yet the soil untill'd
 Pour'd forth spontaneous and abundant harvests.
 Pulse and small berries, maize in strong luxuriance,
 And slender rice that grew by many waters :
 The forests cast their fruits, in husk or rind,
 Yielding sweet kernels or delicious pulp,
 Smooth oil, cool milk, and unfermented wine,
 In rich and exquisite variety.

On these the indolent inhabitants
 Fed without care or forethought, like the swine
 That grubb'd the turf, and taught them where to look
 For dainty earth-nuts and nutritious roots ;
 Or the small monkeys, capering on the boughs,
 And rioting on nectar and ambrosia,
 The produce of that Paradise run wild :—
 No,—these were merry, if they were not wise ;
 While man's untutor'd hordes were sour and sullen,
 Like those ahorr'd baboons, whose gluttonous taste
 They follow'd safely in their choice of food ;
 And whose brute semblance of humanity
 Made them more hideous than their prototypes,
 That bore the genuine image and inscription,
 Defaced indeed, but yet indelible.

—From ravening beasts, and fowls that fish'd the ocean,
 Men learn'd to prey on meaner animals,
 But found a secret out which birds or beasts,
 Most cruel, cunning, treacherous, never knew,
 —The luxury of devouring one another.

Such were my kindred in their lost estate,
 From whose abominations while I turn'd,
 As from a pestilence, I mourn'd and wept
 With bitter lamentation o'er their ruin ;
 Sunk as they were in ignorance of all
 That raises man above his origin,
 And elevates to heaven the spirit within him,
 To which the Almighty's breath gave understanding.

Large was their stature, and their frames athletic ;

Their skins were dark, their locks like eagles' feathers ;
Their features terrible ;—when roused to wrath,
All evil passions lighten'd through their eyes,
Convulsed their bosoms like possessing fiends,
And loosed what sets on fire the course of nature,
—The tongue of malice, set on fire of hell,
Which then, in cataracts of horrid sounds,
Raged through their gnashing teeth and foaming lips,
Making the ear to tingle, and the soul
Sicken, with spasms of strange revolting horror,
As if the blood changed colour in the veins,
While hot and cold it ran about the heart,
And red to pale upon the cheek it show'd.
Their visages at rest were winter-clouds,
Fix'd gloom, whence sun nor shower could be foretold.
But, in high revelry, when full of prey,
Cannibal prey, tremendous was their laughter ;
Their joy, the shock of earthquakes overturning
Mountains, and swamping rivers in their course ;
Or subterranean elements embroil'd,—
Wind, fire, and water, till the cleft volcano
Gives to their devastating fury vent :
That joy was lurking hatred in disguise,
And not less fatal in its last excess.
They danced,—like whirlwinds in the Libyan waste,
When the dead sand starts up in living pillars,
That mingle, part, and cross, then burst in ruin
On man and beast ;—they danced to shouts and screams,
Drums, gongs, and horns, their deafening din inflicting
On nerves and ears enraptured with such clangour ;
Till mirth grew madness, and the feast a fray,
That left the field strown with unnatural carnage,
To furnish out a more unnatural feast,
And lay the train to inflame a bloodier fray.
They dwelt in dens and caverns of the earth,
Won by the valiant from their brute possessors,
And held in hourly peril of reprisals
From the ferocious brigands of the woods :

The lioness, benighted with her whelps,
There seeking shelter from the drenching storm,
Met with unseen resistance on the threshold,
And perish'd ere she knew by what she fell ;
Or, finding all within asleep, surprised
The inmates in their dreams, from which no more
Her deadly vengeance suffer'd them to wake.
—On open plains they framed low, narrow huts
Of boughs, the wreck of windfalls or of Time,
Wattled with canes, and thatch'd with reeds and leaves ;
There from afflictive noon sought twilight shadow,
Or slumber'd in the smoke of greenwood fires,
To drive away the pestilent mosquitoes.
—Some built unwieldy nests among the trees,
In which to doze by night, or watch by day
The joyful moment, from that ambushade
To slay the passing antelope, or wound
The jackal chasing it, with sudden arrows
From bows that task'd a giant's strength to bend.
In flight or combat, on the champaign field,
They ran atilt with flinty-headed spears ;
Or launch'd the lighter javelin through the air,
Follow'd its motion with a basilisk's eye,
And shriek'd with gladness when a life was spill'd :
They sent the pebble hissing from the sling,
Hot as the curse from lips that would strike dead,
If words were stones ; here stones, as swift as words
Can reach the ear, the unwary victim smote.
In closer conflict, breast to breast, when one
Or both must perish on the spot, they fought
With clubs of iron-wood and ponderous force,
Wielded with terrible dexterity,
And falling down like thunderbolts, which naught
But counter-thunderbolts could meet or parry.
Rude-fashion'd weapons ! yet the lion's jaws,
The tiger's grasp, the eagle's beak and talons,
The serpent's fangs, were not more formidable,
More sure to hit, or, hitting, sure to kill.

They knew not shame nor honour, yet knew pride ;
 —The pride of strength, skill, speed, and subtilty ;
 The pride of tyranny and violence,
 Not o'er the mighty only, whom their arm
 Had crush'd in battle or had basely slain
 By treacherous ambush, or more treacherous smiles,
 Embracing while they stabb'd the heart that met
 Their specious seeming with unguarded breast :
 —The reckless savages display'd their pride
 By vile oppression in its vilest forms,—
 Oppression of the weak and innocent ;
 Infancy, womanhood, old age, disease,
 The lame, the halt, the blind, were wrong'd, neglected,
 Exposed to perish by wild beasts in woods,
 Cast to the crocodiles in rivers ; murder'd,
 Even by their dearest kindred, in cold blood,
 To rid themselves of Nature's gracious burdens,
 In mercy laid on man to teach *him* mercy.

But their prime glory was insane debauch,
 To inflict and bear excruciating tortures ;
 The unshrinking victim, while the flesh was rent
 From his live limbs, and eaten in his presence,
 Still in his death-pangs taunted his tormentors
 With tales of cruelty more diabolic,
 Wreak'd by himself upon the friends of those
 Who now their impotence of vengeance wasted
 On him, and drop by drop his life extorted
 With thorns and briers of the wilderness,
 Or the slow violence of untouched fire.

Vanity too, pride's mannikin, here play'd
 Satanic tricks to ape her master-fiend.
 The leopard's beauteous spoils, the lion's mane,
 Engirt the loins, and waved upon the shoulders
 Of those whose wiles or arms had won such trophies :
 Rude-punctured figures of all loathsome things,
 Toads, scorpions, asps, snakes' eyes and double tongue,
 In flagrant colours on their tattooed limbs,
 Gave proof of intellect, not dead but sleeping,

And in its trance enacting strange vagaries.
 Bracelets of human teeth, fangs of wild beasts,
 The jaws of sharks, and beaks of ravenous birds,
 Glitter'd and tinkled round their arms and ankles ;
 While skulls of slaughter'd enemies, in chains
 Of natural elf-locks, dangled from the necks
 Of those, whose own bare skulls and cannibal teeth
 Ere long must deck more puissant fiends than they.

On ocean, too, they exercised dominion ;—
 Of hollow trees composing slight canoes,
 They paddled o'er the reefs, cut through the breakers,
 And rode the untamed billows far from shore ;
 Amphibious from their infancy, and fearing
 Naught in the deepest waters save the shark ;
 Even him, well arm'd, they gloried to encounter,
 And when he turn'd to ope those gates of death,
 That led into the Hades of his gorge,
 Smote with such stern decision to his vitals,
 And vanish'd through the blood-beclouded waves,
 That, blind and desperate in his agony,
 Headlong he plunged, and perish'd in the abyss.

Woman was here the powerless slave of man ;
 Thus fallen Adam tramples fallen Eve,
 Through all the generations of his sons,
 In whose barbarian veins th' old serpent's venom
 Turns pure affection into hideous lust,
 And wrests the might of his superior arm
 (Given to defend and bless his meek companion)
 Into the very yoke and scourge of bondage ;
 Till limbs, by beauty moulded, eyes of gladness,
 And the full bosom of confiding truth,
 Made to delight and comfort him in toil,
 And change Care's den into a halcyon's nest,
 —Are broke with drudgery, quench'd with stagnant
 tears,

Or wrung with lonely, unimpacted wo.
 Man is beside himself, not less than fall'n
 Below his dignity, who owns not woman

As nearer to his heart than when she grew
A rib within him,—as his heart's own heart.

He slew the game with his unerring arrow,
But left it in the bush for her to drag
Home, with her feeble hands, already burden'd
With a young infant clinging to her shoulders.
Here she fell down in travail by the way,
Her piteous groans unheard, or, heard, unanswer'd;
There, with her convoy, she—mother, and child,
And slaughter'd deer—became some wild beast's prey;
Though spoils so rich not one could long enjoy,—
Soon the woods echo'd with the huge uproar
Of savage throats contending for the bodies,
Till not a bone was left for farther quarrel.

—He chose the spot; she piled the wood, she wove
The supple withes, and bound the thatch that form'd
The ground-built cabin, or the tree-swung nest.
—He brain'd the drowsy panther in his den,
At noon o'ercome by heat, and with closed lids
Fearing assaults from none but vexing flies,
Which, with his ring-streak'd tail he switch'd away;
The citadel thus storm'd, the monster slain,
By the dread prowess of his daring arm,
She roll'd the stones, and planted the stockade,
To fortify the garrison for him,
Who scornfully look'd on, at ease reclined,
Or only rose to beat her to the task.

Yet, midst the gall and wormwood of her lot,
She tasted joys which none but woman knows,
—The hopes, fears, feelings, raptures of a mother,
Well-nigh compensating for his unkindness,
Whom yet with all her fervent soul she loved,
Dearer to her than all the universe,
The looks, the cries, the embraces of her babes;
In each of whom she lived a separate life,
And felt the fountain, whence their veins were fill'd,
Flow in perpetual union with the streams
That swell'd their pulses, and throbb'd back through hers.

Oh! 'twas benign relief when my vex'd eye
Could turn from man, the sordid, selfish savage,
And gaze on woman in her self-denial,
To him and to their offspring all alive,
Dead only to herself,—save when she won
His unexpected smile; then, then she look'd
A thousand times more beautiful, to meet
A glance of aught like tenderness from him;
And sent the sunshine of her happy heart
So warm into the charnel-house of his,
That Nature's genuine sympathies awoke,
And he almost forgot himself in her.
O man! lost man! amidst the desolation
Of goodness in thy soul, there yet remains
One spark of Deity,—that spark is love.

CANTO SEVENTH.

AGES again, with silent revolution,
Brought morn and even, noon and night, with all
The old vicissitudes of Nature's aspect:
Rains in their season fertilized the ground,
Winds sow'd their seeds of every kind of plant
On its peculiar soil; while suns matured
What winds had sown, and rains in season water'd,
Providing nourishment for all that lived:
Man's generations came and went like these,
—The grass and flowers that wither where they spring;
—The brutes that perish wholly where they fall.
Thus while I mused on these in long succession,
And all remain'd as all had been before,
I cried, as I was wont, though none did listen,
—'Tis sweet sometimes to speak and be the hearer;
For he is twice himself who can converse
With his own thoughts, as with a living throng

Of fellow-travellers in solitude ;
And mine too long had been my sole companions :
—“ What is this mystery of human life ?
In rude or civilized society,
Alike, a pilgrim’s progress through this world
To that which is to come, by the same stages ;
With infinite diversity of fortune
To each distinct adventurer by the way !
“ Life is the transmigration of a soul
Through various bodies, various states of being ;
New manners, passions, tastes, pursuits in each ;
In nothing, save in consciousness, the same.
Infancy, adolescence, manhood, age,
Are always moving onward, always losing
Themselves in one another, lost at length,
Like undulations, on the strand of death.
The sage of threescore years and ten looks back,—
With many a pang of lingering tenderness,
And many a shuddering conscience-fit,—on what
He hath been, is not, cannot be again ;
Nor trembles less with fear and hope, to think
What he is now, but cannot long continue,
And what he must be through uncounted ages.
—The Child ;—we know no more of happy childhood,
Than happy childhood knows of wretched eld ;
And all our dreams of its felicity
Are incoherent as its own crude visions :
We but begin to live from that fine point
Which memory dwells on, with the morning-star,
The earliest note we heard the cuckoo sing,
Or the first daisy that we ever pluck’d,
When thoughts themselves were stars, and birds, and flowers,
Pure brilliance, simplest music, wild perfume.
Thenceforward, mark the metamorphoses !
—The Boy, the Girl ;—when all was joy, hope, promise ;
Yet who would be a Boy, a Girl again,
To bear the yoke, to long for liberty,
And dream of what will never come to pass ;

—The Youth, the Maiden :—living but for love,
 Yet learning soon that life hath other cares,
 And joys less rapturous, but more enduring :
 —The Woman ;—in her offspring multiplied :
 A tree of life, whose glory is her branches,
 Beneath whose shadow, she (both root and stem)
 Delights to dwell in meek obscurity,
 That they may be the pleasure of beholders :
 —The Man :—as father of a progeny,
 Whose birth requires his death to make them room,
 Yet in whose lives he feels his resurrection,
 And grows immortal in his children's children :
 —Then the gray Elder ;—leaning on his staff,
 And bow'd beneath a weight of years, that steal
 Upon him with the secrecy of sleep,
 (No snow falls lighter than the snow of age,
 None with such subtilty benumbs the frame,)
 Till he forgets sensation, and lies down
 Dead in the lap of his primeval mother ;
 She throws a shroud of turf and flowers around him,
 Then calls the worms, and bids them do their office :
 —Man giveth up the ghost,—and where is He ?"
 That startling question broke my lucubration ;
 I saw those changes realized before me ;
 Saw them recurring in perpetual line,
 The line unbroken, while the thread ran on,
 Failing at this extreme, at that renew'd,
 —Like buds, leaves, blossoms, fruits on herbs and trees ;
 Like mites, flies, reptiles ; birds, and beasts, and fishes,
 Of every length of period here,—all mortal,
 And all resolved into those elements
 Whence they had emanated, whence they drew
 Their sustenance, and which their wrecks recruited
 To generate and foster other forms
 As like themselves as were the lights of heaven,
 For ever moving in serene succession,
 —Not like those lights unquenchable by time,
 But ever changing, like the clouds that come,

Who can tell whence ? and go, who can tell whither ?
Thus the swift series of man's race elapsed,
As for no higher destiny created
Than aught beneath them,—from the elephant
Down to the worm, thence to the zoophyte,
That link which binds Prometheus to his rock,
The living fibre to insensate matter.
They were not, then they were ; the unborn, the living !
They were, then were not ; they had lived and died ;
No trace, no record of their date remaining,
Save in the memory of kindred beings,
Themselves as surely hastening to oblivion ;
Till, where the soil had been renew'd by relics,
And earth, air, water were one sepulchre,
Earth, air, and water might be search'd in vain,
Atom by atom scrutinized with eyes
Of microscopic power, that could discern
The population of a dew-drop, yet
No particle betray the buried secret
Of what they had been, or of what they were :
Life thus was swallow'd by mortality,
Mortality thus swallow'd up of life,
And man remain'd the world's unmoved possessor,
Though every moment men appear'd and vanish'd.
Oh ! 'twas heart-sickness to behold them thus
Perishing without knowledge ;—perishing,
As though they were but things of dust and ashes.
They lived unconscious of their noblest powers,
As were the rocks and mountains which they trod
Of gold and jewels hidden in their bowels ;
They lived unconscious of what lived within them,
The deathless spirit, as were the stars that shone
Above their heads, of their own emanations.
And did it live within them ? did there dwell
Fire brought from heaven in forms of miry clay ?
Untemper'd as the slime of Babel's builders,
And left unfinish'd like their monstrous work ?
To me, alas ! they seem'd but living bodies,

With still-born souls which never could be quicken'd,
Till death brought immortality to light,
And from the darkness of their earthly prison
Placed them at once before the bar of God ;
Then first to learn, at their eternal peril,
The fact of his existence and their own.
Imagination durst not follow them,
Nor stand one moment at that dread tribunal.
" Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right ?"
I trembled while I spake. I could not bear
The doubt, fear, horror, that o'erhung the fate
Of millions, millions, millions,—living, dying.
Without a hope to hang a hope upon,
That of the whole it might not be affirm'd,
—" 'Twere better that they never had been born."
I turn'd away, and look'd for consolation,
Where Nature else had shrunk with loathing back,
Or imprecated curses, in her wrath,
Even on the fallen creatures of my race,
O'er whose mysterious doom my heart was breaking.
I saw an idiot with long haggard visage,
And eye of vacancy, trolling his tongue
From cheek to cheek ; then muttering syllables,
Which all the learn'd on earth could not interpret.
Yet were they sounds of gladness, tones of pleasure.
Ineffable tranquillity expressing,
Or pure and buoyant animal delight :
For bright the sun shone round him ; cool the breeze
Play'd in the floating shadow of the palm.
Where he lay rolling in voluptuous sloth :
And he had fed deliciously on fruit,
That fell into his lap, and virgin honey,
That melted from the hollow of the rock.
Whither the hum and stir of bees had drawn him.
He knew no bliss beside, save sleep when weary.
Or reveries like this, when broad awake.
Glimpses of thought seem'd flashing through his brain,
Like wildfires flitting o'er the rank morass.

Snares to the night-bewilder'd traveller !
Gently he raised his head, and peep'd around,
As if he hoped to see some pleasant object,
—The wingless squirrel jet from tree to tree,
—The monkey pilfering a parrot's nest,
But, ere he bore the precious spoil away,
Surprised behind by beaks, and wings, and claws,
That made him scamper gibbering away ;
—The sly opossum dangle by her tail,
To snap the silly birds that perch'd too near ;
Or in the thicket, with her young at play,
Start when the rustling grass announced a snake,
And secrete them within her second womb,
Then stand alert to give the intruder battle,
Who rear'd his crest, and hiss'd, and glid away :—
—These with the transport of a child he view'd,
Then laugh'd aloud, and crack'd his fingers, smote
His palms, and clasp'd his knees, convulsed with glee ;
A sad, sad spectacle of merriment !
Yet he was happy ; happy in this life ;
And could I doubt, that death to him would bring
Intelligence, which he had ne'er abused,
A soul, which he had never lost by sin ?

I saw a woman, panting from her throes,
Stretch'd in a lonely cabin on the ground,
Pale with the anguish of her bitter hour,
Whose sorrow she forgot not in the joy
Which mothers feel when a man-child is born ;
Hers was an infant of her own scorn'd sex :
It lay upon her breast ;—she laid it there,
By the same instinct, which taught it to find
The milky fountain, fill'd to meet its wants
Even at the gate of life,—to drink and live.
Awhile she lay all passive to the touch
Of those small fingers, and the soft, soft lips
Soliciting the sweet nutrition thence,
While yearning sympathy crept round her heart
She felt her spirit yielding to the charm,

That wakes the parent in the fellest bosom,
And binds her to her little one for ever,
If once completed :—but she broke, she broke it,
For she was brooding o'er her sex's wrongs,
And seem'd to lie amidst a nest of scorpions,
That stung remorse to frenzy :—forth she sprang,
And with collected might a moment stood,
Mercy and misery struggling in her thoughts,
Yet both impelling her to one dire purpose.
There was a little grave already made,
But two spans long, in the turf-floor beside her,
By him who was the father of that child :
Thence he had sallied, when the work was done,
To hunt, to fish, or ramble on the hills,
Till all was peace again within that dwelling,
—His haunt, his den, his any thing but home !
Peace ?—no, till the new-comer were despatch'd
Whence it should ne'er return, to break the stupor
Of unawaken'd conscience in himself.

She pluck'd the baby from her flowing breast,
And o'er its mouth, yet moist with Nature's beverage,
Bound a thick lotus-leaf to still its cries ;
Then laid it down in that untimely grave,
As tenderly as though 'twere rock'd to sleep
With songs of love, and she afraid to wake it :
Soon as she felt it touch the ground, she started,
Hurried the damp earth over it ; then fell
Flat on the heaving heap, and crush'd it down
With the whole burden of her grief ; exclaiming,
“ Oh that my mother had done so to me ! ”
Then in a swoon forgot, a little while,
Her child, her sex, her tyrant, and herself.

Amazement wither'd up all human feeling ;
I wonder'd how I could look on so calmly,
As though I were but animated stone,
And not kneel down upon the spot, and pray
That earth might open to devour that mother,
Or heaven shoot lightning to avenge that daughter ;

But horror soon gave way to hope and pity,
—Hope for the dead, and pity for the living.
Thenceforth when I beheld troops of wild children
Frolicking round the tents of wickedness,
Though my heart danced within me to the music
Of their loud voices and unruly mirth,
The blithe exuberance of beginning life !
I could not weep when they went out like sparks,
That glitter, creep, and dwindle out, on tinder.
Happy, thrice happy were they thus to die,
Rather than grow into such men and women,
—Such fiends incarnate as that felon-sire,
Who dug its grave before his child was born ;
Such miserable wretches as that mother,
Whose tender mercies were so deadly cruel !

I saw their infant's spirit rise to heaven,
Caught from its birth up to the throne of God ;
There, thousands and ten thousands, I beheld,
Of innocents like this, that died untimely,
By violence of their unnatural kin,
Or by the mercy of that gracious Power,
Who gave them being, taking what He gave
Ere they could sin or suffer like their parents.
I saw them in white raiment, crown'd with flowers,
On the fair banks of that resplendent river,
Whose streams make glad the city of our God ;
—Water of life, as clear as crystal, welling
Forth from the throne itself, and visiting
Fields of a Paradise that ne'er was lost ;
Where yet the tree of life immortal grows,
And bears its monthly fruits, twelve kinds of fruit,
Each in its season, food of saints and angels ;
Whose leaves are for the healing of the nations.
Beneath the shadow of its blessed boughs,
I mark'd those rescued infants, in their schools,
By spirits of just men made perfect, taught
The glorious lessons of almighty love,
Which brought them thither by the readiest path

From the world's wilderness of dire temptations,
Securing thus their everlasting weal.

Yea, in the rapture of that hour, though songs
Of cherubim to golden lyres and trumpets,
And the redeem'd upon the sea of glass,
With voices like the sound of many waters,
Came on mine ear, whose secret cells were open'd
To entertain celestial harmonies,
—The small, sweet accents of those little children,
Pouring out all the gladness of their souls
In love, joy, gratitude, and praise to Him,
—Him, who had loved and wash'd them in his blood ;
These were to me the most transporting strains
Amidst the hallelujahs of all heaven.
Though lost awhile in that amazing chorus
Around the throne,—at happy intervals,
The shrill hosannas of the infant-choir,
Singing in that eternal temple, brought
Tears to mine eye, which seraphs had been glad
To weep, could they have felt the sympathy
That melted all my soul, when I beheld
How condescending Deity thus deign'd,
Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings here,
To perfect his high praise :—the harp of heaven
Had lack'd its least but not its meanest string,
Had children not been taught to play upon it,
And sing, from feelings all their own, what men
Nor angels can conceive of creatures, born
Under the curse, yet from the curse redeem'd,
And placed at once beyond the power to fall,
—Safety which men nor angels ever knew,
Till ranks of these and all of those had fallen.

CANTO EIGHTH.

'Twas but the vision of an eye-glance ; gone
 Ere thought could fix upon it,—gone like lightning
 At midnight, when the expansive flash reveals
 Alps, Apennines, and Pyrenees, in one
 Glorious horizon, suddenly lit up,—
 Rocks, rivers, forests,—quench'd as suddenly .
 A glimpse that fill'd the mind with images,
 Which years can not obliterate : but stamp'd
 With instantaneous, everlasting force
 On memory's more than adamant tablet ;—
 A glimpse of that which eye hath never seen,
 Ear heard, nor heart of man conceived.—It pass'd,
 But what it show'd can never pass.—It pass'd,
 And left me wandering through that land of exile,
 Cut off from intercourse with happier lands ;
 Abandon'd, as it seem'd, by its Creator ;
 Unvisited by Him, who came from heaven
 To seek and save the lost of every clime ;
 And where God, looking down in wrath, hath said,
 "My spirit shall no longer strive with man :"
 —So ignorance or unbelief might deem.

Was it thus outlaw'd ? No ; God left himself
 Not without witness of his presence there ;
 He gave them rain from heaven and fruitful seasons,
 Filling unthankful hearts with food and gladness.
 He gave them kind affections, which they strangled,
 Turning his grace into lasciviousness.
 He gave them powers of intellect, to scale
 Heaven's height ; to name and number all the stars ;
 To penetrate earth's depths for hidden riches,
 Or clothe its surface with fertility ;
 Amidst the haunts of dragons, dens of satyrs,
 To call up hamlets, villages, and towns,
 The abode of peace and industry ; to build
 Cities and palaces amid waste places ;

To sound the ocean, combat with the winds,
Travel the waves, and compass every shore,
On voyages of commerce or adventure ;
To shine in civil and refining arts,
With tranquil science elevate the soul ;
To explore the universe of mind ; to trace
The Nile of thinking to its secret source,
And thence pursue its infinite meanders,
Not lost amidst the labyrinths of Time,
But o'er the cataract of death down rolling,
To flow for ever, and for ever, and for ever,
Where time nor space can limit its expansion.

He gave the ideal, too, of truth and beauty ;—
To look on Nature with a poet's eye,
And live, amidst the daylight of this world,
In regions of enchantment ;—with the force
Of song, as with a spirit, to possess
The souls of those that hearken, till they feel
But what the minstrel feels, and do but that,
Which his strange inspiration makes them do ;
Thus with his breath to kindle war, and bring
The array of battle to electric issue ;
Or, while opposing legions, front to front,
Wait the dread signal for the work of havoc,
Step in between, and with the healing voice
Of harmony and concord win them so,
That hurling down their weapons of destruction
They rush into each other's arms, with shouts
And tears of transport ; till inveterate foes
Are friends and brethren, feasting on the field,
Where vultures else had feasted, and gorged wolves
Howl'd in convulsive slumber o'er their corpses.

Such powers as these were given, but given in vain :
They knew them not, or, as they learn'd to know,
Perverted them to more pernicious evil
Than ignorance had skill to perpetrate.
Yet the great Father gave a richer portion
To these, the most impoverish'd of his children :

He sent the light that lighteth every man
That comes into the world,—the light of truth :
But Satan turn'd that light to darkness ; turn'd
God's truth into a lie, and they believed
His lie, who led them captive at his will,
Usurp'd the throne of Deity on earth,
And claim'd allegiance, in all hideous forms,
—The abominable emblems of himself,
The legion-fiend, who takes whatever shape
Man's crazed imagination can devise
To body forth his notion of a God,
And prove how low immortal minds can fall,
When from the living God they fall, to serve
Dumb idols. Thus they worshipp'd stocks and stones,
Which hands unapt for sculpture executed,
In their egregious folly, like themselves,
Though not more like, even in barbarian eyes,
Than antic clouds resemble animals.
To these they offer'd flowers and fruits : to those,
Reptiles ; to others, birds, and beasts, and fishes ;
To some they sacrificed their enemies,
To more their children, and themselves to all.

So had the god of this apostate world
Blinded their eyes. But the true God had placed
Yet further witness of his grace among them,
When all remembrance of himself was lost :
—Knowledge of good and evil, right and wrong ;
But knowledge was confounded, till they call'd
Good evil, evil good ; refused the right,
And chose and loved the wrong for its own sake.
One witness more, his own ambassador
On earth, the Almighty left to be their prophet,
Whom Satan could not utterly beguile,
Nor always hold with his ten thousand fetters,
Lock'd in the dungeon of the obdurate breast,
And trampled down by all its atheist inmates ;
—Conscience, tremendous conscience, in his fits
Of inspiration,—whencesoe'er it came,

Rose like a ghost, inflicting fear of death
On those who fear'd not death in fiercest battle,
And mock'd him in their martyrdoms of torments :
That secret, swift, and silent messenger
Broke on them in their lonely hours,—in sleep,
In sickness ; haunting them with dire suspicions
Of something in themselves that would not die,
Of an existence elsewhere, and hereafter,
Of which tradition was not wholly silent,
Yet spake not out ; its dreary oracles
Confounded superstition to conceive,
And baffled skepticism to reject :
—What fear of death is like the fear beyond it ?
But pangs like these were lucid intervals
In the delirium of the life they led,
And all unwelcome as returning reason,
Which through the chaos of a maniac's brain
Shoots gleams of light more terrible than darkness.
These sad misgivings of the smitten heart,
Wounded unseen by conscience from its ambush ;
These voices from eternity, that spake
To an eternity of soul within,—
Were quickly lull'd by riotous enjoyment.
Or lost in hurricanes of headlong passion.
They knew no higher, sought no happier state ;
Had no fine instinct of superior joys
Than those of sense ; no taste for sense refined
Above the gross necessities of nature,
Or outraged Nature's most unnatural cravings.
Why should they toil to make the earth bring forth,
When without toil she gave them all they wanted ?
The bread-fruit ripen'd, while they lay beneath
Its shadow in luxurious indolence ;
The cocoa fill'd its nuts with milk and kernels,
While they were sauntering on the shores and mountains ;
And while they slumber'd from their heavy meals,
In dead forgetfulness of life itself,
The fish were spawning in unsounded depths,

The birds were breeding in adjacent trees,
 The game was fattening in delicious pastures,
 Unplanted roots were thriving under ground,
 To spread the tables of their future banquets !

Thus what the sires had been, the sons became,
 And generations rose, continued, went,
 Without memorial,—like the Pelicans

On that lone island, where they built their nests,
 Nourish'd their young, and then lay down to die :
 Hence through a thousand and a thousand years,
 Man's history, in that region of oblivion,
 Might be recorded in a page as small

As the brief legend of those Pelicans,
 With one appalling, one sublime distinction,
 (Sublime with horror, with despair appalling.)
 —That Pelicans were not transgressors ;—Man,
 Apostate from the womb, by blood a traitor.

Thus, while he rose by dignity of birth,
 He sunk in guilt and infamy below
 Creatures, whose being was but lent, not given,
 And, when the debt was due, reclaim'd for ever.
 Oh enviable lot of innocence !

Their bliss and wo were only of this world :
 Whate'er their lives had been, though born to suffer
 Not less than to enjoy, their end was peace.

Man was immortal, yet he lived and died
 As though there were no life, nor death, but this :
 Alas ! what life or death may be hereafter,
 He only knows who hath ordain'd them both ;
 And they shall know who prove their truth for ever.

The thought was agony beyond endurance ;
 " O thou, my brother Man !" again I cried,
 " Would God, that I might live, might die for thee !
 Oh could I take a form to meet thine eyes,
 Invent a voice with words to reach thine ears ;
 Or if my spirit might converse with thine,
 And pour my thoughts, fears, feelings, through thy breast,
 Unknown to thee whence came the strange intrusion !

How would my soul rejoice, rejoice with trembling,
 To tell thee who thou art, and bring thee home,
 —Poor prodigal, here watching swine, and fain
 To glut thy hunger with the husks they feed on,—
 Home to our Father's house, our Father's heart!
 Both, both are open to receive thee,—come;
 Oh come!—He hears not, heeds not,—O my brother!
 That I might prophesy to thee,—to all
 The millions of dry bones that fill this valley
 Of darkness and despair!—Alas! alas!
 Can these bones live? Lord God, Thou knowest. Come
 From the four winds of heaven, almighty breath,
 Blow on these slain, and they shall live."

I spake,
 And turning from the mournful contemplation,
 To seek refreshment for my weary spirit,
 Amidst that peopled continent, the abode
 Of misery which reach'd beyond this world,
 I lighted on a solitary glen
 (A peaceful refuge in a land of discord)
 Crown'd with steep rocks, whose hoary summits shone
 Amid the blue unclouded element,
 O'er the green woods, that, stretching down the hills,
 Border'd the narrow champaign glade between,
 Through which a clear and pebbly rill meander'd.
 The song-birds caroll'd in the leafy shades,
 Those of resplendent plumage flaunted round;
 High o'er the cliffs the sea-fowl soar'd or perch'd;
 The Pelican and Albatross were seen
 In groups reposing on the northern ridge:
 There was entire serenity above,
 Beauty, tranquillity, delight below,
 And every motion, sound, and sight were pleasing.
 Rhinoceros nor wild bull pastured here;
 Lion nor tiger here shed innocent blood;
 The antelopes were grazing void of fear,
 Their young in antic gambols ramping by;
 While goats, from precipice to precipice

Clamber'd, or hung, or vaulted through the air,
 As if a thought convey'd them to and fro.
 Harmony reign'd, as once ere man's creation,
 When brutes were yet earth's sole inhabitants,
 There were no human tracks nor dwellings there,
 For 'twas a sanctuary from hurtful creatures,
 And in the precincts of that happy dell
 The absence of my species was a mercy :
 Thence the declining sun withdrew his beams,
 But left it lighted by a hundred peaks,
 Glittering and golden, round the span of sky,
 That seem'd the sapphire roof of one great temple,
 Whose floor was emerald, and whose walls the hills ;
 Where those that worshipp'd God might worship Him
 In spirit and in truth, without distraction.

Man's absence pleased me : yet on man alone,
 Man fallen, helpless, miserable man,
 My thoughts, prayers, wishes, tears, and sorrows turn'd,
 Howe'er I strove to drive away remembrance :
 Then I refrain'd no longer, but brake out,
 —“Lord God, why hast Thou made all men in vain ?”

CANTO NINTH.

THE countenance of one advanced in years,
 The shape of one created to command,
 The step of one accustom'd to be seen,
 And follow'd with the reverence of all eyes,
 Yet conscious here of utter solitude,
 Came on me like an apparition,—whence
 I know not,—halfway down the vale already
 Had he proceeded ere I caught his eye,
 And in that mirror of intelligence,
 By the sure divination of mine art,

Read the mute history of his former life,
And all the untold secrets of his bosom.

He was a chieftain of renown ; from youth
To green old age, the glory of his tribe,
The terror of their enemies ; in war
An Alexander, and in peace an Alfred,
From morn till night he wont to yield the spear
With indefatigable arm, or watch
From eve till dawn in ambush for his quarry,
Human or brute ; not less in chase than fight,
For strength, skill, prowess, enterprise unrivall'd.
Fearless he grappled with the fell hyæna,
And held him strangling in the grasp of fate ;
He seized the she-bear's whelps, and when the dam
With miserable cries and insane rage
Pursued to rescue them, would turn and strike
One blow, but one, to break her heart for ever :
From sling and bow, he sent upon death-errands
The stone or arrow through the trackless air,
To overtake the fleetest foot, or lay
The loftiest pinion fluttering in the dust.
On the rough waves he eagerly embark'd,
Assail'd the stranded whale among the breakers,
Dart after dart with such sure aim implanting
In the huge carcass of the helpless victim,
That soon in blood and foam the monster breathed
His last, and lay a hulk upon the reef ;
Thence floated by the rising tide, and tow'd
By a whole navy of canoes ashore.

But 'twas the hero's mind that made him great ;
His eye, his lip, his hand, were clothed with thunder :
Thrones, crowns, and sceptres give not more ascendance,
Back'd with arm'd legions, fortified with towers,
Than this imperial savage, all alone,
From Nature's pure beneficence derived.
Yet, when the hey-day of hot youth was over,
His soul grew gentle as the halcyon breeze,
Sent from the evening-sea to bless the shore,

After the fervours of a tropic noon ;
Nor less benign his influence than fresh showers
Upon the fainting wilderness, where bands
Of pilgrims, bound for Mecca, with their camels,
Lie down to die together in despair,
When the deceitful *mirage*, that appear'd
A pool of water trembling in the sun,
Hath vanish'd from the bloodshot eye of thirst.
Firm in defence as valiant in the battle,
Assailing none, but all assaults repelling
With such determin'd chastisement, that foes
No longer dared to forage on his borders,
War shrunk from his dominions ; simple laws,
Yet wise and equitable, he ordain'd
'To rule a willing and obedient people.
Blood ceased to flow in sacrifice ; no more
The parent's hands were raised against their children,
Children no longer slew their aged parents ;
Man prey'd not on his fellow-man, within
The hallow'd circle of his patriarch-sway,
That seem'd amidst barbarian clans around
A garden in a waste of brier and hemlock.

Ere life's meridian, thus that chief had reach'd
The utmost pinnacle of savage grandeur,
And stood the envy of ignoble eyes,
The awe of humbler mortals, the example
Of youth's sublime ambition ; but to him,
It was not given to rest at any height ;
The thoughts that travel to eternity
Already had begun their pilgrimage,
Which time, nor change, nor life, nor death, could stop.
All that he saw, heard, felt, or could conceive,
Open'd new scenes of mental enterprise.
Imposed new tasks for arduous contemplation.
On the steep eminence which he had scaled,
'To rise or fall were sole alternatives ;
He might not stand, and he disdain'd to fall ;
Innate magnificence of mind upheld,

And buoyancy of genius bore him on.
Heaven, earth, and ocean, were to him familiar
In all their motions, aspects, changes ; each
To him paid tribute of the knowledge, hid
From uninquiring ignorance ; to him
Their gradual secrets, though with slow reserve,
Yet sure accumulation, all reveal'd.

But whence they came, even more than what they were,
Awaken'd wonder, and defied conjecture ;
Blank wonder could not satisfy his soul,
And resolute conjecture would not yield,
Though foil'd a thousand times, in speculation
On themes that open'd immortality.
The gods whom his deluded countrymen
Acknowledged, were no gods to him ; he scorn'd
The impotence of skill that carved such figures,
And pitied the fatuity of those
Who saw not in the abortions of their hands
The abortions of their minds.—'Twas the Creator
He sought through every volume open to him,
From the small leaf that holds an insect's web,
From which ere long a colony shall issue,
With wings and limbs as perfect as the eagle's,
To the stupendous ocean, that gives birth
And nourishment to everlasting millions
Of creatures, great and small, beyond the power
Of man to comprehend how they exist.
One thought amidst the multitude within him
Press'd with perpetual, with increasing weight,
And yet the elastic soul beneath its burden
Wax'd strong and stronger, was enlarged, exalted,
With the necessity of bearing up
Against annihilation ; for that seem'd
The only refuge were this hope forgone :
It was as though he wrestled with an angel,
And would not let him go without a blessing,
If not extort the secret of his name ;
This was that thought, that hope ;—dumb idols,

And the vain homage of their worshippers,
 Were proofs to him, not less than sun and stars,
 That there were beings mightier far than man,
 Or man had never dream'd of aught above him :
 'Twas clear to him as was his own existence,
 In which he felt the fact personified,
 That man himself was for this world too mighty,
 Possessing powers which could not ripen here,
 But ask'd infinity to bring them forth,
 And find employ for their unbounded scope.

Tradition told him, that, in ancient time,
 Sky, sun, and sea were all the universe ;
 The sun grew tired of gazing on the sea,
 Day after day ; then, with descending beams,
 Day after day he pierced the dark abyss,
 Till he had reach'd its diamantine floor ;
 Whence he drew up an island, as a tree
 Grows in the desert from some random seed,
 Dropt by a wild bird. Grain by grain it rose,
 And touch'd at length the surface ; there expanding
 Beneath the fostering influence of his eye,
 Prolific seasons, light, and showers, and dew,
 Aided by earthquakes, hurricanes, volcanoes
 (All agents of the universal sun),
 Conspired to form, advance, enrich, and break
 The level reef, till hills and dales appear'd,
 And the small isle became a continent,
 Whose bounds his ancestors had never traced.
 Thither in time, by means inscrutable,
 Plants, animals, and man himself was brought ;
 And with the idolaters the gods they served.
 These tales tradition told him ; he believed,
 Though all were fables, yet they shadow'd truth ;
 That truth with heart, soul, mind, and strength he sought.
 Oh 'twas a spectacle for angels, bound
 On embassies of mercy to this earth,
 To gaze on with compassion and delight,
 —Yea, with desire that they might be his helpers,—

To see a dark, endungeon'd spirit roused,
And struggling into glorious liberty,
Though Satan's legions watch'd at every portal,
And held him by ten thousand manacles !

Such was the being whom I here descried,
And fix'd my earnest expectation on him ;
For now or never might my hope be proved,
How near, by searching, man might find out God.

Thus, while he walk'd along that peaceful valley,
Though rapt in meditation far above
The world which met his senses, but in vain
Would charm his spirit within its magic circle,
—Still with benign and meek simplicity
He hearken'd to the prattle of a babe,
Which he was leading by the hand ; but scarce
Could he restrain its eagerness to break
Loose, and run wild with joy among the bushes.
It was his grandson, now the only stay
Of his bereaved affections ; all his kin
Had fall'n before him, and his youngest daughter
Bequeath'd this infant with her dying lips :
“ Oh take this child, my father ! take this child,
And bring it up for me ; so may it live
To be the latest blessing of thy life.”

He took the child ; he brought it up for her ;
It was the latest blessing of his life ;
And while his soul explored immensity,
In search of something undefinedly great,
This infant was the link which bound that soul
To this poor world, where he had not a wish
Or hope, beyond the moment, for himself.

The little one was dancing at his side,
And dragging him with petty violence
Hither and thither from the onward path,
To find a bird's nest or to hunt a fly :
His feign'd resistance and unfeign'd reluctance
But made the boy more resolute to rule
The grandsire with his fond caprice. The sage,

Though dallying with the minion's wayward will,
His own premeditated course pursued,
And while, in tones of sportive tenderness,
He answer'd all its questions, and ask'd others
As simple as its own, yet wisely framed
To wake and prove an infant's faculties ;
As though its mind were some sweet instrument,
And he, with breath and touch, were finding out
What stops or keys would yield the richest music :
—All this was by-play to the scene within
The busy theatre of his own breast.
Keen and absorbing thoughts were working there,
And his heart travail'd with unutter'd pangs ;
Sigh after sigh, escaping to his lips,
Was check'd, or turn'd into some lively word,
To hide the bitter conflict from his child.

At length they struck into the woods, and thence
Climb'd the gray rocks aloof. There from his crag,
At their abrupt approach, the startled eagle
Took wing above their heads ; the boy alarm'd,
—Nor less delighted when no peril came,—
Follow'd its flight with eyes and hands upraised
And bounding forward on the verdant slope,
Watch'd it diminish, till a gnat, that cross'd
His sight, eclipsed it : when he look'd again
'Twas gone, and for an instant he felt sad,
Till some new object won his gay attention.
His grandsire stepp'd to take the eagle's stand,
And gaze at freedom on the boundless prospect,
But started back, and held his breath with awe,
So suddenly, so gloriously it broke
From heaven, earth, sea, and air, at once upon him.
The tranquil ocean roll'd beneath his feet ;
The shores on each hand lessen'd from the view ;
The landscape glow'd with tropical luxuriance ;
The sky was fleck'd with gold and crimson clouds,
That seem'd to emanate from nothing there,
Born in the blue and infinite expanse,

Where just before the eye might seek in vain
An evening shadow as a daylight star.

There stood the patriarch amidst a scene
Of splendour and beatitude ; himself
A diadem of glory o'er the whole,
For none but he could comprehend the beauty,
The bliss diffused throughout the universe ;
Yet holier beauty, higher bliss he sought,
Of which that universe was but the veil,
Wrought with inexplicable hieroglyphics.
Here then he stood, alone but not forsaken
Of Him, without whose leave a sparrow falls not.
Wide open lay the Book of Deity,
The page was Providence : but none, alas !
Had taught him letters ; when he look'd, he wept
To feel himself forbidden to peruse it.

—“ Oh for a messenger of mercy now,
Like Philip, when he join'd the Eunuch's chariot !
Oh for the privilege to burst upon him,
And show the blind, the dead, the light of life !”

I hush'd the exclamation, for he seem'd
To hear it ; turn'd his head, and look'd all round,
As if an eye invisible beheld him,
A voice had spoken out of solitude :

—Yea, such an eye beheld him, such a voice
Had spoken ; but they were not mine : his life
He would have yielded on the spot, to see
That eye ; to hear that voice, and understand it :
It was the eye of God, the voice of Nature.

All in a moment on his knees he fell ;
And with imploring arms, outstretch'd to heaven,
And eyes no longer wet with hopeless tears,
But beaming forth sublime intelligence ;
In words through which his heart's pulsation throb'd,
And made mine tremble to their accents,—pray'd :

—“ Oh ! if there be a Power above all power,
A Light above all light, a Name above
All other names, in heaven and earth ; that Power,

That Light, that Name I call upon."—He paused,
 Bow'd his hoar head with reverence, closed his eyes,
 And with clasp'd hands upon his breast, began
 In under tones, that rose in fervency,
 Like incense kindled on a holy altar,
 Till his whose soul became one tongue of fire,
 Of which these words were faint and poor expressions :
 —"Oh ! if Thou art, Thou knowest that I am :
 Behold me, hear me, pity me, despise not
 The prayer, which—if Thou art—Thou hast inspired,
 Or wherefore seek I now a God unknown ?
 And feel for Thee, if haply I may find
 In whom I live and move and have my being ?
 Reveal Thyself to me ; reveal thy power,
 Thy light, thy name—that I may fear, adore,
 Obey,—and, oh ! that I might love Thee too !
 For, if Thou art—it must be—Thou art good ;
 And I would be the creature of thy goodness :
 Oh ! hear and answer :—let me know Thou hearest !
 —Know that as surely as thou art, so surely
 My prayer and supplication are accepted."

He waited silently ; there came no answer :
 The roaring of the tide beneath, the gale
 Rustling the forest-leaves, the notes of birds,
 And hum of insects,—these were all the sounds,
 That met familiarly around his ear.
 He look'd abroad ; there shone no light from heaven
 But that of sunset ; and no shapes appear'd
 But glistening clouds, which melted through the sky
 As imperceptibly as they had come ;
 While all terrestrial objects seem'd the same
 As he had ever known them ;—still he look'd
 And listen'd, till a cold sick feeling sunk
 Into his heart, and blighted every hope.

Anon faint accents, from the sloping lawn
 Beneath the crag where he was kneeling, rose,
 Like supernatural echoes of his prayer :
 —"A Name above all names—I call upon.—"



THE
LIFE OF
SAMUEL JOHNSON

Thou art—Thou knowest that I am :—Reveal
Thyself to me ;—but, oh ! that I may love Thee !
For if Thou art, Thou must be good :—Oh ! hear,
And let me know thou hearest !”—Memory fail’d
The child ; for ’twas his grandchild, though he knew not,
—In the deep transport of his mind he knew not
That voice ; to him the sweetest of ten thousand,
And known the best because the best beloved.
Again it cried :—“Thou art—Thou must be good :

—Oh ! hear,
And let me know thou hearest.”—Memory fail’d
The child, but feeling fail’d not ; tears of light
Slid down his cheek ; he too was on his knees,
Clasping his little hands upon his heart,
Unconscious why, yet doing what he saw
His grandsire do, and saying what he said.
For while he gather’d buds and flowers, to twine
A garland for the old gray hairs, whose locks
Were lovelier in his sight than all the blooms
On which the bees and butterflies were feasting,
The Patriarch’s agony of spirit caught
His eye, his ear, his heart ; he dropt the flowers,
And kneeling down among them, wept and pray’d
Like him, with whom he felt such strange emotions
As rapt his infant-soul to heavenly heights ;
Though whence they sprang, and what they meant, he
knew not ;

But they were good, and that was all to him,
Who wonder’d why it was so sweet to weep ;
Nor would he quit his humble attitude,
Nor cease repeating fragments of that lesson,
Thus learnt spontaneously from lips, whose words
Were almost dearer to him than their kisses,
When on his lap the old man dandled him,
And told him simple stories of his mother.

Recovering thought, the venerable sire
Beheld, and recognised his darling boy,
Thus beautiful and innocent, engaged

In the same worship with himself. His heart
 Leap'd at the sight : he flung away despondence,
 While joy unspeakable and full of glory
 Broke through the pagan darkness of his soul.
 He ran and snatch'd the infant in his arms,
 Embraced him passionately, wept aloud,
 And cried, scarce knowing what he said,—“ My Son !
 My Son ! there is a God ! there is a God ! ”—
 “ And, oh ! that I may love Thee too ! ” rejoin'd
 The child, whose tongue could find no other words
 Than prayer ;—“ for if Thou art, Thou must be good. ”—
 —“ He is ! He is ! and we will love Him too !
 Yea, and be like Him,—good, for He is good ! ”
 Replied the ancient father in amazement.

Then wept they o'er each other, till the child
 Exceeded, and the old man's heart reproved him
 For lack of reverence in the excess of joy :
 The ground itself seem'd holy ! heaven and earth
 Full of the presence, felt, not seen, of Him,
 The Power above all power, the Light above
 All light, the Name above all other names ;
 Whom he had call'd upon, whom he had found,
 Yet worshipp'd only as “ the Unknown God, ”—
 That nearest step which uninstructed man
 Can take, from Nature up to Deity.
 To Him, again, standing erect, he pray'd,
 And while he pray'd, high in his arms he held
 That dearest treasure of his heart, the child
 Of his last dying daughter,—now the sole
 Hope of his life, and orphan of his house.
 He held him as an offering up to heaven,
 A living sacrifice unto the God
 Whom he invoked :—“ O Thou who art ! ” he cried,
 “ And hast reveal'd that mystery to me,
 Hid from all generations of my fathers,
 Or, if once known, forgotten and perverted ;
 I may not live to learn Thee better here ;
 But oh ! let this my son, mine only son,

Whom thus I dedicate to Thee ;—let him,
Let him be taught thy will, and choose
Obedience to it ;—may he fear thy power,
Walk in thy light, now dawning out of darkness ;
And, oh ! my last, last prayer,—to him reveal
The unutterable secret of thy name !”
He paused ; then with the transport of a seer
Went on :—“ That Name may all my nation know ;
And all that hear it worship at the sound,
When thou shalt with a voice from heaven proclaim it ;
And so it surely shall be.”—

“ For thou art ;
And if Thou art, Thou must be good !” exclaim’d
The child, yet panting with the breath of prayer.
They ceased ; then went rejoicing down the mountains,
Through the cool glen, where not a sound was heard,
Amidst the dark solemnity of eve,
But the loud purling of the little brook,
And the low murmur of the distant ocean.
Thence to their home beyond the hills in peace
They walk’d ; and when they reach’d their humble threshold,
The glittering firmament was full of stars.
—He died that night ; his grandchild lived to see
The patriarch’s prayer and prophecy fulfill’d.

Here end my song ; here ended not the vision :
I heard seven thunders uttering their voices,
And wrote what they did utter ; but ’tis seal’d
Within the volume of my heart, where thoughts
Unbodied yet in vocal words await
The quickening warmth of poesy, to bring
Their forms to light,—like secret characters,
Invisible till open’d to the fire ;
Or like the potter’s paintings, colourless
Till they have pass’d to glory through the flames.
Changes more wonderful than those gone by,
More beautiful, transporting, and sublime,
To all the frail affections of our nature,
To all the immortal faculties of man :

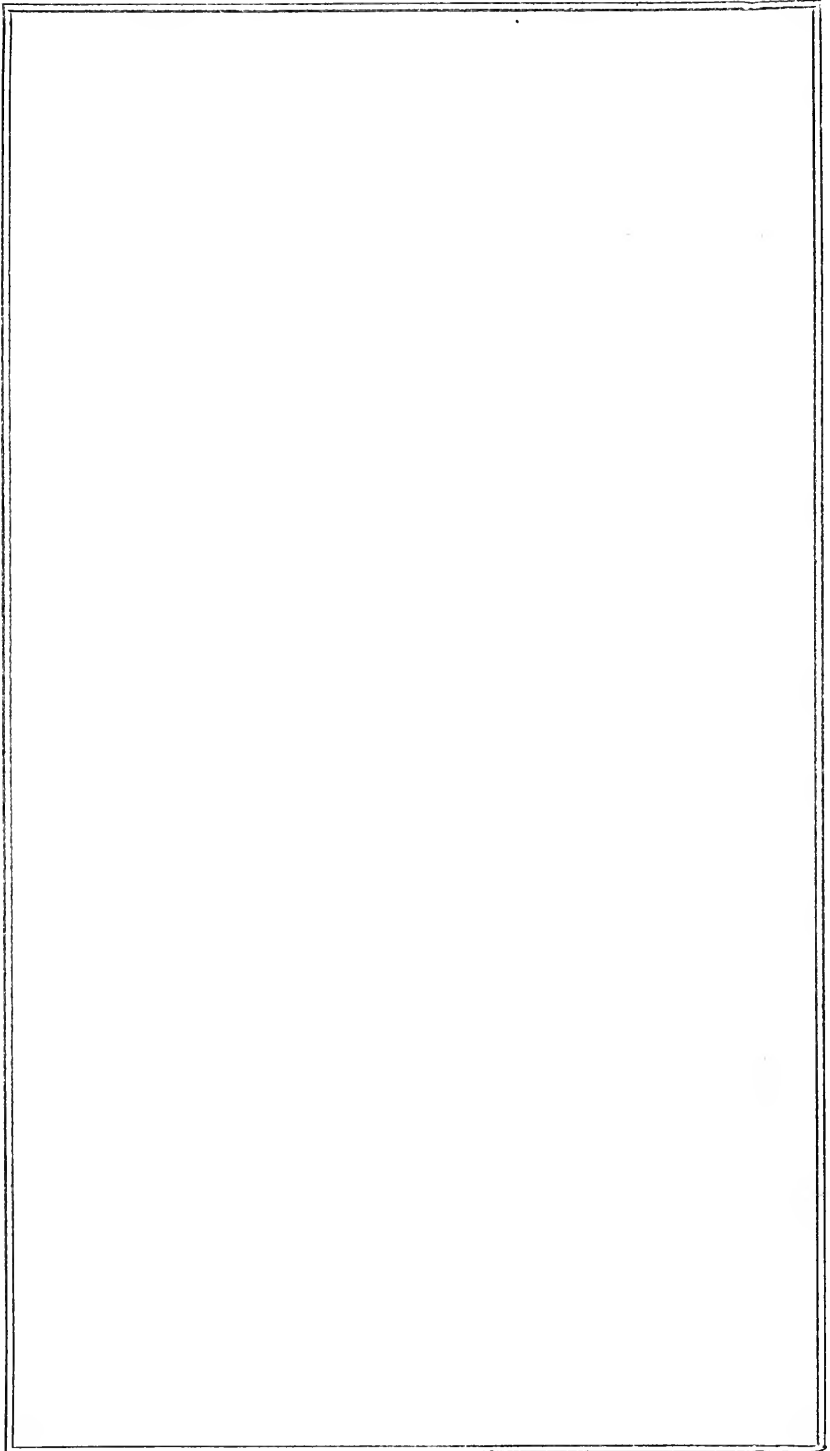
Such changes did I witness ; not alone
 In one poor Pelican Island, nor on one
 Barbarian continent, where man himself
 Could scarcely soar above the Pelican :
 —The world as it hath been in ages past,
 The world as now it is, the world to come,
 Far as the eye of prophecy can pierce ;—
 These I beheld, and still in memory's rolls
 They have their pages and their pictures ; these,
 Another day, a nobler song may show.

Vain boast ! another day may not be given ;
 This song may be my last ; for I have reach'd
 That slippery descent, whence man looks back
 With melancholy joy on all he cherish'd ;
 Around, with love unfeign'd, on all he's losing :
 Forward, with hope that trembles while it turns
 To the dim point where all our knowledge ends.
 I am but one among the living ; one
 Among the dead I soon shall be ; and one
 Among unnumber'd millions yet unborn ;
 The sun of Adam's mortal progeny,
 From Nature's birthday to her dissolution :
 —Lost in infinitude, my atom-life
 Seems but a sparkle of the smallest star,
 Amidst the scintillations of ten thousand,
 Twinkling incessantly ; no ray returning
 To shine a second moment, where it shone
 Once, and no more for ever :—so I pass,
 The world grows darker, lonelier, and more silent,
 As I go down into the vale of years ;
 For the grave's shadows lengthen in advance,
 And the grave's loneliness appals my spirit,
 And the grave's silence sinks into my heart,
 Till I forget existence in the thought
 Of non-existence, buried for a while
 In the still sepulchre of my own mind,
 Itself imperishable :—ah ! that word,
 Like the archangel's trumpet, wakes me up

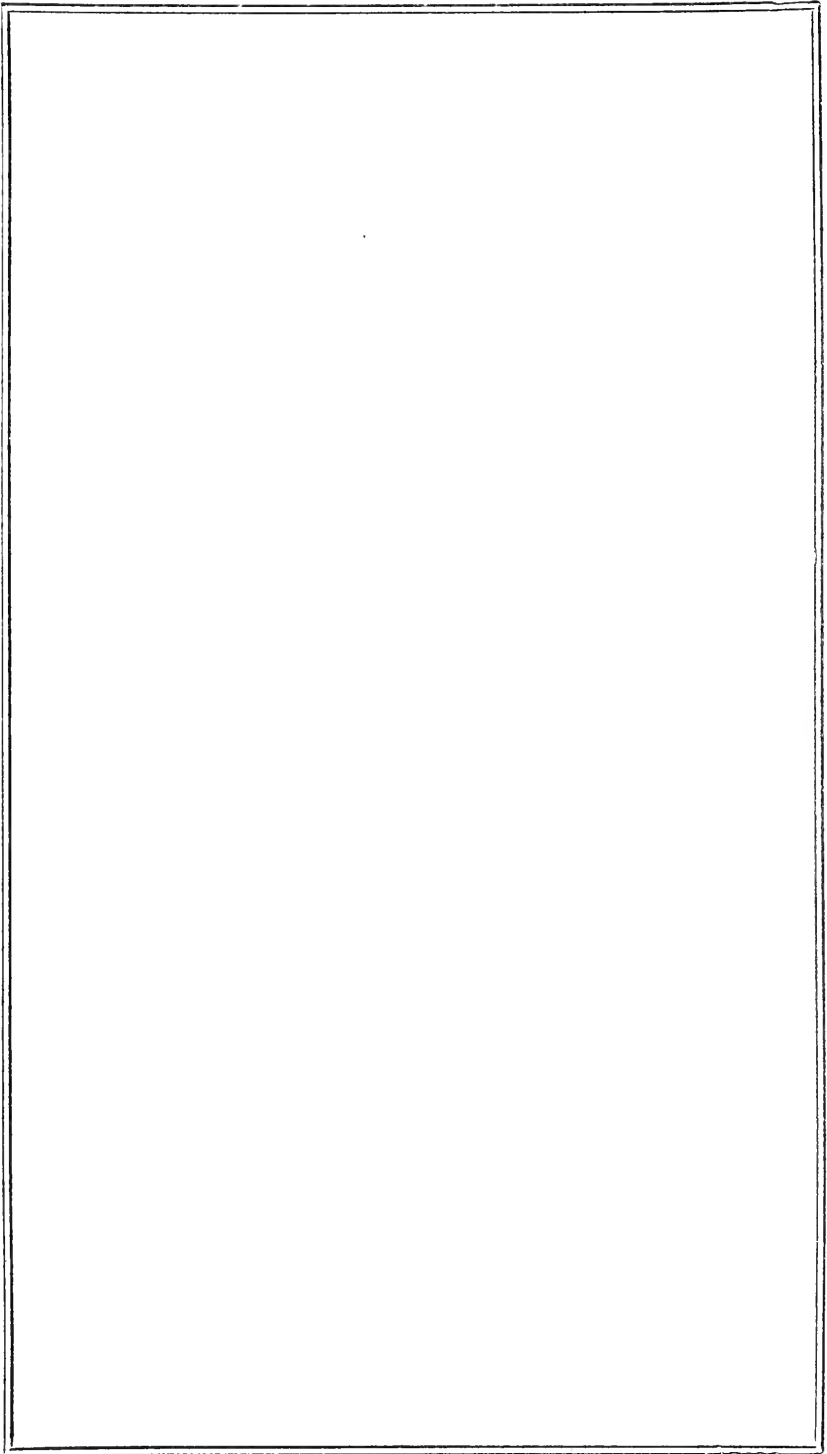
To deathless resurrection. Heaven and earth
Shall pass away, but that which thinks within me
Must think for ever ; that which feels must feel :
—I am, and I can never cease to be.

Oh thou that readest ! take this parable
Home to thy bosom ; think as I have thought,
And feel as I have felt, through all the changes,
Which Time, Life, Death, the world's great actors, wrought,
While centuries swept like morning dreams before me,
And thou shalt find this moral to my song :
—Thou art, and thou canst never cease to be :
What then are time, life, death, the world to thee ?
I may not answer ; ask Eternity.





THE CHRONICLE OF ANGELS.



THE CHRONICLE OF ANGELS.

The following Poem having been suggested by the perusal of a manuscript treatise on "The Holy Angels," by the Author's late highly esteemed friend, R. C. Brackenbury, of Raithby, is most respectfully inscribed to Mrs. Brackenbury.

PART I.

ALL that of angels GOD to man makes known,
Here by the light of his clear word is shown.
'Tis Jacob's dream ;—behold the ladder rise,
Resting on earth, but reaching to the skies,
Where faith the radiant hierarchies may trace
Abroad in nature, providence, and grace,
Descending and returning by that path,
On embassies of mercy or of wrath ;
Here the stone pillow and the desert-sod
Become the gate of heaven, the house of GOD ;
—Put off thy shoes, approach with awe profound,
The place on which thou stand'st is holy ground.
Spirit made perfect, spirit of the just !
Thy hand which traced these leaves is fall'n to dust,
Yet, in the visions of eternity,
Things unconceived by mortals thou canst see,
—Angels, as angels stand before the throne,
By thee are without veil or symbol known :
Oh ! couldst thou add one brilliant page, and tell
What those pure beings are who never fell,
—Those first-born sons of GOD, ere time began,
Though elder, greater, not more loved than man,
Thrones, principalities, dominions, powers,
Cherub or seraph, midst empyreal bowers,
Who in themselves their Maker only see,
And live, and move, and dwell in Deity :
—But 'tis forbidden ;—earthly eye nor ear
Heaven's splendours may behold, heaven's secrets hear :

To flesh and blood that world to come is seal'd,
Or but in hieroglyphic shades reveal'd.

We follow thee, bless'd saint ! our tongues, ere long,
May learn from thine the church-triumphant's song :
For well, I ween, thy minstrel soul of fire
Can compass all the notes of Raphael's lyre ;
—That soul, which once, beneath the body's cloud,
Sang, like an unseen sky-lark, sweet and loud ;
Louder and sweeter now thy raptures rise,
Where cloud nor sun are seen in purer skies.

But what of angels know we ?—Search that book
On which the eyes of angels love to look,
Desiring, through its opening seals, to trace
The heights and depths of that transcendent grace,
Which from the Father's bosom sent the Son,
Himself the ransom for a world undone.

First, with the morning stars when nature sprang,
These sons of God for joy together sang ;
Diviner wonders day by day explored,
Night after night with deeper awe adored ;
Till, o'er his finish'd work, JEHOVAH placed
Man, with the stamp of his own image graced :
Even angels paused a moment then to gaze,
Ere burst from all their choirs such shouts of praise,
As not in heaven at their own birth were known,
Nor heard when Satan's host were overthrown.

When man lost Eden for his first offence,
The swords of cherubim expell'd him thence,
Those flaming signs of heaven with earth at strife
Turn'd every way to guard the tree of life.

Angels, thenceforth, who in God's presence stand,
As ministering spirits, travel sea and land ;
Onward or upward, rapt through air and sky,
From heaven to earth, from earth to heaven they fly ;
Like rays diverging from the central sun,
Which through the darkness of creation run,
Enlightening moons and planets in their course,
And thence reflected seek their glorious source.

PART II.

WHEN Abraham dwelt in Mamre angels spoke,
As friend to friend, with him beneath the oak :
With flocks and herds, with wealth and servants blest,
Of almost more than heart could wish possess,
One want the old man felt,—an hopeless one !
Oh ! what was all he had without a son ?
Heaven's messengers brought tidings to his ear,
Which nature, dead in him, found hard to hear ;
Which faith itself could scarce receive for joy,
But *he* believed,—and soon embraced a boy ;
Nor, while the line of Adam shall extend,
Will faithful Abraham's promised issue end.

Hence, when his lifted arm the death-stroke aim'd
At him, whom GOD mysteriously reclaim'd,
At him, whom GOD miraculously gave,
An angel cried from heaven the youth to save,
And he who found a son when he believed,
That son again as from the dead received.

When Hagar, wo-begone and desolate,
Alone, beside the desert fountain sate,
And o'er her unborn babe shed bitter tears,
The angel of the LORD allay'd her fears,
And pledged in fee to her unportion'd child
The lion's range o'er Araby the wild :
“ Here have I look'd for Him whom none can see ! ”
She cried ;—“ and found, for thou, GOD, seest me ! ”
—Again, when fainting in the wilderness,
An angel-watcher pitied her distress,
To Ishmael's lips a hidden well unseal'd,
And the long wanderings of his race reveal'd,
Who still, as hunters, warriors, spoilers, roam,
Their steeds their riches, sands and sky their home.
Angels o'erthrew the cities of the plain,
With fire and brimstone in tempestuous rain,

And from the wrath which heartless sinners braved,
 Lot, with the violence of mercy, saved ;
 Now where the region breathed with life before,
 Stands a dead sea where life can breathe no more.
 When Jacob, journeying with his feeble bands,
 Trembled to fall into a brother's hands ;
 At twilight, lingering in the rear, he saw
 God's host's around his tents their 'campment draw :
 —While, with a stranger, in mysterious strife,
 Wrestling till break of day for more than life ;
 He pray'd, he wept, he cried in his distress,
 "I will not let thee go except thou bless !"
 Lame with a touch, he halted on his thigh,
 Yet like a prince had power with God Most High.

Nine plagues in vain had smitten Pharaoh's land,
 Ere the destroying angel stretch'd his hand,
 Whose sword, wide flashing through Egyptian gloom,
 Lighted and struck their first-born to the tomb ;
 Through all the realm a cry at midnight spread,
 For not a house was found without *one* dead.

When Balaam, blinded by the lure of gold,
 To curse whom God would bless, his heart had sold,
 A wrathful angel, with high brandish'd blade,
 Invisible to him, his progress stay'd,
 Nor till, with human voice, his own dumb ass
 Rebuked the prophet's madness, let him pass.

When Joshua led the tribes o'er Jordan's flood,
 The captain of God's host before him stood,
 He fell, and own'd, adoring at his face,
 A power whose presence sanctified the place.

When Deborah from beneath her palm-tree rose,
 God into woman's hands sold Israel's foes ;
 They fought from heaven,—'twas heaven deliverance
 Stars in their courses against Sisera fought. [wrought.

They sinn'd again, and fell beneath the yoke ;
 To Gideon then their guardian angel spoke ;
 Three hundred warriors chosen at the brook,
 Pitchers for arms, with lamps and trumpets took ;

They brake the vessels, raised the lights, and blew
A blast which Midian's startled hosts o'erthrew ;
Foe fell on foe, and friend his friend assail'd ;
—The sword of God and Gideon thus prevail'd.
When David's heart was lifted up with pride,
And more on multitudes than God relied,
Three days, an angel arm'd with pestilence,
Smote down the people for the king's offence ;
Yet when his humbled soul for Israel pray'd,
Heaven heard his groaning, and the plague was stay'd :
He kneel'd between the living and the dead,
Even as the sword came down o'er Zion's head :
Then went th' Almighty's voice throughout the land,
"It is enough ; avenger ! rest thine hand."

Elijah, with his mantle, smote the flood,
And Jordan's hastening waves divided stood ;
The fiery chariot, on the further shore,
Deathless to heaven th' ascending prophet bore :
"My father !" cried Elisha, as he flew ;
"Lo ! Israel's chariot and his horsemen too :"
Then with the mantle, as it dropp'd behind,
Came down a power, like mighty rushing wind,
And as he wrapt the trophy round his breast,
Elijah's spirit Elisha's soul possess'd.
—He, when the Syrian bands, as with a net
Of living links, close drawn, his home beset,
Pray'd,—and his trembling servant saw amazed,
How Dothan's mountain round the prophet blazed ;
Chariots of fire and horses throng'd the air,
And more were for them than against them there.

When pale Jerusalem heard Sennacherib's boast,
How, in their march of death, his locust host
Swept field and forest, rivers turn'd aside,
Crush'd idols, and the living God defied,
—While fear within the walls sad vigils kept,
And the proud foe without securely slept,
At midnight, through the camp, as with a blast,
Hot from Arabian sands, an angel pass'd ;

And when the city rose at dawn of day,
An army of dead men around it lay !

Down in the raging furnace, bound they fell,
Three Hebrew youths,—when, lo ! a miracle ;
At large, amidst the sevenfold flames they walk'd,
And, as in Eden, with an angel talk'd ;
Up rose the king, astonied and in haste ;
“ Three men,” he cried, into the fires we cast ;
Four I behold,—and in the fourth, the mien
And semblance of the Son of God are seen.”

While Daniel lay beneath the lion's paws,
And angels shut the death-gates of their jaws,
Which, ere his headlong foes had reach'd the floor,
Crush'd all their bones, and revell'd in their gore.

Angels to prophets things to come reveal'd,
And things yet unfulfill'd in symbols sealed,
When in deep visions of the night they lay,
And hail'd the dawn of that millennial day,
For which the church looks out with earnest eye,
And counts the moments as the hour draws nigh.

Thus angels oft to man's rebellious race,
Were ministers of vengeance or of grace ;
And, in the fulness of the time decreed,
Glad heralds of the woman's promised seed.

PART III.

To Zacharias, with his spouse grown old,
John the forerunner's course an angel told ;
Struck dumb for unbelief, the father's tongue
At the babe's birth for joy brake loose and sung.

To Mary, highly favour'd, Gabriel brought
An embassy of love transcending thought ;
With fear and meekness, hearkening to his word,
“ Behold,” said she, “ the handmaid of the Lord.”

When Christ was born, that messenger once more
Good tidings to the Bethlehem shepherds bore ;
When suddenly with him th' angelic throngs
Turn'd night to morning, earth to heaven with songs.

When Herod sought the young child's life,—by night,
An angel warn'd his foster-sire to flight ;
But when the murderer's race of blood was run,
JEHOVAH out of Egypt call'd his Son.

When by the Spirit to the desert led,
Our Saviour had not where to lay his head ;
With hunger, thirst, fatigue, and watching worn,
When he the tempter's dire assaults had borne,
Still with the written word his wiles repell'd,
Though long in that mysterious conflict held,
Till the foil'd fiend at length shrunk back with shame.
—Angels to minister unto him came.

In lone Gethsemane's most dolorous shade,
When in such agony of soul he pray'd,
That like great blood-drops falling to the ground
Burst the dark sweat from every pore around,
An angel,—from twelve legions marshal'd nigh,
Who waited but the signal of his eye,—
Cast o'er the Son of God his shadowing wing,
To strengthen him whom angels call their King.

Round the seal'd sepulchre where Jesus slept,
Angels their watch till the third morning kept ;
They hail'd the earthquake, they beheld him rise,
Death's victim, now death's victor, to the skies.

While woman's faithful love the tomb survey'd
In which her hands his lifeless limbs had laid ;
With lightning looks, and raiment snowy-white,
At whom as dead the guards fell down in fright,
A mighty angel,—he who roll'd the stone
From the cave's mouth,—the Lord's uprise made known.

Angels, to his disciples, while they saw
Their glorious Master in a cloud withdraw,
Ascend and vanish through th' expanding skies,
And follow'd him with failing hearts and eyes,

Foretold his second advent, in that day
When heaven and earth themselves shall pass away.

Angels unseen, as ministering spirits went,
When forth the chosen witnesses were sent,
With power from high to preach, where'er they trod,
The glorious gospel of the blessed God.
Angels made straight their paths o'er land and sea,
Threw wide their prison-doors and let them free,
Smote slaughter-breathing Herod on his throne,
Led Philip where the Eunuch sat alone,
Taught meek Cornelius, from what lips his ear
Might "words whereby he must be saved" hear;
And stood by fearless Paul, when, tempest-driven,
The whole ship's company to him were given.

Good angels still conduct, from age to age,
Salvation's heirs, on nature's pilgrimage;
Cherubic swords, no longer signs of strife,
Now point the way, and keep the tree of life;
Seraphic hands, with coals of living fire,
The lips of God's true messengers inspire;
Angels, who see their heavenly Father's face,
Watch o'er his little ones with special grace;
Still o'er repenting sinners they rejoice,
And blend their myriad voices as one voice.

Angels, with healing virtue in their wings,
Trouble dead pools, unsluice earth's bosom-springs.
Till fresh as new-born life the waters roll;
Lepers and lame step in and are made whole.

Angels, the saints from noonday perils keep,
And pitch their tents around them while they sleep;
Uphold them when they seem to walk alone,
Nor let them dash their feet against a stone;
They teach the dumb to speak, the blind to see,
Comfort the dying in their agony,
And to the rest of paradise convey
Spirits enfranchised from the crumbling clay.

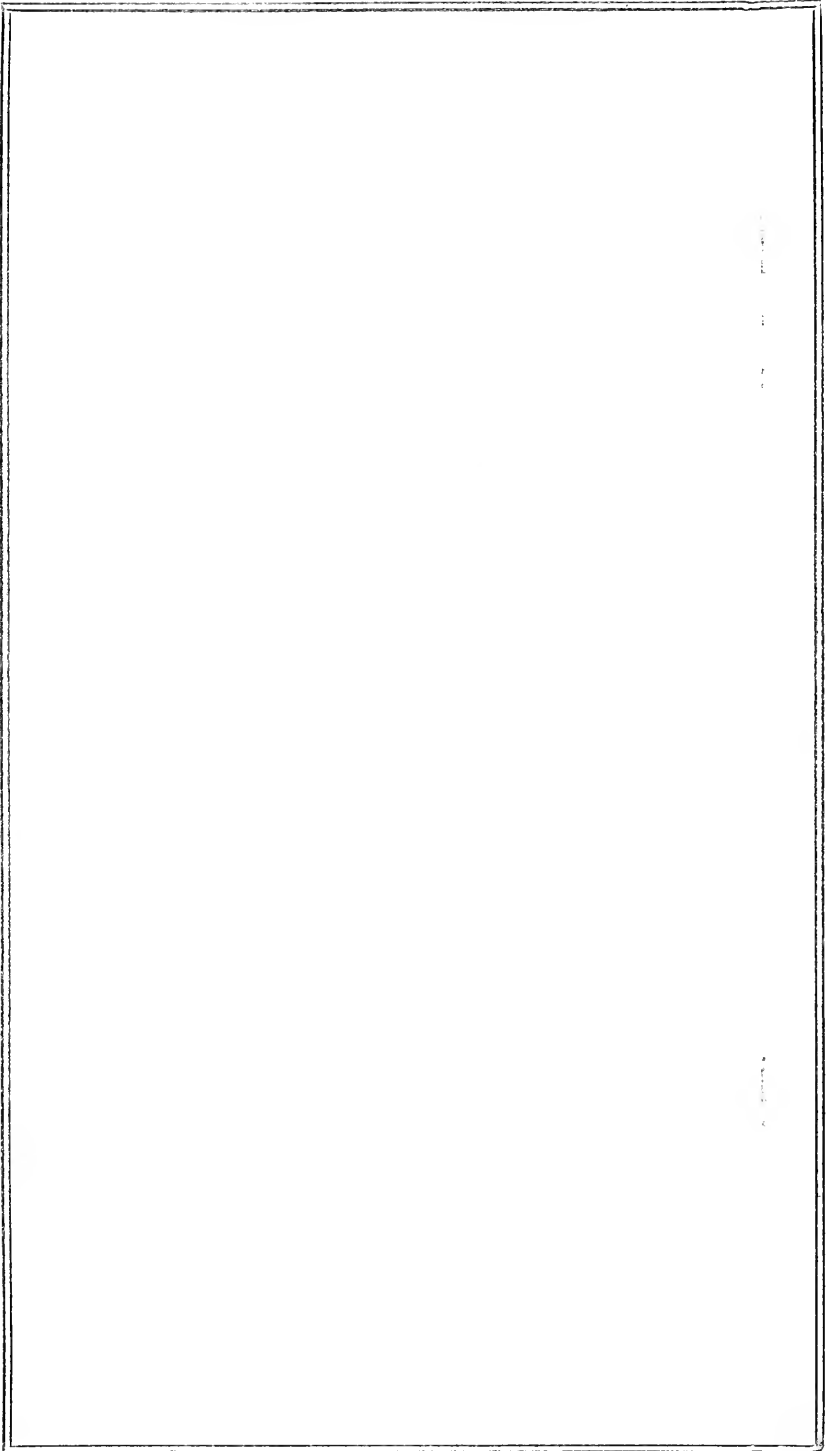
Strong angels, arm'd by righteous Providence,
Judgments on guilty nations still dispense,

Pour out their full-charged vials of despair
And death, o'er sun, and sea, and earth, and air ;
Or sound their trumpets, while at every blast,
Plague follows plague, wo treads on wo gone past.

Bright angels, through mid-heaven shall hold their flight
Till all that sit in darkness see the light,
Still the good tidings of great joy proclaim,
Till every tongue confess a Saviour's name.

Th' archangel's voice, the trump of God, the cry
Of startled nature, rending earth and sky,
Shall change the living, raise the dead, and bring
All nations to the presence of their King,
Whose flaming ministers, on either hand,
Ten thousand times ten thousand angels stand,
To witness time's full roll for ever seal'd,
And that eternity to come reveal'd,
—That era in the reign of Deity,
When sin, the curse, and death no more can be.
Angels who fell not, men who fell restored,
Shall then rejoice in glory with the Lord :
—Hearts, harps and voices, in one choir shall raise
The new, the old, th' eternal song of praise.

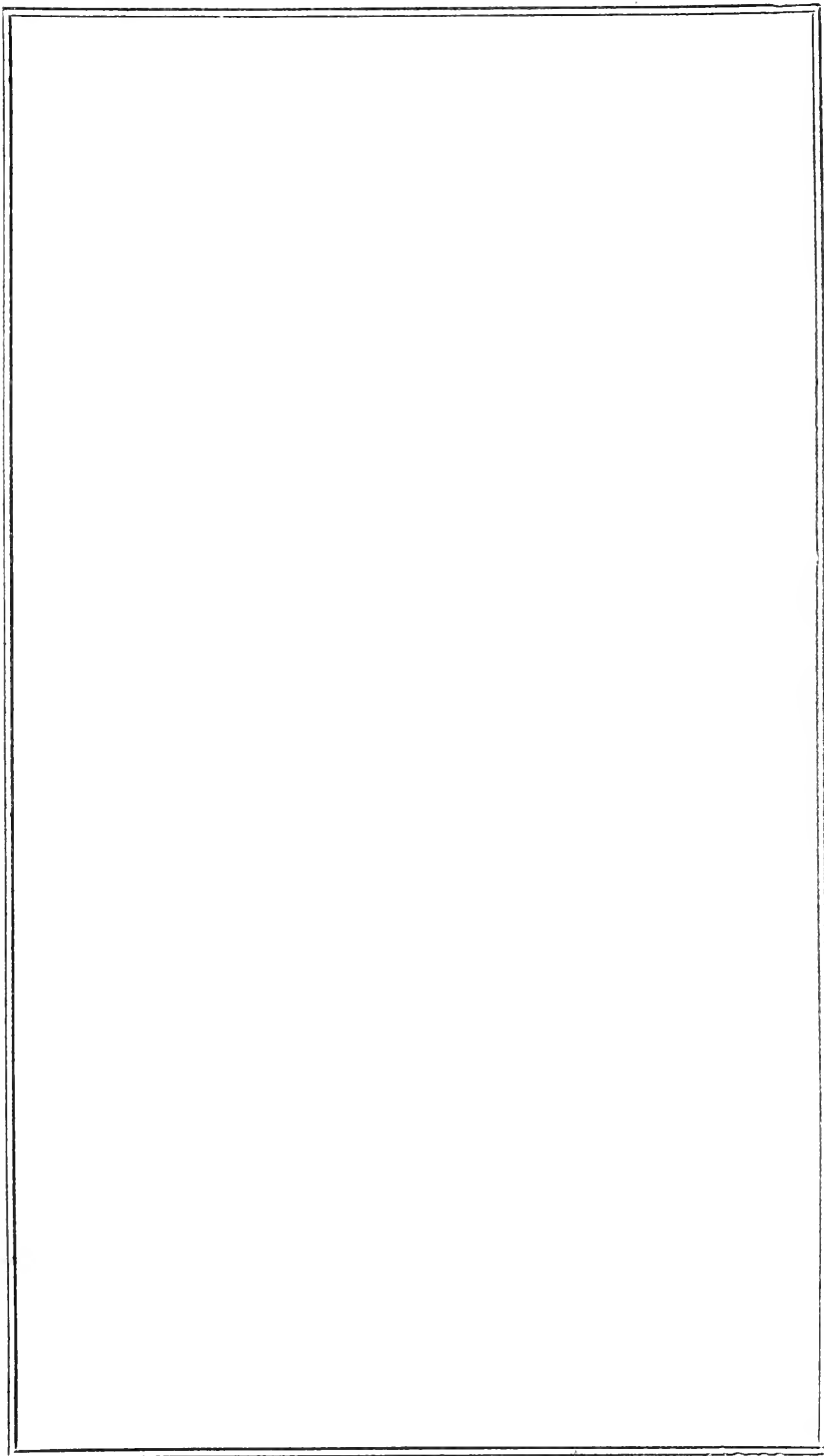
May ye who read, with him who wrote this strain,
Join in that song, and worship in that train !



100

100

SONGS ON SLAVERY, SONNETS, ETC.



SONGS
ON
THE ABOLITION OF NEGRO SLAVERY.

NO. I.—THE RAINBOW.

Sign of the passing storm,
Symbol of wrath gone by,
Born of the cloud and sun,—what form
Of beauty tracks the sky?
From Afric to the isles of slaves
The rainbow spans th' Atlantic waves.
Black, white, and bond, and free,
Castes and proscriptions cease;
The Negro wakes to liberty,
The Negro sleeps in peace;
Read the great charter on his brow,
"I AM a MAN, a BROTHER *now*."

NO. II.—THE NEGRO IS FREE.

[To Moore's melody of "Sound the loud timbrel o'er Egypt's dark sea."]

Blow ye the trumpet abroad o'er the sea;
Britannia hath conquer'd, the Negro is free:
Sing, for the pride of the tyrant is broken,
His scourges and fetters, all clotted with blood,
Are wrench'd from his grasp, for the word was but spoken,
And fetters and scourges were plunged in the flood:
Blow ye the trumpet abroad o'er the sea,
Britannia hath conquer'd, the Negro is free.

Hail to Britannia, fair liberty's isle !
 Her frown quell'd the tyrant, the slave caught her smile :
 Fly on the winds, to tell Afric the story ;
 Say to the mother of mourners, " Rejoice !"
 Britannia went forth, in her beauty, her glory,
 And slaves sprang to men at the sound of her voice :
 —Praise to the God of our fathers ; 'twas He,
 JEHOVAH, that conquer'd, my country ! by thee.

NO. III.—SLAVERY THAT WAS.

AGES, ages have departed
 Since the first dark vessel bore
 Afric's children, broken-hearted,
 To the Caribbèan shore ;
 She like Rachel,
 Weeping, for they were no more.

Millions, millions have been slaughter'd
 In the fight and on the deep ;
 Millions, millions more have water'd,
 With such tears as captives weep,
 Fields of travail,
 Where their bones till doomsday sleep.

Mercy, mercy vainly pleading,
 Rent her garments, smote her breast.
 Till a voice, from heaven proceeding,
 Gladden'd all the gloomy west,
 " Come, ye weary !
 Come, and I will give you rest !"

Tidings, tidings of salvation !
 Britons rose with one accord,
 Purged the plague-spot from our nation,
 Negroes to their rights restored ;
 Slaves no longer,
 FREE-MEN,—FREE-MEN of the LORD

NO. IV.—SLAVERY THAT IS NOT.

GOD made all his creatures free ;
 Life itself is liberty ;
 GOD ordain'd no other bands
 Than united hearts and hands.
 Sin th' eternal charter broke,
 —Sin, itself earth's heaviest yoke ;
 Tyranny with sin began,
 Man o'er brute, and man o'er man.
 Pass five thousand pagan years
 Of creation's groans and tears ;
 To oppression's climax come,
 In the crimes of Christendom.
 What were these ?—Let Afric's sands,
 Ocean's depths, West Indian strands,
 In the day of wrath declare :
 —Oh ! the mercy that they *were* ;—
 For they *are not*,—*cannot be* ;
 Life again is liberty ;
 And the Negro's only bands
 Love-knit hearts, and love-link'd hands.
 So the plague of slavery cease !
 So return primeval peace !
 While the ransom'd tribes record
 All the goodness of the LORD.

NO. V.—THE NEGRO'S VIGIL :

ON THE EVE OF THE FIRST OF AUGUST, 1834.

“They that watch for the morning :—they that watch for the morning.”

Psalm cxxx. 6.

HIE to the mountain afar
 All in the cool of the even ;
 Led by yon beautiful star,
 First of the daughters of heaven :

Sweet to the slave is the season of rest,
Something far sweeter he looks for to-night ;
His heart lies awake in the depth of his breast,
And listens till God shall say, "*Let there be light!*"

Climb we the mountain, and stand
High in mid-air, to inhale,
Fresh from our old father-land,
Balm in the ocean-borne gale :
Darkness yet covers the face of the deep ;
Spirit of freedom ! go forth in thy might,
To break up our bondage like infancy's sleep,
The moment when God shall say, "*Let there be
light!*"

Gaze we, meanwhile, from his peak ;
Praying in thought while we gaze ;
Watch for the morning's first streak,
Prayer then be turn'd into praise ;
Shout to the valleys, " Behold ye the morn,
Long, long desired but denied to our sight :"
Lo, myriads of slaves into men are new-born ;
The word was omnipotent, "*Let there be light!*"

Hear it and hail it ;—the call,
Island to island prolong ;
Liberty ! liberty !—all
Join in the jubilee-song :
Hark ! 'tis the children's hosannas that ring ;
Hark ! they are free-men whose voices unite ;
While England, the Indies, and Africa sing,
" AMEN, HALLELUJAH !" at "*Let there be light!*"

SONNETS,
IMITATIONS, AND TRANSLATIONS.

A SEA-PIECE.

IN THREE SONNETS.

SCENE.—*Bridlington Quay, 1824.*

I.

AT nightfall, walking on the cliff-crown'd shore,
Where sea and sky were in each other lost ;
Dark ships were scudding through the wild uproar,
Whose wrecks ere morn must strew the dreary coast :
I mark'd one well-moor'd vessel tempest-tost,
Sails reef'd, helm lash'd, a dreadful siege she bore.
Her deck by billow after billow cross'd,
While every moment she might be no more :
Yet firmly anchor'd on the nether sand,
Like a chain'd Lion ramping at his foes,
Forward and rearward still she plunged and rose,
Till broke her cable ;—then she fled to land,
With all the waves in chase ; throes following throes ;
She 'scaped,—she struck,—she stood upon the strand.

II.

The morn was beautiful, the storm gone by ;
Three days had pass'd ; I saw the peaceful main.
One molten mirror, one illumined plane,
Clear as the blue, sublime, o'erarching sky :
On shore that lonely vessel caught mine eye.

Her bow was seaward, all equipt her train,
 Yet to the sun she spread her wings in vain,
 Like a caged Eagle, impotent to fly ;
 There fix'd as if for ever to abide ;
 Far down the beach had roll'd the low neap-tide,
 Whose mingling murmur faintly lull'd the ear :
 " Is this," methought, " is this the doom of pride,
 Check'd in the onset of thy brave career,
 Ingloriously to rot by piecemeal here ?"

III.

Spring-tides return'd, and Fortune smiled ; the bay
 Received the rushing ocean to its breast ;
 While waves on waves innumeraibly prest,
 Seem'd, with the prancing of their proud array,
 Sea-horses, flash'd with foam, and snorting spray ;
 Their power and thunder broke that vessel's rest ;
 Slowly, with new expanding life possest,
 To her own element she glid away ;
 Buoyant and bounding like the polar Whale,
 That takes his pastime ; every joyful sail
 Was to the freedom of the wind unfurl'd,
 While right and left the parted surges curl'd :
 —Go, gallant Bark, with such a tide and gale,
 I'll pledge thee to a voyage round the world.

WESTMINSTER ABBEY,

ON THE TWENTY-EIGHTH OF JUNE, 1838.

TO THE QUEEN.

THE orb and sceptre in thy hands they placed,
 On thine anointed head a crown of gold ;
 A purple robe thy virgin form embraced ;
 Enthroned thou wert, all-glorious to behold :
 Before thee lay the Book of God unroll'd ;
 Thy tongue pronounced, thy pen the covenant traced,
 Which men and angels witness'd :—young and old,

Peers, princes, statesmen, birth and beauty graced
 That scene of tombs and trophies. All is fled ;
 Like life itself, the living pass'd away,
 And none that met remain'd there but the dead !
 —Thence to thy closet didst thou not retreat,
 In secret to thy heavenly Father pray,
 And cast thyself and kingdom at his feet ?

SONNET.

IMITATED FROM THE ITALIAN OF GAETANA PASSERINI.

IF in the field I meet a smiling flower,
 Methinks it whispers, "God created me,
 And I to Him devote my little hour,
 In lonely sweetness and humility."
 If, where the forest's darkest shadows lower,
 A serpent quick and venomous I see,
 It seems to say,—“I, too, extol the power
 Of Him, who caused me, at his will, to be.”
 The fountain purling, and the river strong,
 The rocks, the trees, the mountains raise one song ;
 “Glory to God !” re-echoes in mine ear :
 Faithless were I, in wilful error blind,
 Did I not Him in all his creatures find,
 His voice through heaven, and earth, and ocean hear.

THE OAK.

IMITATED FROM THE ITALIAN OF METASTASIO.

THE tall Oak, towering to the skies,
 The fury of the wind defies,
 From age to age, in virtue strong,
 Inured to stand, and suffer wrong.
 O'erwhelm'd at length upon the plain,
 It puts forth wings, and sweeps the main ;
 The self-same foe undaunted braves,
 And fights the wind upon the waves.

SONNET.

IMITATED FROM THE ITALIAN OF GIAMBATTISTA COTTA.

I SAW th' eternal GOD, in robes of light,
 Rise from his throne,—to judgment forth he came ;
 His presence pass'd before me, like the flame
 That fires the forest in the depth of night :
 Whirlwind and storm, amazement and affright,
 Compass'd his path, and shook all Nature's frame,
 When from the heaven of heavens, with loud acclaim,
 To earth he wing'd his instantaneous flight.
 As some triumphal oak, whose boughs have spread
 Their changing foliage through a thousand years,
 Bows to the rushing wind its glorious head,
 The universal arch of yonder spheres
 Sunk with the pressure of its Maker's tread,
 And earth's foundations quaked with mortal fears.

SONNET.

THE CRUCIFIXION.

IMITATED FROM THE ITALIAN OF CRESCIMBENT.

I ASK'D the Heavens,—“What foe to God hath done
 This unexampled deed?”—The Heavens exclaim,
 “’Twas Man ;—and we in horror snatch'd the sun
 From such a spectacle of guilt and shame.”
 I ask'd the Sea ;—the Sea in fury boil'd,
 And answer'd with his voice of storms, “’Twas Man :
 My waves in panic at his crime recoil'd,
 Disclosed th' abyss, and from the centre ran.”
 I ask'd the Earth ;—the Earth replied aghast,
 “’Twas Man ;—and such strange pangs my bosom rent,
 That still I groan and shudder at the past.”
 —To Man, gay, smiling, thoughtless Man, I went,
 And ask'd him next :—*He* turn'd a scornful eye,
 Shook his proud head, and deign'd me no reply.

SONNET.

IMITATED FROM THE ITALIAN OF P. SALANDRI.

TO A BRIDE.

THE more divinely beautiful thou art,
 Lady! of love's inconstancy beware:
 Watch o'er thy charms, and with an angel's care
 Oh! guard thy maiden purity of heart:
 At every whisper of temptation start;
 The lightest breathings of unhallow'd air
 Love's tender, trembling lustre will impair,
 Till all the light of innocence depart.

Fresh from the bosom of an Alpine hill,
 When the coy fountain sparkles into day,
 And sunbeams bathe and brighten in its rill:
 If here a plant, and there a flower, in play,
 Bending to sip, the little channel fill,
 It ebbs, and languishes, and dies away.

SONNET.

IMITATED FROM THE ITALIAN OF GAETANA PASSERINI.

ON THE SIEGE OF GENOA BY THE FRENCH ARMY IN 16**.

Liberty speaks.

"MY native Genoa! if with tearless eye,
 Prone in the dust thy beauteous form I see,
 Think not thy daughter's heart is dead to thee;
 'Twere treason, O my mother! here to sigh,
 For here, majestic though in ashes, lie
 Trophies of valour, skill, and constancy;
 Here at each glance, each footstep, I descry
 The proud memorials of thy love to me.

"Conquest to noble suffering lost the day,
 And glorious was thy vengeance on the foe,
 —He saw thee perish, yet not feel the blow."
 Thus Liberty, exulting on her way,
 Kiss'd the dear relics, mouldering as they lay,
 And cried,—“In ruins?—*Yes!*—In slavery?—*No!*”

SONNET.

IMITATED FROM THE ITALIAN OF PETRARCH.

LONELY and thoughtful o'er deserted plains,
 I pass with melancholy steps and slow,
 Mine eyes intent to shun, where'er I go,
 The track of man :—from him to hide my pains,
 No refuge save the wilderness remains :
 The curious multitude would quickly know,
 Amidst affected smiles, the cherish'd wo
 That wrings my bosom, and consumes my veins.
 Oh ! that the rocks and streams of solitude,
 The vales and woods alone, my griefs might see !
 But paths, however secret, wild and rude,
 I find not from tormenting passion free ;
 Where'er I wander, still by Love pursued,
 With Him I hold communion, He with Me.

SONNET.

IMITATED FROM THE ITALIAN OF BENEDETTO DALL'UVA.

ON THE SIEGE OF FAMAGUSTA, IN THE ISLAND OF CYPRUS,
 BY THE TURKS, IN 1571.

Thus saith the Lord :—“ In whom shall Cyprus trust,
 With all her crimes, her luxury, and pride ?
 In her voluptuous loves will she confide,
 Her harlot-daughters, and her queen of lust ?
 My day is come when o'er her neck in dust,
 Vengeance and fury shall triumphant ride,
 Death and captivity the spoil divide,
 And Cyprus perish :—I the Lord am just.
 “ Then he that bought, and he that sold in thee,
 Thy princely merchants, shall their loss deplore,
 Brothers in ruin as in fraud before ;
 And thou, who mad'st thy rampart of the sea,
 Less by thy foes cast down than crush'd by Me !
 Thou, Famagusta ! fall, and rise no more.”

SONNET.

IMITATED FROM THE ITALIAN OF GABRIELLO FIAMMA.

ON THE SEPULTURE OF CHRIST.

WHERE is the aspect more than heaven serene,
 Which saints and angels view'd with pure delight?
 The meekness and the majesty of mien,
 That won the yielding heart with gentle might?
 Where is the voice with harmony replete,
 That changed to love the most obdurate will?
 The eye, whose glance so ravishingly sweet,
 The soul with joy unspeakable could fill?
 Where is the hand that crush'd our direst foe,
 And Satan's powers in chains of darkness bound?
 Where is the servant's humble form below,
 In which the eternal Son of God was found?
 —Lo! where his pilgrimage of mercy ends:
 What Glory here into the grave descends!

1821.

SONNET.

FROM THE ITALIAN OF GIOVAMBATTISTA ZAPPÌ.

ON JUDITH RETURNING TO BETHULIA WITH THE HEAD OF
HOLOFERNES IN HER HAND.

SHE held the head all-horrible with gore;
 Nor of the woman in that act was seen
 Aught save th' alluring locks and beauteous mien:
 "Hail, heroine, hail!" all voices cried before.
 At the glad news, the damsels came with speed;
 Some kiss'd her feet and some her garment's hem,
 None her right-hand, for terrible to them
 Was the remembrance of that fatal deed.
 A hundred prophets sang the matron's fame;
 "Fly round the world, thine everlasting name!
 The sun through all his march shall tell thy story."
 Great from that dread achievement though she rose,
 Greater she stood at this triumphant close,
 For she was humble in the height of glory.

1825.

SONNET.

FROM THE ITALIAN OF EUSTACHIO MANFREDI.

FOR A NUN, ON TAKING THE VEIL.

As when a lion, mad with hunger, springs
 To seize the unguarded shepherd by surprise,
 Fear in a moment lends the victim wings ;
 To some broad elm or ancient oak he flies,
 Climbs for his life, amidst the branches cowers,
 And sees th' infuriate brute, with ramping paws,
 Leap at the trunk, and wearying all his powers,
 Spurn the loose sand, and grind his foaming jaws.
 So she, whom hell's fierce lion mark'd for prey,
 Flies to the tree of life's extended arms,
 The cross of Calvary,—which, night and day,
 Yields shade, and rest, and refuge from alarms ;
 Whence she beholds the baffled fiend again,
 Gnashing his teeth slink back to his old den.

SONNET.

From Petrarch, in which the Poet laments the death of his friend *Signore Stefano Colonna*, occurring soon after that of *Laura*. In the original there is a symbolical allusion to the names of both,—the one as a *Column*, the other a *Laurel*.

FALL'N is the lofty *Column*, and upturn
 The verdant *Laurel*, in whose shade my mind
 Found peace I ne'er again may hope to find,
 Though round the heavens o'er earth and ocean borne :
 —O Death ! how hast thou me of comfort shorn !
 My double treasure to the grave consign'd,
 Which made life sweet !—and wealth with power combined,
 Can ne'er restore to soothe my thought forlorn.
 What can I do, if fate have so decreed,
 But let my sorrowing heart in secret bleed,
 My brow be sad, mine eyes o'erflow with tears ?
 —O Life ! so beautiful to look upon,
 How, in a moment's space, for ever gone
 Is all we toil to gain through many years !

THE SWISS COWHERD'S SONG,

IN A FOREIGN LAND.

IMITATED FROM THE FRENCH.

Oh, when shall I visit the land of my birth,
 The loveliest land on the face of the earth ?
 When shall I those scenes of affection explore,
 Our forests, our fountains,
 Our hamlets, our mountains,
 With the pride of our mountains, the maid I adore ?
 Oh, when shall I dance on the daisy-white mead,
 In the shade of an elm, to the sound of the reed ?

When shall I return to that lowly retreat,
 Where all my fond objects of tenderness meet,—
 The lambs and the heifers that follow my call,
 My father, my mother,
 My sister, my brother,
 And dear Isabella, the joy of them all ?
 Oh, when shall I visit the land of my birth ?
 —'Tis the loveliest land on the face of the earth.

MEET AGAIN !*

JOYFUL words,—we meet again !
 Love's own language, comfort darting
 Through the souls of friends at parting ;
 Life in death,—we meet again !
 While we walk this vale of tears,
 Compass'd round with care and sorrow,
 Gloom to-day, and storm to-morrow,
 "Meet again !" our bosom cheers.

* The three following pieces were paraphrased from the German.

Far in exile, when we roam,
 O'er our lost endearments weeping,
 Lonely, silent vigils keeping,
 "Meet again!" transports us home.

When this weary world is past,
 Happy they, whose spirits soaring,
 Vast eternity exploring,
 "Meet again" in heaven at last.

VIA CRUCIS, VIA LUCIS.

NIGHT turns to day :—

When sullen darkness lowers,
 And heaven and earth are hid from sight,
 Cheer up, cheer up ;
 Ere long the opening flowers,
 With dewy eyes, shall shine in light.

Storms die in calms :—

When over land and ocean
 Roll the loud chariots of the wind,
 Cheer up, cheer up ;
 The voice of wild commotion
 Proclaims tranquillity behind.

Winter wakes spring :—

When icy blasts are blowing
 O'er frozen lakes, through naked trees,
 Cheer up, cheer up ;
 All beautiful and glowing,
 May floats in fragrance on the breeze.

War ends in peace :—

Though dread artillery rattle,
 And ghastly corpses load the ground,
 Cheer up, cheer up ;
 Where groan'd the field of battle,
 The song, the dance, the feast go round.

Toil brings repose :—

With noontide fervours beating,
When droop thy temples o'er thy breast,
Cheer up, cheer up ;
Gray twilight, cool and fleeting,
Wafts on its wing the hour of rest.

Death springs to life :—

Though brief and sad thy story,
Thy years all spent in care and gloom.
Look up, look up ;
Eternity and glory
Dawn through the portals of the tomb.

GERMAN WAR SONG.¹

HEAVEN speed the righteous sword,
And freedom be the word !
Come, brethren, hand in hand,
Fight for your father-land !

Germania from afar
Invokes her sons to war ;
Awake ! put forth your powers,
And victory must be ours.

On to the combat, on !
Go where your sires have gone :
Their might unspent remains,
Their pulse is in our veins.

On to the battle, on !
Rest will be sweet anon ;
The slave may yield, may fly,
We conquer, or we die !

TRANSLATIONS FROM DANTE.

UGOLINO AND RUGGIERI.

The sufferings of Ugolino on earth, and his cannibal revenge in hell, on his betrayer and murderer, Ruggieri, are better known in this country than any other part of the *Divina Commedia*, having been often translated, and several times made the subject of painting, especially in the rival pictures of Reynolds and Fuseli. One version more may be tolerated, and it will probably be long before it can be said that yet another is not wanted, to give the English reader an adequate idea of the poet's power in the delineation,—not so much of the supernatural horrors of his infernal caverns, as of a real earthly scene, (like the death by starvation in the dungeon of a father and his four innocent children.) “so simply, so severely great,” that of the narrative, in his own Italian, it may be said,

“The force of nature could no further go.”

Ugolino, Count of Gherardesca, having united with the Archbishop Ruggieri degli Ubaldini to expel his own nephew, Nino Giudice di Gallura, from the sovereignty of Pisa, seized it for himself. But the archbishop soon turned against him, and being supported by Lanfranchi, Sismondi, and Gualandi, three of the principal inhabitants, they raised a tumult in the city, during which Ugolino was dragged from his palace, and with his two sons, and their two sons, (he calls all four his children in the story,) imprisoned in a tower on the Piazza degli Anziani, for several months, at the expiration of which the portals were all locked, and the keys thrown into the river Arno: the miserable captives being thus left to perish with hunger, whence the hold itself obtained the name of “*Famine*.” With great skill, to produce the most pathetic impression, as well as with consummate knowledge of human nature, Dante makes Ugolino dwell wholly on the treachery and cruelty exercised towards himself, without any allusion to his own atrocious injustice towards his nephew, for which he is doomed to the second round of the ninth or lowest gulf of Hell, with no mitigation of the pains of eternal hunger, except the ravenous feast, like that of the eagle on the liver of Prometheus, upon the never-satisfying and never-wasting brain of the traitor Ruggieri.

Dante (accompanied by Virgil, his conductor) finds in this department of “the doleful city” the victims tormented variously, according to their crimes,

“In thrilling regions of thick-ribbed ice;”

and, among others, the two personages aforementioned.

SCARCE had we parted thence, when I beheld
Two in one well of ice, so grouped together
The head of one to the other seem'd the cowl,
While, like a hungry man devouring bread,
The uppermost had fasten'd with his teeth
Upon the lower, where skull and neck are join'd;

Nor more voraciously did Tydeus tear
The front of Menalippus, in his rage,*
Than on that head and brain th' assailant prey'd.

“O thou !” I cried, who show'st by such brute token
Hatred to him whom thou devourest, say,
Why dost thou so ?—I ask on this condition,
That knowing who thou art, and what his crime,
If thou have cause of wrong against thy victim,
I yet may right thee in the upper world,
Should *that* with which I speak be not dried up.”

Dell' Inferno, canto xxxiii.

The sinner paused amidst his dire repast,
And wiped his mouth upon the hairy scalp
Of him whose head he raven'd on behind,
Then answer'd :—

“Thou wouldst have me to renew
Horrible pangs, of which the very thought
So wrings my heart, I scarce find power for utterance :
Yet if my words prove seed, of which the traitor,
Whom thus I gnaw, may reap th' accursed fruit,
Thou shalt behold me weep and speak at once.

“I know not who thou art, nor by what means
Thou hast come hither, but a Florentine,
By speech, I deem thee.—Know me, then,
Count Ugolino,—this, th' Archbishop Ruggier,
And why I'm such a neighbour thou shalt hear.
I need not say how, by his foul devices,
Reposing on his faith, I was ensnared,
And murder'd :—but, what cannot have been told thee,
How cruel was that murder, thou shalt know ;
Then judge if he have injured me or not.

“When the small casement of that dungeon cage,
Which hath from me the name of ‘Famine,’—where
Others may yet be left like me to perish,—
Through its dim aperture, had more than once
Shown the new moon, an evil sleep fell on me,
Which from the future rent the veil.

* STATIUS, *Theb.* l. vii.

—Methought

This wretch, as lord and master of the field,
Hunted a he-wolf and his whelps along
The mountain which from Pisa shadows Lucca.
With meager, staunch, and noble-blooded hounds,
Gualandi, and Sismondi, and Lanfranchi
Swept on before him.—After a short chase,
Parent and young fell, fainting from fatigue,
And with keen fangs I saw them torn to pieces.

“When I awoke at day-break,—in their sleep,
I heard my children moan, and ask for bread
(For they were with me);—cruel is thine heart
If it grieves not for what mine then foreboded,
And if thou weep'st not now, what wilt thou weep for?
—Ere long they woke; the hour drew nigh when food
Was wont to be brought to us; but in each
Secret misgivings from his dream arose;
And of the horrible tower, I heard the portal
Lock'd underneath our cell. Thereat I look'd
Full on my children, but spake not a word,
Nor wept, so petrified I felt within.
They wept, and little Anselm said to me,
'You look so, father! Ah! what mean those looks?'
Still I wept not, nor answer'd all that day,
Nor the next night.

At sun-rise on the morrow,
When a faint ray gleam'd through our doleful prison,
And in four haggard faces show'd me mine,
I worried both my hands with agony:
They, thinking that I did so in the rage
Of hunger, all together rose and cried,
'Father! 'twill hurt us less if you will feed
On us; you clothed these limbs with suffering flesh,
Now strip them!'

Then I quieted myself,
Not to make them more wretched.—All that day,
And all the next, we sat, and held our peace;
Ah! earth, hard earth! why didst thou not then open?

“When we had linger’d on till the fourth day,
 My Gaddo threw himself down at my feet,
 Crying, ‘My father! why do you not help me?’
 Then died.—As plainly as thou seest me now,
 I saw the other three fall, one by one,
 Between the fifth day and the sixth. Then blind
 I groped about to feel and clasp their bodies;
 Three days I call’d them by their names, though dead,
 Then famine did for me what grief could not.”

Dell' Inferno, canto xxxiii.

MAESTRO ADAMO.

The hideously comic interview and adventure with Maestro Adamo (Master Adam,) the coiner,—in another of the lower rounds of the infernal gulf, where traitors of the baser sort are tormented with unappeasable thirst, in various diseases that excite it,—is thoroughly *Dantesque*, but in the poet's coarser vein. It may form a singular companion-piece to the fearfully sublime, but simply told and tenderly affecting, narrative of Count Ugolino.

I saw one shapen like a lute, had he
 Been shorten'd where the man becomes a fork :*
 Enormous dropsy (which had swoln his limbs
 With stagnant humours, till his ghastly cheek
 But ill agreed with his unwieldy paunch)
 Made him, for thirst, gasp like a hectic,—one
 Lip lolling on his chin, upcurl'd the other.

“Oh! you,” he cried, “that without pain (though why
 I know not) pass through this unhappy world,
 Hear, and mark well the sorrows of Adāmo;
 Living, I had whatever heart could wish,
 And now, alas! I lack a drop of water.
 The murmuring rivulets down the verdant hills
 Of Cassentino, flowing into Arno,
 Which keep their little channels moist and cool,
 Are ever in mine eye;—and not in vain,
 For their sweet images inflame my thirst

* The strange phrase employed in the original quaintly signifies,
 —“if he had been shortened from the waist.”

More than the malady that shrinks my visage.
 The rigid justice, which torments me here,
 Even from the place where I committed sin,
 Draws means to mock and multiply my groans ;
 Romena stands before me, where I forged
 The lawful coin and Baptist's seal, for which
 I left my wretched body in the flames.³
 —Yet could I spy the woful ghost of Guido,
 Of Alessandro, or their brother, here,
 I would not quit the sight for Branda's fountain !
 Somewhere among these pits dwells one,—if truth
 Be told by those mad souls that roam at large,—
 But what is that to me whose limbs are bound ?
 Oh ! were I light enough to move an inch
 A century, I had set out ere now
 In search of him among the hideous throng,
 Through all the eleven long miles of this sad circle,
 Which hath not less than half a mile in breadth !
 They brought me to this family of fiends,
 They tempted me to falsify the florin,
 And mix it with three carats of alloy."

Then I to him :—" And who are these two wretches.
 That smoke like hands in winter plunged through snow,
 Lying close fetter'd on the right of thee ?"

" I found them here, and they have never stirr'd
 Since I was dropt into this ditch," he answer'd :
 " One's the false woman who accused young Joseph,
 And t'other Sinon, the false Greek at Troy,
 Who, in the excruciate pangs of putrid fever,
 Send up such steam."

That moment one of them,
 Wroth to be named so ignominiously,
 Struck with the fist on his distended hide,
 That thunder'd like a drum ;—but Master Adam
 Repaid the blow upon the assailant's face,
 Not less afflictive, with his arm ; exclaiming,
 " Though reft of locomotion, being so large,
 I have a hand at liberty for *that*."

To whom the other :—" Thou wert not so prompt,
When thou wast going to the stake ; and yet
More prompt than now when thou didst stamp the coin."

" Thou speak'st the truth," the dropsical replied,
" But didst not so at Troy, when truth was ask'd thee."

" False words I utter'd then, as thou false money ;
If for one crime I suffer, thou art damn'd
For more than any demon here," quoth Sinon.

" Remember ! perjured one, the hollow horse,
With its full belly," Adam cried, " and stand
Guilty through all the world."

" Stand guilty thou !"

The Greek retorted ; " witness that huge round,
That quagmire, which engulfs thee in thyself."

The coiner then :—" Thy mouth for evil-speaking
Is quite as open as it wont to be ;
If I have drought while humours swell me up,
Thou hast a burning heart and aching head,
And wouldst not need much coaxing to the task
To lap the mirror of Narcissus dry."

I stood all fix'd to hear them.—" Little more
Would make me quarrel with thee ; so be warn'd,"
Cried Virgil :—when I heard him speak in warmth,
I turn'd about, and colour'd with such shame,
The very thought brings back the blush upon me.
Like one who dreams of harm befalling him,
And dreaming wishes it may *be* a dream,
Desiring that which *is* as though it *were not*,
So I, unable to excuse myself,
(For I stood mute,) excused myself the more,
Unwittingly.—" Less shame than thine might make
Atonement for a greater fault than thine,"
My Master said, " so cast away thy sadness ;
And know that I am ever at thy side ;
If fortune brings thee where such knaves fall out,
—To love their broils betrays a base-born mind."

Dell' Inferno, canto xxx.

DANTE AND BEATRICE.

There is no circumstance in the whole compass of the *Divina Commedia* more exquisitely imagined than the *unfelt* swiftness with which Dante and Beatrice, by the mere act of volition on their part, are transported from planet to planet in the *Paradiso*; nor is the *evidence* of their *arrival* at each new stage, in the increased loveliness of the lady to the eyes of the poet, less delicately conceived.

I FELT not our ascension to that star,
 But soon of this my lady gave me warning,
For she had grown more beautiful.
Del Paradiso, canto viii.

Their first flight from the Hill of Purgatory was to the moon. Their entrance within the sphere of "that eternal pearl" is thus described.

The native-born and everlasting thirst
 For that pure realm, resembling God himself,
 Carried us thither, swift as move the heavens.
 My lady look'd aloof, and I on her;
 Then, in as brief a space as, on the string,
 An arrow rests, escapes, and flits away,³
 I found myself transported, and arrived,
 Where a strange thing surprised me; but my guide.
 From whom naught in my heart could be conceal'd,
 Turn'd, with a sweet and gracious countenance,
 Exclaiming, "Now, thank God! that we have reach'd
 The nearest star."²—Methought a lucid, dense,
 And brilliant cloud, like diamond, which the sun
 Transpierces, compass'd us on every side:
 Within the orb of that eternal pearl,
 We enter'd,—as a ray of light pervades
 The crystal wave, united yet unbroken.
Del Paradiso, canto ii.

* The moon.

The sign which spiritual intelligences in heaven give of their desire to converse with the travellers that visit their respective abodes, by shining out from among their companions with intenser lustre, is of the same happy character of thought with the idea of Beatrice's beauty brightening as she mounts from sphere to sphere.

SHE ceased, and seem'd to enter a new round
 Within the wheel where she revolved before ;*
 That other ardour, known to me already,
 Now flash'd out marvellously upon my sight,
Like a fine ruby smitten by the sun ;
 For joy in heaven brings splendour, as it brings
 Laughter on earth ;—but, in the abyss of hell,
 Horror grows blacker as the mind more sad.

Del Paradiso, canto ix.

THE RIVER OF LIFE.

The greater part of the *Paradiso*,—while it exemplifies, almost beyond example, the power of human language to vary a few ideas and images in themselves so simple, pure, and hallowed, that they hardly can be altered from their established associations without being degraded,—shows also the utter impotence of any other terms than those which Scripture has employed “as in a glass darkly,”—and who can *there* add light ?—to body forth what eye hath not seen, ear heard, neither hath entered into the heart of man to conceive. One elaborate specimen (however defective the translation may be) will elucidate this failure even in the noble original, which, like its ineffable theme, in this part is “dark with excessive bright.” The poet here copies more directly than he is wont from the sacred Oracles ; or, as in the sublime simile of the rock, illustrates his subject with not unworthy natural objects ; at the same time, with characteristic ingenuousness, he explains his own feelings on beholding “things which it is not lawful for a man to utter.”

As sudden lightning dissipates the sight,
 And leaves the eye unable to discern
 The plainest objects,—living light so flash'd
 Around me, and involved me in a veil
 Of such effulgence, that I *ceased to see*.
 “Thus Love, which soothes this heaven, all kindly fits
 The torch to take his flame !”†—These few, brief words

* A mystic dance, most curiously described in the original, in which the celestials are engaged.

† Beatrice addresses this remark to Dante.

Had scarcely reach'd mine ear, when I perceived
 Power from on high diffuse such virtue through me,
 And so rekindle vision, that no flame,
 However pure, could 'scape mine eyes.

I saw

Light, like a river clear as crystal, flowing
 Between two banks with wondrous spring adorn'd ;
 While from the current issued vivid sparks,
 That fell among the flowers on either hand,
 Glitter'd like rubies set in gold, and then,
 As if intoxicate with sweetest odours,
 Replunged themselves into the mystic flood,
 Whence, as one disappear'd, another rose.

"The intense desire that warms and stirs thy thoughts
 To understand what thou beholdest, yields
 More joy to me, the more it urges thee ;
 But ere such noble thirst can be assuaged,
 Behooves thee first to drink of this clear fount."
 The sun that lights mine eyes* thus spake, and added :
 —" Yon stream, those jewels flitting to and fro,
 And all the joyance of these laughing flowers,
 Are shadowy emblems of realities,
 Not dark themselves, but the defect is thine,
 Who hast not yet obtain'd due strength of vision."

Ah ! then, no infant, startled out of sleep,
 Long past his time, springs to the mother's milk
 More eagerly than o'er that stream I bow'd,
 To make more perfect lustres of mine eyes,
 Which, when the fringes of their lids had touch'd it
 Seem'd, from a line, collaps'd into a round.
 —As maskers, when they cast their visors off,
 Appear new persons, stript of such disguise,
 The sparks and flowers assumed sublimer forms,†
 And both the courts of heaven were open'd round me.

* Beatrice.

† They were transfigured from symbols into their spiritual identities ; and, as intimated below, the sparks were the souls of all the saints who had been removed in past ages to the bliss of heaven.

O splendour of the Deity ! by which
The lofty triumph of thy real reign
I saw,—give power to paint it *as* I saw.

There is a light, which renders visible
The Maker to the creature who desires
Felicity in seeing Him alone :
—Though but a ray of uncreated glory,
Sent from the fountain-head of life and power,
It forms a circle, whose circumference
Would be too wide a girdle for the sun :
And, as a cliff in water, from its foot,
Looks down upon its height in that broad mirror,
And seems therein contemplating its beauty,
What verdure clothes, what flowers its flanks adorn,
So, standing round about that sea of glass,
As many souls as earth hath sent to heaven,
Upon ten thousand thrones and more, beheld
Their happy semblances reflected there.

If, round its lowest stem such pomp appear,
What must the full-expanded foliage show
Of that celestial rose ?* and yet my sight,
Through its whole amplitude and elevation,
Gazed unbewilder'd ; yea, at once took in
The measure and the amount of all that joy.

Del Paradiso, canto xxx.

* This refers to a dry conceit, which runs through much of the *Paradiso*, arranging the happy spirits throughout the various heavens, in different forms, such as an eagle, a cross, &c., and here a rose.

THE PORTAL OF HELL.

Awfully contrasted with the foregoing dazzling spectacle, but far more real in its picturesque and imaginable grandeur, is the famous description of the entrance upon the infernal regions.

“THROUGH me, ye go into the doleful city,
Through me, ye go into eternal pain,
Through me, ye go among the lost for ever:
’Twas justice moved my Founder; Power divine,
Infinite Wisdom and primeval Love,
Ordain’d and fix’d me here. Before me naught
That is existed, save eternal things,
And I unto eternity endure;
—Abandon every hope, all ye that enter!”

These words in sombre colours I beheld
Inscribed upon the summit of a portal:
“’Tis a hard sentence, Master!” I exclaim’d;
When he, like one of ready speech, replied:
“Leave all mistrust, all base misgiving here,
We now have reach’d the place of which I told thee,
Where thou shalt see the miserable throngs
Who mourn the loss of intellectual good.”

Then straightway, in his hand enclasping mine,
With brightening countenance that cheer’d my heart,
He led me down among the things of darkness:—
There sighs, and groans, and lamentable wailings,
So rang throughout that region without star,
That on the threshold I began to weep:
Horrible tongues, discordant languages,
Words full of dolour, accents of sharp anger,
Shrill and hoarse voices, sounds of smitten hands,
Rose in wild tumult, eddying through the gloom,
Like sands before the whirlwind of the desert.

Del’ Inferno, canto iii.

ANTEUS.

Dante and Virgil, in the lowest gulf but one, find the ancient giants bound on rocks or wedged in caverns. From one of these they solicit help, namely,—a lift downward into the last abyss, where Lucifer (three-faced, and eternally worrying at each of his mouths, Judas Iscariot, Brutus, and Cassius) is embedded in adamantine ice. The negotiation is conducted with great *finesse* on the part of Virgil, who assails the monster on his weak side, the "*laudum immensa cupido*," unextinguished even there, where "hope never comes;" the poet himself, at the same time, betraying, though from the lips of his guide, that pride of conscious power to praise or give renown, which often and unexpectedly throws a passing glory over his human nature, even when the infirmity of the latter is most frankly confessed.

—We journey'd on, and reach'd Anteus,
 Who stood above the pit's mouth five good ells,
 Besides his head.—"O thou! who in the field
 Of fortune, that made Scipio glory's heir,
 When Hannibal with all his veterans fled,
 Didst catch a hundred lions for thy prey:
 And 'tis believed, that, in their war with heaven,
 Hadst thou been with thy brethren they had triumph'd,
 —*Land us below*—(nay, scowl not thus askance)—
Where cold congeals Cocytus. Force us not
 Aid to implore of Tithyus or of Typhon:
 This man can give thee what ye covet here:
 Bow then, nor grin upon us like a griffin;^{*}
 He yet can make thee famous through the world,
 For he still lives, and counts on length of days,
 If grace remove him not before his time."

So spake my Master, and in haste the giant
 Stretch'd forth the hand, whose gripe cramp'd Hercules,
 To take us up:—when Virgil felt his grasp,
 "Hither," he cried, "come hither, let me hold thee:"
 He caught me, and we both became one burden.
 Then, as the tower of Carisenda seems

* "Torcer lo grifo," an Italian phrase for "to make an ugly face."

Itself in motion, to the eye beneath,
 When a cloud sails above its leaning top ;
 So seem'd Anteus, when I watch'd him bend,
 And wish'd myself elsewhere ; but easily,
 Down in the gulf that gorges Lucifer
 And Judas, he deposited us twain :
 Nor stooping stay'd he, but anon, erect,
 Rose like a ship's mast from the rocking surge.
Del' Inferno, canto xxxi.

CAIN.

If, in the scene with Anteus, the emphasis of silence, and the perspicuity of graphic delineation, are happily exemplified, in the following brief passage the force of mere sounds (where no image or personification is presented to the eye) is made to produce a surprising effect. On one of the sloping mazes of the spiral Hill of Purgatory, the travellers having parted with some agreeable company, which had long engaged them, it is said :—

We knew those friendly spirits heard us going,
 Their silence therefore show'd our path was right :
 Now left alone, proceeding on our journey,
 Like lightning when it rends the region, rush'd
 A voice beside us, lamentably crying,
 "Ah ! every one that findeth me shall slay me !"*
 And then it fled, like thunder that explodes,
 All in a moment, from the riven cloud :
 —Scarce from that sound our ears had truce, when lo !
 Brake forth another, with astounding peal,
 "I am Aglauros who was turn'd to stone."†
 Closer behind the poet's back I cower'd,
 —Then was the air in every quarter still.
Del Purgatorio, canto xiv.

* Genesis iv. 14.

† Ovid. Metam. lib. ii.

FARINATA.

In the tenth canto of the "Inferno," where heretics are described as being tormented in tombs of fire, the lids of which are suspended over them till the day of judgment, Dante finds Farinata D'Uberti, an illustrious commander of the *Ghibellines*, (the adherents of the emperor,) who, at the battle of Monte Aperto, in 1260, had so utterly defeated the *Guelfs* (the Pope's party) of Florence, that the city lay at the mercy of its enemies, by whom counsel was taken to rase it to the ground; but Farinata, because his bowels yearned towards the place of his nativity, stood up alone to oppose the barbarous design; and partly by menace—having drawn his sword in the midst of the assembly—and partly by persuasion, preserved it from destruction. Notwithstanding this patriotic interference, when the Guelfs afterwards regained the ascendancy, he and his kindred were most inveterately proscribed there, and doomed to perpetual exile.

The interview between Dante and this magnanimous foe, in those

"Regions of sorrow, doleful shades, where peace
And rest can never dwell; hope never comes,
That comes to all; but torture without end
Still urges, and a fiery deluge, fed
With ever-burning sulphur unconsumed,"—

(*Paradise Lost*, book i.)

is painted with transcendent power of colouring, and stern, undecorated energy of style. To prepare the reader for well understanding the episode, which abruptly breaks through the order of this high dramatic scene, it is necessary to state that Cavalcante Cavalcanti, whose head appears out of an adjacent sepulchre, was the father of Guido Cavalcanti, a poet, the particular friend of Dante, and chief of the Bianchi party, who were banished during his priorship.

"O TUSCAN! Thou, who, through this realm of fire,
Alive dost walk, thus courteously conversing,
Pause, if it please thee here. Thy dialect
Proclaims thy lineage from that noble land,
Which I perhaps too much have wrong'd."

Such sounds

Suddenly issued forth from one of those
Sepulchral caverns.—Tremblingly I crept
A little nearer to my guide; but he
Cried, "Turn again! what wouldst thou do? Behold
'Tis Farinata, that hath raised himself:
There mayst thou see him, upward from the loins."
—Already had I fix'd mine eyes on his,

Who stood, with bust and visage so erect,
 As though he look'd on hell itself with scorn.
 My Master then, with prompt and resolute hands,
 Thrust me among the charnel-vaults towards him,
 Saying:—"Thy words be plain!" When I had reach'd
 His tombstone-foot, he look'd at me awhile
 As in disdain; then loftily demanded,—
 "Who were thine ancestors?"

—Eager to tell,
 Naught I conceal'd, but utter'd all the truth.
 Arching his brow a little, he return'd,
 "Bitter antagonists of mine, of me,
 And of my party, were thy sires; but twice
 I scatter'd them."

"If scatter'd twice," said I,
 "Once and again they came from all sides back,
 —A lesson, which *thy* friends have not well learn'd."

Just then, a second figure, at his side,
 Emerged to view; unveil'd above the chin,
 And kneeling, as methought.—It look'd around
 So wistfully, as though it hoped to find
 Some other with me; but, that hope dispell'd,
 Weeping it spake:—"If through this dungeon-gloom
 Grandeur of genius guide thy venturous way,
 My son!—Where is he?—and why not with *thee*?"

Then I to him:—"Not of myself I came;
 He who awaits me yonder brought me hither,
 —One whom perhaps thy Guido held in scorn."⁴
 His speech and form of penance had already
 Taught me his name; my words were therefore pointed.
 Upstarting he exclaim'd,—“How?—saidst thou *held*?
 Lives he not then? and doth not heaven's sweet light
 Fall on his eyes?”—when I was slow to answer,
 Backward he sunk and reappear'd no more.

Meanwhile that other most majestic form,
 Near which I stood, neither changed countenance,
 Nor turn'd his neck, nor lean'd to either side:
 "And if," quoth he, our first debate resuming,

“They have not well that lesson learn’d, the thought
 Torments me more than this infernal bed :
 And yet, not fifty times *her* changing face,
 Who here reigns sovereign, shall be re-illumin’d,
 Ere *thou* shalt know how hard that lesson is.*
 —But tell me—so mayst thou return in peace
 To the dear world above !—why are thy people
 In all their acts so mad against my race ?”

“The slaughter and discomfiture,” said I,
 “That turn’d the river red at Mont’ Aperto,
 Have caused such dire proscription in our temples.”
 He shook his head, deep-sighing, and rejoin’d :
 “I was not *there* alone, nor without cause
 Engaged with others ; but I *was* alone,
 And stood in her defence with open brow,
 When all our council, with one voice, decreed,
 That Florence should be rased from her foundation.”

“So may thy kindred find repose, as thou
 Shalt loose a knot which hath entangled me !”
 Thus I adjured him :—“Ye foresee what time
 (If rightly I have learn’d) will bring to pass,
 But to the present, otherwise, are blind.”

“We see, like him that hath an evil eye,
 Far distant things,” said he, “so highest God
 Enlightens us, but yet when they approach,
 Or when they are, our intellect falls short ;
 Nor can we know, save by report from others,
 Aught of the state of man below the sun ;
 Hence mayst thou comprehend, how all our knowledge
 Shall cease for ever from that point, which shuts
 The portal of the future.”

At that moment,
 Compunction smote me for my recent fault,
 And I cried out :—“O tell that fallen one,
 His son is yet among the living :—say,

* He foretells Dante’s own expulsion from his country, within fifty lunar months.

That if I falter'd to reply at first,
 With that assurance, 'twas because my thoughts
 Were harass'd by the doubt which thou hast solved."
Dell' Inferno, canto x.

The reader of these lines (however inferior the translation may be) cannot have failed to perceive by what natural action and speech, the paternal anxiety of Cavalcanti respecting his son is indicated. On his bed of torture he hears a voice which he knows to be that of his son's friend: he starts up, looks eagerly about, as expecting to see his son; but observing the friend only, he at once interrupts the dialogue between Dante and Farinata, and in broken exclamations inquires concerning him. The poet happening to employ the past tense of a verb in reference to what his "Guido" might have done, the miserable parent instantly lays hold of that minute circumstance, as an intimation of his death, and asks hurried questions of which he dreads the answers, precisely in the manner of Macduff, when he learns from the messenger that his wife and children had been murdered by Macbeth. Dante hesitating to reply, Cavalcanti takes the worst for granted, falls back in despair, and appears not again. Thus with him

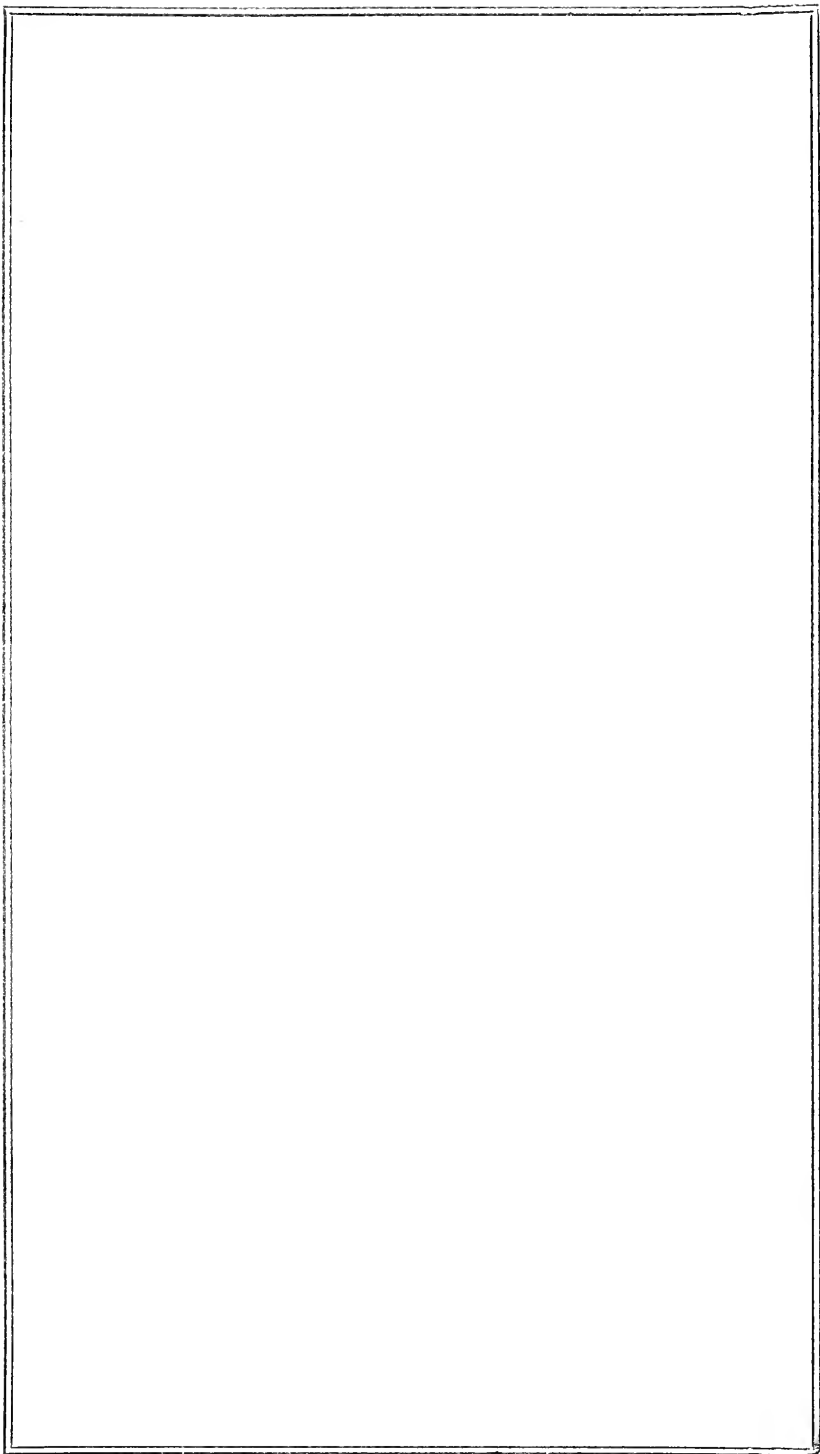
"Even from the tomb the voice of nature cries."

The poet, however, at the close of the scene, unexpectedly recurs to his own fault with the tenderness of compunction and delicacy due to an unfortunate being, whom he had unintentionally agonized by his silence, and sends a message to the old man that his son yet lives. Contrasted with this trembling sensibility of a father's affection, stronger than death, and outfeeling the pains of hell, is the proud, calm, patient dignity of Farinata, who, though wounded to the quick by the sarcastic retort of Dante, at the instant when the discourse was interrupted, stands unmoved in mind, in look, in posture, till the episode is ended; and then, without the slightest allusion to it, he takes up the suspended argument at the last words of his opponent, as though his thoughts had been all the while ruminating on the disgrace of his friends, the afflictions of his family, and the extinguishable enmity of his countrymen against himself. His noble rejoinder, on Dante's reference to the carnage at Monte Aperto, as the cause of his people's implacability, is above all praise. Indeed, it would be difficult to point out in ancient or modern tragedy, a passage of more sublimity or pathos, in which so few words express so much, yet leave more to be imagined by any one who has "a human heart," as the whole of this scene in the original Italian exhibits.

NOTES.

BY

THE REV. RUFUS W. GRISWOLD.



NOTES TO VOL. I.

THE WANDERER OF SWITZERLAND.

Page 53.

¹ More properly the **AVALANCHES**; immense accumulations of ice and snow, balanced on the verge of the mountains in such subtle suspense, that, in the opinion of the natives, the tread of the traveller may bring them down in destruction upon him. The **GLACIERS** are more permanent masses of ice, and formed rather in the valleys than on the summits of the Alps.

Page 56.

² **BRUNNEN**, at the foot of the mountains, on the borders of the lake of **URI**, where the first Swiss Patriots, **WALTER FURST** of **URI**, **WERNER STAUFFACHER** of **SCHWITZ**, and **ARNOLD** of **MELCHTAL** in **UNDERWALDEN**, conspired against the tyranny of Austria in 1307, again, in 1793, became the seat of the Diet of these three forest cantons.

Page 56.

³ On the plains of **MORGARTHEN**, where the Swiss gained their first decisive victory over the force of Austria, and thereby secured the independence of their country; **ALOYS REDING**, at the head of the troops of the little cantons, **URI**, **SCHWITZ**, and **UNDERWALDEN**, repeatedly repulsed the invading army of **FRANCE**.

Page 56.

⁴ By the resistance of these small cantons the French General **SCHAWENBOURG** was compelled to respect their independence, and gave them a solemn pledge to that purport; but no sooner had they disarmed, on the faith of this engagement, than the enemy came suddenly upon them with an immense force; and with threats of extermination compelled them to take the civic oath to the new constitution, imposed upon all Switzerland.

Page 56.

⁵ The inhabitants of the Lower Valley of UNDERWALDEN alone resisted the French message, which required submission to the new constitution, and the immediate surrender, *alive or dead*, of nine of their leaders. When the demand, accompanied by a menace of destruction, was read in the Assembly of the District, all the men of the Valley, fifteen hundred in number, took up arms, and devoted themselves to perish in the ruins of their country.

Page 57.

⁶ At the battle of SEMPACH, the Austrians presented so impenetrable a front with their projected spears, that the Swiss were repeatedly compelled to retire from the attack, till a native of UNDERWALDEN, named ARNOLD DE WINKELRIED, commending his family to his countrymen, sprang upon the enemy, and, burying as many of their spears as he could grasp in his body, made a breach in their line; the Swiss rushed in, and routed the Austrians with a terrible slaughter.

Page 58.

⁷ Many of the UNDERWALDERS, on the approach of the French army, removed their families and cattle among the Higher Alps; and themselves returned to join their brethren, who had encamped in their native Valley, on the borders of the Lake, and awaited the attack of the enemy.

Page 59.

⁸ The French made their first attack on the Valley of UNDERWALDEN from the Lake: but, after a desperate conflict, they were victoriously repelled, and two of their vessels, containing five hundred men, perished in the engagement.

Page 60.

⁹ In the last and decisive battle, the UNDERWALDERS were overpowered by two French armies, which rushed upon them from the opposite mountains, and surrounded their camp, while an assault, at the same time, was made upon them from the Lake.

Page 62.

¹⁰ In this miserable conflict, many of the women and children of the UNDERWALDERS fought in the ranks by their husbands, and fathers, and friends, and fell gloriously for their country.

Page 63.

¹¹ Two hundred self-devoted heroes from the canton of SWITZ arrived, at the close of the battle, to the aid of their brethren of UNDERWALDEN,—and perished to a man, after having slain thrice their number.

Page 63.

¹² The LAVANGES are tremendous torrents of melting snow, that tumble from the tops of the Alps, and deluge all the country before them.

Page 65.

¹³ Mont BLANC; which is so much higher than the surrounding Alps, that it catches and retains the beams of the sun *twenty minutes* earlier and later than they, and, crowned with eternal ice, may be seen from an immense distance, purpling with his eastern light, or crimsoned with his setting glory, while mist and obscurity rest on the mountains below.

Page 72.

¹⁴ The town of STANTZ, and the surrounding villages, were burnt by the French on the night after the battle of UNDERWALDEN, and the beautiful valley was converted into a wilderness.

Page 75.

¹⁵ There is a tradition among the Swiss, that they are descended from the ancient Scandinavians; among whom, in a remote age, there arose so grievous a famine, that it was determined in the Assembly of the Nation, that every tenth man and his family should quit their country, and seek a new possession. Six thousand, chosen by lot, thus emigrated at once from the North. They prayed to God to conduct them to a land like their own, where they might dwell in freedom and quiet, finding food for their families, and pasture for their cattle. God, says the tradition, led them to a valley among the Alps, where they cleared away the forests, built the town of SWITZ, and afterwards peopled and cultivated the cantons of URI and UNDERWALDEN.

THE WEST INDIES.

Page 81.

¹ Mungo Parke, in his travels, ascertained that “the great river of the Negroes” flows *eastward*. It is probable, therefore, that this river is either lost among the sands, or empties itself into some inland sea, in the undiscovered regions of Africa. *See also page 88, line 32.*

Page 83.

² When the author of *The West Indies* conceived the plan of this introduction of Columbus, he was not aware that he was indebted to any preceding poet for a hint on the subject; but, some time afterwards, on a second perusal of SOUTHEY'S *MADOC*, it struck him that the idea of Columbus walking on the shore at sunset, which he had hitherto imagined his own, might be only a reflection of the impression made upon his mind long before, by the first reading of the following splendid passage. He therefore gladly makes this acknowledgment, though at his own expense, in justice to the author of the noblest narrative poem in the English language, after the *FÆRTE QUEENE* and *PARADISE LOST*.

“When evening came toward the echoing shore
 I and Cadwallon walk'd together forth:
 Bright with dilated glory shone the west;
 But brighter lay the ocean flood below,
 The burnish'd silver sea, that heaved and flash'd
 Its restless rays intolerably bright.
 ‘Prince!’ quoth Cadwallon, ‘thou hast rode the waves
 In triumph when the Invader felt thine arm.
 Oh! what a nobler conquest might be won
 There,—upon that wide field!’—‘What meanest thou?’
 I cried:—‘That yonder waters are not spread
 A boundless waste, a bourne impassable;
 That thou shouldst rule the elements,—that there
 Might manly courage, manly wisdom, find
 Some happy isle, some undiscover'd shore,
 Some resting-place for peace. Oh! that my soul
 Could seize the wings of morning! soon would I
 Behold that other world, where yonder sun
 Now speeds to dawn in glory.’”

Page 87.

³ The Cane is said to have been first transplanted from Madeira to the Brazils, by the Portuguese, and afterwards introduced by the Spaniards into the Charibbee Islands.

Page 95.

⁴ The description of African life and manners that follows, and the song of the Negro's daughters, are copied without exaggeration from the authentic accounts of Mungo Park.

Page 102.

⁵ The context preceding and following this line alludes to the old Bohemian and Moravian Brethren, who flourished long before the

Reformation, but afterwards were almost lost among the Protestants, till the beginning of the eighteenth century, when their ancient episcopal church was revived in Lusatia, by some refugees from Moravia.—See Crantz's *Ancient and Modern History of the Brethren*. Histories of the missions of the Brethren in Greenland, North America, and the West Indies, have been published in Germany: those of the two former have been translated into English.—See Crantz's *History of Greenland*, and Loskiel's *History of the Brethren among the Indians in North America*. It is only justice here to observe, that Christians of other denominations have exerted themselves with great success in the conversion of the Negroes. No invidious preference is intended to be given to the Moravians; but, knowing them best, the author particularized this society.

Page 105.

^c The author of this poem confesses himself under many obligations to Mr. Wilberforce's eloquent letter on the Abolition of the Slave Trade, addressed to the Freeholders of Yorkshire, and published in 1807, previous to the decision of the question. Las Casas has been accused of being a *promoter*, if not *the original projector*, of the Negro Slave Trade to the West Indies. The Abbé Gregoire some years ago published a defence of this great and good man against the degrading imputation. The following, among other arguments which he advances, are well worthy of consideration.

The slave trade between Africa and the West Indies commenced, according to Herrera himself, the first and indeed the only accuser of Las Casas, nineteen years before the epoch of his pretended project.

Herrera (from whom other authors have negligently taken the fact for granted, on his bare word) does not quote a single authority in support of his assertion that Las Casas recommended the importation of Negroes into Hispaniola. The charge itself was *first* published thirty-five years after the death of Las Casas. All writers antecedent to Herrera, and contemporary with him, are silent on the subject, although several of these were the avowed enemies of Las Casas. Herrera's veracity on other points is much disputed, and he displays violent prejudices against the man whom he accuses. It may be added, that he was greatly indebted to him for information as an historian of the Indies.

In the numerous writings of Las Casas himself, still extant, there is not one word in favour of slavery of any kind, but they abound with reasoning and invective against it in every shape; and among his eloquent appeals, and comprehensive plans on behalf of the oppressed Indians, there is not a solitary hint in recommendation of the African Slave Trade. He only twice mentions the Negroes through all his

multifarious writings; in one instance he merely names them as living in the islands, (in a manuscript in the National Library at Paris;) and in the same work he proposes *no other* remedy for the miseries of the aboriginal inhabitants, than the suppression of the *repartimientos*, or divisions of the *people*, with the soil on which they were born. In another memorial, after detailing at great length the measures which ought to be pursued for the redress of the Indians, (the proper opportunity, certainly, to advocate the Negro Slave Trade, if he approved of it.) he adds,—“The Indians are not more tormented by their masters and the different public officers, than by their servants *and by the Negroes.*”

The original accusation of Las Casas, translated from the words of Herrera, is as follows:—“The licentiate Bartholomew Las Casas, perceiving that his plans experienced on all sides great difficulties, and that the expectations which he had formed from his connection with the High Chancellor, and the favourable opinion the latter entertained of him, had not produced any effect, projected other expedients, such as, *to procure for the Castilians established in the Indies a cargo of Negroes*, to relieve the Indians in the culture of the earth and the labour of the mines; also to obtain *a great number of working men*, (from Europe,) who should pass over into those regions with certain privileges, and on certain conditions, which he detailed.”

Let this statement be compared with Dr. Robertson's most exaggerated account, avowedly taken *from Herrera* alone, and let every man judge for himself, whether one of the most zealous and indefatigable advocates of freedom that ever existed, “while he contended earnestly for the liberty of the people born in one quarter of the globe, *laboured* to enslave the inhabitants of another region, and, in his zeal to save the Americans from the yoke, pronounced it to be *lawful and expedient* to impose one *still heavier* on the Africans.”—Robertson's *History of America*, Vol. I. Part III. But the circumstance *connected by Dr. Robertson with this supposed scheme* of Las Casas is unwarranted by any authority, and makes his own of no value. He adds—“The plan of Las Casas was adopted. Charles V. granted a patent to one of his Flemish favourites, containing an exclusive right of importing four thousand negroes into America.” Herrera, the only author whom Dr. Robertson pretends to follow, does not, in any place, associate his random charge against Las Casas with this acknowledged and most infamous act. The crime of having first recommended the importation of African slaves into the American islands is attributed, by three writers of the life of Cardinal Ximenes, (who rendered himself illustrious by his opposition to the trade in its infancy,) to *Chièvres*, and by two

others to the *Flemish nobility themselves*, who obtained the monopoly aforementioned, and which was sold to some "Genoese merchants for 25,000 ducats: and they were the first who brought into a regular form that commerce for slaves between Africa and America, which has since been carried on to such an amazing extent."—It is unnecessary to say more on the subject.—A translation of Gregoire's defence of Las Casas was published in 1803, by *H. D. Symonds, Paternoster Row.*

THE WORLD BEFORE THE FLOOD.

Page 194.

¹ This passage, the reader will perceive, is an imitation of some verses in the fourteenth chapter of the Prophecy of Isaiah, which are applied to the fall of the King of Babylon. The following extract from Bishop Lowth's note on the original will elucidate the paraphrase:—"The regions of the Dead are laid open, and Hades is represented as rousing up the shades of the departed monarchs; they rise from their thrones to meet the King of Babylon at his coming; and insult him on his being reduced to the same low state of impotence and dissolution with themselves. * * * * * The image of the state of the Dead, or the *Infernum Poeticum* of the Hebrews, is taken from their custom of burying, those at least of the highest rank, in large sepulchral vaults hewn in the rock. Of this kind of sepulchres there are remains at Jerusalem now extant; and some that are said to be the sepulchres of the kings of Judah. See Maundrell, p. 76. You are to form to yourself the idea of an immense subterraneous vault, a vast gloomy cavern, all round the sides of which there are cells to receive the dead bodies: here the deceased monarchs lie in a distinguished sort of state, suitable to their former rank, each on his own couch, with his arms beside him, his sword at his head, and the bodies of his chiefs and companions around him. * * * * * These illustrious shades rise at once from their couches, as from their thrones; and advance to the entrance of the cavern to meet the King of Babylon, and to receive him with insults on his fall."—LOWTH'S *Isaiah*, xiv. 9, *et seq.*

GREENLAND.

Page 209.

¹ John Amos Comenius, one of the most learned as well as pious men of his age, was minister of the Brethren's congregation at Fulneck,

in Moravia, from 1618 to 1627, when, the Protestant nobility and clergy being expatriated, he fled with a part of his people through Silesia into Poland. On the summit of the mountains forming the boundary, he turned his sorrowful eyes towards Bohemia and Moravia, and kneeling down with his brethren there, implored God, with many tears, that he would not take away the light of his holy word from those two provinces, but preserve in them a remnant for himself. A remnant *was* saved.

Page 239.

² Spenser introduces Prince Arthur as traversing the world in search of his mistress Gloriana, whom he had only seen in a dream. The discovery of a region in the west, by the Greenland Norwegians, about the year 1000, and intercourse maintained with it for 120 years afterwards, may be considered as the most curious fact or fable connected with the history of these colonists. The reason why it was called *Wineland* is given in the sequel.

Page 243.

³ The incidents alluded to in this clause are presumed to have occasioned the extinction of the Norwegian colonists on the western coast of Greenland. Crantz says, that there is a district on Ball's river, called *Pissiksarbik*, or the *place of arrows*; where it is believed, that the *Skraellings* and Norwegians fought a battle, in which the latter were defeated. The modern Greenlanders affirm, that the name is derived from the circumstance of the parties having shot their arrows at one another from opposite banks of the stream. Many *rudera*, or ruins of ancient buildings, principally supposed to have been churches, are found along the coast from Disco Bay to Cape Farewell.

Page 252.

⁴ The principal phenomena described in this disruption of so immense a breadth of ice, are introduced on the authority of an authentic narrative of a journey on sledges along the coast of Labrador, by two Moravian missionaries and a number of Esquimaux, in the year 1782. The first incident in this canto, the destruction of the snow house, is partly borrowed from the same record.

Page 253.

⁵ The ice-bergs, both fixed and floating, present the most fantastic and magnificent forms, which an active imagination may easily convert into landscape scenery. Crantz says, that some of these look like

churches, with pillars, arches, portals, and illuminated windows; others like castles, with square and spiral turrets. A third class assumes the appearance of ships in full sail, to which pilots have occasionally gone out, for the purpose of conducting them into harbour; many again resemble large islands, with hill and dale, as well as villages, and even cities, built upon the margin of the sea. Two of these stood for many years in Disco Bay, which the Dutch whalers called Amsterdam and Haarlem.

Page 254.

⁶ Greenland has been supplied with fuel, from time immemorial, brought by the tide from the northern shores of Asia, and other regions, probably even from California, and the coast of America towards Behring's Straits. This annual provision, however, has gradually been decreasing for some years past [being partly intercepted by the accumulation of ice] on the shores of *modern* Greenland, towards Davis's Straits. Should it fail altogether, that country [like the east] must become uninhabitable; as the natives themselves employ wood in the construction of their houses, their boats, and their implements of fishing, hunting, and shooting, and could not find any adequate substitute for it at home.

Page 258.

⁷ The depopulation of Old Greenland is supposed to have been greatly accelerated by the introduction of the plague, which, under the name of the *Black Death*, made dreadful havoc throughout Europe towards the close of the fourteenth century.

Page 259.

⁸ The Danish Chronicle says, that the Greenland colonists were tributary to the kings of Norway from the year 1023; soon after which they embraced Christianity. In its more flourishing period this province is stated to have been divided into a hundred parishes, under the superintendence of a bishop. From 1120 to 1408 the succession of seventeen bishops is recorded. In the last-mentioned year, Andrew, ordained bishop of Greenland by Askill, archbishop of Drontheim, sailed for his diocese, but whether he arrived there, or was cast away, was never known. To his imagined fate this episode alludes.

TRANSLATIONS.

Page 375.

¹ The simple and sublime original of these stanzas, with the fine air by Hümml, became the national song of Germany, and was sung

by the soldiers especially, during the latter campaigns of the war, when Bonaparte was twice dethroned, and Europe finally delivered from French predominance.

Page 380.

² This miserable culprit had been a metallurgist of Brescia, who, at the instance of Guido, Alessandro, and Aginulpho, three nobles of Romagna, counterfeited the gold florin of Tuscany, which bore the impress of the Baptist's head.—Branda is a beautiful fountain at Siena.

Page 382.

³ The same comparison is used on another like occasion, with a singular though minute variation.

And as an arrow hits the mark, before
The cord hath ceased to tremble on the bow,
Thus had we reach'd the second region.

Del Paradiso, canto v.

Page 390.

⁴ Alluding, it is supposed, to the fact that Guido had forsaken poetry for philosophy, or preferred the latter so much to the former, as to think lightly of Virgil himself in comparison with Aristotle.

THE LIFE OF
JAMES MONROE

BY
JAMES M. SMITH
VOL. I



*On the coast where he was embarked
I visited the strait, a whale among the rocks
D. Wilson Skon.*

