

ORIENTAL SCENES,
DRAMATIC SKETCHES AND TALES,

WITH

Other Poems.

By EMMA ROBERTS,

AUTHOR OF MEMOIRS OF THE RIVAL HOUSES OF YORK
AND LANCASTER—CONRAD, A TRAGEDY—THE
KINSMEN OF NAPLES, A TRAGEDY, &c. &c. &c.

*M. P. Dickson & Co. in the
month of December 1830*

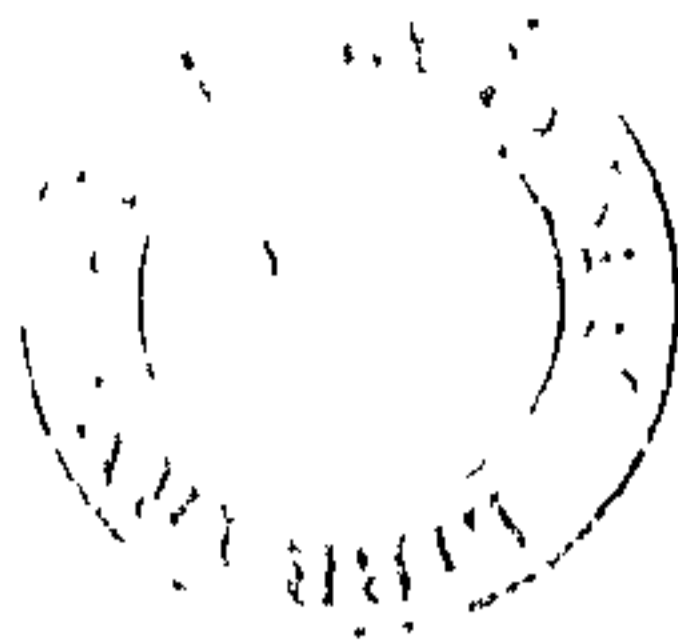
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TO THE RIGHT HONORABLE

LADY WILLIAM BENTINCK.

MADAM,

With very sincere gratitude I avail myself of the permission so kindly granted to inscribe the accompanying volume of Poems to your name. It is, I believe, the first production of the kind, emanating from a female pen, which has issued from the Calcutta Press. May I venture to hail its appearance under your patronage, as an auspicious omen of the advancement of literature in the East? Recommended by the sanction of a Lady eminently distinguished for the accomplishments and virtues which add lustre to noble birth, it will, I hope, stimulate my country women in India to cultivate those intellectual pursuits which have

raised so many female writers to eminence at home: and should the perusal of “The Oriental Sketches” incite more gifted pens to the illustration of the scenery of this sunny land, I shall feel highly gratified in having pointed out a mine of rich materials to their notice. I am most happy in the opportunity afforded me to offer a tribute of gratitude, however faint, to a country wherein I have found so kind a welcome; and I entertain a pleasing hope that the volume which your Ladyship has honoured by an approval, will be acceptable to all who possess congenial minds.

I have the honour to remain,

Your Ladyship’s,

Most obedient Servant,

EMMA ROBERTS.

Agra, April 20th, 1830.

ADVERTISEMENT.

IN giving this little volume to the public, the author has a very pleasing task to fulfil in the assurance of the vivid sense she entertains of the honour conferred upon her by the patronage which has ushered her poems into the world, in a manner at once so brilliant and so flattering. For the support which she has met with in the Upper Provinces (which have added upwards of three hundred names to the accompanying list of subscribers) she feels most deeply indebted; the success is unparalleled in the annals of Oriental Literature, and demands her warmest thanks.

The author feels very proud of the welcome which her book has received in a land where she expected to find strangers, but where she has met with so many persons of taste and talent by whom the former productions of her

pen were not unknown nor unprized ; and most gladly avails herself of so suitable an occasion for the expression of her gratitude to all those friends whose warm and zealous support has ensured the success of her present work.

There is however one person to whom more particular acknowledgments are due, and she with great pleasure mentions her obligations to Mr. H. L. V. DEROZIO, to whose invaluable assistance she is indebted for the superintendance of her volume through the Press ;—a task which the distance of her residence from Calcutta precluded her from performing, and which none save a poet could have executed so ably. The author must ever deem herself fortunate in procuring for so important an undertaking the aid of a gentleman whose well-earned reputation confers honour upon the pages which have experienced his guarding care from those typographical errors which they could not otherwise have escaped.

Agra, April 20th, 1830.

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ORIENTAL SCENES.

A SCENE IN THE DOAAB.

In tangled depths the jungles spread
 Around the solitary scene,
The lurking panther's sullen tread
 Marks the wild paths of the raven;

Here too the fierce hyena prowls,
 Haunting the dark *Jheel's* broad lagoon,
And here, at eve, the wolf-ub howls,
 And famished jackals bay the moon.

Its scorching breath the hot wind pours
 Along the mid-waste; and loud,
The storm-fiend of the desert roars,
 When bursts the sable thunder-cloud,

A crumbling mosque—a ruined fort—
 Hastening alike to swift decay,
 Where owls and vampire bats resort,
 And vultures hide them from the day,

Alone remain to tell the tale
 Of Moslem power, and Moslem pride,
 When shouts of conquest filled the gale
 And swords in native blood were dyed.

They sleep—the slayer and the slain—
 A lowly grave the victor shares
 With the weak slave who wore the chain
 None save a craven spirit wears.

Yet had the deeds which they have done
 Lived in the poet's deathless song,
 These nameless *spahis* would have won
 All that to valour's hopes belong.

They brought their faith from distant lands,
 They reared the Moslem badge on high,
 And swept away with reeking brands
 The reliques of idolatry.

Where'er they spread their prophet's creed
 The guilty rites of Brahma fled;
 No longer shrinking victims bleed,
 Nor sleeps the living with the dead.

The frantic shrieks of widowed brides
 From burning piles resound no more,
 Nor Ganges' desecrated tides
 Bear human offerings from its shore.

Their wreaths have faded—lizards bask
 Upon the marble pavement, where,
 'Twas erst the dark-eyed beauty's task
 To crown with flowers her raven hair.

Unheeded now the scorpion crawls,
 And snakes unscathed in silence glide,
 Where once the bright *Zenana's* halls
 To woman's feet were sanctified.

No trace remains of those gay hours
 When lamps, in golden radiance bright,
 Streamed o'er these now deserted towers
 The sunshine of their perfumed light.

The maiden's song, the anklet's bells
 So sweetly ringing o'er the floor,
 And eyes as soft as the gazelle's
 Are heard, and seen, and felt no more.

Now all is silent; the wild cry
 Of savage beasts alone is heard,
 Or wrathful tempest hurrying by,
 Or moanings of some desert bird.

THE BRAMIN.

'Tis a lovely solitude—the cliff,
 Rich with embowering trees, and garlanded
 With mantling creepers, towers above the skiff
 Meored where the Gange's sacred waters spread
 Their wastes below—and crowning that green height
 In graceful beauty, with its marble dome,
 An I terraced stair; descending flight by flight,
 Appears the holy Bramin's gorgeous loam—
 His temple, and his dwelling place— and there
 He ponders o'er the *Vedas* day by day,
 Passing the silent hours in lonely prayer,
 Or shading from the sun's too fervent ray
 The flowers he tends to deck the holy shrine,
 Or strew the bright pagoda's granite floor;
 And while his skilful hands the chap'ets twine,
 His thoughts above the world's dark confines soar.
 At eve he trims the lamp, the Beacon light
 That beams within the *Mhat's* rich sculptured cell,
 And when the stars announce approaching night,
 With silvery sound awakes the vesper bell.

The Bramin's meals are frugal—some fair tree
 Yields him its fruitage, and the precious grain
 Springing around in rich fertility,
 The few and simple wants of life sustain.
 A scanty mat upon the pavement spread
 Before the temple's threshold, where the sky
 Above the tranquil sleeper's humble bed
 Has flung its star-enameled canopy,
 Suffices for his resting place—his dress
 Betrays not splendour's pomp, nor priestly pride
 Careless, and free from aught of costliness,
 The triple thread across the shoulder tied,
 Around the waist the muslin's ample fold
 Reaching with graceful flow below the knee,
 The snow-white turban round the temples rolled
 Complete the unpretending drapery.
 He asks nor gold nor gems—to him the lore
 The *Shaster's* venerated page affords,
 Is dearer far than all the glittering store
 That worldly men have purchased with their sword

Yet is he wealthy—the pomegranate droops
 Its ruby blossoms to his gathering hand,
 Its richly loaded bough the mango stoops,
 And sheds its living gold at his command,
 While sweeping round him are a gorgeous train,
 Herons, and peacocks, doves, and paroquets;
 The bulbul breathes to him its sweetest strain,
 And pigeons nestle on the minarets,
 While his peculiar care, the mournful bird,
 Who when the sun has left the river's breast,
 With restless wing and wailing cry is heard,
 Calling his mate to her deserted nest,
 With the bright tribe around him lives unharmed;
 There too the moping ape securely dwells,
 For the pagoda's dome-crowned height is charmed,
 And prayers are potent as magicians' spells.
 The Moosulman the Bramin's law reveres,
 Nor dyes his weapon in forbidden blood,
 And even the Christian, from his sport forbears,
 Within the precincts of the sacred wood.

Courteous to all—the stranger from the west,
 Who moors his budgerow on the strand beneath,
 Is welcomed as the Bramin's honoured guest,
 And for his hands are twined the brightest wreath.
 Oh! who that has approached that holy fane
 Can pass unheeding from the blessed spot,
 Where peace, and hope, and sweet contentment reign,
Nor sigh with envy at the Bramin's lot,
 Who purified and free from worldly care,
 In sacred duties all his life employs,
 And in earth's sorrows bearing little share,
 The dearest, brightest bliss of Heaven enjoys?

THE TAAJE MAHAL.

Empress of beauty! must those eyes of light,
 Stars of my soul, that o'er life's paths have thrown
 Rays than the sun's beams more serenely bright,
 Be quenched in darkness; has their lustre flown
 For ever; and the vermeil of thy lips
 Sustained a last, immutable eclipse?

Oh! thou wert far more beautiful than those
 Fair forms of genii by poets sung,
 More blooming than thine own Cashmerian rose,
 O'er thy soft cheek a crimson tint was flung,
 Like morn's first flushes, or the blush that dyes
 The glowing sun-sets of our eastern skies.

Fair as thou wert, thy beauty's light was dim
 To the more holy radiance of thine heart,
 For thou wert pure as heaven-born seraphim,
 Thou wert my blessed one—thou art, thou art—
 Still dost thou live and breathe, and I may strain,
 Thy form in rapture to my breast again.

It may not be—the faint, the trembling pulse,
 So like the flutterings of a wounded bird,
 The painful throes which those pale lips convulse,
 The sighs, like rose leaves in the night breeze stirred,
 Tell me thy doom—and I—I see my fate—
 Queen of my soul, thou leavest me desolate.

Oh! could the treasures of the world restore
 Thy fading health, beloved one,—Shah Jehan
 Countless as yon bright river's sands would pour
 The pearls, and gems, and gold of Hindoostan,
 And yield his empire o'er the world to be
 Master of one poor straw-thatched hut—with thee.

But since, nor gems, nor pearls, nor gold can save
 My peerless beauty, nor my fervent prayer
 Avail to snatch thee from an envious grave,
 Since Heaven relents not to my deep despair,
 And we—(be still, be still my throbbing heart!)
 We, my life's dearest solace, we must part;

As thy surpassing loveliness has shone
 Transcendant over all of mortal birth,
 As thy surpassing excellence has won
 The tribute homage of admiring earth,
 So the world's wonder, even as thou, divine,
 Queen of my soul! shall be thy matchless shrine.

And there in rich and radiant pomp supreme,
 Within the circle of each ample dome,
 The gems of every Indian mine shall gleam,
 And Art's most gifted sons from Greece and Rome
 The splendid fabric rear, whose gorgeous fanes
 Hide from these weeping eyes thy loved remains.

And pilgrims there from many a distant clime
 Pacing with wondering steps the marble halls,
 Shall as they gaze upon the work sublime,
 The sculptured splendours of the storied walls,
 Dream of thy beauty, and instinctive pay
 The heart's deep homage to thy sainted clay.

A hundred years have winged their flight
 O'er princely Agra's lofty towers,
 A hundred years of sunshine bright
 Have revelled through its summer bowers—
 Those circling suns have seen the ray
 Of Moslem glory fade away,
 And where the crescent reared on high
 Its badge of golden blazonry,
 And turbaned monarchs proudly gave
 Their laws to each obedient slave,
 The warriors of the western world
 The red cross banner have unfurled,
 Mingled with mosques and minarets,
 O'er Christian spires the sun's beam sets,
 And strangers from a foreign strand
 Rule unopposed the conquered land,
 Yet still where Jumna's chrystal tide
 In many a breeze-curl'd wave meanders,
 And where its sparkling currents glide
 Through clustering tufts of Oleanders,

Where yonder stately garden shews
 The crimson beauty of the rose,
 The glittering *bambool* drops its gold,
 And *baylas* perfumed buds unfold
 Their crests of snow, o'er the pink bed
 With the broad lotus thickly spread.
 Untouched by time, unscathed by war
 Lonely and bright as eve's first star,
 The splendid mausoleum greets

The stranger's rapt and dazzled eye,
 And to his throbbing heart repeats
 A tale of love's idolatry.

Of precious marbles richly blent
 Shines the imperial monument;
 A gorgeous fabric spreading wide

Its glittering pomp of colonnades,
 Fit palace for the peerless bride
 Reposing in its hallowed shades.

Too beautiful for mortal hands,
 Its clustering cupolas and towers

Seem the bright work of fairy wands,
 And fashioned out of pearls and flowers.
 And as o'er these fair spires and domes
 The stranger's eye enchanted roams,
 Lost in delight, he almost deems
 That wrought by some fantastic spell,
 'Twill vanish like his summer dreams,
 Or cloud-encircled citadel,
 Floating along the moon-lit sky,
 In evanescent pageantry.

Beside the alabaster tomb
 All richly wreathed with glittering gems,
 And shining like the jewelled plume
 O'er eastern monarch's diadems,
 Fond lovers kneel—and as they gaze
 Upon each ingot's brilliant blaze,
 The bright mosaic of the floor
 Where many coloured agates vie
 With onyx thickly scattered o'er
 Turquoise, and lapis lazuli ;

They dash away the rising tear,
They fear no change nor falsehood here.

Oh! every flower-embellished gem

Is worth a mine of gold to them;

It tells of love divinely pure---

 The record that a monarch gave,

That strong affection may endure

 In human hearts beyond the grave.

THE DYING HINDOO.

He lies beside the sacred river,
His heart has lost life's ruddy glow,
His sighs are faint, his pulses quiver,
And death's chill damps are on his brow.

Within yon green and howerly glade
Whose path the smile of sunshine wears,
Beneath the lofty palm tree's shade
His loved though lowly hut appears.

And near him well known sounds arise
With joyous songs and laughter fraught,
And now his glazed and languid eyes
Are turned towards the village-ghaut.

There all is cheerful, as of yore,
When with the sun's declining beam
He too had sought the Ganges' shore,
And bathed within its hallowed stream.

In crowds his early friends repair
 To the *chabouta*'s esplanade,
 Her graceful *ghurrah* filling there,
 Stoops to the brink his dark-eyed maid.

They heed him not — no fond farewells
 Attest their grief, no tears are shed,
 No sigh the heart's deep anguish tells;
 He to the living world is dead.

One pang has shot across his breast—
 One human pang—but it is gone,
 And tranquilly he sinks to rest,
 As the eternal wave flows on.

His eye the blushing wreath has caught
 Which floats along the sacred wave,
 And to his parting soul has brought
 Hopes of bright lands beyond the grave.

Soon shall the form o'er that pure tide
Which now to earth so fondly clings,
Freed from each grovelling trammel glide,
And mingle with its holy springs.

The red crown of the lotus wreath
Upon the molten silver blushes,
And a dark, lifeless form beneath
With the stream's headlong current rushes.

The coise, the flower are seen no more,
For ever lost in you bright river,
The echoes of the lonely shore
In mournful tones repeat—for ever!

THE NORTH-WESTER.

Evening approaches, and the tropic sun
 The western arch of ruddy heaven has won,
 And yielding to the balmy close of day,
 Its scorching heat, its most oppressive ray,
 Now mid ten thousand swiftly fading dyes
 Looks smiling down from yonder roseate skies.
 How beautiful, how placid, fair, and bright,
 The gorgeous scene that greets its parting light!
 The stately river's calm and waveless tide
 In its deep slumber scarce is seen to glide;
 So tranquil is the stream, the lotus crown
 By some fond maid, or anxious lover thrown—
 A bark of hope—unstirred upon its breast
 In lingering tenderness appears to rest;
 The idle *golier* from his flower-wreathed prow
 With careless eye surveys the flood below;
 And all the hundred oars that proudly sweep
 The polished surface of the glassy deep,
 Mocked by the lazy currents, vainly seek
 To urge their shallops round yon woody creek.

Its marble wings up springing from the shade,
 By the dark *peepul's* glossy foliage made,
 The waving *niem*, the willow-like bamboo,
 And shrubs of fragrant scent and brilliant hue,
 The Nazim's regal palace proudly gleams
 In pearl-like splendour in the evening beams;
 While each surrounding crag and sun-kissed slope
 Crowned with the bright luxuriant *mango* top,
 Each vagrant creeper with its starry wreath,
 Are softly mirrored in the stream beneath.

Where'er the wandering eyes delighted roam
 From groves embowering peeps the graceful dome
 Of some small mosque, or holy Brahmī's cell,
 Where the lamp glances, and the silvery bell
 Makes gentle music in the balmy air;
 No other sounds the listening echoes bear
 On this calm eve, save snatches of sweet song
 Which rise at intervals from yonder throng
 Assembled on the terraced ghaut, and fling
 O'er Ganges' wave each flowery offering.

Sudden the fierce north-west breaks loose—and while
 Half the bright landscape still is seen to smile,
 The sultry air grows thick, the skies are dark,
 The river swells, and now the struggling bark
 Along the rushing wave is wildly driven,
 And thunder bursts from every gate of heaven;
 O'er tower and palace, hut, and holy fane
 In frantic madness sweeps the hurricane;
 And trees uprooted strew the earth; and air
 Is filled with yells, and shrieks of wild despair.

The sun sinks down in splendour to the west,
 The skies are in their richest colours drest;
 And where a blackened wreck was seen to float,
 A lamp within the palm nut's fragile boat
 Glides tranquilly—the stars shine forth—the vale
 Is vocal with the Bulbul's sweetest tale;
 The air is gowned with fire-flies; and the breeze
 Is filled with perfume from the lemon trees:
 The storm has passed—and now the sparkling river
 Runs calm, and smooth, and beautiful as ever.

Moorshedabad, Aug. 1828.

THE RAJAI'S OBSEQUIES.

A fairer scene to spell-bound eyes
The smiling earth could scarce unfold—
There's not a cloud o'er those blue skies;
And from its founts of living gold
The sun pours down a flood of light
Upon the river's sparkling wave,
Where the swift current speeds its flight,
Or lingers wooingly to lave
Some bright pagoda's jutting walls,
Or ripples on in gentle falls,
Where all of shining granite wrought
Spreads the broad terrace of the ghaut.
And there majestic banians fling
Their green luxuriance beside
The lofty minarets that spring
With upward flight in towering pride;
As though to their bold spires 'twere given
To pierce the azure vaults of heaven.

The boast of India's sunny land
 Mid fertile plains and waving woods,
 In shining pomp sublimely grand,
 Where Ganges spreads its sacred floods—
 The holy city's temples glow
 Reflected in the stream below,
 A mass of cupolas and towers,
 Arches, and pillared colonnades,
 And flat-roofed palaces, where flowers
 Are clustering round the balustrades,
 And there from the Zenana's halls,
 Stealing when eve reveals its stars,
 The dark-eyed maids hold festivals,
 And listen to the soft sitars,
 Hymning those sweet and gentle themes
 Which young hearts picture in their dreams.
 Oh bright, Benares! are thy domes,
 And beautiful thy sacred groves,
 Where ring-doves make their blissful homes
 And the white bull unfettered roves;

Where with his frugal meal content,
 And hands of slaughter innocent,
 Milk, and some vegetable root,
 The golden *dal*, the silvery rice,
 The plantain's, or the mango's fruit,
 The Hindoo's simple wants suffice.
 Oh! who that sees the meanest thing
 Endued with life, the Bramin's care,
 Can fancy human suffering,
 And human sacrifices, where
 'Twould be a crime to crush the snake
 That sheds its venom o'er the brake?
 Yet here the river's crystal flood
 With living victims is prophaned,
 And here with streams of human blood
 The temple's reeking courts are stained,
 While blackening o'er the fair blue skies
 The smoke's polluted volumes rise,
 From those impure, unhallowed fires,
 Where by a living corpse's side,
 In fierce and torturing pangs expires,
 Untimely doomed, the shrinking bride.

The *ghurrees* chime the evening hour,
 O'er the red west the sun-beam glances,
 And from each arch-way, gate, and tower,
 In countless groups a croud advances.
 While upon every pinnacle,
 Or temple's roof, or pillared screen,
 Each tower-embastioned citadel,
 To gaze upon the passing scene
 The people throng, like clustering bees
 Swarming around the almond trees,
 And all the baths and the bazars
 With many coloured cloths are hung,
 And flowers as bright as shooting stars
 Are from the high verandahs flung;
 While slowly through the crowding throng
 Which from the streets and temples pour,
 A stately pageant moves along,
 And winds its way to Ganges' shore.

Their silver maces waving high,
 The *Chobedar* band in front appear;
 And all around with shout and cry,
 Tulwar, and scimitar, and spear,
Peons and *Chuprassies* clear the way,
 Swelling the pomp and the parade,
 Where shining in their bright array,
 In files a glittering cavalcade
 Of mounted nobles lead the van,
 The flower and boast of Hindoostan.
 Their chargers' tails of scarlet dye,
 Their silver housings ringing clear,
 Flash on the gazer's dazzled eye,
 And strike in music on his ear.
 Behind them in more humble guise,
 Proud only of the triple thread,
Gracing the Rajah's obsequies,
 The Bramins pace with solemn tread.
 And next in mournful pageantry
 All guarded by a troop of horse,

Beneath a gilded canopy,

Appears the fast decaying corpse,

And there the sultry air is stirred

With silver handled *Chowries* wrought

With the rich plume of some rare bird,

Or those more precious cow-tails brought

From glad Kathay's far distant wall,

Or the steep hills of the Nepaul.

Behind, a thick promiscuous troop

Of veiled and turbated heads is seen,

And in the centre of the group,

Each in an open palanquin

The Rajah's wives are borne—a pair

Of brighter forms have never blest

The eye of man— both are so fair,

None can say which is loveliest—

She who so stately and so proud

With lofty mien and eyes of light,

Receives the homage of the croud

As though it were her beauty's right ;
 Or the sweet trembler by her side
 Shrinking abashed with modest grace,
 And striving all in vain to hide
 The blush upon her unveiled face,
 Their muslin robes are wrought with gold,
 The *Syah's* hem beset with spangles,
 And bright the *Ornee's* shining fold,
 And richly gemmed the glittering *Bangles*.
 Benares' far-famed webs have vied
 With Persia's rarest, finest loom ;
 And for the last time each fair bride
 Has gazed upon her beauty's bloom
 In fitting pomp arrayed—too soon
 Their fleet career of life must fly ;
 Ere they have reached their summer's noon,
 This lovely pair are doomed to die—
 Each soft chime from their anklets' bells
 Is ringing out their funeral knells.

The air is musical with song,
 And lotus wreaths are strowed around,
The deep toned *dhole*, and brazen gong,
 With *cittaras* and with flutes resound.
Perfumes are burning all the while ;
 And they have reached the Ganges flood,
And heaped upon the funeral pile
 Cedar, and rose, and sandal wood.
The last red kisses of the sun
 Are blushing on the river's breast,
And from his amaranthine throne
 The flaming orb sinks down to rest.
And all is now accomplished—save
 The final and the dismal rite,
Which on the brink of that clear wave
 Must be performed, ere the pink light
With all its rainbow coloured dyes
Has faded from the sapphire skies.

First from her maiden's circling arms
 The youngest (and perchance the bride
 Preferred for her retiring charms)
 Has lightly sprung, and flung aside
 Her ornaments—and those rich pearls,
 The diamonds, and the ruby studs,
 She showers among the weeping girls
 Blithely, as when her garden's buds
 She scattered in those blissful hours,
 When life itself seemed made of flowers.
 The croud is hushed to silence—now
 Her spirit soars on bird-like wings,
 A slight flush lights her gentle brow,
 And with a voice divine she sings.

I love, I love my native vales!
 The sighing of their perfumed gales
 To me is sweet, and sweeter still
 The music of the bubbling rill,

*Few are my years, but they have fled
 In joy and sunshine o'er my head,
 Happy my transient life has been,
 And happier still life's closing scene.*

*Lord of my soul! I yield my breath
 To snatch thee from the chains of death;
 I claim the privilege divine,
 Which makes thee more than ever mine!*

*Yes, to my thrice blessed hands 'tis given,
 To ope the saffron gates of heaven;
 I bring beloved a boon to thee,
 A pure and bright eternity.*

*Yon dazzling orb has golden courts,
 And there the heaven-born loopy sports,
 And thou with spirits blessed shalt dwell
 Mid fragrant fields of asphodel.*

My soul shall pass to happy things,
 With dainty plumes and glittering wings;
 A Peri bird, I'll build my nest
 On the *chumayla's* odorous breast.

And that sweet state of being o'er,
 Beside the Ganges' much loved shore
 I'll spread my shining fins, and glide
 A spark of silver on the tide.

The second transmigration past,
 I'll reach my brightest, and my last—
 Shoot with my fire-fly lamp on high,
 A star along the summer sky.

Then to the palace gleaming bright,
 Turquoise, and pearl, and chrysolite,
 My heavenly home ascend, and stray
 For ever through the realms of day.

She ceased; and round the funeral pile
 The seven-fold circuit she has made,
 And with a sweet seraphic smile

She gently droops her radiant head
 Beside the ghastly corse—so calm,
 So saint-like are those placid eyes,
 So softly breathes the lip's rich balm,
 So faint and indistinct her sighs,
 In some blest trance she seems to be,
 Or day's delicious reverie.

Darting a scornful glance on all,
 And flinging down with conscious pride
 (As if her limbs disdained their thrall)

Her costly gems—the elder bride,
 Like an offended goddess stands,
 With glowing cheeks, and flashing eyes,
 And clasping both her out-stretched hands,
 Revolting at the sacrifice—

Her troubled spirit nearly wrought
 To madness, finds relief in song,
 And with her heart's deep anguish fraught
 The lay indignant bursts along.

“ Think not, accursed priests, that I will lend
 “ *My sanction to these most unholy rites;*
 “ And though yon funeral pile I may ascend,
 “ It is not that your stern command affrights
 “ My lofty soul—it is because these hands
 “ Are all too weak to break my sex's bands.

“ I, from my earliest infancy, have bowed
 “ A helpless slave to lordly man's controul,
 “ No hope of liberty, no choice allowed,
 “ *Unheeded all the struggles of my soul;*
 “ Compelled by brutal force to link my fate
 “ With one who best deserved my scorn and hate

“ Oh! better far it is to mount you pile,
 “ And stretch my shuddering form beside the dead,
 “ Than with a torturing effort strive to smile,
 “ And hide the bitter tears in silence shed—
 “ That state of loathed existence now is o’er,
 “ And I shall shrink from his embrace no more.

“ The tyrant sleeps death’s last and endless sleep,
 “ Yet does his power beyond the grave extend,
 “ And I this most unholy law must keep,
 “ And to the priest’s unrighteous mandate bend;
 “ Or live an outcast—left of queenly state—
 “ A beggar lost, despised, and desolate.

“ Daughter and heiress of a princely line,
 “ From my proud birth-right I disdain to stoop;
 “ Better it is to *die*, than inly pine,
 “ And feel the soul, the towering spirit, droop
 “ Beneath the cruel toil, the years of pain,
 “ The lost, degraded widow must sustain.

“ But could these weak arms wield a soldier’s brand,
 “ *Could these too fragile limbs sustain the fight,*
 “ Even to the death, Mitala would withstand
 “ *This cruel custom, and uphold the right*
 “ Of woman to her share of gold and gems,
 “ Sceptres and sway, and regal diadems.

“ Oh! is there none—not one amid the throng
 “ *Pressing to view a deed by Heaven abhorred,*
 “ *Whose brave heart, burning to avenge the wrong,*
 “ *Will, at my adjuration draw the sword,*
 “ *And god-like in an injured woman’s cause*
 “ *Crush at a blow foul superstition’s laws?*

“ *Silent and moveless all!—Oh craven race*
 “ *Not long shall this fair land endure your sway;*
 “ *Shame and defeat, and capture and disgrace*
 “ *Await the closing of a blood-stained day:*
 “ *I see, I see the thickly gathering bands*
 “ *Crouding in conquering ranks from distant lands!*

“ The Persian Satrap, and the Tartar Khan
 “ The temples of your gods shall overthrow,
 “ And all the hundred thrones of Hindostan
 “ Before the west’s pale warriors shall bow,
 “ Crouching where’er the banners of the brave
 “ The silver crescent, and the red cross wave !”

Her song has ceased—but that bright eye
 Still with prophetic frenzy glares,
 And struggling with her agony
 Dries with its fires the springing tears.
 She waves away the Bramin band
 And mounts the funeral pile alone ;
 And the *Mussaul’s* enkindling brand
 Is on the heaped-up fagots thrown—
 One long wild shriek, amid the crash
 Of gongs and drums and cymbals, drowned—
 One burst of flame, a ruddy flash
 Gilding the green hill’s distant mound—

One smoky column, whose dark veil
Obscures the fast declining sun—
A cloud of ashes on the gale—
And these unhallowed rites are done!

NIGHT ON THE GANGES.

How calm, how lovely is the soft repose
 Of nature sleeping in the summer night;
 How sweet, how lullingly the current flows
 Beneath the stream of melted chrysolite,
 Where Ganges spreads its floods,—reflecting o'er
 Its silvery surface, with those countless stars
 The ingot gems of Heaven's cerulean floor,
 Mosques, groves, and cliffs, and pinnacled minars.

The air is fresh, and yet the evening breeze
 Has died away; so hushed, 'tis scarcely heard
 To breathe amid the clustering lemon trees,
 Whose snowy blossoms, by its faint sighs stirred,
 Give out their perfume; and the bulbul's notes
 Awake the echoes of the halcyon chime;
 While from yon marble-domed pagoda floats
 The music of its bell's soft, silvery chime.

Mildly, yet with resplendent beauty, shines
 The scene around, although the stars alone,
 From the bright treasures of their gleaming mines
 A tender radiance o'er the earth have thrown.
 Oh! far more lovely are those gentle rays
 With their undazzling lustre, than the beam
 The sun pours down in his meridian blaze,
 Lighting with diamond pomp the sparkling stream.

Each tint its vivid colouring receives:

There is the glossy peepul—the bamboo
 Flings down its rich redundancy of leaves,
 And trailing plants their wandering course pursue
 In hues as bright as if the sun revealed
 The mantling foliage of the woody glade;
 Nor is yon lone sequestered hut concealed
 Sleeping within the green hill's deepest shade.

With snowy vases crowned, the lily springs
In queen-like beauty by the river's brink ;
And o'er the wave the broad-leaved lotus flings
Its rosate flowers in many a knotted link.
Oh! when the sultry sun has sunk to rest,
When evening's soft and tender shadows rise,
How sweet the scene upon the river's breast,
Beneath the starlight of these tropic skies!

THE LAND STORM.

The heavens are cloudless, and the sunny plain
 Rich with its fertile tracts of sugar-cane,
 Its fleecy crops of cotton, corn, and oil,
 And all the myriad plants that gem the soil,
 Yielding their precious juice in costly dyes
 Bright as the rain-bow tints of their own skies,
 Smile in the golden light—a wide expanse
 Of varied landscape where the sun-beams glance
 O'er dotting mango topes, and snow white mhuts,
 Which peep beside the peasants' straw-thatched huts.
 Beyond, in eastern splendour beaming bright
 The city stands upon a wooded height ;
 Its tall pagodas, and its broad *Serais*,
 Shining, like pearls amid the noon-tide, blaze ;
 While from each terrace shooting up afar
 Gleams the proud mosque, and pinnacled minar
 Surmounted by those graceful coronals,
 The palm tree flings above the sculptured walls
 Its drooping foliage, beautifully blent,
 With tower and spire, and marble pediment.

The air is still—there's not the faintest sigh
 Breathed from a vagrant zephyr wandering by ;
 The panting buffalo, oppressed with heat,
 Roams o'er the plain to seek some cool retreat ;
 The fainting bullocks drop upon the roads,
 And weary camels sink beneath their loads.
 The sultriness increases—soaring high,
 Renting the air with shriek and doleful cry,
 The startled birds from jungles, *jheel*, and brake,
 Their native haunts instinctively forsake ;
 Yet one small cloud of darkest blue alone
 Appears above the distant horizon ;
 And all around is calm—now rushing forth
 In billowy masses from the smoking earth,
 Volumes of sand in wild confusion rise
 And lift their summits to the darkening skies ;
 A lurid veil the city's pomp enshrouds,
 And now in wrathful guise the sable clouds
 Come rolling on—yet still throughout the plain
 No breath of air precedes the hurricane,

And a thick darkness falls, and blinding dust,
 Till suddenly in one tempestuous gust
 The whirl-wind bursts—drowning the stunning sound
 Of pealing thunder crashing all around.
 Unheeded mid the horrid dissonance
 And smothering sand, the forked lightnings dance;
 Yet the storm gathers strength, and each wild blast
 Seems armed with fiercer madness than the last.
 And still the raging elements contend;
 And urges on the strife the tempest fiend,
 Deepening the gloom, and yelling o'er the fanes
 Where whirl-winds roar, and chaos madly reigns;
 At length the darkness yields; an awful ray,
 Of fiery light denotes returning day.
 And now in flashing torrents o'er the plain
 Descends like cataracts the tropic rain;
 The air is cooled, by gentle breezes fanned—
 The dust disperses, and a zephyr bland,
 Where late the tempest raged, with wooing breath
 Draws perfume from each freshly flowering wreath;

Spreading their plumes o'er diamond-dropping sprays
The birds are pouring forth their sweetest lays;
The buffalo comes rushing from the wood,
And snorts, and plunges in the welcome flood;
And the parched earth rejoices—and the plain
Is rife with life and happiness again.

THE MOOSULMAN'S GRAVE.

Sweet is the shelter of yon verdant glade,
 Where lofty palms and waving mangos bloom,
 Where the tall *peepul* spreads its grateful shade
 Above the pious Moslem's lowly tomb.
 Severe in chaste simplicity it stands
 Bearing no record of the donor's name,
 To tell the world from whose all-bounteous hands
 The smiling gifts of that fair valley came.

'Twas he who planted all those clustering topes,
 And scooped the basin of the well-filled tank,
 The pleasant haunt of playful antelopes,
 Who leap rejoicing o'er the flowery bank;
 And there in flocks, beside its ample brim,
 Unnumbered birds wheel round in airy rings;
 And o'er its glassy surface wild fowls skim,
 And stately herons plume their shining wings.

There too in crowds the villagers repair,
 And while the cooling stream their temples lave,
 From countless lips is breathed the grateful prayer,
 Blessing the hand munificent that gave
 To the parched waste the precious element,
 Whose gushing waters all their *lotas* fill;
 And many a graceful female form is bent,
 Dipping the *ghurrah* in the crystal rill.

Oh! where the noon-tide sun so fiercely glows,
 Scorching the desert with its sultry beam,
 How bland, how welcome, is the soft repose,
 Invited, by the thickly shaded stream!
 Beneath the boughs of some o'er-arching palm,
 The mossy turf by weary limbs is prest,
 And blest by slumbers most delicious balm,
 The pilgrim sinks at once to blissful rest.

Beside the lakelet, with its modest dome,
 Peeps forth between the trees a pillared mosque ;
 And there the wandring *fakcer* finds a home,
 And chants the *nuzzum* from the high kiosk :
 He feeds the lamp with palm-nut's fragrant oil,
 A lonely star upon the brow of night,
 And plucks the fairy offsprings of the soil,
 To crown with votive wreaths the altar's height.

Nature's luxuriant and lavish hand,
 Forest and hill, steep cliff, and tangled wild,
 With rich profusion o'er the sunny land,
 A countless tribe of brilliant flowers has piled.
 Upon the sandy plain fair lilies spring ;
 And mid the jungle, buds of rain-bow dyes
 To the spiced gale their balmy perfume fling,
 Or lift their towering garlands to the skies.

There the warm red of the pomegranate glows
 In ruby lustre; and acacias twine
 Their many-colored wreaths amid the rose,
 The yellow *champa* and the jessamine;
 Its mantling silver the clematis draws
 O'er clustering oleanders pink and white;
 And the magnolia's richly scented vase
 Droops o'er the *Baobool's* bells of golden light.

And India's dark-browed natives dearly prize
 The silken treasures of their forest bowers;
 They love to plait their fragrant rosaries,
 And heap each holy shrine with wreaths of flowers.
 O'er the bright waters snowy chaplets float,
 With lotus crowns the pearly river glows,
 And each proud shallop and each nut-shell boat
 Bear a rich garland on their dainty prows.

Buds of all scents and every changeful hue,
 The gardens beautiful though fragile gems,
 Whate'er his creed, or Moslem or Hindoo,
 The pilgrim twines in radiant diadems.
 With votive offerings of a grateful breast,
 Mosque or pagoda by his hands are wreathed,
 For where the tank invites the fainting guest,
 He asks not who the precious boon bequeathed.

Oh! blessed work of charity—a tree
 Planted for love of human-kind—a well—
 A mosque or *mhut*'s o'ershading canopy,
 Can make the heart with holy feelings swell.
 The wide *serai* within the city's gate,
 A pool in some green dell beside the plain,
 Cheer with their pious gifts the desolate,
 And light the fading beams of hope again.

Blessed by the bounties of his fellow man

The way-worn traveller who journeys o'er
The wide and sultry realms of Hindostan,

By deep ravine, parched waste, or river's shore,
Where'er his wandering footsteps are addrest,

From steep Nepaul to sea-girt Juggunaut,
He finds a frequent place of welcome rest,

In some pagoda, or some mosque-crowned ghaut.

NOUR JUFFEIR KHAN.

A TALE OF THE JUMNA.

How darkly 'gainst the crimson sky
Those massy heaps of ruins frown,
Whose domes, in towering majesty,
The crags with mournful splendour crown.
No more upon the lofty walls
In troops the well-armed vassals stand;
No more within its stately halls
A gallant chieftain holds command.
But the fierce vulture builds her nest,
The hungry panther makes his lair,
And noisome beasts the courts infest,
And poisonous snakes are brooding there.
While o'er the silent strand below
The lowly river glides—so hushed,
So undisturbed its currents flow,
Where late a proud flotilla rushed,
That strangers deem the desert rude
In its impervious solitude,

Had ever been the dreary haunt,
 Of prowling wolves and tigers gaunt;
 And the soft wind had only borne
 Upon its fresh and balmy wings,
 Of some lone bird the cry forlorn,
 Or savage creature's murmurings.
 For the bright sands no foot-prints wear,
 Save of the forest's denizens—
 The track of the gigantic bear,
 Pacing its wild and dismal glens;
 The fearful alligator's tread,
 The steep and rugged paths, where shine,
 In slender spears profusely shed,
 Quills of the fretful porcupine.
 Yet, on this now-deserted strand
 In fleet career a warlike band
 Flung the *jerreed*, or galloped o'er
 In stately guise the echoing shore.
 And round each crag and pinnacle
 Unnumbered perfumed flowers were springing,

And from the towers the merry bell
 Or *cittara's* softer sounds were ringing.
 The passing boatman wondering gazed
 Where streaming o'er the midnight sky
 A thousand lamps and torches blazed,
 And bursts of joyous revelry
 Came o'er the breeze, from those bright halls
 Where, twining their gay coronals,
 Mid flowers, and lights, and eye-beams glancing,
 Shining in gold and gems and pearls,
 To music's thrilling notes advancing,
 A clustering troop of graceful girls
 Displayed before a raptured throng
 The witcheries of dance and song.
 Oh! not alone in festal hours
 Pleasure illumed those lofty towers;
 For there domestic happiness
 In all its holy beauty smiled,
 And love with innocent caress
 The bright winged sunny day beguiled--

Yet 'twas not might of foreign foe
 That laid yon ruined fortress low !
 Our slender bark makes little way
 Striving against the current's flight,
 And soon the sun's fast fading ray
 Will melt into the shades of night.
 Come—I will tell the tale to thee,
 While our small pinnace lazily
 Glides to its place of destined rest ;
 And while on Jumna's roscate breast
 The beautiful reflection glows
 Of turret tall and arching port,
 And on its liquid mirror shows
 The outline of the crumbling fort.
 Then winding through yon steep defile
 We'll leave these lowly scenes a while,
 And wandering o'er the teeming plains
 White with the cotton's bursting pod,
 Or through the clustering sugar canes,
 The crested parrot's sweet abode,

Mark where the nut-wreathed castors grow,
 Or spreads the vagrant indigo,
 Those rich productions of the soil,
 Which yield their wealth with little toil.
 But to my tale—with gentle hand
 Nour Juffeir Khan the district swayed,
 And plenty smiled upon the land
 Which the mild Omrah's rule obeyed.
 From fierce ambition's paths afar
 No cares disturbed the hill-crowned fort,
 And only waged in mimic war,
 Or flung in some adventurous sport,
 'Gainst sylvan enemies alone
 The sharp and well-aimed spears were thrown.
 And truly 'twas a gallant sight
 When issued forth the hunter's train,
 Urging their coursers' rapid flight,
 Or wheeling round the rugged plain,
 Or speeding to the lovely haunts
 The *nyl ghar* loves mid bushy dells,

Upon those trampling elephants,
 Who to their silvery sounding bells
 Through jungles deep, with stately pace,
 And step unmerring, lead the chase.
 Some are equipped with howdahs, where
 The lavish hand has richly wrought
 Crimson and gold; while others bear
 Encaged the spotted leopards, taught
 With the majestic stag to cope,
 Or spring upon the antelope.
 Nor these alone the chief enlists
 To aid his sport; for on the wrists
 Of falconets, with pride elate
 The regal birds in haughty state
 Sit throned like kings; or soaring high
 O'er their devoted victims fly,
 A single instant hovering,
 Then stooping down with steady wing
 Upon the quarry's head alight,
 Who blinded, and with struggling weak,
 '.

Not long sustains the dreadful fight,
But sinks beneath the cruel beak
Of his fierce foe, who drinks the blood,
Ere from the breast life's pulses part,
And rushing in a crimson flood,
From the poor victim's quivering heart.
And all around, the thronging rout
Whose motley groups on foot advance,
Filling the air with cry and shout,
And armed with javelin and lance,
Or simpler spears of the bamboo,
With reckless footsteps rushing through
The dark defiles of the ravine,
Heighten the spirit of the scene ;
Where gaily trapped, the fiery horse
With all his native ardour pants,
Outstripping in his rapid course
The more majestic elephants,
And chiefs in regal pomp arrayed,
Silver and silk, and gold brocade,

The crimson shawl across the breast
 Above the graceful shoulder hung,
 Or sash-wise, round the shining vest,
 Or o'er the gem-starred turban flung,
 In all their glittering panoply,
 The lofty port—the gleaming brand—
 Appear like those bright genii
 Who erst had ruled the sunny land.
 'Twas a fair pageant, and might seem
 More like a poet's noon-tide dream
 Than cold reality—the throng
 With whirl-wind speed who rush along
 The tangled wild, arousing there
 From copse, and dell, and fields of air
 The forest's tenants—from the rocks
 Uprising with a piercing cry,
 The startled pea fowl soar in flocks,
 And spread like clouds along the sky.
 While the hyena and the wolf,
 Jackalls and bears, and bounding deer,

Seek shelter in some caverned gulf,
 Or o'er the hill tops disappear.
 Through jungle, brake, and brushwood crashing,
 Still do the hunter train sweep on—
 A dazzling meteor brightly flashing!
 A moment's space, and it is gone,
 Leaving the forest's deep recess
 In all its native loneliness.

When from the jovial chase returned
 His tranquil home the Omrah sought,
 For him the perfumed tapers burned,
 And upon glittering trays were brought,
 To spread the hospitable board,
 The ample feast, whose dainty fare
 Invited by their bounteous lord,
 The Zameendars and vassals share—
 Rose water, *paan* and spices' prest
 Profusely on each welcomed guest.
 The Jumna's finny tribes appear
 With quarters of the hunted deer;

Pigeons and kids, and rich *pillaus*,
 And *kaaries* bright with golden glow ;
 While from each sculptured silver vaso
 The many coloured sherbets flow.
 Plucked from the river's sandy bed,
 The gushing water melons shed
 Their grateful streams ; and there in piles,
 Heaped up the glossy mango smiles ;
 Citrons, pomegranates, and the bright
 Pistachio nut from far Thibet ;
 And grapes that gleam with topaz light,
 And sweetmeats in a glistening not
 Of frosted sugar heaped around,
 And all with flower-wreathed garlands crowned.

Thus gaily sped the chieftain's hours,
 Or still more happily, amid
 The bright Zenam's sacred bowers,
 Where in her sweet seclusion hid,

Like some fair lotus bending deep
 Beneath the wave its roseate bells ;
 Like those pure lily buds that keep
 Their virgin court mid forest-cells ;
 Or jewel in a lovely mine ;
 Or image in a hallowed shrine ;
 Above the Jumna's sparkling waters,
 The flower of Delhi's radiant daughters,
 Blesses the undivided love
 Of one who never wished to rove
 From the fair creature by his side,
 His beautiful imperial bride,
 And she—oh ! in this earthly sphere,
 Or heaven's wide realm, no dream of bliss
 Is half so precious and so dear,
 So cherished as her infant's kiss,
 And that loved husband's fondness shewn
 For her bright form, and her's alone !
 Her woman's heart on earth has found
 Its own domestic paradise ;

She knows no happiness beyond

The flowery fields and sunny skies,

Where blessed and blessing she rejoices,

And joins to her's those cherub voices;

Arising when the crimson flush

Is fading into twilight dim,

Or with the morning's earliest blush,

In that soul-thrilling choral hymn,

Whose sweet and simple strain imparts

The gratitude of guileless hearts.

Dearest! I've lingered in my song,

And fain would still the lay prolong,

In fond yet idle pleasure dwelling

On bliss which cheats the listening ear,

With soothing softness only telling

What gentle spirits love to hear.

Yet I must hasten with the tale;

For when we reach yon woody cliff,

Crouding to strike the flimsy sail,
 The crew who guide our fairy skiff,
 Will leave on deck no quiet spot
 Where we may sit, and pensively,
 While musing o'er life's changeful lot,
 Complete the Omrah's history.

Spurned in disgrace from *Scindia's* court
 To shelter his dishonoured head,
 Indignant to his kinsman's fort
 An outcast younger brother fled;
 Bringing a fierce marauding crew
 Of Afghaan and Mahratta hordes,
 A reckless band, who only knew
 The crimson laws of their own swords.
 Eager for bloodshed and for broil,
 And feeding their luxurious tastes,
 Insatiate, with the fearful spoil
 Of cities stormed, and burning wastes,

Not long did Meer Jah Asiph view
 Unmoved his brother's blissful state ;
 Nor was it long ere envy grew,
 And jealousy, and deadly hate,
 In the dark soul where pity's beam
 Dwelled not—and soon the miscreant planned
 With horrid craft a treacherous scheme ;
 And, aided by his lawless band,
 He seized upon the ill-watched keep,
 And slew its guardians in their sleep ;
 And then—but let me draw a veil
 Before the horrors of the tale,
 Nour Juffeir stabbed, disarmed, and bound,
 Beheld with glazed and phrenzied eyes
 His wife and infants fall around,
 While on his heart the victim's cries
 Entered like scorpion stings—o'er wrought,
 That outraged heart could bear no more,

And now the seeming corse is brought
 With its pale comrades to the shore,
 And all the slaughtered find a grave,
 Within the Jumna's blood-stained wave.

Meer Asiph reigned—the revel loud
 Daily resounded from the fort;
 And there a fierce and needy croud
 From the encircling states resort—
 A profligate licentious race
 By rapine and by murder fed,
 Wretches who bring a foul disgrace
 Upon their ruthless master's head;
 Mocking the Prophet's holy laws
 With fiend-like oaths and scornful laugh,
 The precious vintage of Schirauz
 From golden bowls they deeply quaff,
 Spending each night in savage glee,
 Wassail, and wine, and minstrelsy.

One balmy eve, with flaming torch
 And crystal lamp, each wide saloon,
 Verandah, gallery, and porch,
 Shone with the gorgeous light of noon.
 The gayest of their festivals—
 The ductile fingered jugglers came,
 And featly poised the golden balls,
 In sparkling founts and showers of flame;
 There too in strange and fitful dance
 To the soft breathings of a flute
 The many-coloured serpents glance,
 And o'er the marble pavement shoot;
 And there with necromantic skill
 The shrewd magician played his part;
 The raptured croud were gazing still
 With wonder on his potent art,
 All heedless of the murmuring sound
 In distant chambers gathering round—
 A sudden simultaneous cry
 The preconcerted signal gave,

Unarmed—unknowing where to fly,
Each half intoxicated slave
Sank horror stricken from the blaze
Of Juffeir Khan's indignant gaze!
Deeming the rebel recreant crew
Too worthless for his righteous sword,
Upon his brother's throat he flew,
And dragged him from the guilty board—
Beneath the stern avenger's grasp
Meer Asiph for an instant quailed,
But struggling in the deadly clasp
His giant strength at length prevailed;
His powerful hands were disengaged,
And equally the combat raged.
In dumb suspense the vassals viewed
The progress of the mortal feud;
Still in each other's fierce embrace
Across the wide and slippery hall,
Without a moment's breathing space
They reached the fort's surrounding wall,

See'st thou the cleft along the edge
Of yonder overhanging ledge?
Upon that dreadful precipice,
 Burning to end the deadly strife,
By one avenging sacrifice,
 Careless of safety or of life,
Nour Juffeir still with arms enrolled
Round his foe's throat in snake-like fold,
A moment gazed upon the deep
 With triumph flashing in his eye,
And springing to the fatal leap,
 Entwined the mangled bodies lie,
And weltering in each other's gore
Breathed their last sighs on Junna's shore.

DRAMATIC SKETCHES.

CONSTANTINE THE GREAT.

A DRAMATIC SKETCH.

“Zozimus, a pagan that envied the honour of Constantine the Great, makes this tale to discredit him in his history. That Constantine had put his wife Faustina and his son Crispus to death; after which, being haunted by an ill conscience that gave him no quiet, he sought amongst the heathen priests for expiation, and they could give him no peace; but he was told that the religion of Christians was so audacious as to pardon all sins, be they never so horrible. Is not this to commend the Emperor and his religion under the form of a dispraise; for what rest could a troubled mind attain to from the rites and superstitions of idol gods?”

JEREMY TAYLOR.

Scene. A Temple of Jupiter.

CONSTANTINE.

HIGH PRIEST.

VALERIUS.

CONSTANTINE.

Avaunt, ye grisly phantoms, nor prophane
The sacred temple of the gods! Thou pale

And bleeding spectre, wilt thou never cease
 To haunt my steps, to fix thy glassy eyes
 Upon thy murderer, and with thy gaunt
 And bony finger point to that dread shape
 That steals behind thee? Whither shall I turn?
 Where fly to scape these ghastly phantoms?—Blood—
 A sea of blood floats round me. If I raise
 My burning eye-balls to the shrine where stands
 The statue of the Thunderer in grand
 And awful majesty, it disappears,
 And the vindictive shade from Jove's high throne
 Glares on the suppliant;—to earth I turn
 My conscious looks, and stretched upon the ground
 Beneath my feet, two mangled coises lie.
 My wife, my son! why are ye silent?—why
 Do you not charge me with my crime? The deed
 Accused in the eyes of gods and men
 So nameless, foul, unnatural; so black
 That shuddering fiends disdain me,—Heaven and hell
 Have shut their gates, and leave me for the prey

Of these pale tenants of the tomb! Away
 Distracting vision! Oh! ye sacred band
 Who, morn and eve, perform the holy rites
 Before great Jove's high altar, give me hope,
 Speak words of comfort to my troubled soul,
 To my sad spirit, peace.

HIGH PRIEST.

The gods are just!

CONSTANTINE.

I plead for mercy! Justice dooms my crime
 To endless punishment in other worlds,
 And agony in this; to keen remorse,
 The deadly pang that poisons every joy.
 Amid the acclamations, 'mid the shouts
 Of the thronged multitude from east to west,
 The countless hosts of Rome's wide empire, groans
 Burst on my startled ear! Faustina's groans,
 The dying cry of Crispus! At the feast
 When the brimmed goblet sparkles, and each hand
 Pours a libation to the gods, the wine

Within my chalice turns to purple gore—
 'Tis on my soul! it stains my garments! Earth
 Refuses to absorb the guilty stream;
 And the just gods with loathing turn away
 From the unhallowed offering! Oh say
 How may I expiate the crime? What prayer,
 What costly gift, what pompous sacrifice,
 May make atonement to offended Jove?
 The milk-white bull that roams in freedom round
 The base of lofty Athos, crowned with flowers,
 Blooming as those which fond Europa twined
 Around the monarch of the plain, and led
 By troops of noble virgins, raising high
 The choral strain, shall bleed before the shrine.
 And the swart Indian, from his richest mine
 Shall dig the ruby, pluck the orient pearl
 From ocean's depths, and mould the golden ore
 In votive offerings, such as gods may deem
 Meet to adorn their temples.

HIGH PRIEST.

Œdipus,

The blind distracted wanderer, whose crime
 Predestined and involuntary, seems
 Trivial compared to thine, from Pluto's realms
 Shall rend Olympus with his thrilling groans,
 His bitter accusation, should the gods
 Receive oblations from thy guilty hand.
 Orestes lashed by furies shall arise
 To plead against thee; Justice armed his hand,
 And blood demanded blood! Shalt thou escape
 The indignation of the gods, unloose
 The sacred bonds of nature, and with hymns
 And sacrifice of bulls, and glittering gems
 Appease the outraged deities?—Despair!

CONSTANTINE.

I will not be denied. Where are your rites
 Your deep enchantments and mysterious spells,
 The smoking incense that ascends to heaven,
 The magic frenzy that compels to earth

Descending deities? My fierce remorse,
 The unutterable anguish of my soul
 Demands relief! Rid me of those pale forms
 That, mid the blaze of day, the gloom of night,
 Are fixed forever on my burning eyes,
 Sleeping or waking—I can bear no more!
 Send Rome's proud Emperor forth to deserts wild;
 Bid him resign his regal diadem—
 Relinquishing the mistress of the world,
 To roam a beggar through his own wide realm.
 Stand not so mute; your silent cold regards,
 Mocking my passionate grief, will make me mad!
 Pour curses on me; bid me strain each nerve
 To the endurance of strange torture, keen,
 Keen as my agony of mind; but say
 There is a hope, a chance, that suffering
 May pave the way to mercy.

HIGH PRIEST.

Constantine!

Be not deceived, the gods have fixed thy doom;
 Nor prayer nor penance can avail. Depart,

We have no balm to give thee. Festal rites,
 And joyous sacrifice, the song, the dance,
 Performed in praise and honour, form alone
 The duties of our office. Jupiter
 Deigns not to give commission to his priests
 To pardon criminals. Seek other shrines,
 And bend the knee to foreign doities;
 Thou canst not move the gods of Greece and Rome.

CONSTANTINE.

Despite thyself thou giv'st me hope,—speak! say
 Where shall I bend my steps—where seek the fount
 Whence mercy springs?

VALERIUS.

Turn to the living God!
 Forsake these idols made by human hands,
 These dumb insensate marble images,
 And seek redemption from that Holy One,
 The wonderful, the marvellous! whose name's
 Above all powers of magic, far above
 The sorcerer's nightly rites, Thessalian drugs,

The secret charms of Memphis, or the deep
 Mysterious murmurs of the wise Chaldee,
 Miraculous omnipotence hath snatched
 Dominion from the evil powers, and gives
 Salvation to a fallen world—adore
 The sacred name which devils have revered
 With fear and trembling! O'er the darkened earth
 Behold a day-star springs.

CONSTANTINE.

Say on, thy voice
 Seems to my burthened heart oracular.
 Even at thy words those bleeding ghastly shades
 Have melted into air. Blessed be God!
 A sinner's prayers are heard.

THE WITCH'S ORDEAL.

A DRAMATIC SKETCH.

SCENE.—*The outside of a hovel on the edge of a common. A village in the distance. A crowd of rustics assembled.*

THE REPUTED WITCH.

ELLINOR, THE SQUIRE'S DAUGHTER.

ALICE.

MARGARET.

} VILLAGERS.

A TRAVELLER.

FARMERS, PLASANTS, LABOURERS, &c.

FIRST RUSTIC.

Off with the witch, I say we'll try the test—
 I warrant me the hag will swim. The fiend
 Will be at hand to help—come, neighbours, come,
 Assist to hale her to the river's brink,
 Then we shall see how like a cork she floats
 Upon the rapid waters.

SECOND RUSTIC.

Down with her—

She has performed her wicked freaks too long;

The mildew hangs upon the corn; the earth
 Teems with unwholesome damps; whole flocks of
 sheep

Are smitten with disease; and she has wrought
 These deadly plagues. Beneath the waning moon
 I saw her gather poisonous herbs, and heard
 The spells she inly muttered—off with her!

CROUD.

Aye to the river straight—the witch shall swim.

ELLINOR.

Nay, nay good people, hold your eager hands
 The poor old dame is innocent—indeed
 She cannot harm you if she would—so old,
 So pressed by want—Oh! if she had the power
 To work forbidden spells, she would not starve
 Upon a morsel wrung from the cold hand
 Of most reluctant charity. Then pause,
 Nor for an idle prejudice commit
 This cruel deed.

THIRD RUSTIC.

She hath been proved a witch,
 A foul rank witch. 'Twas but a fortnight since
 She passed our door, and out of wicked spite
 Because the silly children set a cur
 A snarling on her heels, to verjuice turned
 A cask of stout October. 'Tis in vain
 We nail the guardian horse-shoe o'er the porch;
 And place witch-straws across the threshold,—still
 Our cattle die, and still the noisome blight
 Destroys the labourer's toil, the farmer's hope.

ALICE.

I drove the cankered beldam from my gate,
 And straight a loathsome toad dragged its foul length,
 And shed its venom o'er the rosemary,
 The thyme, and sage, drying for winter's store.

MARGARET.

The hens break all the eggs, and we may churn
 Until our arms drop off—no butter comes,
 Strange cats with glaring eyes; some of the brood

She nurtures in her hovel roam abroad
 And dart at people's throats. She makes the owl
 To hoot around our houses. Snakes and frogs
 And slimy reptiles, birds of night, the bat,
 The croaking raven and the hedgehog grim,
 Creatures who fly from man, are with this hag
 Familiar, and in her spite she sends
 The will-o'wisp to guide the wanderer on
 To some deep bog: our hind was lantern-led
 But yesternight, and came home scared to death.

ALICE.

She fears nor heaven nor earth, is never seen
 At church or meeting: when she mumbles prayers,
 She says them backwards: she is heard to talk
 With mandrakes buried deep within the ground
 Who do her bidding. Out upon the witch—
 Ay to the river, down with her I say.

THE WITCH.

You will not be content until you have
 My life, you greedy blood hounds. Can I stir

A step without a gibe? Pitfalls are set
 About my path, and I am sorely bruised
 By sticks and stones cast by the village fry
 Whene'er I wander forth; your brats are taught
 To maim my cats, I soon shall be without
 A shed to screen me from the storms; the roof
 Is pulled about my ears. The murrain take
 Your beasts, the red plague hang on all!

ELLINOR.

Stay! stay!

Nay do not curse good mother; you should strive
 With meekness and with gentleness to turn
 Their stubborn hearts.

THE WITCH.

Turn stones and rocks—'twould be
 A task as easy. Preach not peace to me.
 I hate the canting vermin, and I'll spend
 My latest breath in railing. Blisters be
 Upon your slanderous lips! famine and pestilence
 Feed on your vitals!

FIRST RUSTIC.

Peace thou foul-mouthed witch!

Shall we stay tamely by, and hear her curse?

Seize her good neighbours, drag her to the stream.

CROWD.

Down with the witch! down with the wicked hag.

*Enter a Traveller on horseback. Ellinor runs up
and accosts him.*

ELLINOR.

Oh Sir! for charity arrest the mad
And murderous purpose of these credulous
Inhuman peasants. They will put to death
A poor old harmless creature, something given
In truth to evil speaking; but indeed
Most wrongfully accused. The charge they bring
Would be a theme for merriment alone,
Were they not bent upon a cruel test,
They 'll drown their wretched victim for a witch!

TRAVELLER.

It were in vain,
 To reason with a crowd so obstinate
 And mischievous in their intentions—stand aside
 And I will strive to lead them to adopt
 A better ordeal. My good friends restrain
 This violence; there is no need to drag
 You wretched creature to the river's brink—
 You have a surer test within your reach.
 You all have Bibles? In a Christian land
 'Twere sin to doubt it. Place within the scales
 The sacred volume of the Scriptures, and
 However small, however light it be,
 Nay should one leaf alone remain, 'twill sink
 Like lead to earth while the convicted witch
 Shall fly above the beam: but should the book
 Be lightest in the scale, then be assured
 That you have wronged this woman—who shall say
 That she is guilty if this holy book
 By Heaven-inspired and most infallible,
 Proclaim her innocent?

RUSTICS.

We'll try the test ;

It must be true.

FIRST RUSTIC (*bringing a Bible*)

This Bible's somewhat large,

'Twill weigh the beldam down, now neighbour Giles

Your scales are handy—

They weigh the witch, who proves the heaviest.

SECOND RUSTIC.

We have been to blame ;

She has outweighed the sacred volume—see

It seems a feather in the balance.

TRAVELLER.

Friends !

Go to your' homes and ponder on the word

Of Him who graciously vouchsafed to give

That holy volume to a sinful world.

Oh know ye not that when the blessed Son

Of light and peace gave up his life for us

The power of evil spirits was destroyed?
 Live not in ignorance of Him who chained
 The fiends of darkness, and to all mankind
 Offered a free redemption

WITCH.

Has the Bible saved me?

TRAVELLER.

The word of God *has* saved you! Oh repent,
 And turn in humble thankfulness to Him
 Who will preserve your soul. You now rejoice
 Because your wretched body has escaped
 From present peril, but a nobler boon
 Courts your acceptance. Flee away from sin
 And seek a blessed immortality.

ELLINOR.

Thanks, thanks, good Sir; it was a happy thought.

TRAVELLER.

Lady, in this my pilgrimage I've learned
 In every evil chance of my sad life
 To seek for aid, for comfort, and for strength,

From Holy Writ. Study with humble zeal
This blessed book, and you will never need
Another counsellor. Those rustics feared
The word of God; and lady, may I say
Your influence was weak, because they heard
Nothing save worldly wisdom to oppose
Their idle superstition.

THE INCANTATION.

A DRAMATIC SKETCH.

SCENE:—*The Bergstrasse Hills at Midnight—
An Assembly of Witches.*

FIRST WITCH,

For ever first at meeting! Sisters, where,
Where can ye linger on this lovely night?
The moon is down, but in the clear blue sky
The stars are thick; as pale as silver some,
Some bright and golden, some like burnished steel
Clustering in millions, trembling as they pierce
The midnight air. Oh! how my spirit drinks
Their influence. Come on ye tardy crew!—
Bring me my wings; I'm tied to this dull earth,
And yet 'tis beautiful. The laughing Rhine
Rolls its bright azure waves through yon wide plain
Washing the base of many a city's walls:
The gothic towers of spires. The lofty point
Stands boldly in the twilight, from the dark
Cathedral mass of Worms' most ancient church;

And lower down beneath the brightest star
 Lies Mentz: the spirit of her Faust
 Beams in that star, the mightiest master, he
 Of our forbidden art. Clothed in a silvery mist
 Across the stretching corn-fields, richly gemmed
 With forests dark and rustic villages,
 The Vosges mountains bound the distant view,
 The fair and fertile hills of jocund France,
 And to the east lies our own Odenwald,
 Girt with the granite ribs of mother earth,
 Steep cliffs vine-garlanded, and winding vales,
 And seas of rocks sublime, and woods of pine
 Mark the gay chaos, wild fantastical,
 The sport of nature's most capricious mood.
 Hark the owl hoots—'tis answered by the toad,
 With her harsh croak—the signal—I am here!
 Where is our master?

SECOND WITCH, *appearing.*

He will come anon.

This is our jubilee; to-night we weave

A spell more potent, deep, and terrible,
 Than ever yet hath broken the strict laws
 Which bind that frail worm, man. Where'er we list,
 In sea or air, whatever element
 The fancy charms, 'tis ours to revel in.
 See from the depths below the cauldrons rise :
 Fling in your mystic gifts.

THIRD WITON, *and others.*

A spotted snake,
 Choaked in the shifting sands of Mogador—
 The last life-blood of the expiring wretch
 Gored by a shaggy Andalusian bull,
 His native wildness maddened by the thrust
 Of hostile spears—foam gathered from the lips
 Of a plague-smitten renegade—the beak
 Of a bald vulture, wet with human gore—
 A moore deer's heart, snatched in the deadly feud
 Between a serpent monster and the fierce
 Numidian tiger, mixed with lizard's fat—
 The mouldering flesh of mummies torn from out

'The pyramids---and fragments of the limbs
 Crushed by the blood-stained car of Jaggernaut---
 Herbs gathered in the moon-shine---henbane steeped
 In poisonous sweat exhaled from the dark yew
 That shades a murderous grave---
 And wholesome plants cankered by spawn of toads---
 'Twill make a slimy hell-broth such as fiends
 Will purchase with invaluable gifts.
 It thickens; it increases. Oh rejoice!
 Emancipation from this load of clay
 Is close at hand. Say whither art thou bound?

SECOND WITCH.

Floating in air above the polar star---
 Spreading its wide illimitable waves
 Beyond the human eye, I love to watch
 The huge leviathan as he lies stretched
 Upon the old sea's surface, basking full
 In the bright borealis, troubling there
 The awful stillness of the summer night,
 Which knows no change from day, by the loud rush

Of waters spouting from his nostrils; high
In air the rainbow columns rise.

THIRD WITCH.

I seek
The flame-encircled Mercury, and bathe
In floods of fire. The air is molten gold,
The glorious sun shines cloudless, and the earth
Glow's like a furnace. Our poor tropics seem
Bleak in comparison! By Heaven, there are
Some glorious creatures hatched so near the sun,
Death with his cold damp touch hath never dared
Invade the burning region.

FOURTH WITCH.

To a vale—
An Indian vale, fraught with rich musky balm
From ever-blowing roses, whose bright leaves
Drop in a crimson shower amid the stars
The jasmine sheds upon the flower-strewed earth,
Couched in a lotus bark, I steer my flight.
The sultry sun hath sunk—the dewy air

Is filled with music as it gently woos
 The waving clusters of the tamarisk,
 Or whispers through the clove carnation beds
 In amorous sighs, lulling the soul to sleep,
 Steeping the senses in delicious calm.
 No dreams disturb our slumbers, we inhale
 Rich perfume as we breathe, and the rapt ear
 Lists to the gush of fountains, and the song
 Of night's most thrilling minstrel brought in swells
 By the spiced gale from distant almond groves.

FIFTH WITCH.

I fly to oriental p'ains! but 'tis
 To wander amid ruins, and to share
 His midnight meal with the huge vampire bat,
 Nestling all day within the marble halls
 Of proud Persepolis. The jackal howls,
 The serpent hisses, and the eagle screams
 As my adventurous spirit urges them
 From their most secret haunts.

SIXTH WITCH.

The sport

I love to follow on Spitzbergen's shore.
 Beneath the frowning icebergs, floundering seals
 Perform their clumsy gambols on deep beds
 Of drifted snow. I trace the sullen bear
 Home to his den, or join him as he prowls
 Along the cold inhospitable coast,
 List to his low deep growl, and see him tear
 His prey in savage joy.

SEVENTH WITCH.

On the top

Of lofty Caucasus a hideous storm
 Is brewing by the fiends of hell; the caves
 Have let loose all their winds; the sooty clouds
 Are filled with sulphur; in mere wantonness
 The hurricane is hatched; and it might spend
 Its idle fury o'er Tartarian wastes;
 But I'll bestride the dingy scud, and lead
 The tempest o'er the Euxine. There's a bark

Manned from the Odenwald—a dauntless crew
 Who dream of the blue Rhine, and toast their wives
 In Schiratz wine, yet, as they gaily quaff,
 Scoff at the Persian vintage—they have drunk
 Their last, last drop crushed from the topaz grape
 That gems their native river. We will swell
 The ocean with our flood, let the wild winds
 Rave o'er the waters, till the angry waves
 Lashed into fury, climbing to the clouds,
 Divide and combat. Mid the deadly crash
 Of warring elements, the thunders peal,
 And lightnings fierce illumination, I
 Shall laugh to see the shattered vessel drive
 Before the storm, wheel round and round, then sink
 For ever in the fathomless abyss—
 There will be music in the dying cry
 Of one for whom the rest are doomed. Von Karl,
 Wilt thou remember when the sweeping surge
 Comes rolling onward, her whom thy false vows
 Have ruined, soul and body? What doth ail

The witch pot that it slowly simmers still ?
 We shall be late—how dost thou mean to ride ?

EIGHTH WITCH.

I' th' tail of the comet, as it shoots across
 From pole to pole the boundless fields of air,
 I hold my rapid midnight course, and where
 The last pearl-diver sank to rise no more,
 Drop in the gulf and search for his white bones,
 And plant my feet deep in the slimy ooze
 Accumulations of a thousand years,
 Unctuous and green, the fat of the sea wave,
 And dare the ocean monsters as they gaze
 With their round dull, yet, fiercely cruel eyes
 Stupid, untameable, I love to rouse
 The only feeling of their brutishness,
 Their horrid thirst for banqueting on blood ;
 Then mount a dolphin's back, and swim away
 Far, far beyond their reach.

NINTH WITCH.

'Tis glorious sport!

Oh! who would sit beside the fire and spin,
When they can thread the ocean's maze, or dance
Upon a star-beam? My fond mother weeps,
And looks upon me with beseeching eyes,
Whene'er she hears me murmur my witch songs,
And Leopold has brought me top-knots gay
From Strasburgh and from Mentz. They've trimmed
the green,
And planted flowers, and coaxed the little birds
To feed upon the window sill—they hope
To make me love these simple things. Old Paul,
The village pastor shakes his silvery locks,
Shudders and sighs, to see me reckless turn
From holy shrines; they dread to know the truth,
Yet deeply fear. They've barred the outward door
And nailed a horse-shoe o'er the threshold, strewed
The chamber with fresh rosemary; but I
Repeated thrice the magic spell, and snapped

Such brittle bonds, flew up the chimney swift
 And gained high Melibœus. See how sound
 The village rustics sleep ;—the hamlet lies
 In that small dell. How silent its repose !
 The birds are mute, not even the watch-dog's bark
 Breaks the deep silence ; and the evening breeze
 Is hushed ; there's not a leaf stirs. Haste away
 To the deep forests and the boundless plains,
 And chase a herd of buffaloes who spurn
 The earth beneath them, as they course along
 The wide savannahs and the prairies, where
 The boldest hunter never yet hath dared
 To track their footsteps.

TENTH WITCH.

On swart Afric's coast,
 Swept by a keen east wind, a locust cloud
 Were drowned in ocean ; the returning tide
 Hath cast their loathsome bodies on the shore
 To swell and putrify ; that tainted air
 I may breathe harmlessly. I'll drink my fill

Of the foul atmosphere; then hover o'er
 A grove of chesnuts in Castilian shades,
 Lured by the tinkling sound of the guitar
 Tenderly sighing its fond serenade,
 Hymning the praise of woman. There are eyes
 In their dark languish soft and beautiful
 As the black orbs of Yemen's antelopes,
 Which pay the minstrel, flashing through the bars
 Of the closed lattice. Should the perfumed buds
 Of orange, and the fragrance-weeping lime,
 Or sweeter still, the honied voice of love,
 Draw the veiled beauty from her coy retreat,
 I'll spread the foul contagion through the air,
 Scatter the pestilence and sow the seeds
 Of death in their embrace; the morning's dawn
 Shall find them lifeless on a bed of flowers.

First Witch.

Enough! enough!

The cauldron boils. It is the witching hour;
 The mighty form of Odin strides the hill!

*And Thor's and Freyga's shadowy forms appear,
Filling the air with mist!*

SECOND WITCH.

The rocked earth quakes.
He is amongst us; grim, and dark, and tall,
In awful gloomy majesty. Perform
The magic rites in silence.

THIRD WITCH.

They are done!—
Up and away! One blast, one rush of wind
To scare the sleeping villagers, and then
All will be calm upon the Bergstrasse hills:
No trace of witch or demon to betray
Our mid-night vigil to the eye of man.

GERALDI SFORZA.

A DRAMATIC TALE, IN FOUR SCENES.

GERALDI SFORZA.

PRINCE ANGELO.

JULIAN.

CARLOTTI.

VERONICA.

ISABEL.

SCENE I.—*A Saloon in Prince Angelo's Palace.*

ANGELO AND CARLOTTI.

ANGELO.

Good day, Carlotti; this is kind, to leave
 The splendid pantomime, the gaudy train,
 To visit a recluse, whose waning health
 Would sink beneath the sun's meridian beams,—
 The pageant has commenced?

CARLOTTI.

Ay, a full hour, my lord;
 But is its progress slow. The people throng
 In countless multitudes—their eager love

Is not to be restrained—defying blows,
 The prancing charger's hoofs, the sbirri's staves,
 They crowd around the hero, fill the air
 With shouts of Sforza! Sforza! brave Gerald!—
 Seize on his courser's reins, and press their lips
 Upon his flowing mantle.

ANGELO.

Ah, 'tis like,—

Set up an image to the populace,
 Decked with a few vain trophies, they will fall
 In mad idolatry to worship it.

CARLOTTI.

Modest and mild, yet cheerful, Sforza reins
 His haughty steed, giving to all the crowd
 Warm thanks, and kinder smiles. A gallant train,
 The nobles of the city, ride behind,
 Bearing the spoils of Tunis, all entwined
 With laurel foliage: from the balconies,
 Filled with the fairest and the noblest dames,
 Are flung rich perfum'd scarves, chaplets, and crowns;

And sweet and thrilling voices make the breeze
Melodious with the envied name of Sforza!
 Young Julian by his side, seems to enjoy
 A second triumph, glorying in the friend
 Who taught his arm to wield the sword, and pluck
 The never-fading laurels which he wears
 So proudly on his brow, from Austria's plains.
 They come; I hear the long protracted shout.
 Approach the lattice, good my lord, and view
 The pageant as it passes.

ANGELO.

No, no, no;

It is enough, that from my columned porch
 Up to the pediment, green wreaths are hung,
 And gold-wrought flags, and silken streamers wave
 From every balcony. This will suffice—
 I need not undergo a martyrdom—
 Expose my person to the mocking gaze
 Of the vile rabble, as, in times of old,
 The conquered captive graced the chariot-wheels

Of fortune's gilded minion. I confess
 My want of fortitude,—I cannot gaze
 On my triumphant rival, all unmoved,
 Or view the contrast with a Stoic's eye,
 When baffled, beaten, chased by land and sea,
 I brought the remnant of my soldiers home,
 Mid hisses and disgrace.

CARLOTTI.

The chance of war,
 Disease and famine, want and mutiny,
 Were all combined against thee.

ANGELO.

Here I swear

By all the sacred attributes of heaven !
 By all the much-loved honours I have lost !
 What man could do I did, to stem the tide,
 Which ran so strong against me :—I had died
 Upon the field of war, but that I hoped
 Some future period would see me rise
 From base defeat to glorious victory ;

Yet slander loudly hissed with plague-fraught breath
 A thousand falsehoods; told of Moorish gold,
 Of coward terrors, trifling, weak designs,
 Blasted my name, and held me up to scorn.

CARLOTTI.

A poor return! 'Tis an ungrateful world;
 Yet let not this depress you; soon, perchance,
 A time may come that shall retrieve the ills
 You labour under.

ANGELO.

Never, Carlotti;
 Never, whilst Julian and Geraldine live.
 They are my rival stars, and shine so bright,
 I am eclipsed, o'erpowered, sunk in thick
 Impenetrable darkness. By my birth
 A prince; in person——'tis poor vanity
 To plume one's self on mere exterior,
 And chance advantages; yet I may boast
 A form, cast in as grand and pure a mould
 As Julian's, or as Sforza's; and my mind——

By heaven, 'twas fired by virtuous impulses!
 What is the reason that I am o'erwhelmed
 With disappointment, obloquy, and wrong;
 By the base world misjudged, whilst others rise
 On the broad wings of fame, and fortune smiles,
 And crowns them with her gold and roseate wreaths?

CARLOTTI.

Withdraw your mind from all its late pursuits;
 Seek other channels—love, and politics:
 The sciences are open, they may bring
 A sweet oblivious balm—at least excite
 Strong interest.

ANGELO.

Politics and love?

What, if they both were tried, and both had proved
 False to my hopes, bright meteors, to invite
 My eager steps to drag me deeper down
 The dark abyss of shame? Young Julian,
 Even in his boyhood, has outstripped me far.
 My late negociations, all my toil,

The zeal I manifested to obtain
 An honourable peace, deserved success.
 Yet were they blighted, and a scornful laugh
 Rang through the council, as with honest pride
 I spoke of it as ratified; deceived,
 O'er-reached by diplomatic wiles, the foe
 Amused me with a hollow armistice,
 And ravaged all the frontier; Julian,
 Like a young lion rushing on his prey,
 Flew to avenge the wrong 'gainst fearful odds—
 So great, it seemed miraculous. He won
 A splendid victory; wrote terms of peace
 With his own sword in blood. The emperor,
 Amazed at such an unexpected stroke,
 Granted at once to this wild, headstrong boy,
 Conditions which I never dared propose.
 Thou know'st the clamours of the multitude,—
 The honours he received, but can'st not guess
 My damning tortures; let it pass.—You spoke
 Of love—the beauteous Veronica, she

The princess Isabel's chief confidante:—

Dost thou, Carlotti, know her?

CARLOTTI.

Lives there a man in Naples, be he high
 Or low in his estate, who has not pressed,
 'Mid whelming crowds on days of festival,
 To gaze upon her wondrous loveliness?
 She seems a being of another sphere;
 Form'd in the skies of those bright dazzling clouds
 That hang mid-way in air on summer days,
 Fleecy, and soft, and white, as plumage dropped
 Fresh from the snowy breasts of those fair doves,
 Which drew the car of Venus. The rich tint
 Of warm celestial red that bathes the arch,
 Morning and eve, of pure unclouded heaven,
 Blooms on her cheek, and dyes her ruby lip.
 Her eyes, the colour of the firmament,
 When in its darkest deepest blue, but far,
 Far brighter than its stars. Her glittering locks
 Are threads of gold, stolen from the radii

*That circle round the sun. Her matchless form,
Her faultless lineaments, fair and delicate,
As sculptured goddesses, yet breathing life
In sighs of melting sweetness, charm the heart,
The eye, the soul of man.*

ANGELO.

True, true, Carlotti,—
Thou hast described her well.

CARLOTTI.

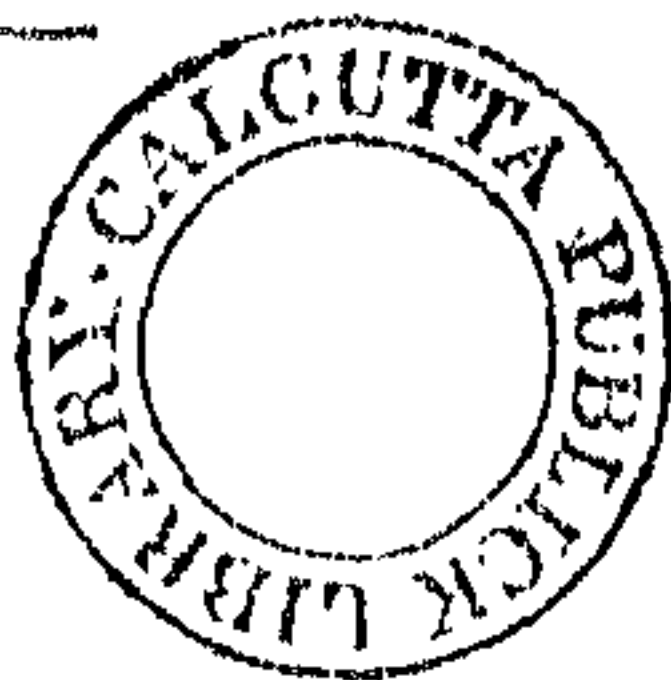
To-day, my Lord,
Beside the Princess Isabel, she stood
Amid the fairest of the court, but far
Surpassing all; lovely, and young, and gay,
As the first Helen, when in innocence
She dwelt beneath her father's roof, nor dreamed
That charms have fatal influence. A rose,
But yielding in its beauty to herself,
Decked her white breast; and this, as Sforza passed,
She flung to him, with such a tender air,
So sweet, so delicate, bashful, yet proud,

To give the hero of the day a prize
 Beyond his hard-earned laurels; in his cap,
 With fond delight, Gerald placed the rose.

ANGELO.

Would, like the flowers that grow on Alpine cliffs,
 It had the power to blast him, Veronica!
 Oh, Veronica! in thy sunny smile
 I had forgotten all my miseries!
 I loved her with a mad idolatry,
 That would have sacrificed eternal life
 To win a sweet return; the cold, proud girl,
 With contumelious scorn refused my suit,
 Glanced at my late disgraces, and to gall
 My rankling wound with venom sharp
 As poison from the desert serpent's tooth,
 Bestowed her fond affection—pledged her hand
 To my detested rival—Agony!
 GERALD—Gerald Sforza!

o



CARLOTTI.

Oh, good my lord!

My early patron, thou hast rent my heart
By these sad tales.

ANGELO.

I am a man borne down
By lava floods; in vain I struggle; fate
Pursues me; every bright and cheering hope
Whelmed in the burning cataract, my soul
Withers within me. This fair atmosphere,
The breeze, which unto others brings rich balm
And healing on its wings, to me is hot
And suffocating; cursed by heaven and man,
I hide my miserable wasted form
Within my palace walls.

CARLOTTI.

Can friendship soothe

Thy deep-felt woes?

ANGELO.

Yes, yes, Carlotti——give,

Give to my longing soul the means to crush
My hated rivals—let me plant despair
In others' hearts——Julian! Sforza!
And she, that young fair girl——Oh, it were bliss,
Maddening, ecstatic bliss, to see them writhe
In agony like mine!

CARLOTTI.

Young Julian stands
Upon the brink of ruin, he has spread
His new-fledged wings too near the fervid sun.

ANGELO.

What dost thou mean?

CARLOTTI.

By chance, a lucky chance
I trust it was, I learned that Julian
And the young Princess secretly were joined
In wedlock's bonds; and yesternight, at court,
He dropped this billet, written by the hand

Of Veronica: the outward scroll explains
 The reason why the Princess could not pen
 The fond effusion.—

ANGELO,

Read it to me, quick—

It gives a glorious promise.—

CARLOTTI.

“Loved treasure of my soul!

“My own Leander, lest thou meet'st the fate,

“The hapless fate of him whom thy fond breast

“Delights to imitate, forbear to-night

“To tempt the perils that await thy steps.—

“Oh, worse than winds and waves will rend apart

“Our tender intercourse: 'tis death to lose,

“Even for one night, thy cherished company,

“But still, still more terrific are the fears

“Which haunt my soul.—I dread our secret known

“To Sforza; his unyielding guarded breast,

“So sternly virtuous, never could excuse

“Our mutual frailty—is it frailty, sweet,

“ To love as we have loved ?——I’ll send thy child
 “ To visit thee till morn, and it will smile,
 “ Like her thou lov’st, and twine its little hands
 “ Amid thy raven ringlets.——Julian,
 “ Thou’lt think upon me through the long, long night ;
 “ But do not come, the garden-gate is closed,
 “ And prying eyes are waking.”

ANGELO.

This wide purse
 Is filled with double ducats ; take them, friend,
 And whatsoe’er thou see’st or hear’st, remain
 Silent as death. This billet in my hands
 Shall prove a talisman.——Thy sun is set——
 Julian ! Gerald ! not another day
 Shall your bright triumphs mock my agonies.
 Away ! away ! I languish for the hour
 That brings me keen revenge. [*Exeunt.*

*SCENE II.—The Sea-shore. Naples illuminated is
seen in the distance.*

Enter PRINCE ANGELO.

ANGELO.

Is not this place secure? The very air
Is drunk with joy, and goads my weary ear
With the loud peal from every steeple's point,
Commixed with human voices: happiness
Seems overflowing from the breasts of all,
The half-starved beggar in the streets forgets
The pangs of hunger, waves his ragged cap
Aloft, and shouts, joy! joy! The song and dance
Go gaily round; and mocking Heaven's bright stars,
Comets and streams of fire ascend from earth.
Why, in the general felicity,
Am I not also blest? I have no friend
To soothe my sorrows; no soft tender breast
Whereon to rest my aching head; no smile
Greets my approach; no gentle voice essays

To win me into sweet forgetfulness.
 I am cut off, 'abandoned, left to pine
 In solitary misery. Is there then
 No source, no spring of hope, to bring me bliss?
 This desolated bosom answers,—No!
 Then, like the demon of the air, the fiend
 Who raises tempests, revels in the roar
 Of hurricanes and overwhelming waves,
 Laughs at the shipwreck, feels a wild delight
 Whene'er the furious avalanche descends
 In ruin o'er bright nature's fairest works,
 I will transform these maddening shouts of joy
 To bitter lamentations of despair,—
 These festal dresses, splendid theatres,
 To mourning robes, and scaffolds red with blood:—
 My fevered lip shall never more repeat
 A prayer, an unavailing prayer, to Heaven.
 Spirit of Evil! wheresoe'er thou dwell'st—
 Or mid the torrid zone, hatching red plagues
 And yellow pestilence, beneath the beams

Of the fierce sun that shines to curse, not bless,
 The withered earth ; or in the frozen realms
 Around the northern pole, nursing bleak winds,
 And arming tempests with their fury ; or
 Deep, deep beneath the centre, flinging forth
 Thy golden baits to win the souls of men ;
 Or gathering amid the elements
 Foul poison from dense vapours, forging darts
 And thunderbolts, and drawing up to Heaven
 The billowy flood, sucked in by sable clouds,
 In black gigantic columns, to give back
 Their briny cataracts upon the deck
 Of some tall stately vessel ;—wheresoe'er,
 Spirit of Evil, thou delight'st to dwell,
 Attend my summons ; heart, and mind, and soul,
 I now devote to thee : crown with success
 My devastating projects.—Who goes there ?
Geraldi Sforza ! to my wish he comes.—
 What can have brought thee to this desert spot—
 The hero of the hour ?—Expecting crowds

Await thy presence in the blazing streets,
Where torches mimic the broad light of day.

SPORZA.

I fly to rest in quiet solitude.

My spirits, weary of excess of bliss,
Here, in this glorious amphi-theatre,
Amid the grand imperishable works
Of Him, the architect of heaven, I feel
The littleness of man. The rolling sea,
Illimitable, fathomless, sublime,—
The lofty mountain, bearing on its breast
Eternal fire,—the green enamelled earth,
With all its silvery streams, its flowery vales,
And vast impervious forests,—that clear sky
Spangled with globes of fire, changeless, and bright,
For ever shining on in majesty
Upon the lovely world below, where man,
The frailest work of nature, bows his head
To unrelenting death. What is my fame,
Compared to those who, in the days of old,

Spread their fierce lightnings to the east and west,
 And made their shrieking fellow-creatures slaves?
 This scene, the theatre of great exploits,
 Remains; but where are they who lost and won
 The crimson field? A tale involved in doubt,
 A broken bust, a medal half defaced,
 Alone are left; and therefore do I come,
 Good Angelo, to teach my swelling heart
 A lesson of humility.

ANGELO.

So young,

And so successful, yet endow'd
 With such philosophy, you may defy
 The frowns of fate. Misfortunes to a mind
 Guarded like yours would lose the power to wound.

SFORZO.

Should storms arise, it may enable me
 To bear them like a man; but I have now
 A harder task, to check the rising pride
 Which fills my soul; blest far above my peers

In love, in friendship, and in war, I feel
My bosom swell in wild tumultuous bliss.

ANGELO.

Enjoy the present. Happiness like thine
Falls seldom to the lot of man. Alas!
Perchance even thou art standing on the brink
Of some deep precipice, the dark abyss
Concealed by smiling flowers,

SFORZA.

With a friend
So true as Julian, a mistress so beloved,
So faithful, fond, as Veronica, I
Can fear no evil, save the stroke of death;
Nought else can sever hearts so closely joined.

ANGELO.

Has Veronica then received your vows
Since your return from Tunis?

SFORZA.

On the wings
Of love she flew to meet me ere I reached

*The gates of Naples; one sweet hour we spent,
Renewing every promise, every oath
Of truth and constancy.*

ANGELO.

*Hast thou not heard
Aught to alarm thy fears? hast thou not seen
Aught to convince thee that a woman's love
Is light, and friendship easily effaced
When strong temptation offers?*

SFORZA.

*None have dared
To breathe one venom'd slander on mine ear,
One well-framed falsehood of my angel love,
Or my brave matchless friend; and none will dare:
For whatso'er his rank, Prince Angelo,
I'd strike the base calumniator dead.*

ANGELO.

*If thou wilt brand the truth with falsehood's name,
Now draw thy sword, and sheathe it in my breast;
For in my dying pangs, with honest zeal,*

I'll tell thee thou'rt deceived; false Julian
Now revels in the love of Veronica.

- Thy long-protracted absence was a test
Too great for human nature; passion grew;
Youth, beauty, opportunity, combined
To snap the bonds of honour; rumour broached
The tale abroad; there's not a page at court
Who has not seen the pressure of the hand,
The soft caress, the gentle whisper pass,
And Julian sigh, and Veronica smile.

SIORZA.

It may be possible, I sink so low
Beneath the worth of Julian; her eye
Might note his form superior, her soul
Pay homage to the virtues which exceed,
Far, far exceed my efforts; and what man
Could coldly turn from Veronica? Gods
Have quitted heaven to woo less lovely maids;
Angels have fallen when strongly tempted; then
Julian is blameless. I will yield her up;

Join at the holy altar kindred souls,
Though my torn heart should split in the attempt.

ANGELO.

Young Julian will refuse the gift; his love,
At least, has cooled; and dull satiety
Usurps the place of passion. To thine arms,
To hide her infamy, the false girl
Would gladly fly.

SFORZA.

Liar and fiend accursed!
My eager sword thirsts for thy blood; this earth
On which thou stand'st should be thy sepulchre,
But that I pant to drag thy dastard form
To open day, to force thy serpent tongue
Before assembled multitudes to prove
Thine own dishonours, clear my injured fame,
And give thee up to obloquy and scorn.
The most deceitful, desperate wretch would fear
To cast a blot on Veronica's name.
Secure in virgin innocence she stands;

The stainless soul that never dreamed of sin
 Gives the gay sparkle to her eye, the smile
 That plays around her roseate lip,—so pure,
 So careless, and so trusting ; though ingrained,
 Cankered, and leperous sunk, immersed in guilt,
 The heart that knows not virtue would confess
 That 't was enshrin'd within her spotless breast,—
 Like her of old, who, poets sing, could stray
 Securely through the desert wilderness
 Amid the monsters of the wild, the fierce
 And untamed lion, the insatiate wolf,
 And ravening tiger, Veronica dwells,
 Unscathed by the licentious tongues of men,
 And more abandoned women. In a court
 Where foul corruption steals, dark guilt has shrunk
 Abashed, and dared not touch her angel name.

ANGELO.

This honest indignation binds thee still,
 Still closer to my heart. Unhappy friend !
 Would I could spare thee this calamity ;

But honour, god-like honour, fires my soul,
And will not be restrain'd. Read, read Gerald;
I spoke not without proof.

SFORZA.

It is the hand,
The seal of Veronica. *(Reads the letter.)*

ANGELO. *(aside)*

Ha! it works:

The subtle poison steals through all his veins,
And with his life-blood mingles. How his eyes
Drink up the fatal scroll. Paralyzed
And mute he stands. Where is the hero now,
Who boldly fronted groves of hostile spears?
Stabbed to the heart by a few foolish words.
Why this is luxury my panting soul
Never imagin'd: let me veil my joy;
If I betray my triumph, I shall mar
My well-constructed plot.

SFORZA.

Where are the fiends
 Who have invaded Heaven, and stolen the forms
 Of angels, to deceive my trusting heart?
 Oh! false fair devil! shameless wanton! thou,
 Thou whom I called my friend, couldst thou too heap
 Dishonour on my head,—give to my arms,
 My chaste embrace, thy spotted harlot? Heaven,
 Lend me thy lightning; 't is not common death
 That will suffice my vengeance. Angelo!
 I loved them both,—how dearly, these hot tears
 Will witness; from my burning eyes they burst
 Like drops of melted iron from the breast
 Of yon volcano.—Oh! my Veronica!—
 Julian!—ye lovely phantoms of my brain!
 Must, must I loose ye!

ANGELO.

Such ingratitude,
 Such base return for kindness, merits not
 This tenderness.

SFORZA.

Rather, good Angelo,

Restrain my arm, than urge my gasping soul
 To deeds of horror ; limb from limb I'll tear
 The dark apostate in her presence ; sat
 My rav'nous eyes upon her agonies ;
 Deface the beauty which has dared to cheat
 The world with virtue's semblance ; monuments
 To future ages they shall stand, and leave
 A dreadful lesson to posterity.

ANGELO.

The night is waning fast ; 't is now the hour
 When from the palace-garden Julian glides,
 Tearing himself from Veronica's arms,
 Mid fond complaints, sweet kisses, and hot tears.

SFORZA.

The palace-garden say'st thou ? It shall be
 To both a grave. Come on, Prince Angelo,
 And witness my revenge.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III.—*The Palace Gardens.*

JULIAN, ISABEL, VERONICA.

JULIAN.

Oh! it is said, my Isabel, that Heaven
 Hath closed the gates of Eden on mankind,
 And Paradise no longer blooms; but we
 Have found, that innocent and faithful hearts
 Can make their own Elysium. Bounteous God
 Still blesses his creation.—What a scene
 Of glory is around us; not a cloud
 O'ershades the radiance of the summer sky—
 Turquoise and gold, the multitudinous stars
 Peep from the tender azure; Zephyr's breath,
 In gentlest sighs, scatters a silv'ry shower
 From the rich blossoms of the orange-trees,
 And wafts their precious odours on its wings.

VERONICA.

The flowers drop balm, and trooping fairies haste
 To gather in their harvest, ere the bee
 Hath roused his drowsy head. Soft music steals

From yonder bubbling spring, for little elves
 Float in the liquid diamond, singing strains
 Of love, and hope, and joy. Oh, the broad day
 Hath none of these delights; sweet Fancy shrinks
 From the betraying sun, and chooses night
 To smile upon her witchery.

ISABEL.

'Tis fair,

'Tis wondrous beautiful; but did the night
 Come clothed in all its terrors, it must bring
 Joy to thine Isabel, my Julian; we
 By stern necessity divorced by day,
 Breathe and exist but in the twilight hour.

JULIAN.

My wild idolatry could wish that night
 Should reign for ever, and these fairy bowers
 Form all our universe. Amid the crush
 Of dark tumultuous passions, which the soul
 Must combat in its worldly intercourse,
 I sigh and languish for the tranquil hour,

That links me with celestial beings—souls
Who know nor sin, nor sorrow, but by name.

VERONICA.

Come, we will sit upon this mossy bank ;
And though 't were easier to count the stars
Than number our perfections, thou wilt strive
To execute the task. Behold my lap
Is filled with flowers ; Flora never owned
A richer treasure, and the prize shall be
The wreath that Isabel delights in. See
What deep bright tints dye these carnations ;
Are they too proud and gaudy for thy sweet
Simplicity ? Here is the delicate,
The pale pink rose, the gentle hyacinth,
Who, ere the sterile wintry winds are hush'd,
In pity opens her silken bells to chide
The lingering spring ; here is the jessamine,
Whose silver stars will suit thy dark locks well ;
The gay jonquil, Titania's ample tent,
And violets, where Puck delights to hide,

ISABEL.

We must indulge her fancy, Julian.
 Repose beside me on this turf; my head
 Has sought its dearest pillow on thy breast;
 My Veronica feasts her gentle eyes
 Upon her fragile treasures: Come now, Love,
 Tax thy invention, or thy memory,
 With such a tale as suits this hour of bliss.

JULIAN.

Shall it be framed of love, or war—the lay
 Of some soft Troubadour, or armed Knight?
 Or shall I steal from Tasso's flowing verse
 The story of the warrior maid, or sing
 Armida's Paradise less fair than this?
 The tower of Ugolino were a tale
 Too dark and horrible——
 I know not why, but gloomy images
 Alone present themselves, unnatural
 And fierce revenge, and disappointed love—
 But true love, sweet, is seldom fortunate.

ISABEL.

Are we not happy, Julian? My heart,
 Swelled with the fullness of its bliss, beats high:
 Thou'rt mine—I know thou'rt mine. Thy wedded
 Oh! as I clasp thee in my arms, I feel [wife—
 Earth hath no purer blessing in its gift.

JULIAN.

The early Christian, as he poured his soul
 Before the holy altar, reared at night
 Mid silent wildernesses, felt a pang
 Steal through his breast;—he longed in open day
 To worship at the shrine. My Isabel,
 I hold thee next to Heaven. My love, my faith,
 Disdains concealment: as the martyr died,
 Acknowledging his God, I too would brave
 All peril, to proclaim before the world
 My title to thy love. The hallowed name
 Of wife springs to my eager lips, mine arms
 Are stretched to clasp thee, and my fond eyes gaze
 In passionate devotion :—I must check

The tender impulse, play the hypocrite,
And school each guarded phrase to cold respect.

ISABEL.

Oh, whilst I hang upon the melody
Of thy loved voice, list to the tender vow,
And wreath my fingers in the crisped curls
That cluster o'er thy brow, no cankered care
Will dare intrude; and were there no restraint
Upon my foolish fondness, thou would'st soon
Grow weary, Julian, and mope, and pine,
Like a caged turtle for thy liberty.

JULIAN.

You wrong me by the thought, my beautiful queen;
I were unfit to share the joys of heaven,
If I could tire of Eden. Do not chide—
Thy meek lip knows not chiding; do not sigh
To hear thy Julian confess, even bliss
Like this is dearly purchased; 'gainst my king
I have offended, and my conscious soul
Dares not to commune with its dearest friend.

Geraldi Sforza; from his searching eye
 I turn abashed; our free uncumbered speech,
 Where thought met thought, and every wish appeared,
 Seems cramped and circumscribed.

ISABELL.

Thou art my world!

And whilst I hear thee speak, and see thee smile
 In fond approval, my devoted soul
 Is rapt in bliss. Oh Julian! Julian!
 It is not thus thou lov'st me—every day
 I bend my knee in impious mockery
 Before my father, kiss his hallowed brow
 With treason on my lips, and force my tongue
 To utter hollow words, mere sounding air.—
 My heart subdued, not hardened by my love,
 Weeps o'er its filial disobedience, yet
 I would not be restored to that sweet state
 Of innocence that blessed my youth; 'tis joy
 Even to suffer for thee, so entire
 And perfect is my love.—Veronica,

Help me to rail against this cold, proud man,
 Geraldi Sforza, who usurps my place
 Within my husband's heart.

JULIAN.

She is absorbed
 In some sweet dream; dear Veronica wake,
 Convince this wayward girl, that she hath wronged
 Our gallant friend; pour forth thine eloquence,
 Or will thy timid modesty deny
 Thy love for brave Geraldi?

VERONICA.

Thou hast loosed
 My silent tongue, and 'twill now wanton. Praise—
 Oh it must fall beneath his worth; he stands
 Unmoved on glory's pinnacle; no fierce
 And mad ambition fires his even soul,
 The meanest objects of creation share
 His tenderness and bounty—far above
 His own renown he prized his country's peace,
 The happiness of others—human life,

By heroes little valued, never fell
 A useless sacrifice at his command.
 How beautiful, and like a god he stood,
 Amid the grateful people he had saved
 From war's red scourge; his eagle eye was bent
 In gentle fondness o'er them. Chronicled
 In brass and marble to a distant age,
 His deeds shall proudly stand: but oh, above
 Earth's bright renown, for him the widow's prayer
 The orphan's blessing shall ascend to Heaven.

JULIAN.

The dearest meed of valour is the praise
 That flows from pure unsullied female lips.
 Fair Veronica, 'tis the proudest boast
 Of brave Gerald's, that his deeds have won
 Thy virtuous love. Kings may bestow rich gifts,
 Honours, and titles; Fame may twine a wreath
 Of bright and fadeless laurels, and the soul
 That covets immortality must prize
 The splendid trophies. Yet the human heart

Will sigh for something dearer. What is life
 Unblest by sweet affection? Isabel,
 Can'st thou imagine aught that could console
 Thy Julian for the loss of thy loved smile?

ISABEL.

Oh flatterer, as false as thou art fair,
 I think thou dost not love me; what new oath
 Wilt thou invent? I'll not believe a vow
 That I have heard before.

JULIAN.

Dear Isabel,

I can no longer loiter here, the morn
 Is breaking, and this fond, fond kiss alone
 Must speak my love. Alas, thy silent tears
 Flow faster than my lip can dry them; sweet,
 Our separation shall be brief,—at night
 I will return.

VERONICA.

'Tis time that thou wert gone;
 The day is dawning fast; fly, Julian;

I must re-lock the gate, for Isabel
 Is grown too careless, and will let the sun
 Illume the parting hour.

ISABEL.

Farewell! Farewell!

Dear Julian, since it must be so; at night
 Remember love thy weeping Isabel.

The Gate of the Garden.

VERONICA.

Are they not sland'rous poets who have styled
 The god of love a vagrant truant boy?—
 'Tis sixteen months, I think, since thou hast played
 The faithful fond adoring lover. Fie,
 What a bad fashion dost thou set at court.
 Nay, nay, confess the truth, thy love is feigned.

JULIAN.

It is the very essence of my being; life
 Were valueless without it; love creates
 A Paradise of bliss, and who would wake
 From dreams delicious to a dull cold world?

Like the imperishable sun, my love
 Burns with a constant, inexhaustible
 And ardent fire. Oh, sooner shall the orb
 Forsake its pillow on the western wave;
 And seek another breast, than I exchange
 That snowy bosom——

Sforza rushing forward, and stabbing him.

SFORZA.

Traitor! false foul fiend!
 Amid accursed spirits thy base soul
 Shall howl through dread eternity——Despair!
 For 'tis Gerald Sforza strikes!

VERONICA.

Oh heaven!

What dark assassin has usurped that name!
 Help, help, he dies.

Enter Isabel.

ISABEL.

It is impossible,
 Julian, awake; thou art not dead, my life!
 My soul! my husband, speak to me!

SFORZA.

Husband?

Thy husband, Princess Isabel? No, no.
There stands his guilty wretched paramour.

JULIAN.

Fly, Sforza, I am dying; thy rash hand
Has slain thy truest friend. My Isabel,
Forgive him; life is ebbing fast.—My wife,
Live for the sake of our unhappy child.
Clasp me again within thy sweet embrace;
I die, my Isabel! These rigid arms
Cannot return thy pressure. Bless thee, Heaven!
Where is Gherardi Sforza? There were words
Still keener than thy sword; my dying breath
Proclaims my unstained friendship.—Seek in flight
Thy safety.—Wipe these heavy damps, my love,
From off my brow. Oh, even thy fragrant breath
Oppresses me. My last, last prayers are——[Dies.

ISABEL.

Wretch!

Complete thy work; bury within my breast
Thy fatal sword.

SPORZA.

Hell has again ingulfed
 The demon who betrayed me to this deed.
 I have not murdered Julian. The fiend,
 Though ravenous for blood, had felt a thrill
 Of gentle pity in his fire-scar'd breast,
 And staid mine arm.—My Veronica, too,
 How cold and pale she lies beside him; soon,
 Sweet innocent, thou wilt awake to pangs
 Of ceaseless torture.—What wild shriek was there!
 Am I the cause? Again it tears mine ears,
 Rings through my brain.—It is his wretched wife.

Enter Prince Angelo and Attendants.

ANGELO.

Here is the scene of blood; bind fast his arms,
 Drag the assassin to a dungeon. We
 Have here a mournful task. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE THE LAST.—*A Dungeon.*

GERALDI SFORZA.

The man I loved is dead—a second Cain,
 For I have killed my brother. Shall I dare
 Invoke Almighty mercy, pray to Heaven,
 And plead repentance, who denied my friend
 A moment's pause to prove his innocence,
 Or make his peace with his offended God?
 A mad and brutal fury urged my sword,
 I thirsted, panted for his blood, struck deep
 The fatal blow, and quenched each spark of life.
 Excellent, virtuous, god-like, Julian!
 Thou wert too good for this base world, which I
 And kindred murderers inhabit.—Dead,
 And mine the accursed hand that dealt the blow.
 Oh will no pitying angel strike me dumb,
 And paralyze my soul, lest my bold lip,
 Daring in crime with horrid blasphemy,
 Arraign the justice of my fate? That deed
 Will make me reckless of all future sin—

Is not this horror written on my front
 In hideous characters? The gaping world
 Will crowd to gaze upon the branded wretch
 Who bears his guilt imprinted on his brow,
 And less detested criminals will bruit
 Gerald's crimes to wondering multitudes.

Enter VERONICA.

Give me my murdered friend, wash from my hands
 These crimson spots—Oh why, why dost thou look
 So like an angel, and yet bear within
 The seeds of mischief?

VERONICA.

Beloved Gerald,

Look not upon me with that cold, stern glance;
 I have no welcome tidings to impart,
 Nothing to soothe thee save my faithful love,
 The strong affection which 'mid bliss or woe
 Still clings in mournful tenderness, still twines
 Like the fond ivy round the blasted tree
 That boasts no other verdure.

GERALDI.

Triumph now,
 Proud beauty. Thy supremacy o'er all
 Thy lovely sex is stamped with blood; thy path
 To fame is strewed with richer trophies than
 Pale flowers and tender madrigals; thy name
 Shall live for ever in the fatal scroll
 Recording Julian's death, and Sforza's doom.

VERONICA.

My poor Geraldi—let me chase away
 Those unkind thoughts, rising, like evil fiends,
 To goad thy wounded spirit; this dark cell
 Wherein hath pass'd thy lonely hours, the pangs
 Of keen remorse have worked a fearful change;
 'Tis not thy nature, Sforza—Oh, unbend
 That strange contracted brow—my tears, my prayers,
 Will they not melt thy much-enduring heart?

GERALDI.

Tell me that Julian lives.—Oh, beautiful cause
 Of man's destruction, hence! Thou art not safe

Within a murderer's cell : I love thee not,
 I never loved thee, and this callous heart
 Is deaf to all thy pleadings : pleasure calls,
 And pomp and glory wait thee : 'mid the joys
 The world has still to give thee, lose all care
 For one who with his dying breath denies
 The passion that he lightly feigned, to win
 A toy that pleased him in his hour of bliss.

VERONICA.

When pleasure winged the frolic day, the world
 Seemed fresh and blooming, and my buoyant heart
 Looked smiling onwards to succeeding years
 As redolent with hope, and peace, and joy—
 When thou, a conqueror, singled from a group
 Of fairer, brighter, wiser beings, one
 Whose only charm was her simplicity ;
 Stealing her inmost soul away with vows
 Tender, and sweet, and winning, as the song
 The siren sung of old ; dazzling her eyes
 With glorious deeds, and seeming in her sight

More than a mortal, whom it were no sin
 To worship with such mad idolatry
 As Danaë felt, when bursting from the skies
 The god descended in a shower of gold—
 When with thy passionate, yet melting words
 You won my trembling lip to breathe my love,
 I did not dream of this. But oh, Gerald!
 Changed as thou art, the wreck of that proud hour,
 A broken statue and a fallen star,
 Though all the world should scorn thee, and thine
 Fals. to thyself, disdain thy truest friend, [heart,
 I will not leave thee to thy m'sery,
 But to the last sad moment of thy life
 Strive with my humble skill to comfort thee.

GERALD.

Love me, my Veronica! dost thou still,
 Still love me? Oh! it is impossible
 To veil my feelings in this odious mask!
 I have not fortitude to sacrifice
 Thy sweet affection, even for thy dear sake.

Angel of mercy ! bright celestial saint !
 I would have spared thee all the agony
 Which thou wilt suffer at my shameful death !
 Forgive this weakness, or forget it, sweet,
 And think me still a hardened, heartless wretch—
 A dark assassin, who could coldly frown .
 Upon thy matchless tenderness: my crime
 Hath merited thy hate. My Veronica,
 I have involved thee in my ruin ; thou
 Wilt never taste of happiness again ;
 This weak and selfish spirit could not bear
 The trial.

VERONICA.

Blessed beyond imagination,
 I feel thy gentle tears bedew my cheek.
 O, Sforza ! when I knelt before the king,
 Vainly to sue thy pardon—when thy foes
 Prevailed against me, this devoted heart
 Felt not such keen, such agonizing, pain
 As followed thy cold looks, thy bitter words.

GERALDI.

Come to my arms, and lay thy gentle head
 Upon my beating heart—a stormy nest
 For such a tender dove: safe from all ills
 Thou should'st repose, rocked calmly to thy rest,
 A guardian angel bending o'er thee; sounds
 Of lulling sweetness, soft ambrosial airs,
 Instead of these hot tears, these stifled sighs,
 And the wild throbbing of my tortured breast.
 I shall be calmer soon; but thou, my love,
 How wilt thou bear thy sorrows? I have brought
 This dreadful blight upon thee; tell me, sweet,
 Is there redemption for a deed like mine?
 Thy pure orison, Veronica, join,
 And, mingled thus, my prayers may reach the skies
 Canst thou, love, soothe me with the blessed hope,
 That even my crimes may be at last forgiven?

VERONICA.

Oh, it were sin to doubt it, dear Gerald;
 Look up with confidence; unfeigned remorse,

And incense sweet of penitential tears
 Are thrice-blessed offerings to the holy saints,
 Thou dost accuse thyself too bitterly,
 That base incendiary, fell Angelo,
 Shall by Omn'potence be justly deemed
 The guilty one; like the accursed fiend,
 Who gazed on Paradise and saw its bliss,
 With unrelenting eye, his pitiless,
 Inhuman heart, dealt the fell bolt that smote
 To dust the fairy edifice that love
 Had fondly reared.

GERALDI.

No, no, my Veronica,
 I suffered dreadful passions to invade
 The breast so proud of virtue; I despised
 My tempter, and this arrogant,
 Perverted soul deemed every sin against
 Its happiness too great to be forgiven—
 I murdered Julian, and it is I
 Must answer for the deed—Oh, would the loss

Of all my much-prized honours, could recal
 That blow, too justly aimed. It will not be---
 The sacrifice of thy dear precious love
 Could not bring back to life the friend I slew !
 My only hope of pardon is the sense
 I feel of my transgression---I regret
 Not all the promised joys that bloom'd so fair ;
 I do not wish to shun my punishment ;
 It is my crime, my crime that I lament.
 The God of mercy will forgive me ere
 I can forgive myself.

VERONICA.

And must I part with thee,
 Geraldi, dear Geraldi, never meet
 Thy fond impassioned glance? one only hope
 To soothe me on my weary pilgrimage,
 Through this bleak desolated world, the thought
 That we may meet in Heaven. My Sforza, say,
 Dost thou imagine in the realms of bliss
 That we shall know each other?

GERALDI.

My beloved,

The hour of my departure is at hand,

Oh, arm thy gentle bosom to endure

The dreaded moment; would thy faithful heart

Could learn a lesson of forgetfulness!

The sight of thy keen agony alone

Will bind me to this earth.

VERONICA.

My Gerald,

I can endure an age of misery,

If I have hope that we shall meet in Heaven,

And love as we have loved on earth; my soul,

I do conjure thee, tell me, dost thou think

It will be so?

GERALDI.

So near my death, my tongue

Dares not equivocate, though to mislead

Thy spirit with a false belief, would spare

Thy tender heart a pang, and give me joy

To mitigate thy anguish. Oh, I fear
 Our parting is eternal. If in Heaven
 ; The virtuous mother who had left on earth
 . A much-loved child, should seek it vainly 'mid
 The new-created angels, Veronica, where
 Would be her Paradise?

VERONICA.

'Tis past, 'tis fled;
 My only hope is melted into air,
 Expect not, ask me not to live, Gerald,
 I never can survive thee.

GERALD.

Heaven avert
 This frightful visitation of my crime,
 For mine will be the sin, and at my hands
 The souls that I to evil lead, be claimed—

VERONICA.

If they would let thee live, my own Gerald,
 Even in this gloomy dungeon, I would bless
 My destiny, and never ask again

To view the light of day ; it is too much,
 Too much of happiness to see thee pine
 And wither in this poisonous atmosphere ?
 And will they, can they tear thee from me, slake
 Their hands in thy warm blood ?

GERALD.

My crime demands
 The forfeit of my life, and I must bend
 With meekness to the just decree—'tis hard,
 'Tis painful to relinquish in my prime
 The bliss that earth can give, to call thee wife--
 To see my children hang about my knees—
 Oh, Veronica, murderer as I am,
 How dare I dream of such felicity ?

VERONICA.

Alas! how pale and haggard is that brow,
 So lofty once. Sorrow, my best beloved,
 Has done the work of age: we should not long
 Burthen this cruel world, our stricken hearts
 Would break together. I could see thee die

Upon a bed of straw by famine pinched,
 With nothing save my tears to quench thy thirst
 And bless my fate: how very wretched then
 Must be my lot since happiness is shaped
 By hopeless anguish in such horrid forms?

GERALDI.

My Veronica, when the laurel wreath
 Was twined around my brow, when at my feet
 The brilliant trophies of successful war
 Were laid by prostrate kings—in that proud hour
 Fancy portrayed thee as the hero's bride,
 Thy timid beauty crowned with dazzling gems,
 Thy chariot drawn by thronging multitudes
 Eager to pay thee homage, 'mid the sound
 Of swelling instruments, but sweeter far
 The music of a grateful people's prayers—
 A fearful change, my Veronica! barred
 Within a noisome dungeon; from thine arms
 Dragged to a shameful death. My love hath been
 To thee a blighting curse; that form of light,

So like a seraph's, stricken to the dust,
 Could I receive my punishment alone
 And leave thee happy, I could bear my fate
 With decent fortitude—but thus, oh thus,—
 My spirit sinks subdued,

Enter the JAILER.

VERONICA,

Sforza, he comes!—Thou horrid minister
 Of cruel laws, for once be merciful,
 And kill me in these arms. Nay, nay, in vain
 You strive to separate us, he is mine—
 I will not leave him, will not quit my grasp
 Till my hewed limbs are severed from their trunk,
 In death's convulsive agonies I'll fold
 My loved Gerald in my strong embrace.

GERALDI.

Dead! is my Veronica dead? Oh, no,
 That blessing is denied her. Must I leave
 Upon the cold earth that pale lifeless form?
 She'll wake and find me gone. Beseech ye, sirs,

See her conveyed to some blest sisterhood
Of holy nuns. One last, and precious kiss,
And then we part for ever. My good friend,
Lend me thine arm; I'm weak, and dizzy: Heav'n,
Take to thy bosom that sweet suffering saint!
It will not hear a murderer's prayer! For me,
My Veronica is accurs'd, Images
Of horror rush upon my brain—lead on,
Lead on to welcome death.—

THE FLORENTINES.

A DRAMATIC TALE.

GIOVANNI.

HELENA.

ROSMUNDA.

SCENE I. — *The Pleasure-grounds of a Villa.*GIOVANNI *returning from the Chase*, HELENA
meeting him.

HELENA.

Giovanni, art thou safe, quite safe—the spoil
 Thou bear'st so bravely on thy spear not won
 By grisly wound? How fierce the monster looks:
 There's blood upon his tusk; not thine, Giovanni?
 Dearest, it is not thine?

GIOVANNI.

Thou fearful girl,
 I am unharmed: thou see'st the boar is dead.
 A noble savage, for he gave brave sport,
 And struggled gallantly for life. 'Twas scarce

A just decree of fortune to secure
 The hunters who had roused him from his lair.
 He made a desperate stand at bay—but, sweet,
 I must abridge my tale, since it doth blanch
 The roses on thy cheek. Thou can'st not bear
 To hear thy husband's prowess; I had hoped
 To win thy plaudits—

HELENA.

Why, why wilt thou rush
 Upon such frightful danger? Is thy life
 So little valued, or my happiness
 So trifling in thine eyes.

GIOVANNI.

Oh, Tyranny,
 Thou hast usurped an angel's form; thy chains
 Are made of roses; who, who would be free
 When slavery is so sweet? I'll stay with thee
 The live-long day, exchange my dangerous sword
 For that slight spear that weaves thy magic webs,—
 Give me thy distaff, love.

HELENA.

Nay, now you mock me—

GIOVANNI.

I dare not, Helen, pretty, pouting girl—
 What must I say, what do to be forgiven?
 Thou know'st I love to kiss away thy tears,
 Yet would not cause them for the wealth of worlds.
 Thine eye is moist, thy cheek is deadly pale,
 Thou art not well, and I have grieved thee, sweet.
 Come, come and rest thee in my arms; thy young
 And innocent heart hath felt no deeper ills
 Than those that love's soft, soothing, melting voice,
 Can charm away.

HELENA.

I've had a frightful dream.—

Methought we stood upon a mountain's brow,
 And watched the sinking sun-beams; all below
 Was calm and sweet, a smooth unruffled sea;
 The golden orb sunk down; from out the sky
 Flashed forth effulgent planets: we were near,

So near to heaven, that we could see, amid
 The brightness of the stars, soft angel-forms
 ; Waving their snowy pinions, darting down
 The milky way, and floating in the pure
 Cerulean ether ; yet beneath our feet
 Sprang flowers of such rare odour, and the earth
 Looked so inviting with its bubbling springs,
 Its sweet variety of hill and dale,
 Its peaceful villages and rural haunts,
 And that unruffled ocean, that we deemed
 Our world the fairest place : and then you threw
 Your arms around me, and, as you are wont,
 Taught me to name the wonders of the sky,
 Whilst they were sailing onwards.—Suddenly
 You stooped to pluck a rose ; I gazed above,
 And missed you from my side. On earth I looked,
 But there you were not ; then my eye sought heaven ;
 Alas ! you were not there. Then all was changed—
 The stars were globes of blood, the sea a gulf
 Of pitchy blackness ; tossed on the dark wave

I saw a livid corpse—'twas thine, Giovanni,
 I shrieked, and burst the bonds of sleep; chill damps,
 Hung on my brow, a weight oppressed my heart,
 And still my pulse beats quick, and wild alarms
 Subdue my weakened spirits.

GIOVANNI.

Hence! avaunt!

Ye baneful sprites! who, out of murky fogs,
 Hatch shapeless monsters, black, unsightly forms,
 Chimeras gloomy, shadowy phantoms dim,
 Away, swart fiends of earth! deep, deep in fens,
 Suck the[#] unwholesome dews; with bloated toads
 And slimy reptiles gorge; but come not near
 The chamber of my love, with visions dark
 To mar her sweet repose. Thou fairy train
 Of sprightly elves watch o'er her pillow; bring
 The pearl that hangs upon the cowslip's cup, to lave
 Her brow of snow; fan her soft roseate cheek
 With feathers plucked from wings of butterflies;
 Steal from the bee his honeyed store, and plant

The treasure on her lips; rear o'er her head
A canopy of gossamer, begemmed
With drops of glittering dew, and gathered fresh
From beds of new-blown daisies; breathe, amid
The honeysuckle's winding chorus, a sound
Of lulling sweetness; strike your pearly shells
In unison with wings for ever fraught
With music; see that the dusky trumpeter,
The gnat, be stingless; lead her sleeping thoughts
To fairy land, and wreath her in the dance
Which bright Titania threads! Helena, now
Smile on my invocation. Thou shalt ne'er
Again be tortured with dark phantasies,
But, waking, sleeping, will thy husband's care
Guard thee from evil.—Are thy fears dispelled,
Or must I weave a charm more potent, love?

HELENA.

I am to blame to let this vision still
 Hang round my heart; I see that thou art safe,
 I feel that thou art mine. My rival lies

Dead at my feet,---Nay, nay, you must confess
 That grim and horrid savage had the power
 To lure thee from these fond entwining arms,
 I will not look upon it; it will feed
 My sickly fancy with another dream.

GIOVANNI.

Sweet infidel! hast thou so soon forgot
 My necromantic spells? or dost thou doubt
 The power of the magician?

HELENA.

Alas! Giovanni,
 Whilst timid apprehension will suggest
 A *cause* for fear, our busy sleeping thoughts
 Dwell upon dangers.

GIOVANNI.

Say, my timid dove,
 What dost thou fear?

HELENA.

Thou wilt laugh at me;
 And that's more painful than thy chiding frown,

That stern, cold look, which thou canst sometimes wear,
When I have chafed thee with an idle speech.

GIOVANNI.

Thou shalt mould all my features to thy wish :
I will not arch my brow the breadth of one
Of those bright hairs clust'ring around thy neck :
My pliant lip, guiltless of irony
Shall curl as thou desirest, dearest girl,
I'll press it on thy soft, white hand. Now ease
Thy burthened heart of all these heavy griefs,
If I should smile, thou can'st not see it, love.

HELENA.

When first we dwelt upon the Arno's bank,
(Leaving the city to its gloomy pride)
Like a young bird just scap'd from his gilt cell,
I ranged abroad, soaring on untried wing,
Fearless and free. But now a narrow space
Confines my flights, my garden's boundary,
I dare not pass its jasmine fence alone ;
And though the dainty butter-cup looks fresh,

Like fairy gold dropped on the distant hill;
 That pretty token of remembrance,
 Forget-me-not, and violets more sweet
 Than those my hands have planted, lure my steps;
 I must restrain the impulse——

GIOVANNI.

Why, my love?

HELENA.

A snake hath coiled its odious form amid
 Those blooming wilds. Alas! my dear Giovanni,
 Since thou hast given shelter to that man,
 That dark, mysterious Garcia, he who begged
 A lodging in the woodland hut, so long
 Untenanted—I dare not stir abroad.

GIOVANNI.

Is poverty a crime with thee, Helena?

HELENA.

Oh, no: I quarrel with his heavy brow,
 The sinister malicious looks he casts
 On thee, my love, when taking from thy hand

Thy lavish bounty. I have heard dark tales
 Of his apostacy. A renegade
 Amid the Turks, who, in a Christian land,
 Can think him less than demon? On my soul
 He hath imprinted such a dread, I ne'er
 Can taste or peace or comfort whilst he haunts
 Our Paradise. Giovanni, give him gold;
 Let him have all he asks, but send him hence.

GIOVANNI.

I do not laugh, Helena, at thy fears,
 Though they are groundless.—Ask me not to play
 A tyrant's part, and exile from the shed
 Which he hath called his home, that much-wronged

HELENA. [man.

He is thine enemy, Giovanni.

GIOVANNI.

No;

And if he were, his sufferings might excuse
 A hostile feeling.

HELENA.

Thou hast never wronged him,

GIOVANNI.

Willingly, my Helena, never yet
 By word, or deed, or wish, did I e'er harm
 A human being; but by me and mine
 Was Garcia deeply injured. Seek not now
 To learn the story, and guard well your ears
 From vulgar slanders; do not trust your eyes
 To whisper to your heart an evil thought,
 Because a cruel destiny hath marked
 His form with haggard misery; he'd show
 Not so unseemly in a velvet robe;
 But tattered weeds, and scars, and sun-burnt brows,
 Detract from outward beauty.

HELENA.

Why dost thou
 Deny his history? It is unjust,
 For I shall doubt until I be convinced.
 Come, come, Giovanni, hide it not from me.

GIOVANNI.

The tale involves a subject which I fear
 Would not unto thine ear sound musical ;
 Not so melodious as thy husband's voice
 Is wont to be——

HELENA.

We have been wedded now two years, Giovanni,
 And even thy chiding has to me seemed sweet ;
 Thou art so gentle, when my wayward words
 Provoke reproof. 'Tis the sarcastic smile,
 Denoting keen contempt, which most I fear
 And wounds me deepest. “ Pretty little fool,”
 Though spoke in jest, seems half in earnest.

GIOVANNI.

Nay,

I only call, I only think thee, love,
 A little simpleton, when thou hast nursed
 A viper in thy breast ; when jealousy,
 Too readily admitted, mars thy peace.

HELENA.

It is my diffidence that makes me doubt ;
 And if thou dost deny thy confidence,
 What can I deem myself, but a mere toy,
 A plaything for thy idle moments?—not
 Thy bosom's counsellor, and valued friend——

GIOVANNI.

Helena, thou shouldst see my inmost soul,
 Read all my thoughts, but——

HELENA.

That thou fearest to trust me :
 Though I lack wisdom, love, I'll be discreet—
 Why dost thou hesitate ?

GIOVANNI.

When Eve had spoiled
 The tree of knowledge with a daring hand,
 She found the fruit was bitter—be advised—
 Retain thy innocent simplicity ;
 Revel in happy ignorance, nor seek
 A theme for deeper meditation, than
 Hath yet found entrance in thy youthful heart.

HELENA.

Alas! henceforward all my joys are fled,
 Vivid imagination will surround
 Thy secret with a host of fears. My heart
 Suggests some cruel motive for thy stern
 Unyielding silence. Oh! my own Giovanni,
 Why art thou so unkind?

GIOVANNI.

Thou art my wife;
 I should have told this tale when I had won
 Thy virgin love, and left thee to thy choice.
 Forgive me, for I feared to lose thee, sweet;
 Forgive me, that I tell the story now.
 It is to prove to thee, my love, my trust,
 And that I deem thee wise as thou art fair.

HELENA.

I am a fool to let thee see how deep,
 How ardent, tender, and how passionate,
 My love hath grown. My husband, when I feel
 The pressure of thine arm, meet thy fond glance

Bend kindly on me, hear the gentle sound
Of thy sweet voice—what would I not forgive?

GIOVANNI.

Read o'er my heart, I will not hide one thought.
The earliest sorrow, Helen, of my youth,
My father caused,—a stern ambitious man:
Born a patrician, he had climbed to power,
And those who valued the Republic, feared
His giant strides would lead him to a throne.
All who opposed him sank beneath his feet;
And one, who struggled hard to clip his wings,
Too boldly venturous, o'erstepped the law,
And fell its victim—in one person, judge!
Accuser! enemy!—his fate was sealed—
My father was implacable.

HELENA.

Indeed!

And thou his son?

GIOVANNI.

I clung about his knees,
Besought, intreated, prayed him to relent?

Writhe'd in the dust before him. My young heart
 Shrank at the sight of blood. The day arrived
 That saw the sentence executed; throngs
 Of heartless wretches crowded in the streets,
 Eager to see a fellow-creature die.
 The scaffold waved with black; the dismal bell
 Told forth a horrid sound. My stricken soul
 Gave to the mournful drapery a tongue;
 And heard in that sepulchral clang, a voice
 Proclaiming, Vengeance! Vengeance on the race,
 Who tore a father from his children's arms,
 And made them orphans.

HELENA.

Oh, my poor Giovanni!

GIOVANNI.

The dark remembrance of that dreadful day
 Will never be erased; the air was hot
 As burning sulphur. Blinded by my tears,
 And all my senses steeped in agony,
 Still, still I saw him, weak, and faint, and pale;

His haggard eye glared wildly on the crowd—
 But there were none to save him, and he died.
 His wealth was forfeit to the state; his son,
 Young Garcia, exiled from his native land:
 His only daughter, sunk in poverty,
 Languished and pined.

HELENA.

A convent's walls, methinks,
 Had proved a safe asylum. Charity
 Left her not quite uncomforted?

GIOVANNI.

I sought
 Her humble dwelling, in a borrowed name,
 And, like a guardian genius, supplied
 Her father's tender cares. From her fair cheek
 The rose had fled; but the rich pallidness,
 The ivory brightness of her delicate
 Pale brow, contrasted with the beaming eye,
 Dark as the sable, silken, curls that waved
 Around her polished temples, seemed, indeed,

So perfect in its beauty—the bright tint,
The flush of red, had marred its loveliness.

HELENA.

So very fair, Giovanni?

GIOVANNI.

She is dead—

Disconsolate, deserted, pity first
Melted my youthful heart; then love's quick flame
Arose. My father sternly had despoiled
Her life of hope; I felt a generous wish
To bid it bloom again. We fled away,
And married—

HELENA.

Married, my Giovanni?

GIOVANNI.

Why dost thou start, and turn away thy head,
Struggling to quit my arms? I told thee, sweet,
That she was dead. Oh! do not envy her
The short brief gleam of sunshine that illumed
Her cheerless life. Sailing along the deep,

The treacherous ocean, suddenly a storm
 Wrecked our frail bark; within my arms I clasped
 My hapless wife, and ploughed the weltering wave:
 Stunned by a blow, all power forsook my limbs,
 And she was lost; but, by a miracle,
 A fishing vessel that outlived the gale,
 Espied me ere the vital spark had fled,
 And called me back to life. I sought my home,
 And hid my secret in my breast—

HELENA.

Yet still
 Cherished thine early love, thy first, first love?

GIOVANNI.

No—'twas a boyish fancy. I have learned
 The lesson since. My Helen, whilst thine heart
 Beats against mine, I feel that I *adore*
 The mother of my child. Come, dry those tears,
 Thou never had'st a rival. Garcia now
 Will claim thy pity; think what he hath lost,
 What he hath suffered.

HELENA.

Swear again thou lovest me!

GIOVANNI.

Come to thy chamber, thou art faint—my life,
My own Helena, doubt me not. All thine,
Dearest, all thine, for ever.

SCENE II.—*The Confines of a Wood*
GIOVANNI enters prepared for the Chase.

GIOVANNI.

From this bold eminence how beautiful
The earth appears; the blue and golden air,
Filled with the vital essence, to the soul
Brings such invigorating influence,
My buoyant spirit seems to rise on wings
That would transport me through the boundless space
Of glittering ether, did not that bright world
That blooms below, entwine around my heart,
And tempt my lingering footsteps. You dark wood,
So deep, so silent, still bears sun-light paths,
Shining amid the gnarled and mossy track
Of giant trees, whose aged arms embrace,
And form a living canopy above :
And there the roebuck springs; the dusky boar
Lurks in his lair. Down, down, my gallant hounds,
A moment yet, ere I let slip the leash,
And rouse the quarry. I must gaze awhile

On thy pure glassy mirror, Aino, where,
 From thy blue depths reflected, tower, and tree,
 The Roman ruin, garlanded with wreaths
 Of flowing ivy, rests in calm repose.
 Oh Italy ! thou bright, romantic land,
 Fit scene for love, and peace, and brotherhood,
 Why art thou so defiled by human deeds ?
 Pride and ambition, hatred and revenge,
 Have dyed thy crystal streams with crimson gore,
 Tainted thy balmy air with noises strewed
 Amid fair valleys redolent with bliss.
 There, deep sequestered, howered around with flowers,
 Blooms the sweet nest of my felicity,
 My joy-encircled home. Thou tender dove,
 Like the white pions of thy prototype,
 Thy snowy garments flutter in the air.
 Helena, blessings light upon thee, love,
 Thou soft, thou gentle, stainless innocent ;
 Brief absence gives affection new delights.
 Now could I leap the space that separates

Thee and thy infant from my longing arms,
And hold thee clasped for ever.—

Enter ROSMUNDA.

Stranger, speed
Thy path in peace, fear not the fire-eyed brutes;
My dogs shall not molest thee.

ROSMUNDA.

I have passed
Too many dangers, scaped from suffering
Too oft, to fear thy fierce and ravenous hounds.
My journey hath been long, and I am faint,
And somewhat apprehensive, lest, perchance,
I meet not such a welcome as my hopes
Have fondly painted.

GIOVANNI.

Rest upon this bank:
The mountain-spring trickles from yonder rock—
I'll bring thee dainty beverage from the vase [fresh
Which nature's hand hath scooped: drink, 'twill re-
Thy parched and fever'd lips. Nay, do not fear

A cold reception from thy relatives.

Oh, there's a germ in every human breast,
 That buds anew when absent friends return,
 Thou 'lt bring with thee blissful remembrances
 Of times long past, of love, and hope, and joy ;
 And though a scorching sun, a blighting wind,
 May have converted to an arid sand
 The soil where flow'rets sprang, they 'll bloom again,
 A second spring of tender, calm delights.

ROSMUNDA.

What, if whilst I have wander'd, sunk in grief,
 Struggling with poverty, and wrinkled cares
 Feeding upon my bloom, wasting my limbs
 With premature decay, my friends have soared
 To fortune's topmost height ; will they embrace
 The squalid wretch that sues to them for bread,
 Brings them no guerdon, save a broken heart,
 Shamed in a tenement of withered clay ?

GIOVANNI.

Thou wilt be dearer for thy sufferings ;
 They 'll pour their golden treasures at thy feet,

Hang o'er thy couch, resume thy grief-dulled eye
 With the revivifying influence
 Of faithful love. Oh, there are human breasts
 So constant, so munificent, so blest
 With god-like attributes, that, for their sakes,
 Heaven withholds its fires from sinful men.

ROSMUNDA.

Should, by misfortune's blighting touch, my form
 Be so much altered, that a single trace
 Of former beauty doth not live, to wake
 Remembrance in the breast; the silv'ry sound,
 The music of my voice, be changed to harsh
 And grating discord, dost thou, dost thou think
 Those who have loved me in my former pride,
 Will gaze with kindness now?

GIOVANNI.

If thou hast proof
 That love existed strong, unsullied—

ROSMUNDA.

Yes,

Oh yes, disinterested, passionate,

And pure affection bless'd me once; dost think
That such attachment e'er could fade? My life
Hangs on thy answer: speak, Giovanni!

GIOVANNI.

A stranger, yet familiar with my name. [Aside
Who, and what art thou?

ROSMUNDA.

Oh, it chills my breast
To hear thee ask the question; to thy heart
Hath not a spirit whispered, 'tis the wreck
Of what was once thy precious, best beloved,
Thy cherished wife, Rosmunda?

GIOVANNI.

Oh! no, no;
Her bones are whitening deep beneath the sea;
A fathomless abyss enshrines her form;
Wave after wave rolls o'er her; she is dead—

ROSMUNDA.

The locks that thou wert wont to call the plume
Stolen from the raven's wing, have lost their gloss;

The cheek, so snowy-faceted, now is bronzed
 With wintry storms, and summer's heat ; yet still
 I am, I am Rosmunda ! Oh, Giovanni,
 'Scaped from the wave, released from slavery,
 Wilt thou deny the haven of thine arms
 To the poor shipwrecked wanderer ?

GIOVANNI.

Away !

'Tis mockery all ; the grave must hold its dead,
 Or tombs will gape, the denizens of earth
 Be strangely mingled with the phantom forms
 Of spirits. Most unnatural union ;
 We'll not endure it.—Darkness, the cold cave
 Of ocean is thy dwelling-place, not light,
 And air, and sunshine—

ROSMUNDA.

Oh, beloved Giovanni !

Speak not so wildly ; 'tis thy living wife,
 Thy lost Rosmunda : by a miracle
 We both were saved. It was a happier fate

That led thee to thy country, raised thee up,
 It should appear, to rank and riches. I
 Suffered the cruel destiny that hangs
 Upon my hapless race; was sold to chains,
 Dragged out an abject servitude, for long
 And weary years, till the kind charity
 Of pious Christians wrought my slow release.

GIOVANNI.

And dost thou plead to me, stained and defiled
 By the embrace of Infidels? I know
 How sacred female purity would be
 Within a harem's walls. We are divorced
 By Heaven's own law. I pity thee; my wealth
 Shall shield thy future life from misery,
 But we must never meet again.

ROSMUNDA.

Before

The face of Heaven, I swear, a spotless bride,
 A faithful, oh most faithful wife, hath dared
 To call thee husband. We are one; the church,

All laws, both human and divine, have bound,
 Irrevocably bound us. Those bright charms
 Which won thee, my *Giovanni*, were effaced,
 At first, by sickness, by despair, by grief;
 And, with returning health, my earliest care
 Was to despoil my person of all power
 To tempt the lawless libertine I served.
 Too soon my pains were needless; thou, even thou,
 Hast turned with loathing from the form which once
 Thou gazed upon with rapturous delight,
 Hung o'er enamoured, like the wooing bee
 Floating in air above the blushing rose.

GIOVANNI.

Forgive me, lost Rosmunda, oh, forgive me!
 Unhappy victim of a cruel fate,
 Thy bitter cup of sorrow is not drained:
 The dregs remain; and I, even I, am doomed
 To add to thy misfortune: that strong oath
 I swore to thee must be revoked; new ties,
 New duties bind me: show thyself supreme

In magnanimity above thy sex,
 And seal our separation. I have now
 No heart, no love to give thee. Tear not then,
 The bonds asunder that have linked my soul—
 Dishonour not my children. At thy feet,
 Low kneeling, I implore you to renounce
 The right you claim: be kind, be merciful.
 Hatred and gratitude are thine to choose.
 Rosmunda, thou hast lived within my breast
 Immaculate; change not thine image now.

ROSMUNDA.

I will not yield thee up thy plighted vows,
 Consign my name to infamy and scorn,
 Connive at thy adulterous intercourse,
 And guard my rival's peace. I will appeal
 To Heaven, to man. Too long the sport of fate,
 I will not bend to thy barbarity,
 Drag out my life in some obscure retreat,
 But share the fortunes of my wedded lord.

GIOVANNI.

If riches are thine object, here are gems
 Would prove a monarch's ransom; all my wealth
 Is freely thine: in distant kingdoms blaze,
 With eastern splendor; leave me a poor hut,
 And the most precious treasures of my soul.

ROSMUNDA.

Waste not the time in idle words—I sought
 The fond protection of my husband's arms.
 He hath denied my suit; but Justice still
 Reigns upon earth enthroned; my cause is linked
 With sacred attributes; an injured wife,
 A helpless woman will not plead in vain.
 Across the Arno, where Zonaldi's gate
 Ope to the sufferer's tale, I'll speed my way;
 Unlike his cruel sire, who wrought the fall
 Of my unhappy father, he will aid
 The righteous cause. My brother hath obtained
 A safe asylum in his broad domains,
 And I will rush amid his marble halls,
 And tell my piercing wrongs.

GIOVANNI.

Not there! not there!

Invade not Eden; thou foul demon, back;
 Dare not advance a single footstep, lest
 My madness, my despair prevail, my heart
 Forget its natural impulse, and my hand
 Rid me, at once, of all I fear and hate.

ROSMUNDA.

Thou shalt not fright me from my purposed way,
 Even though the panting brutes thy strength restrains
 Glare not with fury more implacable
 Than flashes from thine eyes. Insatiate,
 Eager for blood, let slip the leash; their fangs
 Will execute the meditated deed,
 And thou be free from murder.

GIOVANNI.

Thou art wise,

Prudent in counsel; thou may'st tempt me far
 Beyond forbearance: faithful ministers,
 Pursue the chace alone; away! away!

Freed from thy fears, Rosmunda, let my prayers,
My agony prevail.

ROSMUNDA.

Restore me to my rights;

Cast off thy paramour; I am not now
The pliant girl, whose easy, yielding heart
You moulded to your will. The slave of man,
Too long consigned to tyranny and wrong,
I know the value of the power I hold;
And, taught a better lesson, will return
The evil I have suffered. Give me way;
I will proclaim my sorrows to the world,
And force thee to an act of justice.

GIOVANNI.

Hold!

You pass not till I bind you with an oath,
That shall secure me from your frantic threats.
Trifle not, wretched woman, with your life—

[*Exit ROSMUNDA.*]

By Heaven, she has escaped me; she will kill
My gentle Helen with her tale. Away!

I must arrest her footsteps. Gracious Power!
Send forth thy dews to cool my burning brain,
And leave me not to combat with the fiends,
Holding fell councils in my heart. My stay
Is fatal, and my path may lead, oh Heaven!
I know not where.— [*Exit, following ROSMUNDA
through the forest.*]

SCENE III.—*A Garden on the Arno.* HELENA *solus.*

HELENA,

How silv'ry bright the Arno flows, how calm
 Its tranquil breast : the gentle waters steal
 Through the fresh sedges noiselessly ; nor till
 The bubbling spring that bursts from yonder cliff,
 Bounds over rock and stone, in haste to blend
 Its tributary streams, does the sweet sound,
 The gurgling music of the rippling wave,
 Break on the listening ear. The ruddy beam
 Of the bright west hath made the waters blush,
 As though they glided o'er a ruby bed,
 And where the willow dips its graceful boughs,
 Seems a rich mine of emerald. Beneath
 The bow'ring trees that skirt the velvet lawn
 Gambols a sportive kid, and turtle doves
 Plume their bright wings, and murmur notes of love.
 Where is Giovanni ? I must prattle on
 Without his kind response ; 'tis past the hour
 In which he should return ; his eager steps

Pursue the chase too keenly; that quick eye,
 That lion heart, that lithe and active form,
 Could not be baffled by the brutal strength
 Of the grim monsters he delights to slay.
 Almida's art could weave a flow'ry chain,
 Which bound Rinaldo's soul; he never sighed,
 In her fair bower, for battle, swords and spears;
 But my loved truant (like the cruel boy,
 Whom beauty's goddess could not hold within
 Her snowy arms) spite of my smiles, my tears,
 Will burst the gentle bondage. I have gazed
 Upon the glowing canvass of our grand,
 Our mightiest master, little fancying
 It was my own sad tale. The eager dogs
 Strain on the leash; the lovely hunter's heart,
 Though his strong arm reins in the panting hounds,
 Is with the chase; and she, the queen of love,
 With ineffectual pleading, supplicates
 Her loved Adonis to forego his sport.
 He breaks the links her intertwining arms

Have fondly wreathed, and rushes on to death.—
 He comes! now his blithe spirit will repel,
 With joyous smiles, my apprehensive fears—

Enter GIOVANNI.

Oh, no! his brow is deadly pale! My life!
 My husband, thou art wounded?

GIOVANNI.

In my soul,

Helena, mortally. Look on me, sweet,
 With those fair eyes, so full of tenderness,
 A last fond glance! We were too happy, love,
 And we must part—

HELENA.

Oh! never has thy voice
 Assumed so sad a tone. Tell me the worst—
 A thousand horrors rush upon my brain;
 Yet when I clasp thee in my eager arms,
 And feel that thou art safe from outward wounds,
 I'll not despair. Cheer thee, my life! my love!
 We shall be happy still—

GIOVANNI.

Yes, in the grave,
 When this perturbed heart has ceased to beat,
 These throbbing pulses rest—Oh, no, not then:
 Here and hereafter endless misery
 Must be my lot—eternity of pain!

HELENA.

*Shrink not, my husband, from my fond caress;
 Sorrow shall not come nigh thee in my arms;
 I'll chase away the fiend.—Oh! thou hast sworn,
 A thousand times, that I possessed the power
 To sooth thee in thy direst woe, but now
 You turn away.*

GIOVANNI.

*Grief hath bedimmed each sense—
 A dull and torpid weight is on my heart.*

HELENA.

Alas! thou dost not love me.

GIOVANNI.

*In the skies,
 Upon the earth 'tis written, red with blood—*

*Search through yon forest for my broken vow,
 There 'tis recorded. Oh, I have given thee
 My soul—my soul—my love hath been a flame,
 Devouring, quenchless; and the life of one
 Who sought to part us, wildly sacrificed—
 A murderer stands before thee! She is dead—
 My wife, Rosmunda! and a stainless name
 Is thine, thy child legitimized: for thee
 I've plunged in crime—have sold myself to hell!
 Do I not love thee? dost believe it now?*

HELENA.

*Thy looks, thy words are wild; but oh, that deed—
 Intensity of sorrow tells the tale
 Thy lips have only glanced at. She is dead—
 And I the fatal cause! Do not hate me—
 Do not desert me: prayer and penitence
 Shall win forgiveness for thee: we will seek,
 Two weeping pilgrims, for each holy shrine;
 Nor rest, nor taste of comfort, till we feel
 That we are pardoned.*

GIOVANNI.

She lies deep in earth—

The forest boughs wave o'er her; birds will sing
 As blithely, and the fawn shall calmly sleep
 Upon her unblest grave, as tho' he stretched
 His limbs on sod undrenched with human blood.

There is no witness of my crime; the world
 Will call me good and virtuous, and my tomb
 Be sculptured o'er with poets' flatteries—

'Tis here, 'tis in my brain, that I am stamped
 With deadly sin! What would my prayer avail?
 Can I repent that I have saved my child
 And thee from shame? Were it to do again,
 This arm is ready. I have murdered her—
 A helpless woman, and my wedded wife;—
 Could I repent of this, I had been mad
 When I performed the deed. I knew the crime
 Was hopeless, and I shrunk not from it; but
 Never, oh never, nor on earth nor heaven
 Shall I taste peace again.

My father's sins are visited on me,
And I am doomed—

HELENA.

Tears, bitter, passionate tears,
Are all I have to give; my tortured heart
Will not suggest one soothing word. Is 't true
That I stand by thee, hold thee in my arms,
Without the power to whisper peace; that we
Are both alive, both love, and both despair?

GIOVANNI.

Live for thy child, Helena; live to pray
For one who dares not mock the throne of heaven
With impious hopes. My life is waning fast,
My spirit sinks beneath the fearful weight,
The burden of my sin. But yesternoon
I would have boldly dared the living world,
All evil spirits, the dark enemy
Of fallen man, to tempt me from the height,
The proud, the virtuous height on which I stood.
What am I now? A wretch, my fellow-men,

The reckless profligates I have despised,
 Would execrate! Clasp me again, my love,
 Once more within the heaven of thine arms,
 Ere I descend to expiate my crime
 In endless pangs.

HELENA.

Giovanni! my Giovanni!
 Thy brow grows livid, and thy trembling limbs
 Are failing; leave me not, my life! my soul!
 My husband!

GIOVANNI.

Search in the wood; she lies
 Beneath a blasted oak; give to her corse
 The rites of Christian burial. I fear
 She needs thy pious aid; her soul, like mine,
 Had lost its innocence before she died—
 And place me in thy tomb, my gentle love.
 We ne'er shall meet in happiness, but still
 'Twill sooth me if our dust be mingled here.—

MISCELLANEOUS POÉMS.

ADDRESS,

*Spoken at the Opening of the Cawnpore Theatre,**

October 20, 1829.

Where late a jungle spread its tangled dolls,
And panthers lurked within the forest's cells;
Where still in troops the famished jackalls prowled,
And the wolf bays the moon with dismal howl;
Where mid barbaric pomp a Satrap bore
Tyrannic sway along the Ganges' shore,
And the adjacent city only rang
With the deep *dhole*, or harsher cymbal's clang,
And native crowds beheld with fierce delight
On the red plain the sanguinary fight
Of savage beasts, whose worse than brutal sport
Formed the amusement of an Eastern Court;

* An elegant building of the Roman Doric order, erected by subscription, from the design, and under the direction of Major. Burt, Engineers.

Mid reliques and remains of tall Kiosks,
 Pagodas, minarets, and dome-crowned mosques;
 Where towering palms and spreading banians rise,
 A Doric structure meets the spell-bound eyes—
 Its fair proportions formed in every part
 Just to the classic rules of Roman art,
 And dedicated to those Nymphs divine,
 The fairer sisters of the tuneful Nine—
 Attendant on the Drama—a gay throng,
 Who weave the mingled web of dance and song,
 Where young Thalia laughs with mirthful eye,
 And gorgeous Tragedy comes sweeping by.

Say, what the magic charm that thus has changed
 The wild, where erst the forest-monster ranged,
 To the gay Theatre, where wit's bright rays
 Pour forth the sparklings of its diamond blaze,
 And the rapt ear delighted lists again
 The gifted poet's most ennobling strain,

And Satire lightly laughs at Folly's cause,
 And Virtue wins the heart to Virtue's laws?
 'Tis woman's smile!—She raised her potent wand,
 And this fair structure rose at her command;
 She blessed the wilderness, and each ravine
 Transformed at once, became a brilliant scene:
 And the lone exiles from a distant coast
 No longer mourn for all that they have lost;
 But pleased, and pleasing, to this arid sand
 Have brought the treasures of their native land.
 And never yet beneath the arch of heaven
 To lovelier forms was man's obedience given,
 Nor homage ever paid to eyes more bright,
 Than those which grace our Theatre to-night.

Oh! still vouchsafe the soft approving smile,
 Still by your presence gild this honoured pile.
 For when did radiant beauty ever own
 A fairer realm, a more appropriate throne,

Than the arena where the Drama tries
“To catch the manners living as they rise?”
From each expressive glance the Actor draws
The gentle censure, or the sweet applause;
And as their various talents they unfold,
She cheers the timid or appals the bold:
Checks with a glance each free licentious speech,
And gives the lesson none save women teach—
Sanctions the good, directs the march of mind
To all that's great, and beautiful, and refined,
Displays the witchery of the soft, the chaste,
And shews examples of the purest taste.
We bend before you—grateful—for we know
How much to female patronage we owe,
And fearless—for to woman's generous breast
The modest suppliant never yet address
A prayer in vain——whatever our success,
The gentle smile of female loveliness,
Will soothe our failure, or our triumph bless.

Yet to the Drama's sons be not alone
Your plausive glance, and soft indulgence shewn—
But to the well-earned meed of laurel shed
On the aspirant's young and anxious head,
Who from a bold design, with taste correct,
Has reared this splended pile—the Architect,
Dreading no frown, no critic word severe,
He humbly waits for your approval—here.

Cawnpore, October 1829.

THE NAIAD.

She comes to bless me like a dream,
As with an arrow's flight,
I see her gliding down the stream
Of melted chrysolite.

Her glittering hair of wavy gold
Is bound with lilies pale,
And wreathed in many a sunny fold,
Floats round her like a veil.

Her large and tender eyes of blue
Glance upwards, filled with love,
Their sapphire beams come flashing through
The crystal wave above.

Blended with molten pearl, the rose
In all its warmest blush,
On her fair cheek enamoured glows
With ever-changing flush.

*She wears a smile of heavenly birth,
As one untouched by care,
Who never felt the ills of earth,
And knows not what they are.*

*And swiftly as she glides along
That wave so bright and clear,
Each breeze the sedgy banks among
Makes music in her ear.*

*And thus she spends the summer day,
Rejoicing in its light ;
But oh ! how fleetly melts away
When steals the shrouding night.*

*Beneath the moon's soft silvery rays
I watch the stream in vain,
But with the sun's meridian blaze
She comes ! she comes again !*

TWILIGHT WITH THE FAIRIES.

A fairy grot, and a fairy lute,

A fairy bark to float over the tide,

When the winds are hushed, and the billows mute,

And the sun has sunk to his ocean-bride.

How joyous it is to sit within

That elfin cave with its crystal spars,

While the glittering waves come dancing in,

As they catch the light of the gleaming stars.

How joyous to list to the fairy song

Which swells o'er that broad and tranquil sea—

While mermaid voices the notes prolong

Thrilling the soul with their minstrelsy.

Joyous it is in our fairy boat

When dolphins sport on the trackless main,

Like spirits of brighter spheres, to float

And steer to our sparry grot again.

*Joyous it is with the fairy crew
To share the feast so daintily spread—
To quaff the honied and rainbowed dew,
And sip the perfume from roses shed,*

*Oh! when will the twilight hour arrive,
With its mystic sounds and its mystic sights—
And who in this dull cold world would live,
When fairy-land offers such rare delights?*

THE VOYAGE OF LOVE.

Oh haste on board!—My gallant boat,
 While skies are bright and sun-beams smile,
 Shall gaily o'er the waters float,
 And steer for Pleasure's fairy isle.
 'Tis summer's prime; each bud and flower
 Glows upon hill, and dale, and grove—
 Oh! seize the blest auspicious hour
 And haste on board—and sail with Love!

Fair Hope my silken sail has wrought
 To waft us o'er the silvery tides,
 Young Enterprize the rudder brought,
 Which his adventurous spirit guides.
 Upon the deck I'll rear a light
 And trelliced bower of myrtle wove—
 The winds are hushed, the skies are bright,
 Oh! haste on board, and sail with Love!

The maiden heard the gentle song,
 She saw the gaily painted bark ;
 The path by Prudence urged was long,
 And led through valleys drear and dark.
 The silken sails, the pennons gay
 Have lured her truant steps to rove,
 She leaves the rough and rugged way
 To sail o'er tranquil seas with Love.

Swiftly towards Pleasure's flowery realm
 Love's fleet and buoyant vessel flies,
 And still through sunny straits, the helm
 Is boldly steered by Enterprize.
 The fairy prow leaps dancing o'er
 The rippling wave by cliff and cove—
 Who would not quit the lonely shore
 To sail to Pleasure's Isle with Love?

But soon tempestuous winds arise,
Loud roars the surge, descends the rain,
And vainly does young Enterprize
His rudder urge to land again.
He swims to shore—on pinions gay,
While with the weltering wave he strove,
His wily patron speeds away,
But she was wrecked who sailed with Love.

GENEVIEVE.

Bright as the summer's golden beam

Thy smiles were wont to be,

And placid as the rosy dream

Of careless infancy.

Then why that drooping downcast eye,

And wherefore dost thou grieve ;

Why art thou struggling with a sigh

My pretty Genevieve ?

So young, so lovely, and so blest,

What evil canst thou fear—

What thought disturbs thy guileless breast—

Why swells the starting tear ?

Say, dost thou weep that there is woe

Thy tears may not relieve,

And do they for another flow,

My gentle Genevieve ?

Oh! clear thy darkling brow again,
And let the radiance shine,
Like sun-beams chasing April rain,
In those sweet eyes of thine.
I swear to thee, and thou wilt still
The fond, fond vow believe,
To guard thee from each earthly ill,
My precious Genevieve!

SPAIN.

Land of the forest, land of the mountain !
 Land of the river, the hill, and the fountain !
 Where the cork, and the citron, and olive trees
 bloom—

Land where the vine wreathes its leaves into bowers,
 Where orange and lemon shed gold with their
 flowers,
 As the summer gale woos them to yield their perfume.

Land, where of old, the cross and the crescent,
 With hatred unquenched, and with fury incessant,
 Their bright banners advanced o'er the red battle
 plain ;

Where Araby poured forth its hordes like a flood,
 Where the bright mountain-torrents ran crimson
 with blood,
 And the proud Moslem reigned o'er the Christian
 domain.

Land, where the conquering Saracen made
 Tower and palace arise from the glade,
 Giving records sublime of the day of his power—
 Land, where the temple and minaret smiled
 Mid gardens with purple and ruby buds piled,
 The haunt of dark beauties in youth's freshest hour.

Land, where the Moor proudly rode o'er the plain
 With pomp and with cymbal and drum in his train,
 To the tilt, where the knighthood of Christendom flung
 Their pennons on high, and each chieftain's advance
 Was marked by the shock of the broad-sword and
 lance, [rung.
 While the lists, far and wide, with their martial deeds

Land, where love's influence strongly displayed,
 The youth of Castile and the dark Arab maid
 Were oft linked in soft bands only broken by death—
 Land, where the Moor in captivity sweet
 Sighed his fond vows at some fair Spaniard's feet,
 As she bent o'er his forehead her rose-scented breath.

Land, where the shallop spread forth its broad sail,
 And recklessly gave its career to the gale,
 Secure of success—at the leader's command,
 Who, o'er the deep waters, beyond the wide skies,
 Saw clustering islands and continents rise,
 And the bold vessel steered with an unerring hand.

Land, where the earth's richest mines have unrolled
 Their coveted treasures of silver and gold,
 And half the new world as its vassals bowed down;
 Land, where the pure priceless jewels that shone
 On Peru's dazzling sceptre and Mexico's throne,
 Were wrested to gleam on thy proud monarch's crown.

Land of the bull-fight, where hundreds engage
 The brute in his fiercest and deadliest rage,
 Till pierced by their weapons he sinks to the ground;
 Where beauty's eye dwells on the perilous deed,
 And woman can gaze as the combatants bleed,
 And her sweet voice be heard as the plaudits resound.

Land of the convert, the shrine, and the cell,
 Where the deep choral hymn, and the soft vesper bell
 On the light breezes borne gently steal o'er the ear—
 Where the soul's pensive dream of some votary pale,
 Some fond heart that pines 'neath the nun's flowing
 Is chased by the song of the gay Muleteer. [veil,

Land, where the church and the altar profaned
 By dark superstitions and priestcraft are stained
 By heretic blood to the ruthless flames given;
 Land of the dungeon, the rack, and the chain,
 Where man has appealed to his fellow in vain,
 And the shriek of the martyrs ascended to heaven.

Land of the waltz and the gay masquerade,
 The cloaked cavalier and the wild serenade,
 Where fond lovers sigh o'er their tender guitars—
 Land, where the fingers that held in their clasp
 The maiden's white hand the red dagger would grasp,
 And assassins steal forth 'neath the light of the stars.

Land, where the bandit infests each wild scene,
And the wolf bays the moon from the mountain
ravine ;
Where the goatherds have loftier souls than their lords ;
Where peasants by glory's bright chronicles fired,
By their country's renown and its thralldom
inspired,
Its freedom have won at the point of their swords !

A SKETCH.

The fretted pannels gleamed with gold,
And gorgeous shewed that stately room;
The silken curtain's ample fold
Shone with the dyes of Persia's loom.
And there lay harp and lyre and lute,
To waken music's sweetest strain,
But all in that sad hour were mute—
Their witchery lost, their solace vain.

Without—the tall trees wooed the wind
Shading a smooth and spacious lawn,
And where the shrubs their branches twined,
Couched on the blossoms slept the fawn.
The wide verandah's colonnade
With rare and precious flowers was filled,
And every breeze that round them played
Their odorous scents in showers distilled.

The jasmies mantling wreaths were hung
 Upon the trelliced arch, and high
 The rose its rich red clusters flung
 Mid that star-cinctured tapestry.

'Twas evening, and a silvery ray
 Beamed from the bright and full orb'd moon,
 Which sailing on her heaven-ward way,
 Shone broadly on that fair saloon.

The lattice wide, as if for air,
 Was open thrown—and faint and weak,
 A form was seen reposing there,
 With eyelids closed and pallid cheek—
 Upon a velvet couch she lay,
 But not to her a couch of rest ;
 Her long dark hair in disarray,
 Her white arms folded o'er her breast.

Amid the braided tresses shone

Pale flowers exhaling scented breath,

Like coronals wa^s strew upon

The friend we lose by early death.

She was not dead who corpse-like prest

That couch of care; but the moon's light

Ne'er could on one more heart-struck rest

Than her who caught the beam that night,

And there was one of gentle mood

Who watched that pale and prostrate form;

And as in musing grief she stood

And marked the wreck of one wild storm,

She fancied that the moon looked down

With pitying eye upon the bed,

Where like a lily overthrown

The smitten mourner drooped her head.

It was an idle thought—yet still
The dream the pensive mind beguiled,
But that same moon o'er yon green hill
Looked down on other scenes and ^{wide} smiled,—
Oh! fair and false—a beam of light
On misery's thorny couch she throws,
Then faithless turns a ray as bright
Where hope and joy and health repose.

LIFE'S CHANGES.

Mid gay and crowded festivals,
 In many a fair and glittering scene,
 I tread those bright and gilded halls
 Wherein thy feet so oft have been.
 Familiar are the names to me
 Which my new friends and flatterers bear,
 Each sound comes linked with thoughts of thee;
 But thou art—————where?

The busy throng which thou hast known
 In days gone by approach me now,
 And every word and every tone
 Reminds me of thy plighted vow.
 They name thee not, but fancy brings
 Thy voice upon the passing air,
 Thy form is borne upon her wings;
 But thou art—————where?

The wreath which, when my humble song
 Was breathed to careless ears in vain,
 Thou fondly said'st should soon belong
 To my unprized unvalued strain,
 Is twined for me—upon my brow
 In many a knot and cluster fair
 Its blooming buds and blossoms glow;
 And thou art———where?

Not thine the lips that whisper praise,
 Not thine the bright and beaming eye
 Turning on mine its ardent gaze,
 Not thine the hope, not thine the sigh.
 Another breathes a tender tale,
 Another hovers round my chair,
 Another trusts he may prevail,
 For thou art———where?

I know not if my once loved name
Now first before the world avowed,
As one who hopes her lay may claim
The homage of the busy crowd,
Though published wide, has reached thine ear,
Reviving thoughts which love will share—
I know not if it still be dear;
For thou art—where?

STANZAS.

Upon the Ganges regal stream
The suns bright splendours rest—
And gorgeously the noon-tide beam
Reposes on its breast.
But in a small secluded nook
Beyond the western sea,
There rippling glides a narrow brook
That's dearer far to me.

The loory perches on my hand
Caressing to be fed—
And spreads its wings at my command,
And bends its purple head.
But where the robin—humble guest
Comes flying from the tree,
Which bears its unpretending nest,
Alas! I'd rather be.

The fire-fly flashes through the sky,
A meteor swift and bright,
And all below, around, on high,
Gleams with its emerald light :
Though glory tracks that shooting star,
And bright its splendours shine,
The glowworm's lamp is dearer far
To this sad heart of mine.

Throughout the summer year the flowers
In all the flush of bloom,
Clust'ring around the forest bowers,
Exhale their rich perfume ;
The daisy and the primrose pale,
Though scentless they may be,
That gem a far, far distant vale,
Are much more prized by me.

The lotus opens its chalices
Upon the tank's broad lake,
Where India's stately palaces
Their ample mirrors make ;
But reckless of each tower and dome,
The splendid and the grand—
I languish for a cottage home
Within my native land.

STANZAS.

Land of Romance!

Fair and jocund France!

From thy green meads, and from thy sunny rills,
 Thy laughing plains, and from thy vine-clad hills,
 Thy dark-eyed maids advance;
 And while the pipe its gentle music trills
 They wreath the graceful dance.

Land of Romance!

Fair and fertile France!

When music's voice o'er hill and dell and plain
 Had ceased, the minstrel harp, the vocal strain,
 Waked from their long long trance—
 The Troubadour's soft lay revived again
 By thy bright wave, Durance!

Land of the brave and free !

Imperial Germany !

By thy grape-clustered rocks, thy lofty towers,

Thy fair broad rivers, and thy princely bowers,

The warrior's minstrelsy

Resounds—and mid the fairest sweetest flowers

Up springs the laurel tree.

Land of the brave and free !

Imperial Germany !

Deep in the bosom of thy dark pine woods,

Thy mountain mines, and o'er thy angry floods,

Wild as the revelry

Of winds and waves, dwell the unhallowed broods

Of dreaming phantasy.

Land of melody !

Tuneful Italy !

To thy enchanting balmy vales belong
 The spirit and the soul of melting song ;
 They breathe, they dwell with thee—
 Floating thy bowery myrtle groves among,
 Echoes of long past poesy.

Land of melody !

Tuneful Italy !

Each ruined palace and each classic shrine,
 Filled with man's works, yet more than half divine,
 Swells the rapt heart with extasy.
 The sculptor's work, the painter's bold design
 Were both inspired by thee.

Fancy's bright domain !

Chivalric Spain !

Thy broad sierras, and thy olive glades,

The gentle music of thy serenades,

Thy fierce and martial train—

Thy midnight masquings, and thy falchion blades

Bring knighthood's days again.

.

Fancy's bright domain !

Chivalric Spain !

From thy last words, the wanderer hears afar

The tinkling of the fond and wild guitar,

And lovers to the moon complain ;

But at the first shrill trump of war,

Each breaks his silken chain,

BALLAD.

My castle towers on Severn's side
 Smile in the summer's sun,
 Not brighter flows the silvery tide
 Of thy fair stream, Garonne!
 The wild bee murmurs in the bower,
 The deer bounds through the wood,
 And gaily blooms the primrose flower
 In that sweet solitude.

I'll hang rich jewels in thine ear
 If thou wilt be my bride;
 I'll trap thy robe with mine ever
 And broidery beside.
 My page shall at thy palfrey stand
 And hold its silken rein,
 If thou wilt quit thine own fair land
 To cross the foaming main.

*Your charms shall gifted minstrels sing
 And vassals bend the knee,
 Your welcome through my halls shall ring
 With songs and revelry ;
 And as the festal board you grace,
 Or lead the joyous dance,
 The pleasures round you shall efface
 The thoughts of distant France.*

*My lineage I will scorn to name
 Though high its boast may be,
 I leave the trumpet tongue of fame
 To tell thee my degree ;
 For I have borne me in the fight
 Through many a toilsome day,
 As best becomes an English knight—
 The foremost in the fray.*

St. George's banner waves on high
O'er tower and citadel ;
The widow's wail, the orphan's cry,
The midnight breezes swell.
Then sweet, this scene of sadness leave
For merry England's coast—
And in my arms forget to grieve
For all that you have lost.

BALLAD.

My rose! my rose! my Provence rose!

What can to thee compare?

There's not a single flower that blows

So sweet, so soft, so fair—

I've sought the hills of far *Almaine*

Beside the laughing *Rhine*,

Rich with the red grape's ruby stain

And wreathed with many a vine.

And stately dames of high degree

Their gracious looks have lent,

And beamed their blue eyes' rays on me

At tilt and tournament.

But oh! my rose! my *Provence rose!*

What can to thee compare?

There's not a single flower that blows,

So gentle, and so fair.

I've wandered o'er the fields of *France*

Through summer's smiling hour—

Wooed by the song of young Romance
 To beauty's perfumed bower.
 And Bretagne's maids have witching arts,
 Beguiling mortal men;
 And starry eyes; and melting hearts
 Are found in bright Guienne.
 But my blush rose! my Provence rose!
 What can to thee compare?
 There's not a single flower that blows,
 So delicate, so fair!

~~There's many~~ a sweet and sunny glance
 Beyond the sparkling Rhone,
 And rose-lipped maidens lead the dance
 Across the sun-kissed Soane.
 Oh! joyous are the festivals,
 The mirth and minstrelsy,
 With beauty smiling in the halls
 Of tower-crowned Normandy.

But my sweet rose, my Provence rose!
 What can to thee compare?
 There's not a single flower that blows,
 So graceful, or so fair.

I've listened in the orange groves,
 The blossomed dells of Spain—
 Beneath her moon-lit skies, to love's
 Soft, sweet, bewildering strain.
 Through shrouding veils the flashes broke,
 From eyes as bright as stars—
 Whene'er the sweeping fingers woke
 The notes of fond guitars.

But my wild rose, my Provence rose!
 What can to thee compare?
 There's not a single flower that blows
 So precious, or so fair.

BALLAD.

The old ancestral tower is reft
 Of tapestry and of pall—
 There's not a tattered banner left
 Upon the broken wall.
 The owl hoots where the minstrel's lay
 Cheered my bold ancestors—
 And I must up and ride away,
 And win my golden spurs.
 There's rust upon my good sword blade,
 My war-steed rests at ease,
 And still I haunt this darksome glade,
 Nor cross yon glittering seas.
 'Tis idle grief to shed the tear,
 Though he was good and brave,—
 'Tis idle grief to linger near
 My father's blood-stained grave.

Then I my coat of mail will don,
And couch my trusty lance;
There's many a castle to be won
In fair and jocund France.
My halls are empty—but I'll come,
St. George my weapon guide!
With laurel-crested basnet home
And the red gold beside.

The blue eyed maids of England scorn
My ruined house and me,
But there are brides as highly born
In stately Normandy;
And he who in the battle field
Shall prove the stoutest knight,
Will find the eye of beauty yield
Its smile of sunniest light.

And I'll be first in bower and hall,
 And foremost in the ring ;
 And bards at each gay festival
 My knightly feats shall sing.
 I'll bear about the blazonry
 Of arms, in gold and pearl,
 And every precious gem shall be
 The ransom of an earl.

I'll heap my board with costly plate
 With this good sword of mine ;
 And crowds of vassals at my gate
 Shall drain the purple wine.
 Each knave shall with his fellow vie
 In silks, and gauds, and furs ;
 These towers shall ring with mirth, when I
 Have won my golden spurs.

STANZAS.

The greenwood ! the greenwood !
How pleasant it would be
To build a little mossy hut
Beneath the forest tree.
To climb each green and grassy knoll,
To pierce each leafy haunt,
And listen with delighted ears
To every wild bird's chaunt.

The greenwood ! the greenwood !
How bright the sunbeams gleam,
Chequered by many a waving bough
Upon the dancing stream.
And there the dainty harebolls grow,
There roams the vagrant bee,
And every gale that stirs the trees
Makes thrilling melody.

The greenwood ! the greenwood !
 How balmy is the air,
 How sweet the morning breeze that fans
 The roebuck in his lair.
 Oh ! would that from these hated walls
 I too might roam as free,
 And tread the turf with steps as light
 And heart as full of glee.

The greenwood ! the greenwood !
 How bright the dew-drops shine,
 How gracefully the ivy wreaths
 Around the old oaks twine.
 Take all the feasts and festivals
 This darksome city yields—
 Give me the shade of forest bowers,
 The sun-light of the fields.

NOTES
TO THE
ORIENTAL SCENES.

NOTES, &c.

A SCENE IN THE DOAAB.

Those persons who have traversed the Doaab, or the neighbouring district of Bundelkhand, or who have navigated the Jumna which separates these provinces of Upper India, will acknowledge the fidelity of the foregoing description, fortresses in the last stage of decay being as plentiful as the ruined villages of which we read in the Persian tale. Amid the almost numberless incursions of the Moosaulmauns from the adjacent countries into Hindostan, many very gallant exploits remain untold, and others have obtained so slight a record, that we are left to guess at the extent of the invaders' conquests by the mouldering wrecks of temples and fortified places which are scattered over the face of the country.

“ Its scorching breath the hot wind pours.”

The Upper Provinces of Hindostan are subjected to the annual visitation of hot winds, which, during the months of April, May, and June, blow incessantly throughout the

day. None save those who have experienced it can form any idea of the heat, which is like that of a furnace. Europeans contrive to keep the interior of their houses cool by thick mats called *tatties*, made of *khushkus*, the root of a fragrant grass, which being kept constantly wetted, mitigate the burning heat of the air as it passes through. The wind generally blows from the westward, and the *tatties* are fitted into the doors or windows toward that point: they are of comparatively little use when the gale veers to the east, as it then becomes damp as well as hot.

THE BRAMIN.

During a voyage up the Ganges as high as Allahabad, I was particularly attracted by the extreme beauty of the Pagodas which diversify the scenery on the river's banks. As it is the custom for boats to moor close to the shore at sunset, I had frequent opportunities of visiting these Hindoo temples, usually the dwelling place of a Bramin, who derives a frugal existence from the offerings of grain or money left upon the altar by the pious. The flowers which, plaited into wreaths and rosaries, decorate the shrines and enamel the pavement, spring in rich luxuriance amid the vast variety of forest trees which clothe every eminence; and upon our expressing our admiration of their beauty, were pressed upon our acceptance with

the utmost courtesy. These Mhuts, or Pagodas, are surrounded by an immense number of animals, who, living in complete security, are perfectly tame and domesticated. The slaughter of a bird or quadruped under the protection of a Bramin, would arouse a whole village to avenge the wrong.

“ While his peculiar care the mournful bird.”

Chak savak, Brhamanee duck. The Hindoos imagine that for some transgression committed in the human body, the souls of the offending persons are condemned to animate these animals, who are compelled to part at sunset; the male and female flying on different sides of the river, each imagining that the other has voluntarily forsaken the nest, and inviting the supposed wanderer's return with lamentable cries. The Bramins, compassionating the melancholy condition of these birds, hold them sacred, and will not allow them to be molested within the precincts of their jurisdiction.

THE TAAJE MAHAL.

It would be useless to attempt a prose description of the superb edifice reared by the Emperor Shah Jehan, in honour of his most beloved wife Moom Taza Mahal. It

is said that on the death-bed of the beautiful and idolized partner of his splendour, the imperial monarch promised to erect a monument to the expiring object of his affections, which should be as unrivalled in magnificence, as the charms and virtues which had distinguished her above the rest of her sex; and, faithful to his vow, engaged the most celebrated artists from the western world to superintend the work. It is erected in a spacious garden washed by the Jumna, in the close vicinity of the city of Agra, and formed of the most precious materials, the outside being of white marble, and the interior inlaid with an infinite variety of gems, opals, agates, turquoise, &c. &c. no less than fifty different kinds of cornelian being employed in the production of one ornament. The gates, which are lofty archways, crowned with cupolas, approach in beauty and splendour to the Tauje Mahal itself; the name interpreted signifies "tomb" and "palace," and conveys in two words the best idea that can be given of a building, of which there is no prototype in the known world.

THE DYING HINDOO.

There are few things more shocking to European eyes than the publicity of death-bed scenes in India, and the apathetical indifference displayed by the Hindoos while

attending the expiring moments of their nearest relatives or friends. Frequently, only a few yards from a crowded ghaut thronged by the inhabitants of some neighbouring village, who are laughing, singing, and following their ordinary occupations with the utmost gaiety, a dying person may be seen stretched upon a *charpoy* (bedstead) close to the river's brink, surrounded by a groupe of three or four individuals, who look upon the sufferer without the slightest appearance of interest. As soon as the breath has left the body, the corpse is thrown into the river, death being often precipitated by stuffing the mouth and nostrils with mud. Strangers, attracted by some superb lotus floating down the stream, are disgusted by the sight of a dead body rapidly descending with the tide, the ghastly novel appearing above the surface of the water. Every Hindoo is anxious to draw his last sigh on the banks of the Ganges, or some equally sacred stream flowing into its holy waters; the relatives therefore of expiring persons fulfil the last offices of humanity in the manner most desirable to them, by bringing a dying friend to the edge of the river, and consigning the body, when the vital spark has fled, to the hallowed stream. Like the Moosaulmauns, the followers of Brahma are all predestinarians, and make up their minds as easily to the endurance of any inevitable misfortune; wherefore, however strong their affection may be to the living, few, if any, ever think of grieving for the dead.

" To the chabouta's esplanade."

The chabouta is a raised terrace formed of *chunam*, a composition of clay so well tempered as to take as fine a polish as marble. From these *chaboutas* a flight of stone or *chunam* steps descend into the river, and compose the ghauts or landing places, which are often extremely beautiful, especially when they are shaded by a majestic baobab or tamarind tree, and accompanied by a mosque or pagoda, or a series of small white *Mhuts*.

" Her graceful gharrah filling there."

The *gharrah* is a coarse earthen water-pot of an elegant shape. It appears in Mr. Westmacott's (the celebrated sculptor) marble statue of a Hindoo girl seated, and has been very naturally mistaken for an urn. The attitude of the female figure of the groupe alluded to, is not that of a native of Hindostan.

*" Freed from each grovelling trammel glide,
And mingle with its holy springs."*

Should the patient who has been dedicated to the sacred river, recover from his malady, he loses *caste*—none of his tribe will associate with a man rejected by the Ganges.

THE NORTH-WESTER.

The brief but devastating storms, denominated in India North-Westers, are of frequent occurrence during the rainy season, and commit dreadful ravages in the course of their rapid progress, as they sweep over the plains, or lash the waters of the Ganges into temporary madness: they come on suddenly without any previous intimation. The one described took place in the vicinity of Moorsheadabad, the residence of the Nizam of Bengal, and it dispersed a splendid flotilla of boats belonging to that prince.

*“ and fling
O'er Ganges' wave each flowery offering.”*

The Hoogly is one of the mouths of the Ganges, from which it branches a short distance above Moorshedabad: it is esteemed equally sacred, and every wave brings down the lotus or beautiful white or deep crimson flowers consigned by the natives to its silvery tides in honour of the deity of the stream. At night it is also illuminated by lamps burning in fairy shallops of cocoa-nut shells, from which the Hindoos of either sex read the augury of their future fortunes.

THE RAJAH'S OBSEQUIES.

The city of Benares is esteemed so holy, that the pious suppose it to be a jewel or excrescence, placed on, and not a part of, the world. It is situated on the left bank of the Ganges, and is covered with houses to the water's edge; the buildings being intermixed with trees, and separated at intervals by ghats or landing places, very handsomely constructed of large stones and descending by flights of broad steps into the water, which in many places is thirty feet below the level of the street. The celebrated minarets are attached to a mosque, erected by the Emperor Aurungzebe upon the ruins of a pagoda, and present a proud trophy of Moosulman conquest. The view of Benares from the river is exceedingly picturesque and imposing, affording numberless subjects for the artist's pencil.

*“ Where ring-doves make their blissful homes,
And the white bull unfettered roves.”*

•

The whole surface of the streets of Benares, together with every roof, verandah and porch, are literally covered with an immense variety of pigeons and doves. In addition to other animals held nearly as sacred, the Brahmanee bulls roam at large in vast numbers, obstructing the narrow avenues, and helping themselves without ceremony to all the eatables exposed in the bazars.

“ The ghurrees chime the evening hour.”

Time is measured in India by a brass vessel perforated, and placed in a pot containing water: the cup or bason is so constructed as to fill and sink at the expiration of an allotted period, when a person appointed for the purpose strikes the hour on a ghurree or gong.

“ Proud only of the triple thread.”

A string of three threads passed over the shoulder and under the opposite arm, forms the distinguishing mark of the Bramm caste.

“ And with a voice divine she sings.”

The last words uttered by the Suttee are supposed to be oracular: they usually relate to the transmigrations which the parting spirit is destined to undergo.

*“ And eager for prophetic strains
Amid the crowd deep silence reigns.”*

Mr. Derozio, in his very beautiful and truly Oriental Poem, “The Fakcer of Jungheera,” has taken advantage of the licence to depart from the beaten track, universally allowed, and has placed a highly poetical and spirited

effusion, relating to things of far diviner nature than the transmigrations of the soul into the bodies of animals, in the lips of his heroine. I have followed his example by varying the parting address of Mitala from that of her sister victim, but can make no pretensions to the eloquence and harmony of Mr. Derozio's verse.

*“ The Persian Satrap and the Tartar Khan
The temples of your Gods shall overthrow.”*

This prediction relates to the outrages perpetrated by Aurengzebe, mentioned in a foregoing note.

NIGHT ON THE GANGES.

The splendid beauty of the nights in India makes amends for the shortness of the winking hour of twilight. Every feature in the landscape, (and every prospect which the Ganges presents is more or less lovely) is distinctly visible when illuminated by the innumerable stars which come shining forth in a tropic sky.

THE LAND STORM.

The Poem thus entitled is an attempt to describe a storm which took place at the breaking up of the hot

winds in 1829 in the Doab. It was the most awful and magnificent sight I ever witnessed: the whole earth seemed to be torn up into billows, as the vast clouds of dust, brought from the great desert, came rolling onwards, spreading darkness as they approached. The tempest lasted about an hour from its commencement, and I shall never forget the joyful sensation which I experienced when the *tutties* were removed, and we hastened into the *verandah* and breathed cool air, instead of the streams of gas which had been flowing outside the house for the last three months. Our two Persian cats actually rolled themselves in the wet, and walked through the puddles with the utmost complacency, and all the other animals seemed to derive new life from the refreshing change in the atmosphere.

THE MOOSALMAUN'S GRAVE.

“ He asks not who the precious boon bequeathed.”

I have been shown in Bengal several temples whose founders were equally venerated by Hindoos and Moosalmans: the latter, who are natives of this province, are however esteemed a degenerate race, corrupted by the example of the idolaters around them. Still the tanks and

wells by whomsoever dug (and the followers of both creeds are alike enjoined by the precepts of their religion to bequeath these, and similar benefits to posterity) are the indiscriminate resort of the true believers and the disciples of Brahma. In general some Hindoo Priest or Moosaulmaan Fakcer is established in the temples, which are usually built by the side of a Ghaut or Tank, deriving a frugal subsistence from the bounty of travellers and devotees, who leave a portion of grain or a small piece of money for his use. The shade of a grove of trees and the shelter of a Serai, whether planted or erected by Moosaulmaan or Hindoo, must be equally prized and frequented by both.

NOUR JUFFEIR KIAN.

There is scarcely an eminence on the Bundelkhand bank of the Jumna, between Allahabad and Etawah, the limit of my voyage, that does not present the remains of some fortified place. The country is supposed to be one of the strongest in the world, every hill being table land, and from the great height and steepness of all, forming natural fortresses. The excessive loneliness of the river, excepting in the close vicinity of Chilla Tarah Ghaut, and a few other populous places, affords a strong contrast to the gaiety of the passing scene on the Ganges: the number

of wild animals to be seen feeding in apparent security on the shores of the Jumna, give also a savage air to the landscape. The ravines on either side are the dwelling places of hyenas, wolves, and other beasts of prey, while porcupines perambulate the sands, alligators bask upon the mud, and clouds of birds are to be seen in every direction.

*“ And wandering o’er the teeming plain
White with the cotton’s bursting pod.”*

The country on both sides of the Jumna abounds in cotton, sugar canes, millet and other kinds of grain in a rude state of cultivation; shrubs covered with the nut which produces castor-oil spring spontaneously, and furnish food for lamps as well as the medicine so much prized in Europe. The indigo, which grows wild in the Doab, is esteemed of as fine a quality as that which in other places is produced by the utmost care and attention of the planter.

*“ And truly ’twas a gallant sight
When issued forth the hunter train.*

It is scarcely possible to imagine any thing more picturesque than an Indian cavalcade, which presents a

promiscuous throng, comprehending as many pedestrians as equestrians, clad in the most gaudy colours, and glittering with silver and gold and burnished steel. The people on foot frequently surpass the riders in numbers, each horseman being attended by a dismounted *Sycc* or groom, who, when there is a vast multitude of persons assembled, carries a spear to prevent the collision of other chargers: added to these *syccs* are vast numbers of attendants of various descriptions, who swell the trains of the great men of the party, and they contrive to keep up with their mounted companions throughout the day's journey or sport. The variety of animals which are put into requisition on these occasions, adds considerably to the singularity and gaiety of the scene—the stately elephant, with its housings of scarlet and gold, its gilded howdah, surmounted by a glittering *chattah*, (umbrella) and its silver bells—the less dignified camel, with its head nodding high in the air, a strange kind of saddle on its arched back, whereon perchance two men are perched, and a jingling necklace decorating its long neck—while every kind of steed, from the noble Arab to the shaggy tuttoo or native pony, figures off in the groups, some of the former with their tails dyed of bright scarlet, their saddles inlaid with gold, their bridles and stirrups of silver, bearing riders attired in rich gold brocade, sparkling with gems, and gleaming with the many coloured shawls of Cashmere.

*“ Or speeding to the lovely haunts
The Nyl Ghau loves.”*

The Nyl Ghau is an inhabitant of these districts, which abound in antelopes, deer, and every kind of game.

*“ While others bear
Encaged the spotted leopards, taught.”*

Chectahs, or hunting leopards, are still trained to the chase in Hindostan: vast numbers are kept at Bhurtpore, and at the courts of other native princes, for this purpose. Hawking is still more common: even the Rajahs, who, being Hindoos, are forbidden by their religion to shed blood, enjoy the sport with falcons taught to take the prey alive.

*“ Fresh from the Jumna’s sandy bed
The gushing water-melons shed.”*

The sands of the Jumna are famous for their water-melons. Citrons, shaddocks, oranges, mangos, pomegranates, plantains, custard apples, &c. &c. are the productions of the gardens; and preserved fruits of all kinds, Pistachio nuts, fresh apples and grapes, are brought with more costly articles of merchandize by the wandering traders of Thibet, who traffic down the country as far as Benares and Patna.

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