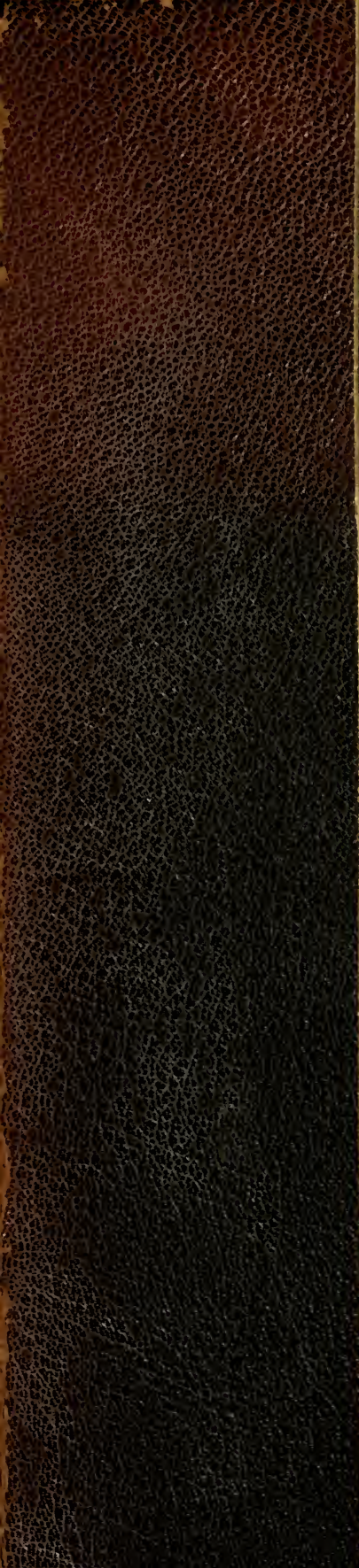
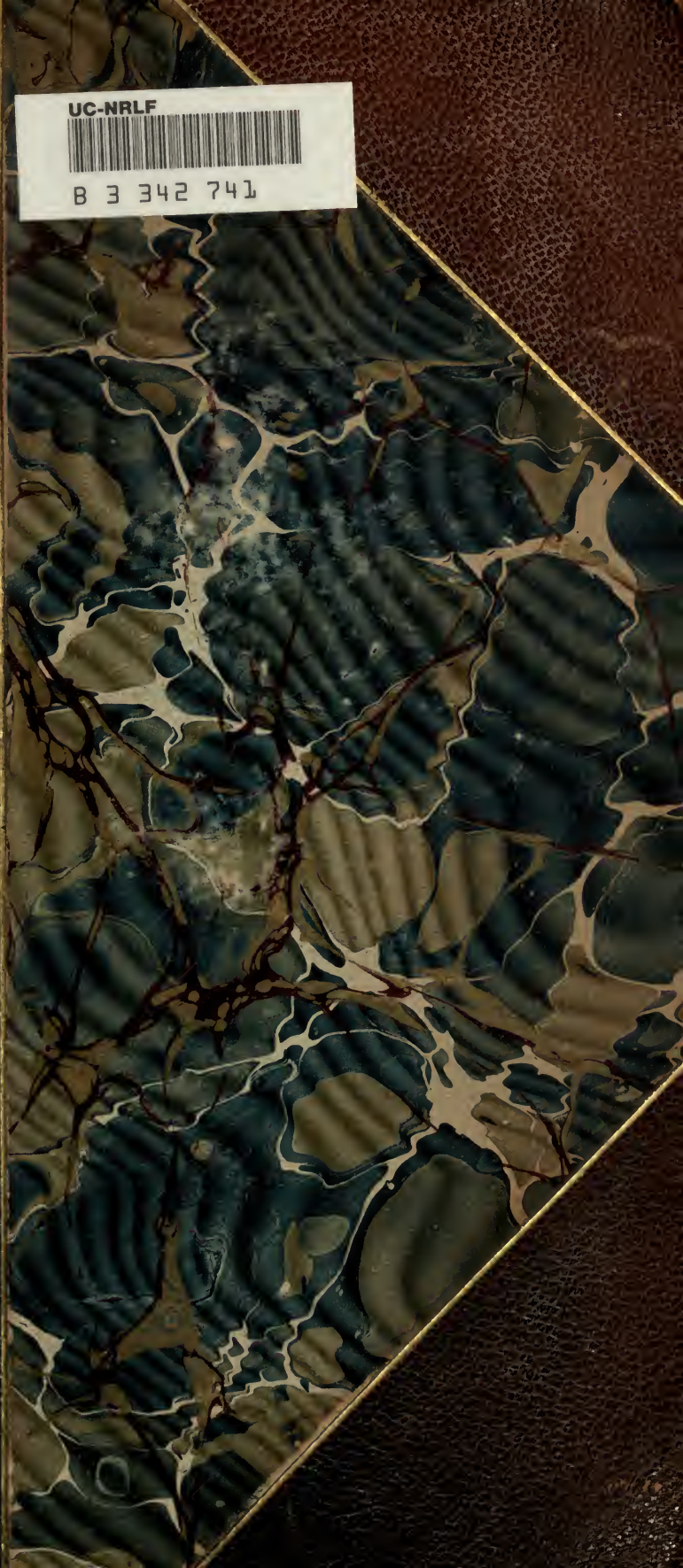


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ELIAS

An Epic of the Ages

By

Orson Ferguson Whitney



New York
The Knickerbocker Press
1904



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by
O. F. WHITNEY

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Joseph F. Smith
John R. Winder
Arthur H. Lund

December
1905

To President Joseph F. Smith

*This song to thee, friend, chieftain, sixth to rise
From him, the foremost of a seer's line,
Mock of the worldly, marvel of the wise,—
His martyred brother's son! May light divine,
Which 'lumined them, forever on thee shine,
Flooding with splendors new thy lineal fame;
And ancient rays with modern beams combine
To glorify a brow whose stalwart aim
To merit heaven's high praise, nor fear a world's false blame!*

Theme

“And if you will receive it, this is Elias, which was to come to gather together the tribes of Israel and restore all things.”

Argument



THE aim of this poem is to point out those manifestations of the Divine Mind, those impulsions of human enterprise, to which have been due in all ages the progress of the race toward perfection.

Thus it deals not only with earth's redemption and ultimate glorification, but with events and epochs leading up to and having those greater ends as their decreed consummation. The Christ theme, in its pre-existent and earthly phases, is supplemented by the sacred and secular history of man upon both hemispheres. God's direct dealings, through prophets, apostles, and other inspired agents, and His indirect dealings through poets, painters, philosophers, statesmen, kings, conquerors, and the like, are indicated, and the experiences of the Church of Christ in various Gospel dispensations portrayed. The title "Elias," signifying restoration and preparation,—the lesser going before the greater with those objects in view,—is used to denote and personify the genius of progress, whose beneficent workings, under the guidance of the Infinite Spirit, through the æons and the ages, behind the scenes and upon the stage of human action, are the thread, warp, and woof of the entire poem. The medial point is the dispensation of the fulness of times, the era of restitution, when the house of God is to be set in order and all things in Christ gathered into one.

The poem is in twelve parts. Following a brief prelude—the announcement of the author's purpose—the first book or canto describes his spiritual awakening.

The next represents him as soliloquizing upon his native mountains, where he meets the Soul of Song, and is inspired to sing the epic of time and eternity.

The poem proper begins with the third book—a pre-existent glimpse—the choosing of Messiah and the rebellion of Lucifer, supplemented by the Saviour's descent to earth, His crucifixion and return to glory.

The fourth is mainly an allegory of the Christian dispensation, following the death of Jesus and His forerunner, and showing the departure from the primitive faith after the passing of the apostolic twelve, one of whom—the Church having gone into the Wilderness—remains to testify of things to come.

The fifth opens the last act in the redemptive drama,—the final restoration of the Gospel,—with Joseph the Seer, as the Elias of the scene, heralding the glad tidings.

The sixth embodies the pre-historic story of America, assumed to have been related by the angel custodian to the translator of the buried Book of Gold.

In canto seven are summarized those sublime doctrines which came directly to the modern revelator during and subsequent to the translating of the ancient plates. A vision of the dispensations is involved—the reading of the book of time and the volume of eternity.

The three succeeding parts present the history of the latter-day Church from its inception to the martyrdom of its founder, who is pictured as foretelling to his people their great destiny.

The epilogue is mainly an address to and a response from Elias, the angel of restoration.

O. F. W.

SALT LAKE CITY, July 1, 1904.

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MORN'S MESSENGER

—“*Night's sceptre wanes,
And in the East the silvery Messenger
Gives silent token of the golden Dawn.*”

MORN'S MESSENGER

— "With a scope ranges,
And in the East the mirror telescope
Gives silent token of the Golden Dawn."

Prelude

Prelude



THE work for Him I asked and aimed to do,
Ere death should claim my dust, my spirit free,—
That looking down from where the wise and true

Inherit glory, gracious eyes might see
A spark I kindled beaming endlessly,
And lighting other wanderers to the goal
Which gave the life that is the life to be;—
Now done, or well or ill, the lettered scroll

Of what is writ on heart and mind I here unroll.

Canto I
As From a Dream



As From a Dream



YOUTH'S morn was breaking when I dreamed a dream,
Splendrous as springtime's weft of wonders rare;
Idyl of beauty, rainbow-hued romance,
Glory of love and glamor of renown.
I dreamed of man as generous and just,
While woman was to me divinity.

Wealth wooed I not, nor power—to wear the sign
And wave the symbol of authority;
To speak, and have hosts tremble; or to frown,
And find all pale and prostrate at my feet;
To sway men's minds, as breeze the swinging boughs,
Save 't were in duty's name, in virtue's cause,
By tongue of thunder or by pen of flame;
Or by some wise, sublime, benefic deed,
Some word or work of merit and of might,
To fix the fleeting gaze of centuries.

Glory and love—these were my guides divine,
The planet passions of my destiny,
The Baal and Astoreth to whom I bowed,
A Canaanite, in rapt idolatry.
And at the feet of these dear deities,
Careless of great Jehovah's smile or frown,

An Epic of the Ages

In the fresh morning of my youth's fair might,
Slumbering, I dreamed, till golden grew the dawn.

A strange and stern awakening—the sky,
So calm, so clear, now craped with angry clouds,
Tortured and torn with crackling tongues of fire.
Crash follows crash, and bolt on bolt descends,
Till earth, air, heaven, seem wrapt in roaring flame.
And when the rifted storm has rolled away,
And stillness reascends her solemn throne,
Ruin looks forth from retrospection's tower,
And memory weeps where desolation reigns.

It was the end. Dispelled illusion's dream;
My soul shook off its fetters and was free;
But most fond ideals I had reared in youth,
Lay level with the dust ere manhood's prime.

I slept and dreamed no more; I was awake!
And saw and heard with other eyes and ears,
Which taught me things unseen, unheard before;
Things new and old—old as eternity—
Old e'en to time, though new and strange to me.

I talked with Truth on solemn mountain tops;
I soared with winged thought the sunlit dome;
Studied the midnight stars; and when the storms
In supermortal might went forth to war,
Bestrode the tempest as a battle steed,
Grasping the volted lightnings as they flew,

And thundering through the mists on things below.
Rejoicing in my new-found strength, I gave
Glory to Him, the source and Sire of all;
That God whom I had neither loved nor feared,
That God whom now I worshipped and adored;
Who girdled me with light—truth's triple key,
Unlocking has been, is and e'er-to-be,
Chasing death's gloom, life's three-fold mystery,
Solving the secret—whither, whence, and why.

O wondrous transformation! when the wand,
Awakening wand of truth—life-lifting power—
Waved o'er the cross where hung fond hopes impaled,
Waved o'er the tomb where loved ambitions lay,
Touched the strewn fragments of my shattered dream,
Bidding the dead arise in bodies new,
Building, on ruined hope, faith's battlement,
Crowned with love's palace, pinnacled in light—
In glory greater than earth's grandest dream,
Than glittering fame's most splendid spectacle;
Ideal transcending ideality,
Ideal made real past all reality.

No natural eye could see what then I saw;
No natural ear, what then I heard, could hear;
When the all-searching Spirit tore the veil
Of things that seem, and showed me things that are.

Beauty, divine, but not divinity,
Not parent—child of purity and truth;

An Epic of the Ages

Nor fount, nor stream, but bubble lost in air;
 Nor tree, nor fruit—only a fragrant flower,
 Flung from ambrosial gardens, here to grow,
 That life might be the less a wilderness.

But lo! a loveliness that lives for aye!
 The bud ephemeral as beautiful,
 That withering here, is there revived,
 Radiant and redolent forevermore!
 The beauty of the restful and the risen,
 Of paradise and glory's higher home,
 Spirit and element commingled, one;
 Bright symbol of blest union yet to be,
 When heaven and earth are wed eternally.

Beauty, a star, a lamp, a guide to heaven?
 'T was more—'t was heaven itself when visioned there;
 Though here full oft a finger-post to hell,
 A lure-light o'er the marshes of despair.

High in the zenith, smiling still, love shone.
 Love, gold of heaven, mixt with earth's alloy,
 Playing, as plays the sun-spot, needful part
 In nature's wise and true economy;
 Love dies not—'t is love's seeming that dissolves,
 Low to its serpent level, native dust,
 Its grave unmemoried in Lethean ground.
 The while see heaven-born, heaven-aspiring love,
 Immortal Spirit of the Universe,

As From a Dream

11

Soaring and singing larklike to the sun;
Heir to herself, a self-succeeding queen,
Still lingering on life's throne when life is o'er!

Was this the love that warmed my boyish breast?
Was this the love that lit my youthful eye?
I know not—this I know, my love was pure;
Pure as the mountain monarch's ice-crowned crest,
Pure as the snow king's mantle, diamond-strewn,
Pure as the cascade's limpid crystalline,
Leaping from cliff to chasm, the breeze-flung flood
Blown into spirit spray of dazzling sheen.

But pure love, e'en the purest, may be blind.
Truth spake—then fell the bandage from love's eyes;
And fond ones, wedded, who had wept in vain
When death's harsh hand divided, smiled through tears
To see love's arch, that only time's vale spans
To human vision, forward thrown till lost
Beyond the mountains of eternity.

O thou, of beauty loveliest form and phase,
Goddess dethroned, divinity uncrowned,
Partner and peer of human majesty!
Sharing with him life's jointed sovereignty,
Well canst thou wait for thrones and diadems.
Queen of the future, Eve of coming worlds,
Mother of sun-born myriads yet to be,
Spirits resplendent that shall people stars,
And hail thee empress of a universe!

An Epic of the Ages

No more was it of crowning consequence,
 That mortal clay to mortal eye should shine;
 That human mites should shout and sing in praise
 Each of the other's midget mightiness;
 That molecules should atoms glorify.

Apple of ashes to the longing lip!
 Brine to the burning throat and thirsting soul!
 Phantom, eidolon, gauzy ghost of fame,
 Voidest and vainest of all vanities!

When was it great to loom 'mid glittering show?
 To sit in highest seat—is that to shine?
 Largeness or littleness, or high or low,
 Has but to breathe, and straightway he is known.
 What speech conceals, the spirit manifests.
 Fame, place, power, title, find a proper use,
 And rightfully demand all reverence due;
 But envy not the empty lot of him
 Who, winning without merit, wins in vain.

“Be not beguiled”—truth's vibrant thunder note,
 Pealing from clouds that canopied my life;
 The warning, lightning-winged to purify,
 Up-kindling all the summits of the soul.
 “Be not beguiled: not what men think and say,
 But what God sees and knows, is what avails.

“Who knoweth aught, unknowing of the all?
 Unknowing all, who knoweth perfectly

'Twixt small and great, 'twixt failure and success,
'Twixt heights of glory and the gulfs of shame ?
What cares eternity for time's decrees ?
Victor and vanquished equally may win.

“ Greatness, true greatness, mightiness of mind,
And greater greatness, grandeur of the soul,
Tell but one tale—capacity, not place,
Capacity, whose sire, experience,
Whose ancestors, innate intelligence,
Original, inborn nobility,
As oft in hut as mansion have their home.

“ Greatness not gift, but guerdon—crown for all
Who care to climb; and fame, eternal fame,
White as the shining cloak of Arctic hills,
A mantle falls, of fadeless purity,
On loftiest lives, that mount to meet their source,
And like to snow-capt, sun-kissed peaks sublime,
Receive but to dispense their blessedness.
Who seek not gifts, but Giver—they shall find
No sacrifice but changes part for whole.

“ Eternal life demands a selfless love.
Hampered by pride, greed, hate, what soul can grow ?
Conceive a selfish God! Thou canst not, man!
Then let it shame thee unto higher things.
Fare on, full sure that greatest glory comes,
And swiftest growth, from serving humankind.

An Epic of the Ages

Toil on, for toil is treasure, thine for aye;
A pauper he who boasts an empty name."

So spake the Spirit of the Infinite;
So fell the message from the Monitor.

Some men I found embodiments of all
The goodness, all the greatness I had dreamed;
Men seeming gods, bestowing benefits
As suns their beams, as seas and skies their showers;
Others as dwarfs, as despots by compare,
Devoured with greed, consumed with jealousy.

But truth taught charity, gave me to see,
As face to face one sees familiar friend,
Why men are not alike in magnitude,
Why souls, like stars, all differ in degree,
And cannot show an even excellence,
Unequal in their first nobility.
Great tells of greater—littleness of less;
Time a true shadowing of eternity,
Whose glories fixt, essential, evermore.

Some souls, than others, have more summits climbed,
More light absorbed, more moral might evolved;
Hence wiser, worthier than those they lead
Through precept's vales, up steep example's height,
To where love, beauty, wealth, power, glory, shine.

While some, innately noble, are borne down
By weight of weaknesses inherited,

By passions fierce, propensities depraved,
The lineal legacy of centuries,
That much of their true worthiness obscures,
While spirit strives with flesh for mastery,
For higher culture and for added might.

And yet anon such souls effulgent shine,
As bursts the April beam through banks of cloud,
In glory from which envy shades its eyes,
While, stricken dumb, detraction grounds its arms;
The glory of a great intelligence,
Which mortal mists can dim but for a time;
The fault God-given, lest man be glorified,
And pride perchance dethrone humility.

Truth taught me more, but bade me silent be;
And I had teachers else—toil, prayer, and pain,
With days and nights of misery's martyrdom,
Alone and lorn in grief's Gethsemane;
Till storm above, and earthquake underneath,
Shook down thought's prison house, broke bolt and bar,
And agony set inspiration free.

'T is thus the Great Musician tunes the harp
That He would strike—strikes thus the harp in tune;
Sweeping with sorrow's hand the quivering strings,
That they may cry aloud, and haply sound
A loftier and more enduring lay.

Canto II
The Soul of Song

The Soul of Song



LONE my soul upon a mighty hill,
Ancient with lingering snows of vanished years,
Where towering forms the templed azure fill,

Woody by the breath of woodland atmospheres;
Where Nature, throned in solitude, reveres
The God whose glory she doth symbolize,
And on these altars, watered by her tears,
Spreads far around the fragrant sacrifice
Whose incense wafts her sweet memorial to the skies.

Here let me linger. O my native hills,
Watchful and solemn warders o'er the waste!
With what a joy the bounding bosom thrills,
Whose steps aspiring mar your summits chaste!
Vain, language—richest robes and rarest taste.
How clothe description in befitting dress,
When halts imagination's winged haste,
Wrapt in mute wonder's conscious littleness,
Where loom the cloud-crowned monarchs of the wilderness?

Where o'er I roam, and still have loved to roam,
From childhood's rose-hued, scarce-remembered day,
And found my pensive soul's congenial home,
Far from the depths where human passions play.

Born at their feet, my own have learned to stray
 Familiar o'er these pathless heights, and feel,
 As now, the mind assume a loftier sway,
 Soaring for themes that o'er its summits steal,
 Beyond all thought to reach, all utterance to reveal.

Grim, storm-plumed guardians, warriors tempest-mailed!
 Federal with freedom, fortressing her land!
 Had primal man the sacred garden tilled,
 Ere earthly scenes your early vision scanned?
 In spirit form took ye your Titan stand,
 Ere rolled a world-creating fiat forth?
 Or came ye at convulsion's fierce command,
 'Mid loud-tongued thunders bursting from the earth,
 The martial music that proclaimed your warlike birth?

Vast, voiceless oracles, whose intelligence
 Sleeps in the caverns of each stony heart,
 Yet breathes o'er all a boundless eloquence,
 What wealth historic might your words impart!
 Mute minstrel, hermit of the hills, apart
 From where thy banded mates in union dwell!
 A master lyrist seemingly thou art,
 Chief harper of a host that round thee swell;
 And thine the Orphean boon, what could withstand thy spell?

Thrice wondrous things were thine to wisely scan;
 Fast as thy frozen snow-helm, still in store.
 Hadst thou that melting gift, of sovereign man
 The sunlike glory, thou mightst all restore,

The Soul of Song

21

And learning's tide o'erwhelm the shining shore
With rich revealings of lost realms that rose
And fell, like frost-hewn flowers, thy face before;
Causes which wrought them an untimely close;
Perchance, of spirit lore, some mystic mine disclose;

Some secret, whispered in the graven rock,
Scarred with almighty pen, whose sculpture bold,
Defying time and tide and tempest shock,
Endures where seas and centuries have rolled.
"Oh that my words!"—What sayest thou, sage of old?
Knew he not well, ye mighty tomes of clay,
How firm the trust your flinty page might hold?
Have ye not spurned the flats of decay?
Are ye not standing now where nations passed away?

But like the laboring brain that burns to speak
Unutterable thoughts, deep in its dungeons pent;
Or liker still to inward boiling peak
Of fires volcanic, vainly seeking vent
Where adamantine bolts and bars prevent;—
Thou'rt doomed to utter stillness, and shalt keep
The burden of thy bearing, till is rent
Yon heavenly veil, and earth and air and deep
Tell secrets that shall rouse the dead from solemn sleep.

And must I be as mute, O silent mount!
Muse of all melody, shall I not sing?—
Burst these dumb bars, when e'en yon babbling fount
May find in every breeze a wafting wing,

An Epic of the Ages

Afar its lightest murmured word to fling?
 Where art thou, ancient soul of solemn song?
 Asleep? Then wake! Wherefore art slumbering?
 The world hath need of thee, and waiteth long.
 Strike—strike again thy harp, and thrill the listening throng!

Thus musing, lone upon a beetling brow,
 Quaffing thought's crystal fount, that sparkling sprung,
 The spirit of the sun-kissed torrent flow,
 Methought from out the rocky caves there rung
 A voice whose tone bewrayed no mortal tongue,
 Though softly clear the mournful cadence broke,
 As notes from off the weird-toned viol flung,
 Or as the heavens lowly rumbling spoke,
 Heralding the storm monarch's shout and shivering stroke.

Amazed I listened. Did I more than dream?
 Had random word aroused unhopèd reply?
 Or was it sound whose import did but seem?
 Hark!—for again it rolls along the sky:
 "Then question hast thou none? Or none wouldst ply,
 Save to thy soul in meditative strain,
 Or heedless winds that wander idly by?
 So be it; still to me thy purpose plain,
 Thy hidden wish revealed, nor thus revealed in vain."

While yet the ambient, aromatic air
 Echoed the spellful wonders of that tone;
 While, as on threshold of a lion's lair,
 Speechless I stood, as stricken into stone;

Methought the sun with lessening splendor shone,
As if some wandering cloud obscured his gaze.
Then burst a glory from his midday throne!
Turning, mine eye beheld, in rapt amaze,
What memory ne'er would lose were life of endless days.

A stately form, of giant stature tall;
Of hoary aspect, venerable and grave;
Whose curling locks and beard of copious fall
Vied the white foam of ocean's storm-whipt wave.
The firm-fixt eye flashed lightnings from its cave;
Far-darting penetration's gaze, combined
With wisdom's milder light. Of study, gave
Deep evidence that brow by learning lined,
Thought's towering throne, where ruled his realm a monarch
mind.

The spirit's garb—for spirit so it seemed—
Fell radiant in many a flowing fold;
Of style antique, by modern limners deemed
Befitting monk or eremite of old.
Head, hands, and feet were bare; the presence bold
With majesty, e'en as a God might wear
While condescending to a mortal mould.
He spake—the voice no longer thrilled with fear;
Like some vast organ swell, it charmed, enchained the ear.

“ Long have I watched and waited, but no sound
Broke the wild stillness of this stern abode,
Save thunder's fiery foot-print smote the ground,

An Epic of the Ages

Or far beneath some torrent's fury flowed;
 Anon the screaming eagle past me rode;
 The seeker after gold, with toilsome stride,
 And eager eye to fix the shining lode,
 Hath paused and panted on the steep hillside;
 But none, for greater things, till now have hither hied.

“ And thou, O pensive crier in the waste,
 Invoker of the Voice now visible!
 Prepared art thou a mystery to taste,
 Whose fruit is joy or woe ineffable?
 Pluck not of wisdom's branches bending full,
 Drink not of that divine philosophy,
 Save thou canst bravely suffer wrong's misrule,
 Nor love thy fellow less; save thou canst be
 Henceforth time's fool, though wise unto eternity.

“ Not all my ministry to lift the gloom
 Yet hovering o'er this mystic hemisphere.
 List, son of man! for I am one by whom
 Future and past as present shall appear.
 In me behold Messiah's minister,
 Ancient of time and of eternity,
 Spirit of song that moved the Hebrew seer,
 Voice of the stars ere earth's nativity;
 Exile, for ages gone, of mortal minstrelsy.

“ See now my sacred heritage the prey
 Of ribald rhymsters, sensuous, half obscene;
 Of gloating censors, glad o'er my decay,

And deeming all but best I ne'er had been!
The body's bards throned, sceptering the scene,
The grovelling worshippers of earth and time!
Arise! and with thy song's celestial sheen,
Shame these false meteors, change the ruling chime!
My minstrel—I thy Muse—sing thou the soul sublime!

“ Sing, poet, sing! but not of new—of old,
Of old and new—Eternal Truth thy theme,
That holdeth past and future in her fold,
That maketh present but a passing dream,
While time and earth and man as trifles seem;
That knoweth not of new, or old, or strange;
Whose ever-during, all-redemptive scheme,
Fixt and immutable 'mid worlds of change,
On, on, from universe to universe doth range.

“ Faint not, nor fear, for all shall fare thy way—
My way—His way, the Master evermore.
East shall seem West, returned the rising ray,
Shining afar from this most ancient shore;
And man shall rise e'en where man fell before.
Fools may deride, may jeer at destiny;
They mock to mourn; oblivion earths them o'er;
While they that champion truth, by truth shall be
Exalted, e'en in time, to live eternally.”

The Ancient paused, and, unrevealed till then,
A mammoth harp his bosom swung before,
Such as perchance tuned Israel's psalmist when

A maddening rage his monarch tossed and tore,
And music's magic quelled satanic power.
Seated, his form against a crag reclined,
He waved me to his feet, and forth did pour,
As roaring cataract on the waiting wind,
A sea-like surge of song, thundering from mind to mind.

Full tale of what was told, I may not tell,
Though mind be heir to all of mystery;
With milk of truth the breasts of wisdom swell,
Sufficing past and present infancy.
But matching all the modern eye may see
With what was promised to the future sight,
'T was as the shrub unto the sheltering tree,
The floating swan unto the eagle's flight,
The hillock to the snow-crowned summit lost in light.

Silent, he towered above me, harp in hand,—
Was it a dream? Could dream so vivid be?—
And with his mantle's fold my forehead fanned.
Then leapt to life the flame of poesy!
Was it a vision of my destiny?
Upon the mount, as erst, I stood alone,
And naught was there of muse or minstrelsy;
Save that afar still trembled that strange tone,
And something said within: "That harp is now thine own."

Canto III
Elect of Elohim



Elect of Elohim



ING I a song of aeons gone,
Of life from mystery sprung,
Ere sun, or moon, or rolling stars
Their radiance earthward flung;
Ere spirit-winged intelligence
Forsook those shining spheres,
Exceeding glory there to gain
Through mortal toil and tears.

A song they learn whose lives eterne
Transcend yon twinkling night,
Pale Olea's silver beam outsoar,
Shinehah's golden flight;
Passing the angel sentries by,
Mounting o'er stars and suns,
To where the orbs that govern burn,
Royal and regnant ones.

Declare, O Muse of mightier wing,
Of loftier lore than mine!
Why God is God, and man may be
Both human and divine;
Why Sons of God, 'mid sons of men,
Unrecognized may dwell,

An Epic of the Ages

So masked in dense mortality
That none their truth can tell.

From heavenmost height, 'mid worlds of light,
Heard I, or seemed to hear,
A sweet refrain, as summer rain;
A cadence soft and clear;
A voice, a harp,—was it the same?—
Harping those harps among,
Leading the lyric universe,
On those high hills of song.

In solemn council sat the Gods;
From Kolob's height supreme,
Celestial light blazed forth afar
O'er countless kokaubeam;
And faintest tinge, the fiery fringe
Of that resplendent day,
'Lumined the dark abysmal realm
Where earth in chaos lay.

Silence self-spelled; the hour was one
When thought doth most avail;
Of worlds unborn the destiny
Hung trembling in the scale.
Silence o'er all, and there arose,
Those kings and priests among,
A Power sublime, than whom appeared
None nobler 'mid the throng.

A stature mingling strength with grace,
Of meek though Godlike mien,
The love-revealing countenance
Lustrous as lightning sheen ;
Whiter his hair than ocean spray,
Or frost of alpine hill.
He spake ;—attention grew more grave,
The stillness e'en more still.

“ Father ! ”—the voice like music fell,
Clear as the murmuring flow
Of mountain streamlet trickling down
From heights of virgin snow.
“ Father,” it said, “ since one must die,
Thy children to redeem,
Whilst earth, as yet unformed and void,
With pulsing life shall teem ;

“ And thou, great Michael, foremost fall,
That mortal man may be,
And chosen Saviour yet must send,
Lo, here am I—send me !
I ask, I seek no recompense,
Save that which then were mine ;
Mine be the willing sacrifice,
The endless glory, Thine !

“ Give me to lead to this lorn world,
When wandered from the fold,
Twelve legions of the noble ones

An Epic of the Ages

That now thy face behold;
 Tried souls, 'mid untried spirits found;
 That captained these may be,
 And crowned the dispensations all
 With powers of Deity.

“A love that hath redeemed all worlds,
 All worlds must still redeem;
 But mercy cannot justice rob—
 Or where were Elohim?
 Freedom—man's faith, man's work, God's grace—
 Must span the great gulf o'er;
 Life, death, the guerdon or the doom,
 Rejoice we or deplore.”

Silence once more. Then sudden rose
 Aloft a towering form,
 Proudly erect as lowering peak
 'Lumed by the gathering storm;
 A presence bright and beautiful,
 With eye of flashing fire,
 A lip whose haughty curl bespoke
 A sense of inward ire.

“Give me to go!” thus boldly cried,
 With scarce concealed disdain;
 “And hence shall none, from heaven to earth,
 That shall not rise again.
 My saving plan exception scorns;
 Man's agency unknown;

As recompense, I claim the right
To sit on yonder throne!"

Ceased Lucifer. The breathless hush
Resumed and denser grew.
All eyes were turned; the general gaze
One common magnet drew.
A moment there was solemn pause;
Then, like the thunder-burst,
Rolled forth from lips omnipotent—
From Him both last and first:

"Immanuel! thou my Messenger,
Till time's probation end.
And one shall go thy face before,
While twelve thy steps attend.
And many more, on that far shore,
The pathway shall prepare,
That I, the First, the last may come,
And earth my glory share.

"Go forth, thou chosen of the Gods,
Whose strength shall in thee dwell!
Go down betime and rescue earth,
Dethroning death and hell.
On thee alone man's fate depends,
The fate of beings all.
Thou shalt not fail, though thou art free—
Free, but too great, to fall.

An Epic of the Ages

“ By three in heaven, by three on earth,—
 By blood that sanctifies,
 By water of obedience,
 Spirit that justifies;
 By every word of mine and thine,
 Through toil and travail sore,
 Man, God-redeemed, with God shall be,
 As God forevermore.”

'T was done. From congregation vast
 Tumultuous murmurs rose;
 Waves of conflicting sound, as when
 Two meeting seas oppose.
 'T was finished. But the heavens wept;
 And still their annals tell
 How one was choice of Elohim,
 O'er one who fighting fell.

A stranger star that came from far,
 To fling its silver ray,
 Where, cradled in a lowly cave,
 A lowlier infant lay;
 And led by soft sidereal light,
 The Orient sages bring
 Rare gifts of gold and frankincense,
 To greet the homeless King.

Oh wondrous grace! Will Gods go down
 Thus low that men may rise?

Imprisoned here the mighty one
Who reigned in yonder skies?
Hark to that chime!—a tongue sublime,
That tells the hour of noon.
A dying world is welcoming
Life—light of sun and moon.

“Peace! peace!”—thy voice, eternity!
“Peace!” echoes time’s false tone.
“Peace! peace!” Is discord then no more?
Are earth and heaven as one?
Peace, peace, where sparkling hosts proclaim
A monarch manger-born;
There ruler of unnumbered realms,
Here throneless and forlorn.

He wandered through the faithless world,
A prince in shepherd guise;
He called his scattered flock, but few
The voice did recognize;
For minds upborne by hollow pride,
Or dimmed by sordid lust,
Ne’er look for kings in beggar’s garb,
For diamonds in the dust.

Wept He above a city doomed,
Her temple, walls, and towers,
O’er palaces where recreant priests
Usurped unhallowed powers.
“I am the way, the life, the light!”

Alas! 't was heeded not;
 Ignored—nay, mocked God's messenger,
 And spurned the truth He taught.

O bane of damning unbelief!
 Till now when e'er so rife?
 Thou stumbling stone, thou barrier 'thwart
 The gates of endless life!
 O love of self, and Mammon's lust!
 Twin portals to despair,
 Where bigotry, the blinded bat,
 Flaps through the midnight air.

Through these, gloom-wrapt Gethsemane!
 Thy glens of guilty shade
 Grieved o'er the sinless Son of God,
 By gold-bought kiss betrayed;
 Beheld Him unresisting dragged,
 Forsaken, friendless, lone,
 To halls where dark-browed hatred sat
 On judgment's lofty throne.

As sheep before His shearers, dumb,
 Those patient lips were mute;
 The clamorous charge of taunting tongues
 He deigned not to dispute.
 They smote with cruel palm a face
 Which felt yet bore the sting;
 Then crowned with thorns His quivering brow,
 And mocking, hailed him "King!"

Transfixt He hung,—O crime of crimes!—
The God whom worlds adore.
“Father, forgive them!” Drained the dregs;
Immanuel was no more!
No more where thunders shook the earth,
Where lightnings, 'thwart the gloom,
Saw that unconquered spirit spurn
The shackles of the tomb.

Far-flashing on its wings of light,
A falchion from its sheath,
It cleft the realms of darkness and
Dissolved the bands of death;
Hell's dungeons burst, wide open swung
The everlasting bars,
Whereby the ransomed soul shall win
Those heights beyond the stars.

Canto IV
Night and the Wilderness

Night and the Wilderness



SETS the great Sun, but sets to rise again,
More glorious from a night of martyrdom;
Sinks, like the waning Moon, in seas of blood,
To soar anon above a mightier morrow;
Sets here to rise on realms and times untold,
All worlds illuming, erewhile, evermore.

Follow the lingering Stars, save haply one
Of primal twelve,—a Queen's rare diadem,—
Through mystic night of ages sparkling lone,
And speaking in high splendor things to come.

While the lorn Bride, the Woman wonderful,
Clothed, crowned, and shod, as with the triple sheen
Of future glories in her gracious gift;
Ere winging to the restful Wilderness,
Returning to the world invisible,
Abides to hope, believe, endure, all things;
All depths and heights with Him inheriting.

Henceforth with her another Comforter,
Christ-sent, divine, a Spirit minister,
Of heavenly Three the unembodied One,
Proceeding from the presence of the Sire
To manifest the meaning of the Son.

An Epic of the Ages

Giver of gifts from Him, the glory-crowned,
 Fountain of memory and of prophecy;
 Herald of peace, proclaiming Holiness,
 Voice of Eternity to virgin Time.
 Lamp of the soul, light of the universe;
 Creative Hand—omnific Arm of God;
 Holder, with Christ, of resurrection's key,
 The quickener of the living and the dead.
 Life, Light, and Love—magnetic mystery,
 Whereby the Father draweth to the Son,
 Nor Twelve alone, nor Seventy seventyfold,
 But ere the end, tribes, tongues, and kindreds all.

Ever with them, earth-wandering Witnesses,
 The heralds of a kingdom yet to come,
 Kingdom upon and yet not of the earth,
 Whose portal none can enter, none can see,
 Save born anew, born of a dual birth,
 By mystic fatherhood and motherhood
 Begotten sons and daughters unto God.
 Wide sowers of the word, sent forth to strew
 On stony ground, on goodly soil, the seed,
 Of present and of future faith the germs,
 Sown to the full set time of harvesting.
 Far hunters, fishers, gatherers, of men;
 The shepherds set to feed a wolf-torn flock,
 Holding the sacred keys that loose and bind.
 Always with them, God-missioned ministers,
 Unctioned with fire, anointed from on high,

Circling as stars their ever central Sun,—
Revolving round a loftier Splendor still—
And Him withdrawn, reflecting wave on wave
Of Gospel light, gladdening a gloom-hung world.

A world o'ershadowed by an Eagle's wings,
From Scythian snows to hot Hamitic sands,
From Ganges on to Tiber and the Thames;
Where goeth forth, unwittingly the tool
Of Truth eterne, her pathway to prepare,
The law and legion of imperial Rome,
Mighty to crush and to consolidate,
Haply to humble, soften, making way
For peace to flow wider than war can wound;
Her iron hand the Nazarene's defense,
Holding in quell the hierarchal hate;
Servant unknowingly of Him she slew
In pandering to Judah's jealousy.

Subservient, too, the Macedonian power,
The pard-like phalanx, swift, invincible,
Spreading the glories of a sapient tongue,
The wing whereon a higher wisdom flew,
Till teem, of Aryan clans, the Asian kin,
Seedlings of Japheth, sire of the Gentile world.
Subservient all that e'er hath swayed or served
Since truth set sail upon the surge of time.

Vain, Dragon, vain thy deluge of deceit,
Thy flood of lies, thou false one from of old!

Vain, wrath of devils and of men combined!
 Triumphs the Man-Child, priest-power, summoned home;
 Triumphs the Woman in the Wilderness,
 'Scaping the jaws, the hungering gates of hell,
 That 'gainst the mortal part alone prevail;
 Body, not spirit, crushed and all o'ercome.
 Withdrawn to realms of rest, she reigneth still,
 And here shall rise unto the regnant place,
 Ruling by rod of Christ a ransomed world,
 Leagued now with death and darkness, loathing light
 Of that great Witness, which again must go,
 When eagle pinions shadow earth once more,
 Borne on the shoulders of the Philistine
 To every nation ere the fated end.

Till when proud Japheth sways, while Jacob mourns,
 Fainting 'neath yokes and fardels, prostrate, prone,
 With Judah undermost, the last of all
 The trampled tribes to taste of liberty;
 Though foreordained a wondrous power to wield,
 Antean-like, from touching of the ground;
 Bent, curst, but clutching, and by might of gold
 Conquering his dust-adoring conqueror.

Predestined Israel, martyred, immolate,
 That nations, races, worlds, might look and live;
 Descending, like his Lord, all else below;
 And yet with Him to rise all else above;
 Extremes of woe and weal encompassing;
 Wisdom by sweet and bitter made more wise.

Always with them, crown of that queenliest brow,
The Bride, the Wife, the Woman wonderful,
Her diadem within, without, the world,
Where false Idumea sinks degenerate,
The washed one to his wallowing in the mire;
A drowsy dreamer of the self-same dreams
Dispelled erewhile by lightnings of her eye,
Her altar's blazing and her armor bright,
By heaven-lit torch that made the pathway plain
O'er rugged mount, through mazy catacomb,
Till dimmed with incense from Diana's shrine,
And dashed in pieces 'gainst a pagan throne,
Where prematurely changed was cross for crown,
And Christ's flock fleeced by shearing compromise.

Still with that flock, still with all faith sincere;
Still with the just, though Christian-Pagan turns
His prurient ear to fables, from the truth;
And virtueless as Judah's pharisee,
And graceless as Iscariot, self-hung,
Parts in the midst, imperial East from West,
Twain as the imaged legs of Babel's dream,
Bound down with brazen-iron manacles;
A split colossus, fallen 'twixt Greece and Rome.

With virtue to the end, but not with thee,
Thou wanton, Harlot-Mother, would-be wife!
Roaming tradition's tangled wilderness,
Lost in a night that seemeth to thee day,

An Epic of the Ages

In crooked paths that fain would straight appear;
 Warming thy withered fingers o'er the coals
 Alive 'mid ashes of the ancient fires,
 Where She was wont to kindle faith, hope, love,
 And flash the spirit flambeau o'er the world;
 There holding to thy heart an empty urn,
 There cherishing a name, a memory,
 Mumbling vain prayers, "Lord, Lord," protesting still,
 And still forgetful of thy Lord's commands.

Nay, not with thee, thou crimson courtesan,
 Robed in the horrid hue of countless crimes!
 Fierce dragon's maw, thrice cruel murderess,
 Thy hands a-reek with blood of innocence,
 With blood of prophets, blood of priests and kings,
 Whose martyred souls sue vengeance, judgment-sworn;
 Vengeance on thee, thou slaughterer of saints!
 Vengeance on him, thy sceptered paramour,
 Whose princes ten (while Mammon's host shall wail)
 Loathing where once they loved all lustfully,
 And lived, as thou hast lived, deliciously,
 When thou art ripened unto rottenness,
 Shall give thy crumbling body to be burned.

Nay, Anti-Christ, thou mystic power of sin!
 Never with thee, usurping god of gain!
 Plotting to sway Jehovah's sovereignty,
 As Lucifer the might of Elohim.
 Perdition, warring 'gainst the saints of God,

And overcoming till the judgment sits,
When righteous wrath iniquity shall slay;
When swift-winged morn shall overtake the night,
And glory rift the gloom of centuries.

Are ye alone, ye sacred messengers,—
Prophet and priest and godly minister,—
Whom Mercy sends man's erring soul to win
From folly's paths of wickedness and strife,
To wisdom's way of purity and peace!
Are ye alone forerunners of the Light?

Anon as kings and conquerors they come;
Anon as champions of democracy;
Founders of empire and iconoclasts;
Sword, pen, and tongue of progress and reform;
Pilgrims to continents and climes unknown,
Uncurtained for the play of Liberty,
Now nearing the finale of her dreams—
Dreams that shall waken to reality;
Sages in art, in science past profound;
Invention's wizards, wielding mystic wand;
The stars and suns of literature, whose rays
Laurel with light the living hills of fame;
Masters of melody, whose magic wakes
From earthly harps the echoes of eternity;
Waste-saviours; probers of the polar way;
Pilots of air, rulers of element;
The pioneers of thought's wide wilderness.

Piercing, as peaks, the sombre shades of night,
To greet the early glintings of the morn.

These also are the mighty, kin to those,
Divinest of Jehovah's messengers.
All oracles of light, all arms of power,
Preparers of the way His face before.

Declare His truth, His generations tell,
Whose goings forth, whose sendings, from of old;
O'er whom a wise world marvelled, some to say
Elias, slain of Herod, lives again,
While some said Jeremias.

Whom say ye,
His chosen followers, children of the light,
Illumined, gifted of the Holy One!
Whom say ye was your Master, Teacher, Friend?

“ Word that was God, is God, and shall be aye;
Sire by the spirit, and by flesh the Son;
In glory with the Father ere the world,
And now with that same glory glorified;
Image and likeness of creation's Sire,
Mirror and model of humanity,
Of man the parent and the prototype;
The Sole-begotten, here He doeth o'er
All He hath seen erstwhile the Father do;
Lover of right, loathing iniquity,

Anointed Lord of Lords, and Sire 'mid Sons.
 Elias? Nay, Messiah, Saviour, King;
 The greater one Elias said should come."

Sufficeth it. What now, ye learned ones,
 School-taught, self-sent, man-missioned ministers,
 Creators of a vain divinity,—
 Likeness of naught, mirror of nothingness,
 A god, than graven image, less divine!—
 Daring the thunders of the Decalogue,
 Disputing Moses, Christ, and prophets all,
 Gird up your loins and answer—what is God?

" Impersonal, incomprehensible;
 Centre, as circle, everywhere, nowhere;
 All things made He from nothing"—Hold, enough!
 Night and gross darkness—darken it no more.

Yet give to man his meed—him that hath kept,
 Albeit in empty urn, the Name of Names,
 And toiled and suffered sore transmitting it
 From sire to son through shaded centuries;
 As him that erst Messiah here proclaimed,
 The trodden yet beneath oppression's heel,
 Safe hoarding still the precious prophecy.
 The Jew, the Christian, each hath played his part,
 Each as a star hath heralded a morn.

And what of him, the fierce iconoclast,
 Agnostic, doubting or denying all,

An Epic of the Ages

Ofttimes in hate and horrid ribaldry?
Maintains he not life's equilibrium?
A jet to cool fanaticism's flame,
A brake upon the wheel of bigotry?
Bold unbelief, reform's rough pioneer,
Unwittingly a warrior for the Cross,
A weapon for the right he ridicules.

God's perfect plan an ocean is, where range,
As minnows, monsters, of the wide wave realm,
Men's causes, creeds, and systems manifold;
Free as the will of Him who freedom willed,
While foiling here nor fettering aim divine.
E'en Lucifer, arch-foe to liberty,
Is free—though not to trench on freedom's ground.
All human schemes, all hell's conspiracies,
All chance, all accident, all agency,
All loves, hates, hopes, despairs, and blasphemies,
All rights, all wrongs, bend to one blest decree;
And truth—gold, found with dross, in every age
Hath wrought more good than ill to humankind.

But morn must rise, and night dismiss her stars;
And ocean summon home his seas and streams;
And Truth, the perfect, truth the part fulfill,—
As knowledge, faith; as history, prophecy.

Hark to a cry that cleaves the wilderness,
Pealing the clarion prelude to the dawn!

Canto V
The Messenger of Morn



A NOBLE OF THE SKIES
"I saw in vision such an one descend."

A NOBLE OF THE SKIES

"I saw in vision such an one descend."





The Messenger of Morn



WAKE, slumbering world! Behold the Bridegroom comes!
The shadows lift, and o'er night's dusky beach
Ripple the white waves of morn. Awake! Arise!

Ocean of dispensations—river, rill,
Roll to thy source! End, to thy Origin!
And Israel, to the Rock whence ye were hewn!
For He that scattered, gathereth his flock,
His ancient flock, and plants their pilgrim feet
On Joseph's mountain top and Judah's plains;
Recalls the children of the covenant
From long dispersion o'er the Gentile world,
Mingling their spirits with the mystic sea
That sent them forth as freshening showers to save
The parched and withered wastes of unbelief.
Japheth! thy planet pales, it sinks, it sets;
Henceforth 't is Jacob's star must rise and reign.

Daughter of Zion! be thou comforted,
And wash from thy wan cheek all trace of tears.
Gone are the days of dole and widowhood,
The days of barrenness that brought thee scorn;
Thy wilderness now weds, thy desert blooms.

Rejoice, Jerusalem! thou art redeemed;
Again thy temple and thy towers arise;
Heard is the harp of David in thy halls;
Greater than Solomon's thy wisdom shines.

From spirit heights where thou art beautiful,
Lamp of the nations, send thy light afar!
Take on thy new name, One and Pure-in-Heart;
For thou shalt see thy God, His glory thine.

Gone are the gold, the silver and the bronze,
The conquering iron and the crumbling clay;
World-wide, heaven-high, the Stone of Israel stands,
The Chaldean image as the Chaldean dream.

Six days thou, Earth, hast labored, and the seventh,
Thy sabbath, comes apace! Night's sceptre wanes,
And in the East the silvery Messenger
Gives silent token of the golden Dawn.

Now, heaven's loud trumpets, all earth's secrets tell!
Death and hell's dungeons, liberate your dead!
For 'mid the shouts of saints, the risen, the changed,
Day dawns, hour strikes, skies burst—the King descends!

God's burden; hear it nations! hear it isles!
Ere falls an hour, night's darkest hour of doom.
The trial ends, the judgment now begins.
Out, out of her, my people, saith your God!

Who towers aloft, as mountain girt with hills,
Amid the strength of Ephraim's stalwart sons,
To trumpet thus the closing act of time?
Speak, oracle! what sayest thou of thyself?
Who art thou, man of might and majesty?

“ Would God I might but tell thee who I am!
Would God I might but tell thee what I know! ”

Then was he of the mighty?—one with those
Descended from the Empire of the Sun,
Adown the glowing stairway of the stars;
Regnant and ruling ere they left the realms
Of life supernal, left their sovereign thrones,
To wander oft as outcasts of mankind,
Unknown, unhonored, e'en like One who came
Unto His own, by them spat on and spurned;
The guileless followers of the guiltless Lamb,
Crowned with the halo of the Name of Names;
Peers of the Empire of Omnipotence,
The sceptred satraps of the King of Kings;
The royal retinue of Him who shines
First-born of many brethren; Gibborim,
Great ones worthy the Word that was to come;
Foreknown, elect, predestined, preordained,
The Sons of God, the saviours of mankind.

I saw in vision such an one descend,
And garb him in a guise of common clay;
His glory veiling from the gaze of all,

Who wist not that a great one walked with men;
Nor knew it then the soul incarnate there,
Betwixt the temporal and spirit spheres
So dense forgetfulness doth intervene;
Yet learned his truth betime by angel tongues,
By voice of God, by heavenly whisperings.

But who remains the mystery to solve?
The letter to unlock with spirit key?
The veil to lift by death and silence thrown
O'er all the splendors of that life sublime?

A living prophet unto dying time
Heralding the dispensation of the end;
When Truth once more the vineyard comes to prune,
When potent weak confound the puny strong,
Threshing the nations by the Spirit's power;
That here the Father's work may crown the Son's,
And Earth be joined a holy bride to Heaven,
A queen 'mid queens, crowned, throned, and glorified.

Wherefore a noble of the skies came down
In strength divine, a stirring role to play
In time's tense tragedy, whose acts are seven.

Avails it aught, his name or nation here?
His state and standing there, the vital tale.

His part to fell the false, replant the true,
To sow in mortal soil eternal seed;
To clear away the debris of the past,

The ashes of its dead and dying creeds,
And kindle newly on earth's ancient shrine
The light that points to life unerringly;
Crowning what has been with what now must be,
A mighty still bespeaking mightier.

Earth rose from wintry sleep, baptized and cleansed;
And on her tranquil brow, that seemed to feel
The holy and confirming hand of Heaven,
The warm light in a wealth of glory streamed.
Nature's green floor now carpeted anew
By angel hands, whose care had set the scene
For some glad change, some joyful happening,
Told in the countless caroling of birds,
Brightening the foliage, flashing 'mid the flowers,
Mirroring mingled hues of earth and sky.

Glad happening indeed; for ne'er before,
Since burst the heavens above Judea's hills,
And angel choristers pealed joy's refrain
Above the manged Babe of Bethlehem,
Had earth such scene beheld, as now within
The bosom of a sylvan solitude,
Hard by the borders of a humble home,
Upon that fair and fateful morn was played.

The players three, but only one of earth;
A blue-eyed, guileless, untaught farmer boy,
Standing but fourteen steps upon life's stair,

And yet in mind a man, of thought profound.
Not solemn, save betimes when 'neath the glance
Of some great idea's all-subduing spell;
Not melancholy—mirthful, loving life,
And brimming o'er with health and wholesome glee.

Bowing to God, yet bending to no creed,
Adoring not a loveless deity,
That saved or damned regardless of desert,
Ne'er reckoning the good or evil done;
Wafting the blood-stained criminal to bliss
If he but gasped, half-hung, the holy Name;
Thrusting the spotless infant into hell,
If unbaptized for uncommitted sin;
Foredestining to endless woe or weal.
Loving and worshipping the God of love,
The gracious God of reason and of right,
Long-suffering and just and merciful,
Meting to all according to their work,
Yet giving more, far more than merit's claim.
Bowing to Him, but not to man-made gods,
And shunning shameful strife where peace should dwell,
He holds aloof from those degenerate sects,
Bewildering Babel of conflicting creeds,
And pondering the apostolic line:
"Let any lacking wisdom, wisdom ask
Of Him that giveth and upbraideth not,"
In childlike faith, Godlike humility,
Resolves to put the promise to the test.

What pen can paint the marvel now befell ?
What tongue the wondrous miracle portray ?
Than theirs, the Vision's own, what voice proclaim
Whose dual glory dimmed the noonday beam,
Communing with him there, as friend with friend,
And giving to that prayer reply of peace ?

Tell how, as Moses on the unknown mount,
From whom in rage fled baffled Lucifer,
Who fain had guised him as the Son of God
And won the worship of that prophet pure ;
Tell how with gloom he strove ere glory dawned,
Strove mightily and conquered, e'en as truth,
Warring with error, shall at last o'ercome.
Tell how, in heart of that sweet solitude,
Within the silent grove, sequestered shade,
While spirit hosts unseen spectators stood,
Watching the simple scene's sublimity,
Eternity high converse held with time ;
Eternity, time's mother, waiting gazed,
While time, the mother of the centuries,
Mother of ages, dispensations, hours,
Gave birth unto her last and mightiest child.

Heaven's awful Sire, through Him, both Sire and Son,
Haloed with fire and with the Holy Ghost,
There blazons the beginning of the end.

Three years take wing ; the boy a youth now grown ;
And on his brow, woe-carved, a world of care.

He bows, an Atlas, 'neath the mighty load,
Yet bears it meekly, uncomplainingly.

Nor marvel at his lot; hath he not told,—
A crime man ne'er forgave in fellow man,—
Told the wise world that God hath spoke again ?

“ No church the Christ's. None, therefore, can I join.
All sects and creeds have wandered from the way.
Priestcraft in lieu of priesthood sits enthroned.
Dead forms deny the power of godliness.
Men worship with their lips, their hearts afar.
None serve acceptably in sight of heaven.
Wherefore a work of wonder shall be wrought,
And perish all the wisdom of the wise.”

“ 'T was from below,” thus bigotry, in rage.
“ Nay, from above,” the simple soul's reply.
“ No vision is there now, the time is past.”
“ But I have seen,” affirms the youthful seer.
“ God is a spirit, everywhere, nowhere.”
“ God is a Man; I saw Him, talked with Him.”
“ Man ” ?—“ Aye, of holiness,—exalted Man.”

A strife of words, of warring tongues now waged,
And weapons vied with words the truth to slay;
Nor truth alone, but her brave oracle,
A boy by men, by neighborhoods, oppressed.
The wrangling sects forgave, well-nigh forgot,
Their former feuds and fears and jealousies,

And joining hands, as Pilate Herod joined,
In friendly reconcilment's cordial clasp,
They doomed to death and hell "this heresy."
None sought with loving ruth a soul's reclaim,
But all were bent his name and fame to blast;
And pious would-be murder led the van
Of common hatred and hostility.

But Truth, thou mother of the living thought,
The deathless word, the everduring deed!
What puny hand thy mighty arm can stay?
When crushed, or backward held thine hour beyond?
Can bigot frown or tyrant fetter quell
Thy high revolt? From 'neath his haughty heel
Thou 'lt lift the loyal; humbling to the dust,
In death or penitence, the darkened mind
That measures arms with Light omnipotent.

Day from his quiver drew a shining shaft,
And thwart the night the flaming arrow flew:

"A messenger from God to thee I come;
Thy sins are pardoned through thy penitence;
A marvellous and a mighty work is thine;
Henceforward heard in every creed and clime
The good and evil tongues that trump thy fame.
Behold!"—

An Epic of the Ages

The Choice Seer from his pillow views;
 And while in wonder wrapt, as visions rise,
 Unveiling glories of eternity,
 In words akin to these the tale tells on :

“ Look, seeker after light! for thou shalt find;
 Nor by the lamp, though luring, tempted be;
 Nor turned from truer wealth that shines within—
 God’s word, in weakness clothed, the world to prove;
 Graven on gold in characters unknown,—
 Unknown to thee, but known to me and mine,—
 The language of my people, ages gone.

“ Beside the record, hid in yonder hill,
 At God’s behest and at my sire’s command,
 The seer stones, Urim, Thummim, known of old,
 Whereby thou shalt dispel the mystery
 That hangs above this heaven-favored land;
 And Joseph, speaking from the dust, shall join
 With Judah, page to page, truth’s tale to tell.

“ The winter of the Gentile fulness o’er,
 And Israel’s fig tree putteth forth its leaves;
 Fruit planted by the prophets of the past,
 Hath ripened and is ready for the fall.

“ Elias comes, Messiah’s messenger,
 Israel to summon and the world to save;
 First by persuasion’s pleading; that contemned,
 By voice of wrath and stroke of violence.

He speaks—the mountains kneel, the valleys rise,
Rolls to the north the land-dividing wave;
Pride changing places with humility,
While unity and love creation sway.
Elias comes! 't is restitution's reign,
And order hurls disorder from the throne.
Equality—nay, justice, holds the helm;
Each hath his own; the lost lamb finds the fold.

“ War sheathes his fangs; aloft on fearless wing
Peace broods above a restful universe;
A common faith and interest unite,
But conscience still her fullest freedom sees.
The Church prevails, but 't is the Kingdom reigns,
The crown and shield of causes numberless;
The law from Zion, and the royal word,
The Monarch's edict, from Jerusalem;
A centralized diffusion's balanced sway;
God's might, man's right, in equilibrium.

“ Babel no more, stilled all her strifeful tongues;
The primal language over earth prevails;
And all is found again as at the first,
While ransomed hosts, rejoicing, sing this song :

“ The Lord His ancient people hath redeemed;
The Lord hath gathered all things into one;
Satan is bound and time shall be no more;
The Lord hath brought up Zion from beneath;

The Lord hath brought down Zion from above;
And heaven on earth hath smiled, and she is clothed
In garments as the glory of her God,
Who standeth in the midst forevermore.

“ But ere it break, that bright Millennial day,
There falls a nightlier hour than night hath known,
When sun shall frown, moon blush, while dizzy stars,
Drunken with fumes of man’s iniquity,
Shall hurl them headlong from their sparkling thrones,
And grovel darkly in the deep abyss.
And heaven shall tremble as if palsy-struck,
Earth as an aspen shaken in the wind,
While o’er her quivering crest fierce ocean’s sword
Shall wave triumphantly. Men’s hearts shall fail;
For tribulations till that hour unknown,
Save in the feeble typings of the past,
Terrors of famine, fire, and pestilence,
Terrors of tempest, war, and earthquake shock,
Allied to horrors strange as manifold,
Shall stalk abroad to humble humankind;
To lift the lowly and abase the proud,
To straight the crooked and make smooth the crude,
Jehovah’s awful pathway to prepare;
Jehovah, He who cometh to his own,
And by his own at last is recognized.

“ No more a lowly Lamb to slaughter led,
But as a Lion in his risen strength;

Though gentleness and might shall mingle there,
And mercy walk with justice evermore.

“ But now the harvesters of Elohim
Here thrust the sickle in the ripened grain,
Reaping, while grace endures, for lives redeemed.

“ Truth wells from earth, pours righteousness from heaven,
Till wisdom’s waters inundate the world ;
A spirit deluge, symbolized of old
When earth a burial found within the wave,
Stirred now by breath from angel trumpets blown,
Wafting the chosen seed to safety’s strand ;
Philistia’s shoulder bearing Israel’s flight,
Winning the West, ere yet the East be spoiled.

“ Elijah comes—Elijah, he whose rays
Bespeak the Lord of Glory, from whose light
All splendors, paling, hide their tapers dim.
He comes the world to reap, the vineyard prune,
The wheat to garner and the tares to burn ;
He comes, his face a furnace, melting pride,
Consuming wickedness and cleansing worth.
He comes the hearts of sons and sires to turn,
To plant anew the promises of old,
Binding the present to the parent past,
Part unto whole, time to eternity.
He comes the Priesthood’s fulness to unfold,
The capstone of life’s temple here to lay.

He comes lest man be taken unaware,
And laggard earth be smitten with a curse.

“ Hark to that Prophet, outstretched arm of God,
Who comes the Ancient Order to restore;
And list to him who leads, as Moses led,
The ransomed of the Lord, by power redeemed! ”

Thrice through the night the radiant messenger
In burning words breathed forth the marvel told,
Till memory's page, as traced with pen of fire,
Glowed with each utterance ineffaceable.
And on the morrow stood the sacred twain—
Mortal, immortal, present linked with past—
Above the spot where slumbering truth reposed;
Not to be wakened yet, till autumns four
Had rained their dews upon its resting-place.

Meanwhile the Prophet, by the Angel taught,
In faith and patience disciplined his soul;
And yearly visiting that lonely mount,
Vigiled by him, the heavenly sentinel,
Learned from his lips a story of the past,
Affirmed in full when risen truth revealed
The pent-up secret of the centuries.

Canto VI
From Out the Dust





From Out the Dust



Y native land and thine the future throne
Of Him whose messenger I speed before;
Whose messenger and missile thou, a stone

Hurled from the mountain of the evermore.

The God of freedom, God of justice, severe

No tyrant should this chosen land defile;

And nations here, that for a season bore

The palm of power, **RAMAH-CUMORAH** ^{the whole,}

Or ruin's avenging rain. — "that Mount of mystery,
Of buried lore the solemn sepulchre."

Though not the witness with guilt the cup of crime,
Ripped the harvest of iniquity.

To races, nations, men, there is a time

To come and go, as wisdom shall decree, —

Wisdom supreme, tongue of Eternity.

But strike the blow as soon and nations will,

Who make of man a destined destiny.

And by their deeds the fateful measure set,

Electing to be clean, or unclean lingering still.

Race upon race has perished in its pride,

And nations lustrous as the lights of heaven

Have sinned and sunk, in reckless haste,

Upon this soil, since that dread word was given.

RAMAH-CUMORAH
— "The Heart of Mystery"
Of buried fact the volume speaks

From Out the Dust



MY native land and thine the future throne
Of Him whose messenger I speed before;
Whose messenger and missile thou, a stone
Hurl'd from the mountain of the evermore.
The God of freedom, God of justice, swore
No tyrant should this chosen land defile;
And nations here, that for a season bore
The palm of power, must righteous be the while,
Or ruin's avalanche ruin on ruin pile.

Though not till brimmed with guilt the cup of crime,
Ripened the harvest of iniquity.
To races, nations, men, there is a time
To come and go, as wisdom shall decree,—
Wisdom supreme, tongue of Eternity.
But strikes the hour as men and nations will,
Who make or mar a deathless destiny,
And by their deeds the fateful measure fill,
Electing to be clean, or unclean lingering still.

Race upon race has perished in its pride,
And nations lustrous as the lights of heaven
Have sinned and sunk, in reckless suicide,
Upon this soil, since that dread word was given.

An Epic of the Ages

Realms battle-rent and regions tempest-riven;
 The wrath-swept land for ages desolate;
 A wretched remnant blasted, curst, and driven
 Forth by the furies of revengeful fate;
 Till Wonder asks in vain, What of their former state ?

Wouldst know the cause, the upas-tree that bore
 The blight of desolation ? 'T is a theme
 To melt Earth's heart, and move all Heaven to pour
 With sorrow's heaving flood, as when supreme
 O'er fallen Lucifer, the generous stream
 Of grief half quenched the joy of victory.
 Mark how the annals of the ages teem
 With repetition! Time, eternity,
 The same have taught; but few, alas! the moral see.

There is a sin called self, which binds the world
 In fetters fell, than all save truth more strong;
 A sin most serpentine, round all men curled,
 And in its fatal fold earth writhes full long;
 Crime's great first cause, the primal root of wrong,
 Parent of pride and tree of tyranny.
 To lay the axe doth unto thee belong.
 Strike, that the world may know of liberty,
 And Zion's land indeed a land of Zion be!

A choice land, blest above all other lands,
 Since earth, reborn, rose sinless from the flood,
 Ages ere human malice pierced the hands
 Of Him who poured the all-redeeming blood.

Here stands the ancient Altar, and here stood
 The Ark, till borne triumphant o'er the wave,—
 The hungry wave that made all flesh its food,
 All save a few, whom godly living gave
 To see life's single way and shun death's dual grave.

The Old World, not the New,—this soil misnamed;
 Cradle of man and grave of nations vast,
 Whose glory, wealth, and wisdom had outfamed
 The mightiest of known empires, present, past;
 The land where Adam dwelt, where Eden cast
 Forth from her flaming gate the fateful pair
 Who fell that man might be; a fall still chaste,
 Albeit they sinned, descending death's dread stair
 To fling life's ladder down, Love's work and way prepare.

Here rose the Zion of primeval days,
 Type of a greater Zion, yet to rise;
 Here gleaming walls and towers returned the rays
 Terrestrial, streaming from faith-rent skies,
 Whose gates, wide-flung, gave welcome. Upward flies
 The sainted city, self denied, dethroned.
 In all things one, their power e'en death defies.
 In dust they ne'er shall slumber; they atoned
 For sin with sacrifice, and Christ hath all condoned.

Here cometh up the New Jerusalem;
 Here cometh down that risen realm of old,
 Jehovah's seat, earth's jewelled diadem,
 Joy of the world, by prophet tongues extolled.

An Epic of the Ages

Japheth, here joined with Shem, finds Israel's fold,
 An ark of peace amid a world of war.
 The Ensign on the Mountain here behold!
 'T is Joseph signals Jacob from afar,
 And points him to the goal where God and glory are.

Ancient of Days here sits, as at the first,
 When time and earth and Adam's race were young;
 When, bowed with age, a great soul's sunset burst
 In blessings on his seed, while told that tongue
 Far more than eye hath seen or lip hath sung.
 Michael, the prince, the monarch of our race,
 Sire of the soul, whence dust and spirit sprung,—
 Here sits he, throned in fire; before his face
 Ten thousand times ten thousand throng the judgment place.

Wherefore this land must unpolluted be;
 Or if defiled, by blood again made clean
 From grime of sin, from grind of tyranny;
 Free from the ills that other lands have seen,
 Free from the blots that now dim Freedom's sheen.
 No nation by vain boasting shall abide.
 Bid thine beware, lest here the sanguine scene
 Reacted be, and ruin, spawn of pride,
 Spring from the soil where nations great as thine have died.

But will she heed? Who knoweth? One alone.
 His word remains, and it must aye remain.
 The land is Liberty's; she reared her throne
 Ere Jacob's race or Japheth's thought to reign.

And though the soil be not all free from stain,
Till past the pale of penitence she stand,
Woe unto them that work or plot her pain!
Warring 'gainst God, hurled stormward from the strand,
Welters the shattered fleet, bruised, broken without hand.

Hesperia, keep thy 'scutcheon pure from stain!
No foreign foe 'gainst thee or thine prevails;
Here nations slay themselves if they be slain;
Brother 'gainst brother, sire 'gainst son, till fails
The fount of widow's tears and orphan's wails.
Hearken to him Jehovah's edict sends,
Whom Jacob's coming host as chieftain hails,
That peace and freedom may remain thy friends,
While hither, from all lands, all worlds, God's glory wends.

And Love shall light a realm of liberty,
Theme of the prophet tongue, the poet pen,
And winged with power and crowned with purity,
Earth shine a heaven, where gods and godlike men,—
Fraternity divine, that e'er hath been
And e'er shall be the blissful lot of those
Who, conquering self, bind Satan, fetter sin,—
Soaring beyond the bourne of earthly woes,
Rise to the sainted plane as all past Zions rose.

A gathering from the universe I see,
From realms above as realms beneath the sky;
The powers of heaven shall thy dread watchmen be,
And Gog and Magog menace but to die.

An Epic of the Ages

While they that serve the Lord with single eye
Shall see Him in the midst, the goal then won,
When time no longer flecks eternity,
Nor need is there of star, or moon, or sun,
Since He, light's self, is risen, and heaven and earth are one.

Thus far the Angel, Ramah's sentinel,
Custodian of Cumorah's archive old;
Thus he, the spelled yet speechful auditor
Around the hearthside of that humble home,
Where sire and matron, trusted kith and kin,
Took from his word the tidings wonderful,
Gave faithful credence to the story strange,
And stood him staunch through all emergency.

Thence oft above that mount of mystery,
Of buried lore the solemn sepulchre,
Meet modern seer and ancient oracle;
And while Humility at Wisdom's feet
Expectant waits, where truth from earth shall spring,
Comes, as from riven tomb, this wondrous tale :

List, Joseph, list! Since olden time when torn
Was earth asunder,—ocean's trenchant sword
The wedded lands wide severing,—swiftly borne
Safe through the watery deeps, as there devoured
By wind and wave that harmless o'er them roared;

The pilgrim sons of Shinar, favored band,
 From that far clime where Babel's folly towered,
 And language foundered on confusion's strand,
 Won first this precious heritage, this promised land.

Custodian of a pure and primal tongue,
 Most faithful found 'mid living sons of men,
 Their leader looked on God; then wrestling wrung
 By spirit might, and paged with fiery pen,
 The full of what should be, of what had been;
 Sealing the secret till an hour should chime
 When faith as mighty unto mortal ken
 Should bring the marvel of that book sublime,
 Bridging with lightful lore the shadowy gulf of time.

But trustful prows now part the unknown wave;
 Above, around, baptismal billows roll;
 Divinity their guide, their star, their stave,
 Else had that sea been fatal to the soul;
 Though tight each launch, where light through darkness stole
 From molten stones, late struck from Shelem's height,
 And lit by touch divine. Unto the goal
 Of that great voyage, banishing the night,
 Those crystal miracles gave forth their friendly light.

Till loomed to wistful eyes this waiting land,
 Spreading, like eagle's wings, its arms afar,
 As if to welcome worlds. That wave-borne band
 The Northland chose, lured by a favoring star;
 For South, as North, of human soul was bare.

An Epic of the Ages

But liberty loves most a northern zone,
 Where nature's ramparts e'en 'gainst nature's war
 Put forth protection. Liberty alone
 This sacred realm shall rule, of old her lineal throne.

God's favor now, as then, made manifest.
 What creed or clan may win thy country's crown?
 Though thou and thine anon be sore oppressed,
 Columbia's face reflect Europia's frown,
 Sceptred religion ne'er shall tread thee down.
 Belief and unbelief here find one plane;
 And this that tender truth be not o'erthrown,
 But spring and spread till every tongue maintain
 The kingdom of the King whose throne all worlds sustain.

The God of Israel is the God of all;
 A foe to bigot creed and tyrant clan;
 His purpose to annihilate each thrall
 That binds the body or the soul of man.
 But order, union, parts of freedom's plan;
 And anarchy aloft would foil the aim
 Of Him who burdens with proscriptive ban
 Misuse of Heaven-lent power; who dooms to shame
 The despot's iron rule, whate'er its place or name.

Till One shall rise whose right it is to reign,
 Whose throne is peace, whose sceptre righteousness,
 To rear a sovereign on this soil were vain.
 Here kingcraft, priestcraft, plant their sure distress.
 For what is man, that one should aught possess

Above another, deeming it his own,
 When all is God's? Because of selfishness,
 Pride, tyranny, and greed, with heart of stone,
 Welters the world in sin, and guilt must yet atone.

"Give us a king!" they cried, when years had flown,
 When wealth was massed, and men were multiplied;
 "A king! a king! uprear a royal throne,
 That past restraint our race's might may stride,
 From northern lake to southern ocean tide."
 Grieved was the nation's wise and valiant sire;
 Grieved was the faithful kinsman at his side;
 From eyes of both shot gleams of righteous ire,
 For both had fanned at Freedom's shrine her holy fire.

They sighed: "This leadeth to captivity,
 Perchance destruction, ending dark and dire;
 Yet must they have their will,—their agency,—
 God's early gift. Alas! that Freedom's fire,
 Misplaced, should kindle oft her fatal pyre."
 So saying, they anointed one their king
 Who craved the crown disdained by natures higher,
 Denying base ambition lest it bring
 A world of woes, known woes and worlds outnumbering.

For though a king be righteous in the main,
 As he, the monarch whom this nation chose,
 What ruler from misrule can all refrain,
 When privilege lifts power o'er friends and foes?
 Rare is the reign untarnished to the close,



And rarer still the blameless dynasty,
 Where oft unkingliest as princes pose,
 Because, forsooth, they come of some tall tree
 Whose trunk was sound, while these its branches blasted be.

A king's a king when acting like a king;
 When cowering like a slave he is a slave;
 Nor blood, nor birth, nor all that pride can bring
 To prove a serf a sovereign lord, can save
 The purple tide from mingling with its wave.
 The soul must royal be, or there's an end
 To royalty; spirit, not blood, God gave;
 And each at last a separate way must wend
 Back to its origin, no more to meet and blend.

Scarce gone the goodly ruler, when that realm
 Saw fierce rebellion rear its horrent head.
 Usurping treason seized the civic helm,
 Wrong trampled right, and justice, judgment, fled.
 Then strife, division, hosts to battle led;
 The prophets, mocked, lift warning voice in vain;
 A blood-soaked continent, a sea of dead,
 And of that mighty nation, fallen, self-slain,
 A prophet and a king, a solitary twain.

That prophet saw the coming of the Lord
 Unto the Old, the New, Jerusalem;
 Saw Israel returning at His word
 From wheresoe'er His will had scattered them;
 The realm's wide ruin saw, and strove to stem.

That king, sole scion of a slaughtered race,
 Casting his blood-stained sword and diadem,
 Lived but to see another nation place
 Firm foot upon the soil, then vanished from its face.

Wondrous indeed that ancient word and wise,
 But wiser and more wondrous yet in store;
 As tells the after tale, which fell betime
 From tongue forerunner of the tome of gold:

Again athwart the wilderness of waves,
 Surging old East and older West between,
 Where the lone sea the flowery Southland laves,
 And crowns o'er many climes the Chilean queen,
 Braving the swell, a storm-tossed bark is seen.
 From doomed Jerusalem, to Jacob dear,
 Albeit a leper, groping, blind, unclean,
 Goes forth Manasseh's prophet pioneer,
 Predestined to unveil the hidden hemisphere.

His lot to reap and plant on this far shore
 The promise of his fathers. Joseph's bough,
 From Jacob's well, the billowy wall runs o'er.
 Abides in strength the archer-stricken bow,
 Unto the utmost bound prevailing now,
 Of Hesper's heaven-inviting hills. Bend sheaves
 Of Israel, as branches bend with snow,

Unto his sheaf as mightiest; and as leaves
For multitude, the son the great sire's glory weaves.

His earthly duty done, ere chimes the hour
That summons his return to restful toil
In risen worlds, where life puts on all power,
He calls his kindred near,—their hearts the while
Aglow beneath the burning words that pile
A pyramid of prophecy, whose spire
Empierces heaven—and lest they soil
Their spirits pure, and part the wave of fire,
Warns them 'gainst ways of pride and paths of dark desire.

He speaks of Joseph's, Judah's destiny;
Of blighting and of blessings yet to pour;
Proclaims a mighty one his seed shall see,
Who many of the wandering shall restore;
A chosen seer foretells, revealed of yore
When Jacob's racial star o'er Egypt rose,
Here bringing from the dust a buried lore.
Then seals his benison in solemn close;
And seeks a realm divine, the soul's supreme repose.

The favored son of that prophetic sire—
Favored because most faithful and most just—
Hath soared to sacred mysteries yet higher,
And to the elder scions tongued the trust.
And serpent self, that demon of the dust,
Hath coiled, with pride and envy, round the souls
Ne'er friendly though fraternal, whose distrust

And jealousy breed bitterness that rolls
Rivers of wormwood 'twixt two races and their goals.

Thence peoples twain the promised land divide.
Northland and Southland see their tribes increase,
From Arctic ice-floe to Antarctic tide;
From where the eastern waves their thunders cease,
To where the western waters are at peace.
White and delightful, they that worship God;
They that deny Him—dark, degenerate these;
Doomed the stern wild to penetrate and plod;
Transgression's scourge and school, the Master's chastening rod.

The throneless ruler of the regnant race,
King, but no tyrant—prophet, priest, and seer,
Meets upon sacred summits, face to face,—
As when to Moses drew Jehovah near,—
The Holy One, the Spirit messenger;
Meets Him as man meets man, and by His grace
The gift is given with seeric eye to peer,
Time's vista viewing through prophetic glass.
Plain to his gaze revealed, the unborn ages pass.

War, slaughter, conquest; heroes, sages, famed;
Kingdoms, republics, empires, rise and fall;
Till pride unknown and tyranny unnamed
Where righteous rule brings blessedness to all.
Then self again, the universal thrall.
The faithful dead, or dwindled to a few,
Crime begets crimes, the heavens to appall.

Now arrows of God's wrath the nations strew,
And horrors piled on horrors make misery's retinue.

All this and more the prescient monarch saw;
Messiah's self, Jehovah, Him beheld;
The Lamb of God, in whom was found no flaw,
Though hate's black billows round Him surged and swelled;
Life's deathless tree—deathless, though demon-felled;
The crash resounding to this far-off shore,
Whose winnowed remnant welcomed Him revealed
In risen glory, when had ceased the roar
And raging of the tempest heralds sent before.

At whose rebuke the haughty mountains bowed,
Shorn by the whirlwind, sunk, or swept away,
No more their frown the lowly valleys cowed,
Rising like billows 'mid the wrathful fray,
And dashing 'gainst the skies their dusty spray.
Rocks, boulders, hills, no Titan strength could lift,
Hurtle as pebbles in the storm-fiend's play.
Earth opes her jaws, and through the yawning rift,
Cities, peoples, vanish, of hope, of life, bereft.

Three hours of tempest and three days of night;
Thick darkness, thunder-burst, and lightning flash;
Millions engulfed, millions in prostrate plight,
Groveling as slaves that feel or fear the lash,
Mingling their groans and cries with grind and crash
Of crags the cyclone's catapult impels,
Whose shrieking flails the fields and forests thrash.



EARTH OPES HER JAWS

"Earth opes her jaws, and through the yawning rift
Cities, peoples, vanishes, of hope, of life, of death."

Her arrows of God's wrath the nations glow,
 And horrors piled on horrors make Canaan's regions.

All this will move the precious monarch saw;
 Menahem's son, Jehoram, Him beheld;
 The Lamb of God, in whom was found no flaw,
 Through Israhel's black billows round Him surged and swelled;
 Life's destined tree—deathless, through demon-fellies;
 The crash resounding to this far-off shore,
 When wretched manhood welcomed Him revealed
 In such glory, when had ceased the roar
 And raging of the tempest heralds sent before.

EARTH OPES HER JAWS

At whose ready, the haughty mountains bowed,
 "Earth opes her jaws, and through the yawning rift
 Cities, peoples, vanish, of hope, of life bereft."
 No more their towers the lofty valleys cowed,
 Rising like hillsides and the western tray,
 And hallowed yonder the dust their dusty spray;
 Rocks, towers, hills, no Titan strength could lift,
 Slaves as pebbles in the storm-God's play—
 Earth opes her jaws, and through the yawning rift,
 Cities, peoples, vanish, of hope, of life, bereft.

Three hours of tempest and three days of night;
 Thick darkness, thunder-burst, and lightning flash;
 Millions engulfed, millions in prostrate plight,
 Travelling as slaves that feel or hear the lash,
 Mingling their groans and cries with grind and crash
 As ere the cyclone's catapult impels,
 Whose shrieking sails the fields and forests thrash.





Wild o'er the land roused Ocean's anger swells;
Fierce Flame's prophetic tongue the final doom foretells.

Three hours of stormful strife;—then all is still,
Save for a Voice the universe might hear,
Proclaiming what hath happed as Heaven's high will,
Dispensing pardon and dispelling fear,
Drawing the righteous nearer and more near.
Anon He lifts the curtain of the sky!
The midday sun no more their minister;
Greater hath risen; and glories multiply
As angels in their gaze earthward and heavenward fly.

He greets them as a shepherd greets his flock;
Shows them His wounded side, His hands, His feet;
Then builds His Church upon the stricken Rock,
Where flow life's healing waters, limpid, sweet,
As infant innocence, that joys to meet
Its great Original. With holy hand
He ministers, bids death and hell retreat,
And singles twelve from out the sainted band
To sow with Gospel light the furrowed, tear-worn land.

He bids them write His plain and precious word,
What His own tongue hath told, and all that seers
And prophets, hereto heralding their Lord,
Have poured into a world's unwilling ears;
That truth with truth may blend in after years,
As rivers many to one ocean flow;
That when Messiah in His might appears,

An Epic of the Ages

Men all may see Him as He is, and know
The Majesty of Heaven, 'mid nations bending low.

He greets them as His "other sheep," the fold
Unknown to Judah, but to Jesus known;
And tells of others still, whose fate untold
Hath been the sceptic's scoff and stumbling stone.
These yet must hear His voice, that one alone
May shepherd be, and one fold gather all
The flock of faith, where'er from zone to zone
They wander, and shall heed the warning call;
Fleeing to Zion's shore ere crumbling Babel fall.

He numbers them with Joseph, named of old,
Whom cruel wolves will tear in time to come,
Because a Jacob here his portion sold,
A prodigal forsook the parent dome
To riot in the wilderness and roam,
Feeding on husks; yet turning at the last
To where looms high the Father's heavenly home,
And where, when retribution's hour is past,
Forgiven, at His dear feet the weary soul is cast.

Anon he pictures Japheth's destiny,
The Gentile prospering in the promised land,
The guardian of the realm of Liberty,
So long as he for human right shall stand,
Nor trample on Jehovah's just command.
But woe to them of flinty heart and face
Who from Him turn, to smite with ruthless hand

The withered remnant of a star-ruled race,
For Laman yet shall spring, a lion to the chase!

His word now builds the New Jerusalem
(Earth-born, though basking in eternal rays),
Which Japheth, blent with Jacob, joined with Shem,
Shall rear on Joseph's land in latter days;
The Father's work of wonder and amaze;
A servant marred, though hurt not, and yet healed,
Whom Wisdom hearkens to, whom Faith obeys;
Arm of the Lord, long lying unrevealed,
Then lifted and made bare, His flock to fold and shield.

Now sounds a parting note, a plaint of woe,
Of warning 'gainst iniquity to be,
Ere purifying floods o'er earth shall flow,
And man from sin's duress delivered be.
Then, of the twelve, He sanctifieth three
With power o'er death, and gives them to remain
Till comes He in his glory. Lo! they see
Unrolling heavens receive Him once again;
And marvels else behold, but wisdom bids restrain.

Three generations pass in righteousness;
A fourth begins, and still from strand to strand
Peace rules, love reigns, and wealth and wisdom bless
The banded nations, walking hand in hand,
Christ's word and will supreme o'er all the land.
No rich, no poor, common their goods, their gold;
Nor high, nor low, all free and equal stand,

An Epic of the Ages

Loving each one his neighbor as of old;
Foretaste of rarer feast revealing tongues foretold.

Two centuries of love the land caress;
Buried the ancient feud, and banished vice;
When pride, that springs from dust to breed distress,
Crawls like a serpent to this paradise.
Again the tempter's wiles the weak entice;
Again the fall, the sorrow, and the shame;
Again, while angels weep, the fiends rejoice;
For now come strife, division, hearts aflame,
Hatred of humankind, revilement of God's name.

Farewell to peace and power forever past!
Deepest in crime a once delightful race,
Which melts as would the avalanche if cast
Into the furnace of the red sun's face.
Men vie in deeds that devils would debase;
Southland 'gainst Northland strives with might insane;
Backward, still backward, bends the bloody chase;
Crimson the land with carnage; main to main
Surges a sea of slaughter; millions are the slain.

The white dissolves; the swart, the red, remains;
Night clothes the continents, and thwart the gloom
No ray descends on shadowed peaks or plains
From history's sun; darkness, a living doom,
Mantling mind, soul, making the world one tomb.
Then bursts the dawn! Breaks forth the East in light,
Where Japheth, cramped and straitened, cries for room.

Rent mystery's veil, naked, in savage plight,
Now Occidental realms greet Oriental sight.

First found by him whose faith was mightiest;
And last by one whose patience most excels.
Ere storm-pushed prow hath pierced the wordless West,
That kingly soul, unthroned, uncrowned, compels
The homage of a queen; a glance dispels
The gathered gloom of ages; mutineers
And malcontents his courage calms and quells;
Boldly through seas of bigotry he steers,
And builds a bridge of life that binds the hemispheres.

The Gentile comes, as destiny decrees,
To Joseph's land of wonders held in store.
Freedom his watchword, sons of Freedom these,
Like to the favored bands that long before
A refuge found upon this sheltering shore.
But champions of right oft wrong the right;
Oppressed become oppressors in an hour;
And now, as day that pushes back the night,
The strong the weak assail, enslave, and put to flight.

Nor yet can fate forsake them. Japheth's hand
'Gainst Jacob's wrath-doomed remnant still prevails.
Tyrants oppress him from the motherland;
The Lord of hosts a champion arms and mails,
To match whose might no human power avails;
Nor grander cause or chieftain e'er came forth.
Him as its sire a new-born nation hails,

And fain would crown him, spite his will, his birth,
 Did Heaven vouchsafe such king to shame most kings of earth—

Real though oft recreant sons of Deity,
 Builders, o'erthrowers, of imperial thrones,
 In wrongful act of rightful agency
 Drenching with blood, paving with human bones
 The path to power, gruesome with tears and groans.
 Their lives a failure? God a failure? Nay;
 Whate'er betide, the soul that sins atones;
 And He who casts the parts all mortals play,
 Succeeds He ever, His the night, and His the day.

Thine antecedents, thy forerunners, these,
 Prophet of Ephraim, Joseph's namesake seer!
 More than those ancient bridgers of the seas,
 Unveiler of the long-hid hemisphere,
 Whose secret 't is lies booked and buried here.
 Bring forth that word of Joseph, now to join
 With Judah's word, Messiah's throne to rear;
 That high may rise and holily may shine
 God's house, the pure-in-heart, kingdom of King divine.

That He to the red remnant may reveal
 The great things done, and greater yet to do,
 That bring deliverance unto Israel,—
 To white, to red, to men of every hue,—
 To worlds redeemed His mighty merit through.
 Teach thou the way, tell how by Grace sublime
 The spirit gardens of the endless blue

Are visited, each vineyard in its time,
While glad sabbatic bells ring out their grateful chime.

Proclaim the dispensation of the end,
When all that is, with all that was before,
Keys, powers, and glories, past and present, blend,
Mingling as rivers at the ocean shore;
Where One ascends who all things shall restore—
The dead to life, the dewdrop to its source.
Spirit must reign, the carnal rule no more;
And this lest earth, winging the sunward course,
Unmeet for such a change, melt 'neath consuming curse.

How else, till done on earth the will of Heaven,
Can heaven and earth be one?—that one for all,
Till perfect love each petty fear hath driven,
And man is free from self's ignoble thrall?
Let not the mighty task thy mind appall.
What God hath done shall He not do again?
A day of power shall batter down the wall;
The willing heart shall rend the hampering chain;
And o'er this ransomed orb first Son, then Sire, shall reign.

Curst be the tongue that 'gainst thee shall contend,
The weapon wielded 'gainst this word of God,—
Beginning of the glory of the end,
The primal chapter of a changeless code,
The point, the edge, unto the Iron Rod.
The which withstood, all else must be withheld,—
The marvel still in mystery's abode.

An Epic of the Ages

Volume on volume yet to be unsealed;
But first the simpler things—behold them here revealed!

The purpose plain, the plan to come in time;
Then shalt thou know and walk the ancient way,
The path of peace, wending to power sublime;
The law celestial thou didst once obey,
Where gods and angels honor it alway;
Where greatest by humility are known,
Where justice reigns and order's endless sway,
Where like claims like and cleaves unto its own,
And sovereign, subject, share the glory of the throne.

Smite thou that sin of self, which binds the world
In fetters fell, than all save truth more strong;
That sin most serpentine, round all men curled,
Within whose fatal fold earth writhes full long.
To loose the coil doth unto thee belong.
To free the soul from sordid tyranny,
Be sacrifice the burden of thy song.
Aye, sacrifice shall set the prisoner free,
And men this truth shall learn, that light is liberty.

Canto VII
The Arcana of the Infinite

The Arcana of the Infinite



FLAKE upon flake, then slide succeeding slide,
The marvel and the wonder multiplied.

Till holds that mind—as holds the glacial store
Some cloud-hung, sunlit peak no storms outsoar—
A glittering avalanche of heavenly lore,
Whose streams of life shall slake the burning thirst
Of time unborn, of nations yet unnursed;
Torrent eternal, river of prophecy,
Flowing through worlds to find fulfillment's sea.

He stands, as Moses on the mystic mount,
Where knowledge pours from wisdom's purest fount;
Stands 'neath the droppings of the crystal eaves,
Where justice, joined with mercy, winds and weaves
The solemn warp and woof of destiny;
Where truth—light's temple—was, is, and to be,
'Lumines the vistas of immensity.

He walks and talks with God, as friend with friend;
He reads the book of time from end to end;
And in the volume of eternity
Peruses past and far futurity;

An Epic of the Ages

While from all depths that sink, all heights that soar,
 Come voices, visions, of the evermore.
 Like unto like, above, beneath, the skies,
 Deep calls to deep, and faith to faith replies.

As unto Judah's one and Joseph's three,
 Who tasted of translation's ecstasy;
 Or him who, spared from Babel's doom, beheld
 Messiah's unclothed spirit, faith-compelled;
 Or him of Tarsus, tranced, the triple seer
 Of things unlawful to be uttered here;
 As unto souls like these was given to see
 The marvel past, the mystery to be,
 So upon him, their peer of modern days,
 The Source of all revealing sends His rays.

'Lumed by a lamp that giveth endless view,
 Discerns he spirits false and spirits true;
 Unmasking Satan with the keys of light,
 That blind may see and deaf may hear aright
 A message marvellous to eyes and ears,
 The rhythmic message of the songful spheres;
 And yet no tithe of what those tongues unfold,
 Nor tithe of tithe of what can ne'er be told.

He hears the solemn dispensations chime
 From morn till eve, from birth to death, of time;
 He notes the markings of the horologe,
 The set times of the great Eternal Judge;

Then sees those dispensations as they run
 Their lotted course, like hours 'twixt sun and sun.
 Wave after wave rolls o'er the shining sand,
 Wave after wave breaks higher up the strand,
 With all of weal or woe the ages send.
 As Sundered ocean tides that shoreward tend,
 Now past and future o'er the present pend,
 Till on the narrow isthmus sea meets sea,
 And time no longer parts eternity.

He hears the soundings of the trumpets seven,
 Whose angels, stooping from the heights of heaven,
 Proclaim in tones to rend the echoing spheres
 The secrets of the seven thousand years;
 The secret of the book with seven seals,
 That all of mortal mystery reveals;
 Time's scroll, God's chronicle, life's tale told true,
 Nor tinged with favor's tint, with hatred's hue;
 Earth's week of history, whose sabbath chime
 Summons to rest the wearied soul of time.

Visioned the council of the Ancient One,
 Where Stars make ready for the rising Sun,
 Where Adam yields the mortal world he won
 Unto the Sabbath Lord, till sabbath done,
 And Sire receives the kingdom from the Son.
 Ere when eternal fulness is there none,
 Though great ones gain the far celestial shore,

Shining and perfect as they shone before,
 Till sanctified is glorified, and thence
 The stewardship becomes inheritance.

The all-creating, all-controlling chain
 Whereby the Gods perpetuate their reign,
 Whereby the higher, bending, lift the lower,
 Lever of priestly and of kingly power;
 The right that rules the nations, ill aware
 Whence came the thrones that have been, thrones that are;
 That sets up one and puts another down,
 Their fate proclaimed as fortune's smile or frown;
 The power that reigns not save in righteousness,
 Persuades in meekness, chastens but to bless;
 The might of heaven, the pure and potent chain,
 Stainless save mortal links their lustre stain,
 And plunged through fire are purified again;
 The Holy Order that for aye hath reigned,
 For rarest faith and righteous works ordained;—
 He sees extending through the storms of time,
 Christ's cable, anchored with that Soul sublime.
 Pilots of life on death's fierce tempest tossed;
 Love's legionaries, saviours of the lost;
 A sacred army's solemn pride and boast,
 The janissaries of the heavenly host;
 God's body-guard, Jehovah's diadem,
 The jewelled circlet of the Central Gem.
 Oft parted, seemingly, but sundered ne'er,
 Perfected in his gaze those links appear.

He sees the Endless Order as it came
By Adam, Enoch, Noah, Abraham,
And each Elias of the olden days,
As oft as kindled here the beacon blaze—
Truth, intervaled with error, changeful fate,
Alternant shine and shadow, dubious state,
Whene'er mankind hath proved degenerate.

Though ever, as the day-beam sinks and dies,
The stars reset their lanterns in the skies;
And unto Moses in the wilderness,
Comes greater light, succeeded by the less;
Till Christ the fulness of His ray restores,
And heaven o'er earth an holy unction pours
From vessels chosen on each hemisphere
To voice the tidings and the church to rear.

The promise past, fulfillment now is seen,
A perfect Church, resplendent in the sheen
Of risen Righteousness, whose arm once more
Puts forth in power to rescue and restore.
Gray grows to crimson, crimson melts to gold,
And dawns the day by starry night foretold,
Whose lamps prophetic pale their silvery rays,
Lost in the golden light of latter days,
Drowned in the dispensation of the end,
Where dispensations with their ocean blend,
And time's sad rivers cease their mighty moan
In sobbing requiem o'er his sunken throne;

An Epic of the Ages

Till death departs, and joy, from zone to zone,
Welcomes the rightful Heir unto His own.

Truth is eternal! Thus the solemn voice;
'T was not her birth made morning stars rejoice;
Nay, but her mission to a new-born sphere,
Whither, as oft, her shining bark would steer
With spirit crew, kin to the kingly race
Peopling the burning orbs of bourneless space.
Truth is eternal, endless as its God,
Author and Framers of the changeless code,
Ever-uplifting, oft-returning plan,
Redeeming from all worlds the race of man.

Life-saving line far flung from heaven to earth,
To rescue sinking souls, and give new birth
Unto the fallen, faithful, penitent,
Who else must bide in hopeless banishment,
Beyond the visage and the voice of God,
Did ne'er such gracious sunlight gild the sod,
Reaching with ray divine the dark doom o'er,
Closing its cruel jaws forevermore;
Love dying for belief and unbelief,
Gleaning life's harvest to the latest sheaf.

A God whose glory is intelligence,
A God whose knowledge gives omnipotence,
Who makes, maintains, and gladly glorifies,
Bending to lift the lowliest to the skies,

By triple lever, by the mystic birth,
By three in heaven, the typed of three on earth :
Water, that signifies obedience,
That follows faith and perfect penitence ;
Spirit, whereby the flesh is justified,
And blood, whereby the soul is sanctified.
Nor lifts by these alone, but by each word,
The lofty mandate of the living Lord,
Spirit 'mid spirits, most intelligent,
Wherefore their sovereign Sire benevolent,
Whose principles, essential in themselves,
Omnific wisdom welcomes to its shelves,
And institutes the law whereby the rest
Press on and on till all things are possessed.

Intelligence, eterne and uncreate,
Though glory-gotten in the spirit state,
Where all creations see maturity
Ere launched the soul upon a mortal sea,
To prove by agency the wrong, the right,
And walk by faith, as erst it walked by sight ;
As free to sound the gulf, as soar the height,
None sinking save by sin, denying Light.

Second estate now interlinked with first,
For godliness where spirit life was nursed,
And Satan's rebel host, heaven's third, were sent
To unentabernacled banishment,
Tempters, beguilers, triers of the true,

An Epic of the Ages

Who here reap greater gain, or sadly rue
 The loss of all, surrendering to him,
 Who once was morn, but now as evening dim,
 Where many, wrecked, to awful depths go down,
 While few return to wear the waiting crown,
 Reigning where others serve.

Each woe, each bliss,

In after worlds, the yield of life in this.
 Time a probation; earth, through time, a school,
 Where justice reigns, though oft the unjust rule.
 Pain, trouble, toil, preceptors of the soul;
 Death but the doorway leading to life's goal—
 Life's fount, where earth an infant spirit sprang,
 Life's dawn, where early stars in chorus sang,
 Ignoring pending sorrow, parent pang
 Of after joy o'er which their triumph rang.

Man a divinity in embryo,
 Who, ere he reign above, must serve below;
 His spirit in earth element baptize;
 For birth, as death, a baptism to the wise.
 The gulf that parts the lower from the higher
 Bridged by development of son to Sire,
 Of daughter unto Mother's high estate;
 For e'en as man's, the woman's future fate.

As sun, or moon, or varying star, appears
 Each heir of glory in those endless spheres,
 God's grace condoning life's unpaid arrears.

Sun-like the souls that live celestial laws,
And moon-like they who at terrestrial pause,
Who honor not the Saviour in the flesh,
But after, in the spirit realm, refresh
Their fainting, fettered lives at mercy's fount,
And far as merit buoys them, upward mount;
Saved, glorified, by faith and penitence,
Made valid, through vicarious ordinance,
For all who Him believe, who Him obey,
And own, or there or here, His sovereign sway.
Nor lost forever souls unsaved to-day;
Telestial, they who taste the pangs of hell,
And pay guilt's debt ere they in glory dwell,
Twinkling as stars whose numbers none can tell.

Justice and mercy each must have its own,
Nor thrust the other from a dual throne;
Each shoal and deep shall final fulness see,
And like clasp like through all eternity.

But who shall sound the bottomless despair
Of one condemned the second death to share?

If re-ensnared in Satan's subtle mesh,
A soul redeemed its Saviour pierce afresh,
Spurning the Spirit, scorning proffered ruth,
A traitor utterly to light and truth;
Then flames perdition's gulf, death's last abyss,
The lake of fire, all life's antithesis.

An Epic of the Ages

E'en God were powerless to change its plight;
 For what avails the burnt-out lamp to light?
 Justice as well rest blame on blameless shelves,
 As mercy save who will to damn themselves.

Twofold is death, but life hath threefold sway;
 What ne'er created was must be alway;
 The organized disorganized may be,
 But not the life that 'dures undyingly.
 Nothing bides nothing; that which is shall be;
 Though form, not essence, change unceasingly.
 Space, spirit, matter, all eternal are;
 For death but on creation wages war.
 Spirit to spirit, dust to dust returns,
 But bright intelligence forever burns;
 Though banished from the presence of the Light,
 Exiled and wandering in the outer night,
 Remembering past, and mourning present plight,
 The end whereof, a mystery to man,
 Unsolved while bending 'neath the mortal ban,
 None but the doomed partaker e'er shall scan.

Man's inmost spark, his being's primal fire,
 As birthless and as deathless as its Sire,
 No more the maker of that unmade germ
 Than man the framer of the spirit form,
 Born and begotten in the first estate,
 God's creature, whom God's power can uncreate.
 Whate'er beginning had may have an end,
 But life eternal doth itself defend.

Higher than heaven, deeper than hell, profound,
His course in whom no crookedness is found,
His path whose way is one eternal round.

Comes forth all life at Resurrection's call,
When soul immortal sheds the mortal thrall;
The just first rising, who with Christ shall reign,
While sinners tarry till He sounds again;
Late issuing, in shame and self-contempt,
When Lucifer, unbound, shall newly tempt,
Still warring for a glory not his own,
Till by the Arm almighty overthrown.

Spirit and body, blending, make the soul,
As halves, uniting, form the perfect whole;
Symbol of wedded bliss, celestial state,
The sealing of the sexes, mate to mate,
That heirs with Christ may reign as queens and kings
Where endless union endless increase brings;
Where souls a sweet affinity shall find,
And restitution's edict seal and bind
Eternal matter to eternal mind;
Like unto like, for night weds not with day,
And Order's mandate e'en the Gods obey.

Where blest in heaven, though curst in earth and hell,
The law that framed the house of Israel,
Light's lineal sheath and faith's fraternity,
The called and chosen of eternity;

An Epic of the Ages

Where lives, ne'er ending lives, perpetuate
The joys, a myriad-fold, of mortal state,
And bind with links welded in lesser years
The love-united systems of the spheres.

The body as the sheath without the sword;
No man without the woman in the Lord;
Each pair the Eve and Adam of some world,
Perchance unborn, unorbited, unwhirled.

From endless spirit, endless element,
The worlds that glow in glory's firmament;
Created all and governed all by law,
Perfect they shine, or show sin's fatal flaw,
Their Maker's will obey or disobey,
And felons found, a felon's debt must pay;
While wiser orbs, obedient in time's school,
Through all set terms, here learn to shine and rule,
The lords of light, supernal and supreme,
E'en as great Kolob 'mid the kokaubeam.

Earth a celestial law hath magnified,
And by that law shall she be sanctified,
And by the same shall she be glorified;
Shining forever as a sea of glass,
A globe of fire; flame's ordeal doomed to pass
To perfect bliss. She fell that this might be,—
Fell, e'en as man, to win like destiny;
Fell but to rise, by water once baptized,
And now by fire transformed, celestialized,

Rising resplendent, God-crowned, glory-plumed,
'Mid everlasting burnings unconsumed ;
Celestial seer-stone, making manifest
All things below to souls upon her breast,
By whom the white stone—new name, keyword blest,—
Revealing all above them, is possessed ;
Chosen, omniscient, children of the Sun,
Offspring of Adam, Michael, Ancient One,
Who comes anon his fiery throne to rear,
His subjects summoning from far and near.
Ten thousand times ten thousand bow the knee,
And monarch hail him through eternity.

For so are governed all those worlds of fire,
That chorus in a universal choir
The glory of the great Omnipotent,
Whose power hath framed through infinite extent
The splendors of the flashing firmament ;
Sire of the universe, and King of Kings
O'er countless realms ; each dusty dot that springs
To blazing being, empire of a God,
Who equals Him, yet owns His sovereign rod,
The central sceptre of Omnipotence,
The God of Gods, supreme Magnificence,
Keystone and Crown of royal Trinity,
That reigneth in the midst eternally.

There souls above who once below all things
All things inherit, and are priests and kings,

An Epic of the Ages

Pillars immovable, princes unto God,
No more outgoing, firm in His abode,
Where past and future present are alway,
And years a thousand even as a day.

O message marvellous to eyes and ears!
Voices and visions of the mystic spheres!
Voices of noonday, visions of the night,
Whisperings of angels and their presence bright!
Voice of the Architect of life's vast plan,
Speaking as God to God, as man to man!

Broken the fountains of the upper deep;
Opened the sepulchres where ages sleep;
The past, the future, now the present leaven;
With truth from earth blends righteousness from heaven;
Welding the parted links of being's chain,
Old making new, the dead alive again.

Canto VIII
The Lifted Ensign

The Lifted Ensign



ARMED now with knowledge, panoplied with power,
With two-edged sword of God's authority;—
Girded by heavenly hands on shepherds twain,
The first and second of a future flock,
Transcribers of the buried Book of Gold,
Whose mystic page, unsealed by gift divine,
Save part withheld of mightier mystery,
Now challenges the wise and wondering world;—
Armed and equipt, with staff and stone in sling,
Strong in the Lord, the God of Israel,
The dauntless David of a latter day
Fares forth to meet the giant of Untruth.

Thenceforth a warrior and a wanderer;
A victor hated for his victories;
Targe for the javelin of jealousy;
Hunted and hounded to the wilderness;
Outlawed by all,—all save a loyal few,
The patient sharers of his painful lot,
A living and a dying martyrdom;
Comrades divine, in mortal pilgrimage,
Recalled with him, their earthly errand o'er,
To grace the court of high Jerusalem,
The royal pillars of a kingly throne.

An Epic of the Ages

All throneless here, though very priest and king,
 Shunned, hated by the Christian pharisee,
 Victim of vengeful pulpit, pandering press,
 Of paltering policy and friendship false.

Thought's matchless monarch, exile among men,
 A wanderer in a solitary way;
 Pariah of prejudice and unbelief,
 Whose lowering features fiercely on him frowned;
 God's prisoner and truth's, that maketh free,
 Albeit the body, pen, tongue, pine in chains,
 Consigned to silence, captive unto light,
 And crucified betwixt ideal and real.

'Twixt promise and fulfillment, typed of yore,
 When time was young, though old iniquity,
 Outcast of realms redeemed, on earth was rife,
 And self-enchained a sordid world lay prone
 At feet of Lucifer. And demons laughed,
 And hell rejoiced, and all that ribald host
 Did dance and clap hand in derisive joy;
 While God and angels wept, their pitying tears
 Whitening the spectral mountains cold and lone,
 Wakening with virile springs a spirit waste.

There Enoch's sainted commonweal arose,
 Haven divine, hill of the sanctified,
 Oasis-like 'mid burning sands of sin.

The Lifted Ensign

III

God's people, pure in heart and one in all;
No poor among them; pride and greed unknown;
Saved by the tidings once to Adam taught,
And now, for first of many times, retold.

Self's chain was sundered; devils glared aghast,
And gnashed with disappointed rage their teeth,
Trembling in terror lest perdition's maw
Engulf ere yet 't was time; then gathering power,
As if for Armageddon's conflict dire,
When triumphs Michael o'er the foe unchained,
Hell's molten belch of burning hatred hurled
Upon those hapless sons of earth who scorned
The refuge of the righteous; her blest towers,
Far-beaming with terrestrial radiance,—
The promise fair of full celestial change,—
Bidding the vile beware, nor venture near
The awful mountain of God's holiness.

Waxed foul the world in wickedness, piled high
A hideous monument of shame and crime,
Which, toppling with its own weight, crashing fell,
Whelming in ruin the guilty race of man;
Whose spirits, as fierce seas their dust devoured,
By fiercer fiends to dungeon deeps were driven;
Nor thence redeemed till He who died for all
Soared from the Cross to set the captive free.
The while, on fearless wings of purity,
Cleaving, as bird or ransomed soul, the air,

An Epic of the Ages

Zion rose radiant to eternal rest;—
 Envied of Babel, climbing robber-wise;—
 Bride of the Highest, midway hovering,
 Till folded in the bosom of the Gods,
 Where Zions from unnumbered worlds have fled.

Type temporal of spirit antitype,
 A future moral height foreshadowing;
 Symbol of exaltations without end.

Foreseen the fatal deluge. Ere the doom
 Of all save faithful Noah and his seven,—
 Tri-branching tree of race regenerate,
 Yielding anew life's fruit and foliage,—
 Glimpsing with prescient gaze the pending woe,
 Earth mourned as Rachel, Rizpah, o'er the slain,
 The slain of men unborn who yet must die,
 Degenerate in the days that were to be.

Then Enoch wept and sued in sympathy,
 And God gave answer thus:

“ Earth yet shall rest,
 And sanctified, shall see her Saviour reign;
 Sovereign of worlds, His realms as ocean sands,
 And each, in turn, made glad and glorified.
 But it shall be within the latter days,
 The days of vengeance and of wickedness,
 When men the Sole-begotten crucify,

And He shall go again to judge the world ;
When, ere destruction, truth and righteousness,
Gathering the pure in heart unto a place,
A holy place my people shall prepare,
There to await my coming, mine and thine.
Zion above, from all creations past,
Shall meet and blend with Zion from below,
And thenceforth there my tabernacle be.

“ Yea, as I live, so will I forth again,
My oath to thee, my covenant to fulfill ;
And earth shall garb in glory of her God,
And Noah’s righteous seed in me rejoice.”

On twain of ocean-parted hemispheres,
Saw noon of time a twofold type of peace,
Foretaste and pledge of high Millennial rest,
An earnest of the commonweal to come.
But no fulfillment of the promise old,
No ripe fruition of the ancient oath
To Enoch sworn, through Moses re-affirmed,
By Ephraim’s prophet made to live again.

Promise now sought fulfillment,—it was time ;
For weary Earth lay groaning ’neath her load.
“ Unclean, unclean,” her cry, as leprous Sin
With foul intent clasped close her shrinking form,
And baned with foetid breathing all her soul.

An Epic of the Ages

Long she had mourned and wept o'er life's decay;
Her waning strength, from age and weariness
A prey to fell corruption's baneful blight,
Bringing, in lieu of giants, pigmies forth,
To fall untimely on her withered breast.
Dwindling and dwarfed in all save wickedness,
And knowledge, oft made pander unto ill,
With learning gorged, for wisdom famishing,
Man both a glutton and a starveling seemed.

For Self, the sordid, sat once more enthroned,
Binding in servile chains a universe,
Where mightily men strove for place and fame,
Greedy for power as gluttonous for gold.

And who sought neighbor's weal, save kith and kin
Or petted friendling pressed a favored claim?

Genius at oars, and dullards at the helm,
Flaunting their mediocre mightiness
O'er talent soaring still to spheres sublime,
Spite humble birth or frown of jealous power.
The prancing war-steed fastened to the plow,
The ass unto the chariot—oft with rein
Curbing the mettled courser's noble rage,
Or swirling sounding lash his ears above,
And goading him with needless cruelty.

Matter was monarch; spirit stood aloof,
Unknown, unseen, or spurned and thrust aside

By thronging myriads, bending supple knee
And basking in the proud usurper's smile.

Pride sneered at poverty, if poor of purse,
But gave its hand to beggared intellect,
To bankrupt soul, and greeted them as peers.
Merit, if lowly pillowing his head,
A prince in heart and mind, a pauper deemed.
And many, stung by adder glance of scorn,
Victims of pique, or prey to vanity,
Shunning a life of noble toil and care,
To Hymen and to Mammon sold themselves,
Offering a lawless fire at passion's shrine,
Or staining hands and heart with sabler sins.
Shameful the serfdom of the earth-bound soul,
Cankered and crusted o'er with avarice,
Dupe, dreaming shadow real and substance show.

Throve policy and finance, flourished far,
Where trickery was wisdom, trade supreme,
Where gold was god, where dust was deified,
And principle, than party, less was prized.

Religion dead, and poesy so deemed,
Because unwedded to a carnal age,
Unprostituted to its paltrier aims,
Or hid beneath vast verbal rubbish heaps,
The dust and debris of its former fires.

An Epic of the Ages

Science, when sordid, or subservient
To worldly ends, to aims material,
Was pedestaled and robed in honors rare;
While art fell fainting at the patron's door,
Craving the crumbs, remains of rich men's feasts.

Music, the drama, all art, still divine,
Though oft to ends ignoble basely bent;
In atmospheres miasmatic, upaslike,
To folly pandering and to lechery;
Or using gifts, God-lent for good of all,
Gain's maw to glut, fame's lust to gratify.

And thou, where thou, O sage philosophy,
Heir to a hundred shadows of thy name!
Where thy spent waves on speculation's strand?
Still striving, finite for the infinite;
Man groping for the mystery of God;
A river that would fain engulf the sea.

Religion dead, but bigotry alive,
And ne'er more active upon earth than now,
When sect 'gainst sect in battle order stood,
And schisms and dissensions multiplied.
Religious, irreligious, bigotry,
Each counted victims by the hecatomb.
Those worshipped Nothing, naming it a God;
These God denied, deeming themselves divine.

Fanatics in the state as in the church,
 Their prejudices palmed for principle,
 Vain vagaries and dreams for doctrine sound.
 And woe to him who lisped of liberty,
 Or thought aloud one thought unthought before!
 Freedom to think and breathe—God-granted boons
 Alike to savage, serf and citizen—
 Was all that freedom signified to some,
 Who, as they doled a gift already given,
 Boasted themselves magnanimous and wise.
 Freedom to speak and act, as conscience bade,
 As God commanded, crushed by violence,
 E'en where men vaunted most of liberty.

And peace was yet a dream unrealized;
 For war still sowed and reaped his harvests red;
 And Christian guns were mightiest and slew most.

Nor yet stood toil 'gainst capital arrayed,
 The starving masses 'gainst the Midases,
 As erst arose, 'gainst moss-grown old regimes,
 The trampled Terror, scrawling with fierce hand
 On history's flaming scroll his red revenge,
 With that keen-pointed pen, the guillotine;
 Nor yet faced frowning mass contemning class,
 Jeering, oblivious of the lurking doom,
 The Lemnian lame, still forging in swift might,
 The fire-winged thunders of the future storm.

But murderous crafts and oath-bound anarchies,
 With secret deed of darkness, had begun
 To sap the life of human government,
 And plot against the safety of mankind;
 While greeds and lusts and passions manifold,
 Preying on frailty and on innocence,
 Ran riot 'mid the fairest, brightest, best.

'T was time—full time—the far-seen ensign waved,
 Hailing the morn on heights of holiness,
 Gathering the wide-strewn strength of Abraham,
 Proclaiming peace and freedom to the world.
 'T was time disorder fled, time justice reigned,
 Time substance past its shadow should be prized;
 Time rightfully were held the kingdom's keys,
 Usurping Mammon thrust from Merit's throne.
 Full time the sacred Sceptre here returned,
 By poesy extolled, by art adorned,—
 Religion, science, reason, reconciled;
 Time God in man, His imaged self, were seen,
 With life's true aim and purpose manifest;
 Time feeble earth her panacea found,
 Time health gave life its old longevity;
 Time pride should bend, time lust to love should yield,
 Time human will were one with will of heaven:
 'T was time an Enoch came, a Zion rose.

Hark! the Fifth Angel. Look! the signal looms.
 The fateful Stone upon the Image rolls.

“ On you, my fellow servants, I confer
The priestly power of Aaron, with the keys
Of angel ministries, of penitence,
Of water-birth that washes free from sin.
And greater things than these shall yet be given—
The holier powers of high Melchisedek,
Holding the keys of heavenly mysteries,
With Gospel gifts and graces Spirit-born.”

And on each head was laid an angel hand;
Time making good the promise plighted there;
Welding another link in wonder's chain,
Writing new chapters of a story strange,
God's dealings with to-day—Light's mystery,
Confounding learning's wisdom, folly's wise.

And who is She that looketh forth sublime,
Robed in the rising Sun and crescent Moon;
Crowned with the stars, and as innumerable?
A soul upsoaring as from sepulture,
Body and spirit pure and free from stain,
As gold and silver tried by seven-timed fire;
Fairer than eve, mightier than bursting morn,
As noonday majesty magnificent.

Earth, greet thy Queen, the kingdom of the King!
And Babel, too, the wedded Wife behold,
Whose reign thou wouldst usurp, unrighteous one!
Whose place wouldst fill and fain possess her power;

An Epic of the Ages

Summoned from out the silent Wilderness,
Arisen from the grave of centuries,
No more to be despoiled or trodden down;
A symbol of exalted sanctity,
The sum of offerings acceptable,—
The consecration of the contrite heart;
Of ancient types the modern complement,
Chief splendor of time's sparkling firmament,
Whose silver stars bespoke this sun of gold.

Immanuel's spouse, the glorious Bride of Christ,
Arrayed once more in garments beautiful,
Adorned and ready, waiting for her Lord!

Time, mighty daughter of eternity,
Mother of ages and of æons past!
Assemble now thy children at thy side,
And ere thou diest teach them to be one;
Link to its link rebind the broken chain
Of dispensations, glories, keys and powers,
From Adam's fall unto Messiah's reign;
A thousand years of rest, a day with God,
While Shiloh reigns and Kolob once revolves!

But when did darkness comprehend the day?
When welcomed pleasure thorn-crowned sacrifice,
Whose higher, holier joys than self can know,
As dust and ashes to the sensual soul?

The Lifted Ensign

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Once more the ancient tidings among men!
Once more the sign and seal of heavenly power!
Renewal of an endless covenant!
Elias, restitution, unity!

Jewels to swine, that turning rent the hand,
And fain 'neath foot had torn and trampled all.
Such was Truth's fate, alas! in modern time,
'Mid Christian men; but not her final fate.

For who can stay the sunlike march of Truth?
Who dim with bloody hand her beam divine?
First shall he halt the progress of the stars—
The bright procession of the Infinite;
Blot out the day-beam, dull the scythe of time,
Shear morning's wings, roll back eternal night,
Or shake the moveless throne of destiny.

There floats an ensign never shall be furled,
Flashes a falchion evermore must flame,
Till earth-born realms in one wide empire rolled,
With conquering Christ as life and light of all.



Canto IX
Upon the Shoulders of the
Philistine

Upon the Shoulders of the Philistine



WESTWARD, O Israel, westward wing thy flight!

Westward, speed westward, Angel of the Light!

Westward, still westward, till the morn shall burn

In high meridian glory; till shall turn
Fate's restless tide, re-rolling o'er the East,
Spoiling the spoiler, spreading freedom's feast,
Foiling dark anarchy, thy fellest foe,
Land, chosen land, stunned, staggering 'neath its blow!
Rallying the loyal in a common cause,
Rending the Eagle from the Bear's red claws,
Hurling invasion backward o'er the isles,
Building anew upon the olden piles
Beginnings of the crowning Commonhood,
A modern Zion where the ancient stood.

Westward, flow westward, surging human tide,
Back to the fountain where life's streams divide;
To Adam's land, the far Atlantean shore,
Where last is first, and old is new once more,
And nations rise where nations sunk before.

Flames Joseph's signal from the solemn height
Where set his ancient day in deepest night;
His feet retracing now the fiery path
Where erst he fled, a fugitive from wrath;

An Epic of the Ages

Foredoomed to flee till ebbs that westward flow;
 Bearing from Japheth bitter curse and blow,
 While warding from him still the woeful fate
 Of all that war 'gainst Jacob, all that hate
 The God of Joseph and the just decree
 That builds him here a boundless destiny.

But war, that bringeth woe and breedeth pain,
 No less than peace betimes hath right to reign.
 What strife, what tempest, wreaks its wrath in vain?
 Prosperity and persecution blend,
 As sun and storm, faith's branch with fruit to bend.
 Twain are the shoulders of the Philistine,
 That Israel onward bear, as breeze and brine
 The tempest-driven bark that safe o'er sea
 Carries calm Cæsar and his destiny.
 Progression fails with opposition's flight,
 And darkness is but handmaid unto light.

Though reaps the whirlwind where the wind hath sown
 The fourfold harvest of each tear and groan.

Westward, burn westward, morn divinely bright!
 Eternal morn of Joseph's, Judah's, might!
 But stand thou still on Zion, glorious Light!
 For there must dawn the day that knows no night.

The eaglet's nest is empty; void the lair
 Of the young lion. Where, O Ephraim, where?

Behold him while he sits amid green hills,
Laving a wayworn strength where freshening rills
Mingle with waves that wash a storied strand,
Farmed, forest-fringed, a fair and favored land!

Realm of a rising glory—this thy name!
The cradle of the Kingdom—this thy fame!
Where broke the morn, though flecked with fire and blood,
The morn benign of human brotherhood;
Foredestined to a sad and swift eclipse,
Hampered by self, harried by hounds and whips
Of persecution, whose infuriate maw,
Usurping oft the form and force of law,—
To lawless hands a far too ready rod,—
Had fain engulfed the growing work of God.

O sunny land, left sad and desolate!
O wounded bird, that mourns a driven mate!
The plumage from thy bleeding body torn,
And scattered far o'er realms remote, forlorn!

Yet ere the storm could burst was visioned there,
While bathed in holy light the House of Prayer,
A promise, a fulfillment, long foretold,
The Star of Silver and the Sun of Gold;
Elias and Messiah there behold,
With angel keepers of the ancient keys
Of gathering and of sealing mysteries!
Haloed with fire, while burns the heavenly glow,
Upon the Prophet they their powers bestow.

An Epic of the Ages

Speed now swift messengers his face before,
 To blaze his sacred name on every shore;
 An hallowed host, commissioned from the skies,
 The slumbering nations to evangelize.
 Day beams from glory's height with kindling glance;
 Unlettered light 'gainst learned ignorance;
 Truth's warning tongue proclaims the gauntlet hurled,
 And Gospel thunder shakes the listless world.

Already, to illumine dark Laman's bands,
 Have virile footprints prest those virgin lands,
 Where westering empire, in creative might,
 Rolls a new world upon the wondering sight;
 Where flower-starred prairies, in the far extent,
 Kiss with soft lips the bending firmament,
 While sea-like rivers, solitary, lone,
 Pour their proud waters toward the burning zone.

Land of all lands the rarest, where shall rise,—
 Mirrored magnificence of earth and skies,
 Each gate a pearl, each pinnacle a gem,—
 The jasper walls of New Jerusalem;
 The golden glory of the hemispheres,
 Jehovah's throne through all the Thousand Years.
 Land where an Adam fell, an Enoch rose,
 Where time began and history shall close.

Whereto and whence, by brand and fagot driven,
 His fault to man, his fealty to heaven,

With here and there, perchance, an idle word,
Vainglorious zeal, or vengeful, might afford,
Flies Ephraim, scorched and scourged, from Japheth's wrath,
Pushed on and on o'er suffering's thorny path,
Whipt, plundered, wounded, bleeding, to the goal
Where mortal part becomes immortal whole.

Maddened by hate, a frenzied host decrees—
And blood alone its passion will appease—
A menace in that migrant fold's increase,
A menace to its power, its pride, its peace.
Misled by fear grotesque, that hears and sees
Peril in purling stream, in whispering breeze,
Telling of wondrous thrift, of mystic power,
Of spirit gifts—the Bride's becoming dower;
Of freedom's Gospel, law of liberty,
Sounding afar the knell of slavery;
With feigned or real suspicion of intent
That could but lurk in minds by malice bent,
And ne'er found lodgment in the dreams of those
Now cruelly beset by whelming foes,
Force joins with fraud, impelled by lust of crime,
'Gainst merit fallen on an evil time.

'T was so of old, when Egypt's despot frowned
On Jacob's increase,—growth from fertile ground;
And when fell Herod, fain to slay life's Lord,
Pierced Rachel's bosom with unpitying sword.
A second Pharaoh now o'er Israel see!

An Epic of the Ages

A Herod in the home of Liberty!
 See law-crowned lawlessness, its crime complete,
 Plundering defenceless cities at its feet!

Friendless, unsheltered, forth the exiles go,
 Lit by their burning homes athwart the snow,
 Where crimson footprints stamp the frozen path,
 Till icy billows bar them from the wrath
 Of ruthless fiends, whose fellows, masked as men,
 Where sons of light lie down in darksome den,
 Gloat while they guard, and flout with jest obscene,
 The helpless victims of that heartless scene;
 Exulting foully, boastingly, the while,
 Of virgins 't was their pleasure to defile;
 O'er murdered age, o'er slaughtered infancy,
 O'er deeds none else than devils would decree.

Till flames aloft, as Samuel from the sod,
 A mighty one, at whose right hand is God,
 Chained, weaponless, but wielding as a rod
 The lightning's tongue, to scorch his cowering foes,
 And scourge them to the kennels whence they rose.
 Ne'er known such power, such Godlike faith and will,
 Since Christ bade tempest sleep and waves be still.

And wheresoe'er he wends is hope renewed,
 Demons unhoused, disease and death subdued.

Where Sire of Waters sweeps o'er silvery sands,
 Prest by the pilgrim feet of many lands,

Upon the Shoulders of the Philistine 131

Aloft, alone, a sacred city stands;
Redeemed erewhile from dread malarial ill,
Transformed by wonder-working toil, until,
Terrace on terrace, climbing, climbing still,
From crescent water-edge to templed hill,
Behold yon fane, yon heaven-lit dome, arise!
Unworldly link re-welding earth and skies.

City, mother of many, none more rare,
The blossomed waste shall yield, now burnt and bare;
City, mother of empires, famed as fair,
Whose birth the solemn muse must yet declare.

Comes now Elijah's mightier mission forth,
And mortal vows take on immortal worth,
Where kindled are hope's everliving fires,
Where turned the mutual hearts of sons and sires,
Where doors to spirit dungeons open swing,
That life unto the light e'en death may bring.

But gaze from sinking unto soaring sun,
Where truth, beyond the wave, its way hath won
Past horrent hosts of Lucifer that rose,
With wrath of man, the message to oppose.
Vain strife! where fiends archangels would assail,
Warring 'gainst mightiness that must prevail—
Prevail to save a periled ship. 'T is done;
The crisis past with Albia stormed and won.
East floweth West; the Gathering hath begun!

And now, to fruitful lands, 'neath favoring skies,
Befriended by the brave, the just, the wise,
Till truth too mighty for the common ken
Hath put a sword betwixt the souls of men,
Fares garnered Israel's earliest offering,
Of nations sown to life's last harvesting;
Nations besprent with Abrahamic blood,
Which now remingles with the parent flood;
Elect of faith, redeemed of every land,
Where roving Ephraim mixt with Japheth's band.

By helping hand impelled, and hostile power,
By friendly looks and frowns that darkly lower;
Philistia's shoulder bearing Israel's flight,
That Japheth, too, may come to Zion's light,
And Joseph be o'er all his brethren blest,
A saviour in his Egypt of the West;
Where corn and wine, 'mid famine, comfort life,
Where peace and plenty shame a world at strife,
Where bending from the ice-barred North shall come,
As bent their stars in his, the dreamer's dome,
Assyria's long-lost captives, wending home.

Beginnings that have here in beauty stood,
Foundations swept by devastating flood,
A little season wrecked and ruined lie,
Till they that build put pride and passion by,
And taught by pain, through suffering's fiercest fires,
Part with all lustful, covetous desires.

When faith shall wear the armor without flaw,
When known the union of celestial law,
Then—nor till then—from God's approving eye,
Twain lights shall fall, and myriad shadows fly;
Sword of the Lord and blade of Gideon,
Dazzling, confounding, driving on and on,
Till besomed as with fire the fated strand
Where, chastened, guileless, glorious, heart and hand,
Zion, now called, then chosen, takes her stand,
The Queen and Priestess of the Promised Land;
A terror only to her trembling foes;
Ensign of peace and Eden of repose,
Where life's tree blossoms and light's fountain flows.

But who can count the cost, the painful price,
Measure the sorrow and the sacrifice,
Brave spirits of a more than Spartan race
Compelled heroic heart and mind to face?
In vain, alas! in vain, of such to sing,
With trembling hand a tuneless harp I string,
When might of melody divinely rare
Alone were meet their merit to declare!
What lesser lay than Zion's own shall break
The muse's slumber, bid the world awake,
And glow o'er deeds yet done for conscience' sake?
Whose tongue than modern Leah's, Rachel's, tell
The story of a burden borne so well?

An Epic of the Ages

O patient pain, enduring source of power!
Time but a dream; eternity thy dower.
Sowest thou here in sorrow and despair,
Heart breaking 'neath the heaviness of care?
All gladness shalt thou reap,—all glory share.
Where perfect love hath cast out jealous fear,
A diamond in thy diadem each tear,
And every sigh that rent thy suffering breast
A wave of rapture on the shores of rest.
My lot as thine, purest of pure in heart!
Be mine the bitter, as the better part.

But sorrows else now shadow all things there.
The voice of mourning drowns the voice of prayer.
Shall grief the cold, pale brow with cypress strew,
Dampened e'en now with death's prophetic dew?

While deepening darkness glooms a sky of lead,
While thundrous threatenings tone their notes of dread,
Looms to the fore an archangelic form,
A sunlit summit shining o'er the storm;
A towering rock above the rushing tide
Of eager souls that surge on every side
To where life's water from the fountain plays;
His word—God's will—the guidon of their ways.
Like to the sun that 'lumes with lingering rays
The multi-varied hues of autumn woods,
Or heaving ocean's ever-changing moods,
That pale yet placid countenance benign,

Upon the Shoulders of the Philistine 135

O'ershowering all with love, now seems to shine;
With more than earthly love, with light divine.

Undaunted 'neath the shadow of his doom,
Calm as a statue, solemn as a tomb;
Heedless of self, while hoarsely rumbles near
Hate's fiery flood; that alien to all fear,
That more than man, nor less than Godlike soul,
Erect upon life's summit, at death's goal,
Unlocks time's portal, swings the future's gate,
And opes to Ephraim's gaze his glorious fate.

Hark! for he speaks. Give ear, O earth, give ear
Unto the voice, the vision, of a Seer!

Canto X
The Parted Veil

The Parted Veil



PEACE, O my people! I shall not be slain
While unfulfilled my mission. Then, like Him
Whom I have served, link of a living chain,
Holding in mine the hand of Elohim,
Whose glory dies not, though all else grow dim,—
Like Him must I return. Would else suffice?
Of weal to you, whose praise all worlds shall hymn,
My life, my mortal life, may prove the price;
If so, then welcome death! I will the sacrifice.

God with me alway; never more than now;
And He hath known me while ye knew me not;
Nor e'er can know till at the throne ye bow
Where souls are searched and unto judgment brought.
Weighed in a balance that abates no jot
Of merit's meed, of retribution just,
But parts unto each heir his rightful lot
In glory's realm; when dust shall spring from dust,
Spirit from paradise, know me ye shall and must.

Hope not till then to have my history,
What life hath scribed to scan. Nor tongue nor pen
Can tell the tale, dispel the mystery

An Epic of the Ages

That hides me from the dim, dull gaze of men.
 Something of what awaits the future's ken,
 (No more can ye receive, or I impart)
 Heaven's will permits. See, now, what I have seen;
 And though it grieve yet shall it glad the heart
 Bound unto me in bands no human power can part!

Affliction waits you here—the torch, the sword,
 The trampled field, the violated tomb,
 The tyranny of law and lawless horde,
 The hand of iron 'neath the martial plume.
 For comes a cry of myriads: "Give us room!"
 And Ephraim must fulfill his destiny,
 E'en though an exile's be his lonely doom,
 Forced by a fate both harsh and kind to flee
 Into a desert land laved by a rock-rimmed sea.

What matter, if my mortal race be run,
 When,—where—I sleep, as babe on mother breast!
 While ye, my people,—lo, my setting sun
 Points out your path!—for you no peace, no rest,
 Till firm your weary feet upon the West,
 Where, moveless as yon snowy spine of hills,
 Unfettered as the tempest, unopprest,
 And sovereign as the sun that sends the rills
 To bless the vales, God's first-born fold His purpose fills.

Affliction here, but friendship there and peace.
 Alas! for this, that white should seek to red.
 And in a day when wars and woe increase,

Till plain is seen what prophet tongues have said,
 And peace shall have no pillow for her head
 Save lofty heights where loyal hosts abound,
 Brave sons of battling sires who toiled and bled,
 That this might evermore be freedom's ground,
 Shall give to you their strength the final State to found.

Ere long fierce war shall rend this nation wide,
 And trample nations all. Ere long shall slaves
 'Gainst masters rise, and anarchy o'erride,—
 As flouting keel the futile-foaming waves,—
 The powers that grind the poor as trodden paves.
 Anon shall Jacob's stricken bands combine
 To vex the Gentile. Then 't is Ephraim saves
 Columbia's soul from chaos. Then the line
 Of Laman, darkly doomed, delightfully shall shine.

Thus far your Moses I; but here must end,
 This side the Jordan, as on Nebo's height,
 My earthly toil. To other worlds I wend.
 But lo! there looms upon my sinking sight
 A second Canaan. Halt, thou failing light!
 A Joshua cometh. Him let Israel heed,
 And loyal be unto that Council's right
 On whom the Kingdom rolls; for they shall lead
 To where the present's hand shall sow the future's seed.

All sacred, sovereign powers, God's gift to me,
 To gather the elect from far and near,
 His Church to found, and turn redemptive key

An Epic of the Ages

Whereby the dead that haunt the nether sphere,
 No less than living, shall the tidings hear,
 Believe, repent, and aided burst the bands
 That hold them helpless in their dungeons drear;
 All keys by Heaven committed to my hands,
 I unto twelve have given. Mark where their leader stands!

Follow that chieftain chosen of the Lord,
 Nor be beguiled by faction's phantasies.
 Three shall bear rule, but one must voice the word
 To guide the whole. His Heaven-inspired decrees
 As mine, as His who gave the Kingdom's keys.
 Follow him safe whose path 'mid mountains lies,
 Where barrenness shall blossom, where he sees
 A mighty people, conquering, colonize
 The waste from whose dry bosom cities,—empires—rise.

Doubt not the harvest springing from such seed,
 Nor dream of night o'erlapping destined day;
 Crooked shall straighten to the future need,
 And crudeness unto culture shall give way.
 For Light fares forth, and who His step can stay?
 Firm, strong, not smooth, yon temple's basic stone,
 Hidden from view, while rests the heavenly ray
 On polished wall, on gleaming spire and cone.
 Jacob's, not Esau's, hand shall rear Messiah's throne.

Bide yonder till God's house grow great and strong,
 Anointed with an unction from on high;
 Nurtured in tribulation; prest along

A thornful path, to glory's goal, now nigh;
By righteousness made terrible, till fly
The foe before as ashes in the wind,
As wintry flake 'neath summer's ardent eye.
Then, Ephra-Judah, who thy strength shall bind?
The crouching lion springs, and he the prey shall find.

And by that power shall Zion be redeemed,—
A might that makes the tempest, quells the storm,—
With marvels, miracles, ne'er done nor dreamed
Since wonder oped her eyes. The world's alarm
Shall surge, an angry sea, but fear nor harm
Can hover near the conquering host of God,
Led by a Joshua mightier still, whose arm,
Mailed with the lightnings of Messiah's rod,
Rests not till sacred towers rise from the sainted sod.

The place appointed! Naught else is designed;
Naught else can Heaven accept at Ephraim's hand.
Plant stakes of Zion, tight her cords to bind,
Where'er ye move, O fated pilgrim band!
But bring forth Zion's self on Zion's land;
The consecrated soil, whereon ye stood
With me, of late, loyal while treason fanned
The flame still thirsting for a martyr's blood.
There build, in time to be, the Holy One's abode.

Nor there alone, for all is Zion's land,
North unto south, east unto western wave.
Far as the hemisphere's wide wings expand

An Epic of the Ages

She reigns a sovereign queen, ice-helmed, to lave
 Her glowing hands in tropic tides, while brave
 Her snowy feet in faith the southern sea.
 Aloft the radiant arm all realms to save,
 And all the righteous to that bosom flee.
 And there be living now who then shall live and see.

While here the glory of the common good
 Shall rise, the shadowed of a shining band,
 Sires of the free and equal sisterhood,
 Whose starry sceptre soon from strand to strand
 Shall emblemize the lot of every land.
 Wherefore, what great Jehovah here hath joined,
 Or yet shall join, as He of old hath planned,
 Let no man seek to sunder; 't is designed
 Such union shall endure, and spreading, all realms bind.

Yea, saith the still small Voice, that whispereth through
 And pierceth all things, I the Lord will send
 A mighty one and strong, his bosom true
 Welling with words, eternal words, to rend
 Order from chaos, and man's cause befriend.
 And he shall part my people's heritage;
 While one, though called, appointed, and ordained,
 Who stays the ark, usurping footstep plants,
 Shall fall as falls the tree shivered by lightning's lance.

I would I now might tell you who I am,
 Might here reveal the hidden things I know,
 Loose from the thicket of my thoughts a lamb,

The Lord's providing—knowledge pure as snow;
 A flood of heavenly light which then would flow
 For earth's refreshing. But alas! e'en ye,
 My fondest friends, would deem me Zion's foe,
 Shout "blasphemy," or "fallen prophet" cry,
 Or seek my life and sink your souls to misery.

Known but the half that in my bosom burns,
 And bigotry would flame as ne'er before;
 For truth, rejected, friend to traitor turns,
 And damns where fain 't would save. Six mounting o'er,
 My spirit to the seventh heaven did soar,
 And saw and heard—ah, would that I might say!
 Though memory but renewed a former lore,
 What all will learn when mists have rolled away,
 When twinkling, twilight faith to knowledge shall give way.

Ere then deem ye the wisest can be wise,
 Sojourning here within this shadowed scene,
 A medial stage, a human compromise,
 The spirit's might, the body's weight, between?
 Extremes of good and evil, man, life's mean,
 Confronts, contending each for victory.
 Judge not till all is heard, till all is seen.
 Mortals but children, asking charity.
 Mercy where mercy shown, harshness where cruelty.

List! Mine ye are, and stood with me what time
 A starry host, celestial symphony,
 Choraled the anthem seraphic, sublime,

To the spelled ear of all eternity.
 Gave we the voice that sent Humility
 In place of pride, to succor earth and save;
 Fought we with Michael, made the dragon flee,
 Who fain with force the Gospel path would pave,
 Fettering the endless lives whom God full freedom gave.

As now, in lesser liberty's abode,
 Incarnate spirit of fell tyranny
 Would trample on the type of that great code,
 Befriending human right where'er it be.
 But hear me, Heaven! Come life, come death to me,
 Jehovah's captain, in His name and fear,
 I vow to Him his people shall be free!
 Aye, free all men, as in that former sphere,
 When hurled from yon dread height the power of Lucifer.

Bide valiant here, as ye were valiant there.
 Whence came delightful bodies, soaring minds,
 That e'en would God's sublimest glory share?
 Spring not all seeds according to their kinds?
 Each act, each word, each thought, or frees or binds,
 Dwarfs or develops. Man's all-crowning state
 His own creation. What the judgment finds,
 The soul reveals. All upon will must wait.
 Eternal agency the architect of fate.

Bide valiant unto death; for what is death?
 The body's rest, the spirit's change of scene,
 Being's return to where, ere soul drew breath,

It shone, and shineth aye, with added sheen,
If loyal to the end it here hath been.
Patience, and pardon all, though murder swell
With martyred gore yon river to the main.
Will ye not grieve to gaze on souls in hell?
Will ye not snatch them thence, as pity shall impel?

I saw, while justice showed the vision dire,
Till mercy's hand let fall the lifted veil,
The doom of the ungodly; blood and fire,
War, famine, pestilence, as pelting hail,
Smiting earth's face with desolating flail.
And this the mere beginning of their woe,
Whose final fate a doom the damned bewail;
While they that follow Christ shall gladly go
To guide and save lost souls, groping in shades below.

Good fears not evil, grapples with it strong,
Hell turns to heaven, the unclean purifies;
For what is ill but good—a right bent wrong?
Passion, when pure, a power to scale the skies.
No weakling to celestial realms can rise.
'T is strength that wins the goal of blessedness;
'T is knowledge saves; 't is wisdom glorifies;
And bends intelligence to lift and bless
The fallen, innocent till snared in sin's duress.

Could you but gaze, as truly I did gaze,
Upon the glories of the worlds of God,
Wrap in their mantles of celestial blaze,

The Father's fullness and the Son's abode,
 Won by their feet who walk the rightful road,
 Nor weary in well doing; 't were alone
 Reward for all that here hath been your load.
 Forgive—leave all to heaven, whose highest throne
 Theirs who make earth and earthliness the stepping-stone.

One fold alone I lift of that vast veil:
 How came he God to whom all Gods must bow?
 The very Sire, whom all the Sons now hail
 As mightiest of the mighty? I avow
 That even He was once as we are now;
 That we like Him can be—yea, by degrees
 Mount unto loftiest heights, till on each brow
 Be writ the Name of Names. Not angels these,
 But Gods, e'en Sons of God, through all eternities.

Weighed in the balance here, nor wanting found;
 Tried in the fire, triumphant from the test;
 Though wrung their hearts, their finest feelings ground,
 Betwixt life's upper, nether millstones prest,
 Till proved, of good and brave, the bravest, best.
 Less faith than theirs, than theirs who follow them,
 Withholding naught when God hath made request,
 Lifts not the gates of that Jerusalem
 Where David's throne endures, though haply not for him.

Where throned are Jacob, Isaac, Abraham,
 Who erred not, honoring celestial law,

The sovereign mandate of the Lord, I AM;
Whose lives were pure, though sin finds many a flaw.
Exalted these amid the Gods I saw,
With all who would have kept the covenant,
Had they but tarried. Justice counts each straw—
Weighs motive, not mere work. A thought may paint
The portrait of thy future, sinner thou or saint!

Farewell! Abide in faith the bitter end;
For bitter must it be ere yet 't is sweet,
Farewell! This from your father, brother, friend.
No more your prophet, patriarch, ye meet,
Till here all prophets, patriarchs, ye greet,
Mingling with Gods, while heaven on earth shall dwell,
To drink the wine of wisdom at His feet,
The Husbandman and Vine of Israel.
Thus saith the God of Jacob—Joseph's God. Farewell!

What said,—what saw—he more? Did he behold
The sanguine deed that sealed his tragic fate?
Surged by the flood of grief and shame that rolled
Above the murdered honor of a State,
Where innocence again fell prey to hate?
There be who say he visioned all to come—
Forsaken cities, weeping, desolate;
The hallowed fane defiled, the blazing dome;
The weary wanderings far in quest of peace and home.

Saw, then, and heard, while like a clarion rang
 That voice; while o'er a form known, loved, full well,—
 A soul all leonine, as forth it sprang
 Unto its place,—the martyr's mantle fell,
 Full in the gaze of awe-stunned Israel.
 God's lion, he whose path 'mid mountains lies;
 Heard his loud call, the ringing trumpet peal,
 That now bids Ephraim's trampled host arise
 And pitch their pilgrim tents afar 'neath alien skies.

Saw, too, that tender, hopeful tragedy,
 Pathetic omen of his tribe's increase;
 Nine mothers 'neath a canvas canopy,
 Nine new-born babes, soft slumbering 'neath a fleece
 Of moon-lit frost, as buds that bide in peace
 Till spring's warm breath take off the covering cold,
 Protecting life where life hath seemed to cease;
 Nine lambs, fresh penned within the Saviour's fold,
 And like Him manger-nursed, homeless on earth's threshold.

Like Him that homeless nation, born e'en so;
 Born in a day; fate halting in her flight
 To watch the little one a thousand grow,
 As grows the torrent from the trickling height,
 The blaze of noonday from the dawning light.
 The birth throes of an empire, whose far reign,
 Founded in febleness, soars past the sight
 Of all save prophecy, while cities twain
 Sceptre the universe, with foot on land and main.

The Parted Veil

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Whose but a prophet's eye such end could see?
Whose but a prophet's tongue the issue tell?
A modern march of ancient destiny,
Another exodus and Israel,
Bidding his bonds, his all, save hope, farewell;
Lifting light's ensign, widening freedom's fame,
Where slavery, girt with darkness, fain would dwell;
Carving Columbia's ever-conquering name
Where looms the Aztec's altar, quenched of its ancient flame.

There bringing forth the promise of thy land,
Thesaurus of the West!—the prophecy
Of glittering cities strewn along thy strand,
Of splendrous empires spreading from the sea.
Who gave thy early glories unto thee?
The firstlings of thy fame, O flower-crowned State!
Who made thee mighty as they made thee free?
By pick and plow and press who formed thy fate?
A hand which, making thee, did more than thee create.

Fairer than thou, than all the flowery world,
A land of desolation's mystery;
Where, fronting hate from every fortress hurled,
Love wrought redemption's rarer destiny.
Fairer, the desert-born, whose dying sea,
Whose bitter wave is as a tear, the brine
Of sorrow shed by her while succoring thee.
Toil-riven rock, now pouring milk and wine,
Where all was treeless waste and sun-baked alkaline.

An Epic of the Ages

But who can hymn thy praise, O pioneer!
 Who harp thy merit, home of pure and brave!
 Land of the white-helmed peak and crystal mere,
 Matchless 'mid empires throned on mount or wave!
 O'er charms less rare, let fulsome minstrels rave.
 Most loved and lovable 'mid lands of earth!
 Whose will is forth, like thine, the world to save?
 Land lily-symbolled, land of wondrous worth,
 Land of the Honey-bee, land of my mortal birth!

Land prest by footprint of my pilgrim sire;
 Land visioned by my more than sire, whose soul
 Swept the far future with a glance of fire,
 Bade hope, as memory, her page unroll,
 Beheld uplifting, as a mighty scroll,
 The curtain from a Kingdom yet to be,
 The crowning Keystone of the arching Whole;
 Saw monarchs bow, saw nations bend the knee,
 Saw dead and risen time take on eternity.

Thought's pioneer, threading a trackless waste,
 Untrod by Truth a thousand years nigh twained,
 The while men roamed, till morn the shadows chased,
 As savages by untaught trappers trained;
 Blind leading blind where spirit darkness reigned.
 Blazed he through thorny wold the only way
 That leadeth from the wild, showing how gained
 The sterile ground to glory; his last ray
 Pointing the Christ-lit path, kindling an endless day.

Farewell, great light! Farewell, thou Godlike one!
Awaits a realm to hail a homing king.
Crimson the sky above thy sinking sun,
Omen of golden dawn swift following.
Death's winter promise of eternal spring,
Celestial Edens, empires, throne on throne,
Where worlds, once wastes, redeemed, are blossoming.
Future now present, and the past unflown,
While all unguised, unveiled, life, death, earth, time, are known.

Epilogue



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Epilogue

BUT what are life, death, earth, and time to thee,
Eternal Truth? Thou goest on for aye,
Lives, deaths, earths, times, their plurals manifold,
These but the bubbles on thy boundless wave,
The rands of thy great glass, the flickering gleams
Of life that kneels our origin and end;
These but the *THE ANGEL ASCENDANT*,
The falling "Mark when the Bow's bright promise is withdrawn!"
Whence wars but set that straightway suns may rise.

Each ray of light, each principle of power,
Each epoch-making hap of history,
Had it a tongue would it not testify:
"There cometh after me a mightier;
I but prepare the way his face before;
I but baptize with water, he with fire?"
Till now tells not the past this oft-told tale,
Which yet the future shall proclaim and prove?
Progress eternal! thou goest hand in hand
With life eterne, and naught but death e'er dies.

Thou Angel, there ascending from the East,
That criest unto four, Hurt not, but spare,
Till we the servants of our God have sealed!
Who art thou and why standest thou to view?



THE ANGEL ASCENDANT

"Now when the boy's bright promise is withdrawn"

Epilogue

BUT what are life, death, earth, and time to thee,
Eternal Truth? Thou goest on for aye.
Lives, deaths, earths, times, their plurals multifold,
These but the bubbles on thy boundless wave,
The sands of thy great glass, the flickering gleams
Of life that knows nor origin nor end;
These but the sparks flung from thy flaming forge,
The falling star-dust of thy firmament,
Where stars but set that straightway suns may rise.

Each ray of light, each principle of power,
Each epoch-making hap of history,
Had it a tongue would it not testify:
"There cometh after me a mightier;
I but prepare the way his face before;
I but baptize with water, he with fire" ?
Till now tells not the past this oft-told tale,
Which yet the future shall proclaim and prove ?
Progress eterne! thou goest hand in hand
With life eterne, and naught but death e'er dies.

Thou Angel, there ascending from the East,
That criest unto four, Hurt not, but spare,
Till we the servants of our God have sealed!
Who art thou and why risest now to view ?

“ I am that Voice which crieth in the Waste;
 That wandereth through all worlds, invisible;
 That sayeth unto all, Prepare, prepare,
 Behold He cometh! Go ye out to meet.

“ As His, my goings forth are from of old.
 Redeemer He, Restorer I, of all.

“ Came I by one, morn’s twilight messenger,
 Time’s earliest voice from out eternity,
 Opening the way by water and by fire,
 Whereby the fallen Michael rose again;
 Anon by one, translation’s pioneer,
 Pilot terrestrial, seer of the sanctified,
 Crest of a dispensation Enoch-crowned.

“ Wrought I through him whom Gods name Gabriel,
 The Noah of a world once water-doomed,
 By whom was earth besprent with life anew,
 Nor less with light from truth’s rekindled flame;
 Still burning, though with error’s incense dimmed,
 And fouled with alien fire in many lands.

“ Wrought I through him whom men call Abraham,
 The root of Shiloh—righteous branch of Shem,
 In whom salvation, gracious gift, inheres.
 Quarry of Jacob, rock whence he was hewn,
 Type of the spirit Stone of Israel,—
 Sire of the Church God-gotten and His own.
 Blessor of races with believing blood;

Sprinkler of spirits faithful o'er the world;
Ocean of nations, fountain-ward that flow,
As the soiled floods unto the filtering sea.

“Led I the prophet pilot sent to save—
To part the wave 'twixt chains and liberty;
As lead shall I anon the one beloved,
Who yet must captain home captivity.
Smote I by him who carved to Canaan's land,
Whose sword gave Israel his inheritance,
Whose high behest e'en day and night obeyed,
On Gibeon, in the Vale of Ajalon.
Blazed I through him who flamed as fire from heaven
At Kishon's brook, where sunk the pride of Baal;
Sealer, unsealer, of the heavenly gates,
Renewer of the worship primal, pure.
My hand in his, the anointed, named ere born,
To sunder brazen-gated Babylon,
And symbolize a world deliverance.
Beamed I by him, the Moon that bathed in blood,
When set of yore the Sun of Righteousness;
Baptist with water I, as He with fire.

“Then burst the long-sealed sky o'er head of him,
Revealed to whom were holy Sire and Son,
And angel guardian of the Book of Gold.
Mine, mine the hand that gave the Kingdom's keys,
Lifting an ensign for the gathering;
Beginning of an ending yet to be,

When I a second time shall set my hand,
Judah, as Joseph, joining to the fold,
And long-lost tribes and remnants ransoming;
Promise of world-wide peace and unity,
And presage of assemblage mightier,
A congress of the Gods, a conference
From suns and stars,—yon Zions and their stakes.

“ Came I anon the Abrahamic keys,
The Abrahamic covenant to restore;
That Jacob, to the end increasing still,
Might be as sands and stars for multitude.
Loomed I by him who there gave life to give
The warning unto Ephraim, God’s first-born;
Truth, telling of the rise of Righteousness,
Great daystar, heralding a greater Dawn.

“ Wrought I through him, uncoverer of the West,
Stronger than storms, mightier than wind or wave;
Through him whose pen of fire thy country freed;
Through him whose blade the blood-bought soil redeemed.

“ Came I to thee, lone muser on the mount,
Invoker of the Voice now visible!
My minstrel,—I thy Muse. Dost know me now?

“ All, all that make for freedom and for peace,
That loose the captive and the lost restore,
That teach, in part or whole, Eternal Truth,

Or wing the drooping soul with melody;—
All these my ministers, who aid my aims.
Elias I, their tasks Elias-given.

“ Spirit of progress, speeding on for aye;
Gleam of the glory of Omnipotence;
Hand of the Arm omnific—cause of all;
A mighty making way for Mightier.

“ Come I again, again, His courier,—
Jehovah’s Ancient Covenant Messenger,—
Till plenal powers of great Melchisedek
The fullness of the glory here unfold,
Whelming, O earth, as once with watery wave,
Thy form with fire and with the Holy Ghost;
Sealing, unsealing, binding o’er and o’er,
Till all is order and all things in place;
Coming as Jacob upon Esau’s heel,
Eternity upon the trail of Time.

“ Await my word destroyers four, that give
The Gospel, God’s last warning unto man,
By fitting ministers,—each class its kind,—
The Gospel Everlasting, ere the end.

Await likewise the thousands, twelve times twelve,
Who for the coming King the way prepare;
Building the highway for Messiah’s feet,
And wheresoe’er He fareth, following.

An Epic of the Ages

“ Hold I the signet of the living God—
Lift unto light, or hurl to darkness down.
The hour is imminent. Heed well the sign.
Mark when the Bow’s bright promise is withdrawn! ”

Enough, I know thee, strong and mighty one,
That standeth in the presence of the Lord,
That leadeth Israel from bondage old,
That lifteth up the ensign unto all!
Know thee, thou Muse and Minstrel of the mount,
Thou Harper on the hills of melody?
I know thee, and am here to work thy will,
To hymn thy praise, perchance behold thy power,
When, iris-crowned and clothed as with a cloud,
Thy face the sun, thy feet as pillared fire,
Thou comest down from heaven and swearest by
Eternity that time shall be no more.

Ancient of Ages! Angel of the East!
Spirit of Promise! Prophet of the Dawn!





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