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STANZAS ON THE DEATH OF MRS. HEMANS.

"The rose—the glorious rose is gone."—*Lays of Many Lands.*

BRING flowers to crown the cup and lute,—
 Bring flowers,—the bride is near;
 Bring flowers to soothe the captive's cell,
 Bring flowers to strew the bier!
 Bring flowers! thus said the lovely song;
 And shall they not be brought
 To her who linked the offering
 With feeling and with thought?

Bring flowers,—the perfumed and the pure,—
 Those with the morning dew,
 A sigh in every fragrant leaf,
 A tear on every hue.
 So pure, so sweet thy life has been,
 So filling earth and air
 With odours and with loveliness,
 Till common scenes grew fair.

Thy song around our daily path
 Flung beauty born of dreams,
 That shadows on the actual world
 The spirit's sunny gleams.
 Mysterious influence, that to earth
 Brings down the heaven above,
 And fills the universal heart
 With universal love.

Such gifts were thine,—as from the block,
 The unformed and the cold,
 The sculptor calls to breathing life
 Some shape of perfect mould,
 So thou from common thoughts and things
 Didst call a charmed song,
 Which on a sweet and swelling tide
 Bore the full soul along.

And thou from far and foreign lands
 Didst bring back many a tone,
 And giving such new music still,
 A music of thine own.

Stanzas on the Death of Mrs. Hemans.

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A lofty strain of generous thoughts,
 And yet subdued and sweet,—
 An angel's song, who sings of earth,
 Whose cares are at his feet.

And yet thy song is sorrowful,
 Its beauty is not bloom;
 The hopes of which it breathes, are hopes
 That look beyond the tomb.
 Thy song is sorrowful as winds
 That wander o'er the plain,
 And ask for summer's vanished flowers,
 And ask for them in vain,

Ah! dearly purchased is the gift,
 The gift of song like thine;
 A fated doom is hers who stands
 The priestess of the shrine.
 The crowd—they only see the crown,
 They only hear the hymn;—
 They mark not that the cheek is pale,
 And that the eye is dim.

Wound to a pitch too exquisite,
 The soul's fine chords are wrung;
 With misery and melody
 They are too highly strung.
 The heart is made too sensitive
 Life's daily pain to bear;
 It beats in music, but it beats
 Beneath a deep despair.

It never meets the love it paints,
 The love for which it pines;
 Too much of Heaven is in the faith
 That such a heart enshrines.
 The meteor wreath the poet wears
 Must make a lonely lot;
 It dazzles, only to divide
 From those who wear it not.

Didst thou not tremble at thy fame,
 And loathe its bitter prize,
 While what to others triumph seemed,
 To thee was sacrifice?

Stanzas on the Death of Mrs. Hemans.

Oh, Flower brought from Paradise
 To this cold world of ours,
 Shadows of beauty such as thine
 Recall thy native bowers.

Let others thank thee—'twas for them
 Thy soft leaves thou didst wreath ;
 The red rose wastes itself in sighs
 Whose sweetness others breathe !
 And they have thanked thee—many a lip
 Has asked of thine for words,
 When thoughts, life's finer thoughts, have touched
 The spirit's inmost chords.

How many loved and honoured thee
 Who only knew thy name ;
 Which o'er the weary working world
 Like starry music came !
 With what still hours of calm delight
 Thy songs and image blend ;
 I cannot choose but think thou wert
 An old familiar friend.

The charm that dwelt in songs of thine
 My inmost spirit moved ;
 And yet I feel as thou hadst been
 Not half enough beloved.
 They say that thou wert faint, and worn
 With suffering and with care ;
 What music must have filled the soul
 That had so much to spare !

Oh, weary One ! since thou art laid
 Within thy mother's breast—
 The green, the quiet mother-earth—
 Thrice blessed be thy rest !
 Thy heart is left within our hearts,
 Although life's pang is o'er ;
 But the quick tears are in my eyes,
 And I can write no more.

L. E. L.

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THE DREAM.

“ Sleep hath its own world,
 And a wild realm of wide reality ;
 And dreams in their development have breath,
 And tears and tortures, and the touch of joy.
 They leave a weight upon our waking thoughts.”

Of thee, love, I was dreaming
 Beneath the moon's pale light ;
 The trees were silver seeming,
 And the meadow grass was white.

The lark below was sleeping,—
 He asks, whene'er he springs
 From the dewy clover's keeping,
 For sunshine on his wings.

The leaves hung dark and shivering
 O'er the colourless dim flowers ;
 And the aspen's restless quivering
 Alone disturbed the hours.

Pale were the roses, stooping
 Beneath the heavy dews,
 And the wan acacia drooping
 Forgot its morning hues.

Perhaps my sleep might borrow
 Its likeness from the shade ;
 For the shadow of some sorrow
 Upon my soul was laid.

We seem'd to be together,
 And yet we seem'd apart ;
 In sleep,—I question'd whether
 Mine was the sleeper's part.

Pale faces gather'd round us,—
 The faces of the dead ;
 With cold white wreaths they bound us,—
 We shudder'd, and they fled.

Next came a crowd ; I lost thee
 Amid the rapid throng,
 While hurrying strangers cross'd me,
 And forced my steps along.

Strange mirth was there,—but lonely ;
 It was not made for me :
 I sought for thee—thee only,—
 I sought in vain for thee !

Again we met,—but alter'd :
 Thy brow was not the same :
 I strove to speak, but falter'd,—
 I could not breathe thy name.

And then I saw thee leave me,
 And wear another's yoke !
 In sleep thou couldst deceive me !
 But ah ! at once I woke.

L. E. L.

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THE PARTING WORD.

I leant within the window
 That overlooks the tide;
 I saw our eyes were meeting,
 And I saw nought beside.
 I knew that we were parting;
 That knowledge made me say
 More than my lips had ventured
 On any other day.
 I asked " Will you forget me ?"
 Too long my dreaming heart
 Recall'd the words we whisper'd,
 As there we stood apart.
 I see the open window,
 The careless talkers near,
 And how I talked as careless,
 To shun their smile or sneer.
 I see the silent river
 That wander'd darkly on,
 While the mournful light of midnight
 Above the waters shone.
 I said—so darkly flowing
 My course of life has been ;
 With mocking lights, whose lustre
 But partly show'd the scene.
 I felt as if the morning
 At length began to shine—
 As if my spirit's day-break
 Came from those eyes of thine.
 I felt I deeply loved thee—
 With fond and earnest love—
 Firm as the earth beneath me,
 True as the stars above.
 Such love as I had painted
 Thro' long and lonely years ;
 Too passionately happy,
 My eyes were fill'd with tears.
 I wish that I had shed them,
 They had not then been kept,
 For the hours that came the morrow
 To weep as I have wept.
 For I have felt the folly
 Of all I fancied then ;
 Not with my own heart's loving
 Am I beloved again.
 I fear my evil planet,
 Whose fortune has denied
 The only heart I covet
 In all a world so wide.
 The memory of that moment
 Is lingering with me yet :
 I said to you remember !
 Ah, must I say forget !

L. E. L.

DEATH-BED OF ALEXANDER THE GREAT.

ON his bed the king was lying—
On his purple bed* ;
“ Tell us not that he is dying ;”
So his soldiers said,
 “ He is yet too young to die.
Have ye drugged the cup ye gave him †,
From the fatal spring ?
Is it yet too late to save him ?
We will see our king !
 Let his faithful ones draw nigh,
The silver-shielded warriors—
The warriors of the world !”
Back they fling the fragrant portals
Of the royal tent ‡ ;

Death-bed of Alexander the Great.

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Vainly to the stern immortals
 Sacrifice and vow were sent*.
 Cold and pitiless are they!
 Silent in their starry dwelling,
 Nothing do they heed
 Of the tale that earth is telling,
 In her hour of need!
 They have turned their face away,
 Ye silver-shielded warriors,
 Ye warriors of the world!

In that royal tent is weeping;
 Women's tears will flow;
 There the queens their watch are keeping†
 With a separate woe.
 One still wears her diadem—
 One her long fair hair is rending,
 From its pearls unbound‡;
 Tears from those soft eyes descending,
 Eyes that seek the ground.
 But Roxana looks on them,
 The silver-shielded warriors,
 The warriors of the world!

In the east the day was reddening,
 When the warriors pass'd
 In the west the night was deadening,
 As they looked their last.
 As they looked their last on him—
 He, their comrade—their commander—
 He, the earth's adored—
 He, the godlike Alexander!
 Who can wield his sword?
 As they went their eyes were dim,
 The silver-shielded warriors,
 The warriors of the world!

Death-bed of Alexander the Great.

Slowly passed the sad procession
 By the purple bed ;
 Every soldier in succession
 Thro' that tent was led.
 All beheld their monarch's face—
 Pale and beautiful—reclining,
 There the conqueror lay,
 From his radiant eyes the shining
 Had not passed away.
 There he watched them from his place—
 His silver-shielded warriors,
 His warriors of the world !

Still he was a king in seeming,
 For he wore his crown ;
 And his sunny hair was streaming
 His white forehead down.
 Glorious was that failing head !
 Still his golden baldric bound him,
 Where his sword was hung ;
 Bright his arms were scattered round him,
 And his glance still clung
 To the warriors by his bed—
 The silver-shielded warriors,
 The warriors of the world !

Pale and motionless he rested,
 Like a statue white and cold,
 With his royal state invested ;
 For the purple and the gold
 In his latest hour he wore.
 But the eye and breath are failing,
 And the mighty Soul has fled ** !
 Lift ye up the loud bewailing,
 For a wide world mourns the Dead ;
 And they have a Chief no more—
 The silver-shielded warriors,
 The warriors of the world !

L. E. L.

* "While Alexander was on his death-bed, the soldiers," says Arrian, "became eager to see him ; some to see him once more alive, others because it was reported that he was already dead, and a suspicion had arisen that his death was concealed by the chief officers of the guards, but the majority from sorrow and anxiety for their king ; they, therefore, forced their way into his chamber, and the whole army passed in procession by the bed where he lay pale and speechless."

† Plutarch mentions that one of the popular reports was, that Alexander's death was occasioned by poison administered by Iollas, his cup-bearer. This poison, the water of a mountain-spring, was of so corrosive a nature as to destroy every substance but the mule's hoof in which it was brought.

‡ Phylarchus gives a splendid account of Alexander's magnificence. His tent contained a hundred couches, and was supported by eight columns of solid gold. Overhead was stretched cloth of gold, wrought with various devices, and expanded so as to cover the whole ceiling. Within, in a semicircle, stood five hundred Persians, bearing lances adorned with pomegranates ; their dress was purple and orange. Next to these were drawn up a thousand archers, partly clothed in flame-coloured, and partly in scarlet dresses. Many of these wore azure-coloured scarfs.

In front of these were arranged five hundred Macedonian Argyraspides, soldiers, so called from their silver shields. In the middle was the golden throne, on which Alexander sat and gave audience. The tent on the outside was encircled by elephants drawn up in order, and by a thousand Macedonians in their native dress. Beyond these were the Persian guard of ten thousand men, and the five hundred courtiers allowed to wear purple robes.

* Alexander's death was preceded by many omens, which sacrifice vainly strove to avert.

† After the conqueror's death, Roxana allured her gentler rival into her power, and poisoned her. She was the beautiful daughter of a barbarian chief, made captive by Alexander, who was so struck with her charms, that he immediately married her. Statira was the child of Darius, and inherited the evil fortunes of her ill-fated race.

‡ Pearls were favourite ornaments with the Persian ladies, who often wore them wreathed in their hair.

* The death of Alexander plunged all his vast empire into anarchy and slaughter. He was the soul that animated the mighty force that afterwards wasted its energies in petty warfare. The popular saying attributed to him might well be true, "That the survivors would celebrate his obsequies with bloody funeral games."
