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AFRANIUS,

AND

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THE IDUMEAN,

TRAGEDIES,

WITH THE

ROMAN MARTYRS, AND OTHER POEMS.

BY THE

REV. PROF. JOHN M. LEAVITT.

34
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AFRANIUS.



ACT I.

SCENE I. — *Rome. Palace of the Gothic King.*

KING.

ZALA! my daughter! Said you my daughter?

SIBYL.

Yea! your Majesty, Zala, thy daughter.

KING.

How dared the villain this! The place! the time!

SIBYL.

Once thou commanded me to shut my lips,
Or lose my tongue. Ha! now my words are wish'd.

KING.

Dwell not on that, old nurse. Then anger flash'd,
Sweeping away upon its tide of fire
The memory of each service to my child,
Since life's first morning dawn'd upon her eye,
Till now her womanhood glows like a rose.

SIBYL.

I said that Julius sought thy daughter's heart.
But why should I a Roman doom to stripes?

KING.

Because you know I can compel your speech,
And from your silent soul its secret wring.

SIBYL.

Although thy hand a Gothic sceptre sways,
Imagine not to force me with thy threats.
Thy wither'd slave, beneath her weight of years,
Touch'd by th' ancestral flame felt in Rome's day
When mystic leaves were turned in midnight caves,
Revealing fate, thine empire here defies.

KING.

Sibyl! forget my jest, and speak, nor stare
Like that old sorceress in my boyhood's morn,
Who on our snowy hills your conquest sang.

SIBYL.

Thy daughter's love constrains me now to tell
What all earth's monarchs never could compel.
'Tis sometime since I saw how Julius gazed
With sighs on Zala's face, and watch'd her form.

KING.

Why spoke you not before?

SIBYL.

Restrain thy rage
O King, and hear my tale. By madness urged,

A short hour since when glow'd the noonday heat,
 Nor stirr'd a breeze to cool the burning cheek,
 Julius, at Zala's feet avow'd his love,
 While she, astonish'd, spurn'd the slave away.

KING.

And now she asks my vengeance on his head!
 Ho! Julius! Julius! bring Julius here!

SIBYL.

Nay!

She plead with all the eloquence of tears
 That I should not disclose the fact to thee.
 But fearing this wild flame, I disobey.

KING.

What! will she ask the brazen'd villain's life?
 Nothing avails a wretch beneath our yoke
 Who makes such suit. Ho! haste! call Julius here!

[Enter Servants with Julius.]

Viper! whose shining skin tempted this hand
 To warm thee, and be stung. Sly, hateful spider,
 Along the mansion's wall thy silvery lines
 I see thee spin to bite the mansion's lord.

JULIUS.

O hear! your Majesty!

KING.

Julius, no more!

And would'st thou, knave, thy slavish heart unfold
 To pour its baseness in my Zala's ear,

And importune her with the gaze of love!
Strip him, and let the rod beat out his life!

JULIUS.

O spare my flesh the scourge! I pray thee, spare!

KING.

When first our Goths possess'd these towers of Rome'
Thy pensive face and eye my fancy won,
And waked a wish to cultivate thy gifts.
Before thy mind Rome's learning was unroll'd;
Thy skillful hand soon touch'd the lute's sweet strings;
Thy magic voice stirr'd depths of melody.
Nurtured thus, I near my Zala placed thee
As a companion rather than a slave.
Yet, wretch, you dare to whisper your vile vows;
Lay hold and scourge him while his life remains.

[*Enter Zala.*

ZALA.

O, father, spare! I do beseech thee, spare!

KING.

Peace, Zala, peace! He dies.

ZALA.

Father, forgive!

KING.

Nay! These vile Roman dogs grow more unruly
By each day's indulgence. They need the yoke.
The coming feast which marks the glorious hour
When our brave Goths first scaled these walls of Rome
Shall bind with heavier chains the bloated knaves.

ZALA.

O, must poor Julius die! Is there no hope —
No door where Pity may an entrance find,
And soften down stern Justice into tears?
I shall brand myself his cruel murderess,
And oft when midnight sits upon the air,
By conscience stung, I'll toss and tear my couch,
Seeing in dreams his pale, reproachful face,
While through my aching ear will pierce his shrieks
'Till I will never know the dew of sleep.

KING.

Zala, no more! Thy woman's tears prevail.
Julius, I grant thy life. Yet, lest thy pride
Again offend, thine ear, cut off, shall imprint dread
In purple drops on every Roman slave.

JULIUS.

My lord! I pray thee let me rather die!
Beat, tear, stab, burn, stain with my gushing blood
The lion's jaws; sink me with hissing snakes
Into the sea; in silent dungeons chain
Me to the corpse whose pestilence is death, —
But clip me, never, to a thing of scorn!

KING.

Enough! enough! You cannot change me more.
Just when the dial points the hour of four,
And ere the shadow of its finger pass
One hair-breadth from the mark, remove his ear!

SCENE II. — *A retired Street of Rome.*

LUCIUS.

HAIL, ancient friend! How sober grows thy face!

VARRO.

Sobriety becomes gray hairs. Thou art
Fresh as morning air, and bright as sunlight.

LUCIUS.

Yes! I have heard what makes my heart again
With every throbbing pulse beat ecstasy.

TITANIUS.

To Lucius I have told our daring scheme,
And for his honor I will pledge my life.

VARRO.

'Tis well; our cause needs men who will not pale
Before a tyrant's rage, when Battle bares
His blood-red arm, shrieking his notes of death.
The want of Rome is *men* — not demagogues
Who test the fickle crowd by glittering straws;
But men who peril all where Power, enthroned
Upon a nation's wrong, would drain their blood,
And kindle round their brows the martyr's flame.
Such was Brutus when he struck that Greatness
Which had first spann'd our world, then touch'd the
Heav'ns;

Rending a tyrant with avenging steel,
Made keen by Justice. Such is Afranius.

LUCIUS.

His dreams will never break one Roman's chain.
Beside, a Christian cannot draw the sword.

VARRO.

Beneath his seeming apathy there lurks
A fiery spirit so intensely hot,
That, stirr'd to flame, will burn the Goth to ashes.

TITANIUS.

Before the hated cross his courage tamed,
Valor sat on his helm, waved in his plume,
Beam'd from his eye, and tower'd within his form ;
Flashing in the bright circles of his sword,
Until he moved amid the battle's storm
Invested with resistless majesty.

LUCIUS.

The moon now sees him to a temple steal,
Sit down in tears upon some broken shaft,
Leaning his silent head upon his hand
To watch the stars, and gaze on vacancy.

TITANIUS.

Last eve, with folded arms and absent look,
I saw him 'mid the statues of the Pantheon.

VARRO.

Ye both ere long will mark the hero's fire
Burst to a blaze. A crisis now is near.

These silken lords of Rome boasting the steed
 That whirl'd the thundering chariot to its goal,
 Or gladiator conquering in his blood —
 With music lull'd to sleep in curtain'd beds —
 Who shook to feel but spring breathe in the breeze,
 Have now learn'd wisdom from these years of stripes,
 And may by valor win what cowardice lost.
 But I see Julius!

[Enter Julius.

Ah! Julius, how fares

Thy master now?

JULIUS.

A Roman knows no master.

LUCIUS.

Save when the lash shall mark his back with blood,
 Or horrid tortures cry, "Thou art a slave!"

JULIUS.

Ask'd you for the king? Curse, I say, curse him,
 And having done, begin, and curse again,
 'Till curses stick like hairs, each breeding poison.

VARRO.

Bravo, Julius, bravo; but whence this wrath?

TITANIUS.

The royal tongue has scored for some neglect;
 Or Zala, peevish with the summer heat,
 Venting her rage in stripes upon his back,
 Has made her slave to this fierce hero flame.

JULIUS.

Jeers I deserve. I've been too long a slave
 To those who pamper'd me with luxury,
 Showing wild Goths, rude as their northern blasts,
 Our delicate delights, whose organs drink
 The glorious light of these Italian skies.
 But that has happen'd which has burst my chain,
 And piled on here a mountain of revenge
 To tower o'er earth, black with the wrath of Heav'n.

ALL.

Farewell, brave Julius, 'till thy temper cools.

[*Exeunt.*]

JULIUS.

I seem hideous — of my proportion shorn —
 Each stream will mirror my deformity ;
 The sun's full circle will suggest my loss ;
 Unfit to dwell in caves 'mid curious beasts ;
 Ashamed to look my fellow in the eyes ;
 Doom'd to hear the shouts of knavish boys,
 Or suppress'd titter of each giddy girl.
 Yea ! clipp'd like some dumb beast to bear abroad
 The mark and badge of him whose slave I am.
 O, ear, through all whose galleries and aisles
 A mother's voice thrill'd music to my heart,
 Thy bloody severance hath my nature chang'd,
 And turn'd my love to a remorseless hate,
 Strangling conscience with a murderer's grasp.
 Thou, through whose veins Rome's noblest currents
 flow'd ;
 Whose marble halls the winter-storm defied ;
 Whose cheek but perfum'd breezes softly kiss'd ;
 Then made to Goths a slave — smile from thy skies

While vows thy son, Revenge! Since, Jesu, since,
Where thundering Jove his sculptured image lifts
Majestic as a god, I, bowing low,
Upon his altar laid the incense-grain
Which touch'd to flame roll'd high its fragrant clouds
Filling the Capitol, I burn within;
My breast an ocean whirling round in fire;
An angel bars the starry gate of light;
Apostate, exiled, lost, I know my doom;
Revenge my Heav'n — Revenge at last my Hell.

ACT II.

SCENE I. — *A private Place in Rome.*

AFRANIUS.

My friends, you do mistake.

FIRST GOTH.

Afranius, nay!

AFRANIUS.

Indeed this day I boast these arms mine own.
Yet see! the fetter's mark still scars my flesh;
So late a slave I shall but hurt your claim.

SECOND GOTH.

Thy valor moved the king to set thee free,
And gratitude will make thy plea avail.

FIRST GOTH.

Ay, and fair Zala views with smiles thy form.

AFRANIUS.

That tale would blast me in her father's eyes,
And hurl me back again to heavier chains.

SECOND GOTH.

'Twas aged Sibyl first the story told.
But to the point. We pray thee aid our suit.

AFRANIUS.

Prudence whispers, "Shun the unseemly risk :"
 But I recall your kindness shown the slave,
 And grant your wish.

BOTH.

Thanks, thanks, Afranius, thanks.
 [*Exeunt.*]

AFRANIUS.

How wretched he who hangs on smiles of kings !
 O Liberty, thy music, midnight storms ;
 Thy bed, the mountain's breast ; thy roof, the clouds,
 I love thee more than pomp of palaces
 Where glitters in bright robes but painted misery.
 Vanish ye dreams ! O, should the king be told
 We at the fountain met, beneath the moon,
 'Mid silvered trees, to seal eternal vows,
 The eyes of golden stars our witnesses ;
 In dungeons chain'd below the Tiber's wave,
 This hand would never strike from Rome her bonds.
 Does love for her, a heathen, make this night ?
 Yet God hath form'd us as the sun and moon !
 Quench either orb, and earth and sky complain,
 While both bright spheres call beauty from our world.
 Wild tempests shake my breast. Clouds veil my path.
 Religion, Love, and Rome are struggling here.

[*Enter Julius.*]

How fare you, Julius ?

JULIUS.

Ill ; and how with you ?

AFRANIUS.

My country's shadows fall around my heart.
Why look you pale? Say, Julius, what ails you?

JULIUS.

You, Afranius, firm in the Goth's esteem,
Basking in royal smiles, while Romans groan
In chains, you, glittering in the sun of power.
Forget your countrymen are slaves — base slaves.

AFRANIUS.

Julius! you do me wrong. Have I e'er flatter'd,
Or bent a pliant knee, or play'd the knave
To gain my freedom and the Goth's good will?
Have I not blush'd for every Roman's shame,
And sought to mitigate each Roman's wrong?
Has not a patriot's love consumed my soul
With ever-burning and tempestuous flame?

JULIUS.

'Tis most true, Afranius.

AFRANIUS.

Why then affirm

That I on paltry honors plume myself,
Shutting my heart to pity and to grief?

JULIUS.

Why does Afranius when he weeps o'er Rome
Not change his tears for bold heroic blows?

AFRANIUS.

Cease this mystery, and explain thy words

JULIUS.

I will.

[*Pulling aside his hair to show the place of his lost ear.*]

AFRANIUS.

O, horrible, most horrible!
Say, why this blood, this foul disfigurement?

JULIUS.

I loved, and on my knees avow'd my flame.

AFRANIUS.

But, Julius, whom?

JULIUS.

Zala.

AFRANIUS.

Zala, Julius?

JULIUS.

Why not, Afranius? Why start with surprise?
What angry spot thus crimsons on thy cheek?

AFRANIUS.

And how did she your suit regard?

JULIUS.

Regard!

She treated it with a contemptuous scorn,
Deeming it too presumptuous for belief;
Then told the king, and he enraged, did *this*.

AFRANIUS.

Julius, I pity thee.

JULIUS.

Not me, but *Rome*.

My sorrows told with aptest eloquence
 Would not express the pangs which tear her breast;
 Each statue of her gods hurl'd from its base;
 Her palaces and temples spoil'd by fire,
 Or given o'er for sport to reveling winds,
 While Sadness sits in gloom upon her gates,
 Sighs through her air, and turns her skies to night,
 And stealing 'mid her streets, clouds o'er each face,
 And to oppression leagued, within our homes
 Darkens the sunny smiles of innocence
 That sparkled there, and kindled earth to Heav'n;
 And all Rome's mightiness, by heroes nursed,
 Which panted once to pass the meagre earth,
 And strike the stars, upon the sword-points held
 Of brutal Goths, gazing in wonder round
 Like silly children on some glittering toy,
 Amazed to know from whence such fortune sprang.
 And yet Afranius sleeps, and yet Rome sleeps.
 Awake! awake! Awake, and swear Revenge!

[Exit.

AFRANIUS.

Nay! *not* Revenge. Apostasy makes fiends.
 Stung with the daughter's scorn, and father's wrong.
 He hurls me forward to assuage his hate;
 To slay the Goth, at Zala points the sword:
 Perhaps with her own blood may stain this hand;
 "Vengeance is mine," beside has Heav'n declared;
 Did Moses with his rod bring blasting plagues?

Yet Jesus, who could scathe with bolts of fire,
Call seraphim to hurl the mountains down,
Pleads for his foes that blood drain'd from his heart.
Then must the Goth bind Rome in cruel chains?
Eternal Father, drive this night away!

SCENE II. — *A retired Place in a Garden.*

ZALA.

How thick the air!

SIBYL.

To me this hour seems bright
And pure as heav'n. See how the lingering sun,
With orb enlarged, hangs on the horizon's verge,
Fringing with golden hues those western clouds,
Then coloring all the sky with one broad glow
Of purple. Oft creative fancy sees
The gods, with glancing wings and radiant hair,
Gliding along those beams of slanted light
From heav'n to earth, and back from earth to heav'n.

ZALA.

Sibyl, to me this world is voiceless now,
And Sorrow steeps my every sense in gloom.
Believe you dreams?

SIBYL.

When Somnus shuts the eye
Our souls assert their power, spreading wide wings
For loftier flights, and through the future pierce.
Why ask you this?

ZALA.

Last night, when Darkness came
Environing my couch, and all was still

Except the curious sound, like ocean's roar,
 Which murmurs in the ear, I strangely dream'd
 That I was walking on a toppling cliff
 Around whose base of rock dash'd winter-waves,
 When suddenly, seiz'd with some mad desire,
 I threw me headlong from the hideous height,
 And swiftly fell, as drops a shooting star,
 Gasping in agony infinite for breath.
 My eyes out from their sockets stood with pain ;
 My blood was forced up to my bursting skin ;
 Until at last I struck the thundering surge,
 Whose cold and sharp impact waked from my dreams.
 Thus sink I down the abyss of wedlock.

SIBYL.

By secret arts and charms, I'll bear thee safe
 From each dark ill which tempests now thy life.

ZALA.

Thy divinations, auguries, and signs
 Are mysteries to me. But what I hate
 I have, and what I love I lose — no balm
 For wounded hearts except what they adore.

[Enter Afranius.]

Save me! My father bids me wed young Spain ;
 But let me fly with thee to some lone isle,
 Where, if wild tempests sweep, and winters chill,
 Our love shall tame the storm and light the sun ;
 Making the purple vine its clusters hang
 Around the shaded grot, while fragrant flowers
 Unfold their bloom. How we will hail at morn
 With carols gay the blush upon the hills,
 Or sing day's monarch to his ocean bed
 When twilight brightens with the star of eve !

AFRANIUS.

What pangs thy burning words wake in my heart!

ZALA.

Afranius, dost thou pause? Wilt thou not snatch
From this dark gulf which shuts me from thy breast?

AFRANIUS.

All I have is thine, except my honor.

ZALA.

O man, thy love how prudent and how poor!
I conquer shame, scorn fear, mock death, dare fate.
A woman's love knows nothing but itself,
And him who has evoked its awful power:
It leaps the bars of wealth, the grades of rank,
The world's reproach, yea, the high thrones of kings;
Seas could it swim of fire to clasp its own,
And search on tireless wing eternity.
And naught has ever quenched a woman's love
Save woman's pride, whose sensitive and strong
O'ermastering nature will extinguish love,
As darkness doth the universal day.

AFRANIUS.

Oft through the purple of the fading eve
Our tremulous star has look'd, and hung its urn
Of gold in Heav'n to bless the dewy earth,
Its dying brilliance brightening as it sank.

ZALA.

Afranius, stop! My heart perceives thy drift;
Me you desert, and phantoms grasp for Rome —
Farewell!

AFRANIUS.

Zala, I implore thee, stay!
 Could I tell all, yourself would laud the deed.
 Honor forbids!

ZALA.

Of honor, prate to fools —
 A bubble blown to beauty from thin air,
 That dances in the sun to cheat the world,
 Then glittering bursts to its first emptiness.

[Exit.

AFRANIUS.

O, to be blamed by her who has my heart,
 Reproach'd with cowardice, branded as false!
 I have breathed too long ambrosial sweets,
 Whose subtle essence through my brain distill'd
 Flush'd into dreams my life, until I dwelt
 'Mid airs perfumed, and music-murmuring gales,
 That sigh'd in dalliance where the summers fringe
 A sky-reflecting lake, set bright with stars.
 Spirit that fills with flames the patriot's veins,
 That drew great Cincinnatus from his plow
 And struck the dagger to Virginia's heart,
 Then breathed in fire o'er Livy's matchless page
 To light the deed with an immortal glow,
 Come from the past, and point my nerveless arm
 A Christian Rome shall shine the sun of earth!

ACT III.

SCENE I. — *Rome. A retired Street.*

VARRO.

HAIL, my friend, Lucius! Thou, Titanius, hail!
Antonius, let me grasp thy cordial hand.
But why these clouds?

LUCIUS.

A midnight scowls o'er Rome.

ANTONIUS.

But where does censure fall? *Ours* all the fault
That sovereign Jove, impell'd on shrieking storms,
Has roll'd amid the roaring flames of Rome
His chariot from her high-domed Capitol,
Seeking his native skies; and from the top
Of bright Olympus that he mocks with scorn
Rome's pigmied sons, who, in their pictured halls,
Where all the past looks from the eyes of heroes,
Clench their dwarfish fists, and vent their sighs
To amuse the laughing majesty of heav'n.

VARRO.

Yes! *ours* the blame that tears extinguish hope,
Where once shone Rome the jewel of our world,
And kings, with gifts, begg'd to be citizens.

ANTONIUS.

Then *Romans* fought where War his standard waved,
 Till empires rang'd beneath our magic sway,
 And Rome, enthroned upon a prostrate world,
 Sat like her banner'd bird with balanced wings,
 High-pois'd, and near the sun, and from his rock
 Looking disdainful over earth and sea.

Ah! now, her glory gone, and sunk her power.
 The blue-eyed Briton from his ocean isle
 Chain'd to some king from India's wave, marches
 No more in tears amid his fetter'd sons,
 Behind the victor's chariot of gold,
 With trophied treasures rich, and thrones, and crowns,
 Rolling in triumph to the Capitol.

There, instead, behold that sad procession —
 Romans in bonds — whipp'd to their daily toil,
 Where once their fathers with exulting shouts,
 Bursting from windows, walls, and swarming roofs,
 Have rock'd these pillar'd temples to their domes,
 And shook th' eternal arches of yon heav'n!

VARRO.

Say, would Antonius aid to right these wrongs?

ANTONIUS.

Yea! willingly as serves the hand the head.

LUCIUS.

Titanius, with swift words unfold our plans.

TITANIUS.

Antonius, know that we whose ancestry
 Long held the noblest dignities of Rome —

Her senates graced, and thundered on her fields—
 Were bound last night by solemn oath to drive
 Back howling to their wilds these Gothic wolves.

ANTONIUS.

Ours, liberty, and victory, and Rome!

TITANIUS.

The blood of Julius turn'd to drops of flame
 Kindled our plans. By him impell'd we swore
 To kill each Goth we meet upon the day
 When feasts insulting tell Rome of her chains.
 Afranius alone refused the pledge,
 But when prepared Julius will take his oath.

VARRO.

Fear not Afranius—'though a Christian, he
 Will give his hand to break the bonds of Rome.
 The whispering breeze that comes on murmuring wing
 To steal the flowery sweet, oft bursts a storm,
 Hurling high forests from its boisterous course.

TITANIUS.

As coming hither, muffled in disguise,
 I Trajan's pillar pass'd, old Sibyl there
 Most wildly placed this parchment in my hand.

[*He reads.*]

“The Fates have sent the earthquake's shock
 To heave the hill and rend the rock;
 Have roll'd their thunders loud and high,
 And shot red lightnings o'er the sky,
 And flaming comets hurl'd through space
 To shake down horror on our race.

In fire they shaped upon the west
 Fantastic forms for battle dress'd;
 Which, curvetting on blazing steeds,
 While tracing on the clouds their deeds,
 Or pause, retreat, or fiercely fight,
 Till swallow'd up by closing night.
 Then on the lonely mountain side
 Where grim beasts howl, and whirlwinds ride,
 Where sharp frosts pinch, and witches hold
 Wild revels in the midnight cold,
 The sister Fates amid the gloom
 Write with the stars Rome's coming doom,
 And tell, who will the tyrant slay,
 Living thereafter but a day,
 Shall bring to Rome her former state
 When Glory grasp'd the torch of Fate.
 But if a moment he expires,
 Before that day has quench'd its fires,
 Then Rome no more shall gain her might,
 Environed with eternal night."

ANTONIUS.

Romans! burns in my heart a quenchless flame.
 Bright visions glorious with immortal shapes
 Are smiling round, which, beckoning, "Onward" cry.
 A tyrant there his purple mantle folds —
 A dagger grasping, see a phantom hand!
 Be *mine* the hour — be *mine* the envied stroke!
 Fortune, nor death, nor a wide empire's might
 Unnerves the heart strong in the cause of right;
 And though the body gash'd may bleed, and die,
 The soul will smile immortal from the sky.

SCENE II. — *A private Room in Rome.*

AFRANIUS.

How sad this hour! Hast ever lost a friend?

JULIUS.

Yea! her I saw expire who gave me life.

AFRANIUS.

How dear that name of friend! When fades the day
The whispers of the eve are not so sweet.
With what huge sorrow death can weigh us down!
Hast heard the fate of my Antonius?

JULIUS.

He fail'd to stab the king, I learn'd, and dies.

AFRANIUS.

To deepen the humility of Rome
And feed his pride, in mockery of our state,
The tyrant made a gladiatorial show.
Well! there high-ranged along the circling seats
These wild Goths gazed as Romans, Romans fought,
Where once our Pompeys and our Cæsars saw
Their hairy fathers wield the savage club
Against mad beasts, staining with blood the sand
Piled o'er with ghastly bodies grim in death.
O! must Goths yell to see a Roman die?

JULIUS.

Ay! 'tis maddening. Shall we endure it more?

AFRANIUS.

Julius, the worst remains. A dimness draws
 Its curtain o'er my eye — my brain reels round
 Dizzy as when an eddying whirlpool boils,
 While the black horror through my memory swims.
 Antonius, hurling defiance at the crowd,
 And breathing fiery flashes from his face,
 Was dragg'd to view. A Roman was his foe.
 "Perish the hand," he cried, "that here would strike."

JULIUS.

There shone his nobleness.

AFRANIUS.

But soon the slave
 Unsheathes his coward sword, and makes a wound.
 Antonius in scorn disarms the wretch,
 Throwing him headlong down upon the sand.
 The Colosseum shook as burst the cry
 To slip the lion's bars; when lo, a beast,
 With hunger fierce, and shaggy mane erect,
 Rush'd forth, and stood, with glaring, monstrous eyes,
 In awful pause, then, making one huge bound,
 He fastened in my friend ten horrid claws,
 And tore his flesh, until the ground was strewed
 With mangled fragments, and by blood-spots stain'd.

JULIUS.

Afranius, cease! and swear with me revenge!

AFRANIUS.

A nobler flame must burn within my breast.

JULIUS.

Thy color'd sketches of our ancient Rome,
With fancies mingled from thy sacred books,
Have turn'd thee from the course of common life,
As incense flung by priests transports rapt souls
In soft Elysian dreams amid the clouds.

AFRANIUS.

I scorn the schemes which make the world a game
Where villains win. Julius, my aim is Virtue,
At whose altar bow'd the Grecian sage.
What Socrates but saw in mists of morn
Shines now in Jesus, man's eternal sun.
Virtue is not the image of a god
Shaped in cold marble by immortal art,
But the Divinity made breathing flesh,
Sealing his love with blessings, and with blood.

JULIUS.

Stop these hated themes, and take here the oath
In which wild Gothic shrieks like music thrill.

AFRANIUS.

Julius, would you kill all — strewing our streets
With gasping infancy, and dying age?
Reason, that beam which shines to show the right,
Can never light to bloody cruelty.
Why not content to slay resisting men?

JULIUS.

Nay! I say, death — a universal death.
 When spared the Goth since his infuriate swarms
 Pour'd yelling through our gates? He has hurl'd
 down
 Our monuments — burn'd homes, temples, palaces —
 Made Romans writhe beneath the lash, and thrown
 Their flesh to beasts — our children chain'd as slaves,
 Their shrieking mothers forcing to his arms.
 Ay, look here! Witness this deformity!
 Each drop has turn'd a fiend; in night's still gloom
 And in the sun's broad glare, let loose from hell,
 Exulting demons scream o'er my disgrace
 Till every pulse of life throbs but for blood.

AFRANIUS.

O, without blood, eternal Rome arise
 To that majestic height, when poets sang
 In various verse, and thy scholars search'd
 Philosophy's profound! Then Victory
 Beneath thine eagle's eye won laurel'd crowns,
 To inspire art and deck th' historian's page,
 While breathed thine orators heroic fires,
 And swarm'd thy streets, resounding with earth's
 tongues,
 Till here the world's own heart appear'd to beat!
 On thine imperial brow a crown must shine,
 And gleam the Cross above thy Capitol!

JULIUS.

These are boy's words. Blood is the price of greatness.

AFRANIUS.

Who seeks the right, stands like a radiant god
Whom Heav'n has arm'd for Truth and Victory.
How can I swear to slay each innocent?

JULIUS.

You shall!

AFRANIUS.

What! shall?

JULIUS.

Aye, shall!

AFRANIUS.

Shall! shall! beware!

JULIUS.

*I say beware! Think you I would arouse
The lion from his lair to feel his fang?
A brawl between us clouds the hope of Rome.*

AFRANIUS.

But shameless villains press advantages.

JULIUS.

Thy insults cease! Should I proclaim through Rome
That you and Zala had exchang'd your vows —
Ha! you start; on my witness place the tale
Now whisper'd by report, — how would he waked
The Roman's curse, and how the Goth's revenge!
Behold, you stand between two walls of fire,
Whose circling flames are closing round your head!

AFRANIUS.

O, shall this scheming overmaster me!
 Ye lofty notions of immortal truth
 By Heav'n inspired, and must ye bend to craft?
 Must Virtue fade before a villain's breath?
 To vow, my Zala kills; and not to vow
 Kills Rome. Eternal Spirit grant thy ray!
 Julius, I yield, but when the struggle's o'er,
 God's indignation, flaming like a sun,
 Shall burn in deadly vengeance round thy brow.

JULIUS.

'Tis mine to take the risk, and thine the vow.

AFRANIUS (*Kneeling*).

To Heav'n, not thee, I bend. Yes, I invoke
 Upon my heart the omniscient eye.
 War's trump has summon'd me to grasp the sword.
 I now obey, because, bursts to my view,
 Rome, towering o'er her hills, with glory crown'd,
 To pierce the skies and beam o'er all the earth,
 The universal empire of my Lord.
 Hence I yield love; hence tear my heart away;
 Hence dare the circlet of the martyr's flame.
 Black as a cloud this oath scowls o'er my path.
 I see no fringe of light. Perhaps I err.
 On suppliant knees, with love for Rome I plead
 That Heav'n may see, and smile upon the deed!

ACT IV.

SCENE I. — *A banqueting Hall in the Palace.*

KING.

My friends! let every lip express our joy!
This feast recalls the hour when valiant Goths
Seiz'd Rome's proud eagle which had aw'd a world,
And clipp'd his plumes with their victorious swords.

FIRST COURTIER.

Forgetting now our former wintry years,
Let brimming goblets sparkle in the blaze!

SECOND COURTIER.

Departed heroes, hail! Ye never dream'd,
When dragg'd to feed with blood the eye of Rome,
Your sons would see her lords with lions fight.

KING.

'Tis Fortune rolls around the earth's huge wheel,
Sinks in the dust, or lifts amid the clouds.

THIRD COURTIER.

But why such paleness on thy royal cheek?
What airy shape can fix thy straining eye?

KING.

A shadow — but a shadow — there, 'tis pass'd;
Does not some heaviness oppress the brain?

ALL.

Nay, nay, your Majesty!

KING.

That thunder loud!
 What lightnings flash! The air is quivering flame.
 'Tis ominous, I think, 'tis ominous.

FOURTH COURTIER.

Propitious Heav'n proclaims from summer clouds
 The gentle rain. Glad peasants bear a voice
 Telling of golden crops, and mellow fruits,
 And joyous, sparkling wines, which winter cheer.

KING.

The pang has pass'd. Drain now full merry cups,
 Drowning the cares which wall around a throne,
 And pierce like thorns through every royal state!

FIRST COURTIER.

To great Alaric! He waved our banner
 First above Rome's high majestic Capitol.
 Encased in gold, forever bright his dreams
 Beneath thy wave, tide-turn'd Busentinus!

KING.

I will seek the window, courting the winds
 Of heav'n to play upon my throbbing brow.

THIRD COURTIER.

May Gothic Rome outshine the polar star!

KING.

[*Aside.*

Some spirit spreads his wings upon the night,
 Breathing a subtle poison through the air.
 Ah! these dark images of memory!
 My soul is like that heavy-hanging cloud
 Inroll'd from the night to frown o'er Rome.
 Behold its blackness swelling up the skies
 To hide the glimmering stars! Amid the gloom
 Below glance lights. There flares a ghastly flame.

GAUL.

Behold a charm, O King, to break this spell.
 Thou hast a daughter.

KING.

Daughter, ay, daughter!

GAUL.

One who combines, as stolen from the skies,
 The various charms of every fabled Grace
 Whose pictured stories in Rome's temples hang.

KING.

Wo! Wo!! Wo!!!

GAUL.

[*Aside.*

This is sheer insanity.
 His mind, in reaching o'er the future's verge,
 With madness dizzies at some fearful view.

KING.

That horrid dream! The round moon rides amid
 The chasing clouds, shedding her spectral light,

While fountains spout their frightful streams of blood,
 Leaping through air in sportive mockery.
 A shrouded matron from an altar tears
 A brilliant pair. Her voice bursts from the grave
 Shrieking our fall, and finds an echo here.

COURTIERS.

This is frenzy's agony.

KING.

There! there!! there!!!
 Tempestuous shouts assail my aching ear,
 Like dismal shrieks that far away at sea
 Outvoice the storm, and on the billows hang,
 Where wretches struggle in the wild abyss.
 A demon glares, and thunders in my breast;
 Away, these shows of joy — this emptiness!
 Why deck a death-bed with the flowers of spring?
 Why spread a feast beside a gaping grave?
 Heav'n speaks in fire, and earth hurls forth her dead.
 [*Enter messenger.*]

MESSENGER.

O King, the Romans, by Afranius led —

KING.

Ill-omen'd owl, I stop thy boding voice.
 [*Strikes him to the floor.*]
 Ha! ha! ha! the knave writhes like a trod worm.
 [*Enter another messenger*]

SECOND MESSENGER.

Your Majesty, I fear to tell my tale.

KING.

Speak out! The storm has pass'd. My pulse now
 beats
 Soft as the veins of sleeping infancy.

SECOND MESSENGER.

By Julius stirr'd, and by Afranius led, —
 Bound by an oath to kill each Goth they meet, —
 The Roman slaves now march from house to house,
 Till our affrighted streets run red with blood;
 They fire our homes, and seek the palace gate.

KING.

Arm! arm! Here by my throne I stand till death.
[Exeunt all but King.]

Julius, thy mother's blood crimsons this hand,
 And thou, unconscious, dost avenge the stain.
 The eye of Heav'n is on the murderer's track;
 Although a king, a crown is not a shield:
 Omnipotence would drag me from the stars.
 The mist clears from my brain. My fate unfolds.
 I feel the crumbling of a tottering throne.
 Rage on, ye storms! Ye thunders, rive my breast!
[Enter Afranius.]

Ha, serpent, is it thou? I thought not this.
 Art thou ordain'd by Heav'n to drain my veins?
 Come on!

AFRANIUS.

I am the messenger of Justice.

KING.

Of Justice! I was thy friend.

AFRANIUS.

But Rome's foe.
When calls my country, even friendship dies.

KING.

I strike thee, traitor.

[*The King rushes at Afranius, who, after a struggle, kills him.*]

AFRANIUS (*over the body*).

Hate gash'd not these wounds.
My tears outnumber life-drops from that breast,
And bathe in agony his quivering clay.
I fight for Truth, for Rome, for Liberty —
Else murder's stain would be eternal here.
O Revolution, terrible thy front
'Though shaped by Heaven's own hand, and from the
sleep
Of calm endurance by God's angel waked
To put the mantle of thy terrors on
And ride the whirlwind! Blood lies on thy path;
Groans are thy music, and thy breath is flame.
Before thee turns the look of infant innocence
To the death-pang, while young maternal pride
Will follow thee with shrieking agony.
O! writhing at thy feet, her I behold
Whose smile, bright as a morning beam, proclaim'd
Th' unutterableness of woman's love,
Which from her heart flows like a flower-girt stream
And deepens in its progress. O Liberty,
Is *this* thy price? Yet burn, ye patriot fires!
Humanity must burst the tyrant's chain.

[*Enter Zala, pursued by Julius with a drawn dagger.*]

ZALA.

Afranius, save!

AFRANIUS.;

Demon, back, on thy life!

JULIUS.

Afranius, thy oath! ha! ha! ha! thy oath!

ZALA.

And does this wretch but urge thee to thy pledge?
Here plant thy dagger, and redeem thine honor.

AFRANIUS.

Never!

JULIUS.

This hand revenges then my ear.

*[Julius attempts to stab Zala. — Afranius seizing, throws him violently
down.]*

AFRANIUS (*stooping to examine the body*).

The villain's pulse is still. Zala, we fly!

ZALA (*pointing to the King*).

Behold these eyes that stare into thy face,
These lips compress'd in silent agony,
This drooping head, these nerveless, unbraced limbs:
Here lies thy friend. This then is patriotism —
To slay thy king, opening these crimson mouths
Which murder shriek. Yea, worse, to vow the death
Of a defenseless girl whose heart was thine.
With thee I never will consent to fly.
Nay! here by him who gave me life, I die.

[Zala falls on the King's body.]

AFRANIUS.

This is no time for words. I bear thee off.

[Exit with Zala in his arms.]

JULIUS (*slowly rising*).

Not kill'd yet, Afranius; no thanks to thee.
But dead, my mind would wander bodiless
To mar thy bliss. Thy fireside should grow dark,
For I would steal in midnight to thy breast,
There planting jealousy's sharp thorn, and breathe
Suspicious on the air, till beauty turn'd
Deformity; love's smile, a demon's grin;
The breast of flame cold as the mountain's crown,
And every fond caress, repulsion.
Spurning this lifeless, sceptred thing call'd king,
The hunger here cries out for nobler food.
Afranius, now beware! Zala, beware!
Relentless Fate her foldings dark draws round.
Visions, bright as the clouds which morning paints
With gold, or evening with her crimson stains,
May smile along your sky; yet shall they grow
Blacker than night, and thunder with your doom.

SCENE II. — *Temple of Apollo in Rome. Sibyl engaged in her incantations.*

SIBYL.

YE gods, who from the azure hills look down
To trace the thoughts that weave our destiny,
Watching each charm spread o'er the face and form
As girlish beauty bursts to womanhood!
Ye, who guard the couch where heroism sleeps,
And lead its eagle-wing toward the sun,
That it may soar where coward natures sink,
Nursing to manhood, now your children save!
Alas! grim darkness o'er their future scowls,
And vengeful Julius stalks amid the gloom.
Encircled in this scroll their mystic fate,
My solemn oath forbids to break its seal.
I'll stand upon the temple's eastern porch,
And Phœbus, as he lifts his orb of fire
Above the hills, may show the token wish'd.

[*Exit.*

[*Enter Afranius and Zala from an opposite part*

AFRANIUS.

Zala, say not so!

ZALA.

Heav'n and Earth cry "No!"

AFRANIUS.

But Hope should bind its halo round our lives,
Making the future like the radiant past.

ZALA.

Those hours, with brightness fill'd, wake from their
sleep,
Fringing my sorrows with their golden light,
And, for a moment, chase away the gloom.

AFRANIUS.

Relent!

ZALA.

The past cannot efface the present.
My father, mother, kindred, country gone —
My very life a stain upon thy name —
Each heaving of my suffering breast suggests
Thy broken vow. O Afranius, never!

AFRANIUS.

A month will find my power firm in our Rome,
And then I will proclaim thee as my wife.

ZALA.

My blood has left a spot no rite can purge.

AFRANIUS.

Thou art unfit to breast life's storm alone.

ZALA.

This glittering dagger, snatch'd when Havoc's cry,
Wild hurtling through the air, our palace reach'd,

Will be my passport to Elysian fields,
Where I will glide to thee made pure by death.

AFRANIUS.

Zala, such thoughts abjure! renounce thy gods!
In Jesus immortality has burst to life;
Here in this temple I will point the way,
Through Him to an eternal joy.

ZALA. •

Cease! fly!

Thou art betray'd. With look malign I see
The stealthy Julius peer around that column's base.

JULIUS (*appearing*).

Afranius, duped again, ha! ha!

AFRANIUS.

Has Hell

Unlock'd its jaws to belch thee from its flames?

ZALA.

Ye pillars of yon dome, O crush the wretch!
What is thine errand here?

JULIUS.

Can you not tell?

Thy father maim'd me thus. He is a corpse.

ZALA.

Is not this enough?

JULIUS.

Nay, not all I ask.

Thy cheek, now pale, the pride of beauty flush'd;
 Power crown'd thy brow, and grace moved in thy step;
 My suit was scorn'd, and ridiculed my flame —
 Then the disgrace that stirs to madness now.

AFRANIUS.

Monster, for this do you demand her blood?

JULIUS.

Crush'd by a word, a glance of proud contempt,
 Love turns to gloomy and to brooding hate,
 Waking the keenest of all mortal pangs;
 Assuaged but when its object sleeps in death,
 Protected from the clasp of envied rivals.

AFRANIUS.

Can Hell be thus transferr'd to human breasts!

JULIUS.

Afranius, thou hast won the heart I loved;
 Need I tell thee how I hate thee? A blow
 From thy clench'd fist fell on me here. Each hour
 It stings with pain that tingles in my nerves,
 And boils along the channels of my blood,
 Mounting in frenzy to my whirling brain.

[Shouting heard.]

Ha! ye are mine. Our Romans fill the place.
 They cry out for his blood who broke his oath.

[Enter Soldiers.]

Drag this foul traitor to an instant death!

AFRANIUS.

Back, ye minions, back! I am Afranius!

This voice rang thunders 'mid the clash of arms;
This hand first flung your banner from the gate,
And slew the Goth within his palace hall;
This sword-stain purples from the tyrant's heart.
Back, then back, and hold my person sacred!
Rome owes her present liberty to me.
I'll come before your judges in an hour,
And answer there the charges ye may urge;
But I will never be to Justice dragg'd
With pinion'd hands, and head droop'd down in shame,
While the base rabble hoots;—never! never!
Nay, I will walk as now, towering and firm,
With the bold tread of manly innocence,
And conscious service render'd to the state,
To prove upon my side—Humanity.
Sheathe then your swords, and back upon your lives!
Ye are Romans! respect me, too, a Roman!

ACT V.

SCENE I. — *Rome. Temple of Jupiter.*

SIBYL.

I HAVE essay'd for naught my various arts ;
My spells are useless, and my charms are vain.
Do now the gods displeas'd thwart my intents?
Or has old age benumb'd my faculties,
And spread its darkness o'er my baffled vision?
On every side are signs I may not read.
The arrowy swallows from their chimney-tops ;
The arching swans that o'er their shadows swim,
White and majestic in the Tiber's wave ;
The vultures circling high on upward wing
Till they seem specks across the snow of clouds,
With wild commotions on the troubled earth,
And fiery battles blazing in the sky,
Which ancient augurs on their scrolls record
To make the future plain, I scan in vain.
Hope sees these prostrate pillars rise around,
Once more o'erarch'd by their stupendous dome.
These broken statues, lifted to their place,
Line the long aisles with forms of breathing life,
While on these pavements *Romans* kneel again.
Alas ! this is fancy, and not prophecy.
Immortal Jove, to this thy temple fly,
Viewless from that cloud which towers in majesty.

Ah! sailing o'er its fringe of silvery light,
Then lost upon the darkness from my view,
An eagle's form I see. The bird, the cloud
Approach with even speed. A midnight frowns.
The eagle comes, on sweeping pinion borne,
Cleaving with his broad breast the stormy air.
How roll the thunders when the lightnings leap!
Ah! shot by Jove himself, a bolt of fire
Darts to his shrieking bird, and strikes him dead;
He falls, and with him fall thy fortunes, Rome!
Broad opens now the vision to my view;
War, Darkness, Havoc blast my blinded sight.

SCENE II. — *The Roman Forum. Varro, Lucius, and Titanius robed as Judges: Afranius and Zala as Accused: Julius as Prosecutor.*

VARRO.

ARE the prisoners prepared?

AFRANIUS.

Yea, my lords!

VARRO.

Let these shouts be hush'd. Justice must not lift
Her beam amid such tempests.

Afranius,

You know the charge.

AFRANIUS.

I stand here to meet it.

VARRO.

Romans may expect impartial justice.

AFRANIUS.

My sole defense is in the deed.

VARRO.

Julius,

Now appear! Proclaim your accusation!

JULIUS.

I charge he broke his oath.

VARRO.

Produce the proofs.

JULIUS.

Hear me, my lords! I give what you demand.
That night of massacre I sought this girl;
Seeing me, shriekingly, she ran away,
And I with dagger drawn, enrag'd, pursued.
She flew along the hall; from room to room
Sped like the lightning; till, urged by fate,
She saw Afranius o'er her father's corpse,
And screamed for help. I cried, "Thy oath! thy oath!"
He hurl'd me down. He bore the girl away.
He made his refuge near Apollo's shrine,
As all these Romans know. I therefore ask
That he shall keep his oath, or else shall die.
If he refuse, that I may kill this Goth.

VARRO.

Justice, not passion should direct thy acts.

JULIUS.

I am not here for law, but vengeance.
This maddens in my veins. *This* burns my brain,
Consuming Reason on her funeral pyre.
Conscience has died, and Love, and Hope, and Joy;
While Hell seems blazing in this demon-breast.
I have been disfigured, stung by a blow,
Mock'd, scorn'd, ridicul'd, exiled when with men.
Brand me as mad! I quench these flames in blood.

VARRO.

Afranius, speak in answer to this charge!

AFRANIUS.

My lords! he owns that malice brought him here,
 Nor hides his hate beneath the forms of law,
 But gives it hideous to the day's broad glare.
 I broke my oath, and glory in the deed;
 Since gain'd its end, its binding force was gone,
 And then to kill would mark with murder's stain.

VARRO.

Admit not aught which may imperil life!

AFRANIUS.

I claim to be a sacrifice for Rome;
 But why condemn this girl? Her death decreed
 Will not advance the state, — nay, will disgrace.
 To take her life is crime. Despoil'd of all,
 She cries through me to save from yon mad wretch
 Whose nostril now dilates with smell of blood.
 There is a bourne whose golden line, by Heav'n
 Inscribed, should stay the Law's rash trespasses;
 'Tis Charity. Besides our state is not yet firm.
 The Northman's fire will blaze on all these hills;
 His war-cries peal along our sleeping vales;
 And from his snows will vengeance rush on Rome.
 Incense him not with blood! Brave not your doom!
 We wait your judgment.

[*Judges consult.*]

VARRO.

Our duty painful.
 Afranius has confess'd he broke his oath,

And hence compels us to pronounce his death.
 Yet he may kill the girl, and thus escape.
 The blood of Rome's oppressors leaves no stain.

AFRANIUS.

My lords, you mock. Pois'd on life's verge I stand.
 Will you insult me here? Am I a thief
 Chain'd in the stocks, round whom the rabble yell?
 Am I a vile poltroon whose honor sits
 Loose on him as his robe? Am I a wretch
 Used to betray my manhood for my breath?
 What! pierce the heart I love to save my life!
 Strange that Rome's judges hint a thing so base.

VARRO.

Afranius, we have bent the rigidity
 Of law in thy behalf. Mercy refused,
 Justice must grasp her sword. Ye both shall die.

AFRANIUS.

My lords, this heart loves Rome. I, when a boy,
 By contemplation in the evening led,
 Have climb'd the ruins of yon Capitol,
 To view her heroes from cold marble glance
 Anguish at her disgrace. Their stony lips
 Would seem to breathe in sighs, and shame's own
 tears
 Drop o'er their cheeks; while waving in the moon,
 To mourning winds the ivy told her fate;
 And spirits of the past, in midnight aisles,
 Groan'd to the stars their grief, that crownless Rome
 Should feel despair eternal at her heart.
 Oft through the future's darkness rose to view,

Like some spired city o'er a dusky plain,
 Resplendent visions of her glory gain'd.
 When I embraced the Cross, Hope saw her shine
 Bright with salvation, Empress of a world.
 Shall I, a Christian, gain her power with blood?
 My path was night — my soul grew weak with doubts.
 The truth now shines, alas, to gild my grave.
 Man may fight to free the assaulted State;
 The Church, Jehovah's hand alone defends.
 To spread the reign, I broke the law of Christ;
 And as he said, the sword I seized is death.
 Prayer, not war: Faith, not arms: the Cross of Love
 And not the torch of Hate, must save our world.
 But Zala now believes — with her I pass
 The opening portals of eternal joy.

ZALA (*tearing away her veil*).

Afranius, thou must live!

AFRANIUS.

Upon yon cloud
 I see an angel beckon to the skies.

ZALA (*rushing to the Judges*).

Ye judges, and ye men of Rome, O hear!
 Make me the victim which your rage demands!
 Mar not that form! Let not your axe distain
 That brow which laurel'd Victory should bind.

VARRO.

Lictors, proceed! Lead the condemn'd away!

ZALA (*kneeling to Afranius*).

'Tis I have call'd this stroke upon thy head:

O then on me let now the blow descend!
 Death from thy hand is life — it saves thy life,
 And thou art life to me. The state ordains
 The deed — commanded thus it is no crime.
 Break now the tie which binds to suffering earth!
 Bathed in eternal light we soon will tread
 The flowery windings of celestial groves,
 Stroll near bright golden streams, beneath the tree
 Of Life breathe Heav'n's own air, behold the Christ
 Majestic on his throne, then wing our way
 From star to star, filling the worlds with praise.

[Enter Sibyl.]

SIBYL.

Make room! make room, and hear the gracious gods!

VARRO.

Sibyl! your air, your tone, your streaming locks
 And eyes of flame, what message tell from Heav'n?

SIBYL.

My age and name are proofs of what I say.
 Julius, thy mother on her dying couch
 This parchment gave; and till the gods should speak,
 She made me swear to never break the seal.
 Just now within the temple of great Jove
 I heard a voice in awful thunder say,
 "Fly to the judges, fly, and give the scroll;"
 Then silence settled in the solemn court.

[Judges taking the scroll, read.]

JUDGES.

This is an interference from the gods.

CITIZENS.

The scroll, the scroll! what says the scroll? the scroll!

VARRO.

An infant of the king, a girl, expired;
 Unknown, the queen took Zala from the breast
 Which Julius bore, as her adopted child.
 She is a Roman thus. Our oath but bound
 Against the Goth. The accused are free.

JULIUS.

This is a shallow lie to spoil my vengeance.
 Revoke your judgment! Else, look to yourselves.

[Afranius and Zala embrace.]

O hated sight! O sharper than hell's pangs!
 Worse than the tooth of Cerberus that kiss!
 I'll kill him, if I toss on waves of fire;
 I dare the worm; I dare th' eternal flame;
 I dare the stain of blood which blasts forever;
 Chains, tortures, death I choose for vengeance.

[Julius, rushing at Afranius, stabs him.]

AFRANIUS.

He reach'd my heart! O fatal stab, that robs
 Me of my bliss, and Rome of me! A film
 Steals o'er my eye. The earth swims round and round.
 Zala, thy face is like the star of eve,
 Gilding the twilight of my waning life.
 Night gathers fast. Now darkness hides the sun.
 Yet Jesus shines immortal through the gloom,
 Streaming his glory o'er a conquer'd tomb.

[Afranius dies, while Zala, falling on his body, expires.]

SIBYL.

Ye gods which sway the destinies of Rome,
 But let him live till Day withdraws his face,
 And gracious Night shall veil the mountain top,
 Showing the star which trembles with Rome's fate.
 The bolt which scathed Jove's bird was prophecy.
 Hope made me blind. Ah! lost, forever lost!

VARRO.

This is a foul affront upon the law.
 Seize the murderer!

JULIUS.

Hands off, ye men of Rome!
 I vindicate myself with this keen steel.

SIBYL.

Cease, demon, cease! the gods shall blast your brow;
 I, their own minister, pronounce thy doom.
 Seize, citizens, seize him — put him to death.

JULIUS.

Sibyl, I will cheat you, and cheat the gods.
 Ha! ye are duped — my vengeance is secure.

[Julius stabs himself, and dies.]

SIBYL.

The voice was heard through Jove's majestic aisles,
 That I might snatch these from a felon's death,
 To make their urn immortal with their dust,
 And give to Fame their names, like beaming stars,

Where I divined the freedom of our Rome.
Now she must stand a spectre 'mid 'Time's gloom
To fright the earth in its career of crime,
Or empires lure along the path of death
By the false glitter on her ghostly brow.

THE IDUMEAN.

ACT I.

SCENE I. — *A Balcony of a Palace in Jerusalem.*

GLAPHYRA.

WHAT has changed thee thus, Aristobulus?
Thy words no more flash fire. Like evening's cloud
Thy brow is imaging tranquillity.

ALEXANDER.

Our father's love has never charm'd thy tongue,
And hush'd the storms awaked by years of injury.

ELIA.

Nay! Herod is incapable of love;
I grieve my veins should hold his kindred blood.
Thy wrath should burn.

ARISTOBULUS.

Is not a son's forgiveness
Of a parent's wrong most manly virtue?

GLAPHYRA.

Nay! Aristobulus, base submission
Must provoke contempt, and ruin prove.

ELIA.

There proudly spoke the daughter of a king.
 Woman in the other sex scorns softness ;
 And I, thy wife, thy father's niece, affirm
 That Herod's cruelties dissolve in blood
 All filial ties. Manhood demands revenge.

ALEXANDER.

Brother, tell thy secret. Why this strange change ?

ARISTOBULUS.

That night a shadow pass'd o'er the young moon,
 Earth veiling in a spectral gloom, I dream'd
 I stood near Panium's cave whence Jordan flows.
 Where rocks hung piled on rocks precipitous,
 With marble columns pale in night's dim beams,
 The temple rose in beautiful proportion.
 The calm, invisible waters sent from
 The chasm's depth a golden cloud of mist,
 In which appear'd Hyrcanus, crown'd and robed,
 With venerable locks, high on a throne,
 Expressing a most kingly dignity.
 Slowly he said, "Obey the Law, nor seek
 Thy father's life?"

ALEXANDER.

Why didst thou not invoke
 The spirit of our ancestor? Appear'd
 No wound upon the royal priest struck down
 By Herod's fear?

ARISTOBULUS.

A single murderous spot
 Was on his breast. But soon by angel hands

I thought myself conveyed to Cæsarea
 On a swift-flashing star-beam. Midnight winds
 White-crested billows dash'd 'mid clouds and thunder.
 Then suddenly a calm breathed o'er the sea ;
 A youth, my uncle, Aristobulus,
 Whose name I bear, in dress pontifical,
 Mitred as when he at the altar stood,
 Moving to tears by his meek boy's beauty,
 Rose from the wave, in a bright halo sphered,
 And smiling said, "Forgive Antipater,
 Nor let fraternal blood pollute thy soul!"

GLAPHYRA.

O that these ghosts would shriek in Herod's ear
 To show him murder's guilt!

ARISTOBULUS.

I have not done.

A third dream came. Above the temple hung
 A wreath of smoke, through which were seen dim
 stars.

It soon seem'd a woman. In perfect grace
 Then wafted from the skies, Mariamne,
 Floating across the moon, on yon high dome
 Stood like an angel — her beauty matchless —
 Celestial glory shrined in mortal form ;
 With love that breathed in face and voice she said,
 "My son, come to me in eternal light ;"
 Then through a pure, white cloud pass'd into Heav'n.

ALEXANDER.

Eternity unbarr'd her gates, and sent
 These shades. Here was proclaim'd the Law

Once thundered terrible from Sinai's top.
 Obedience now is death instead of life.
 Standing in gloom, a spectre on our path,
 Behold Antipater — his malice deadly!
 Hate must contend with hate, and will with will,
 Else we are victims garlanded for slaughter.

ARISTOBULUS.

After the dream, with penitential tears,
 Searching in prayer our holy oracles,
 I offered sacrifice. The priest Hilkiah,
 Friend to Hyrcanus once, the victim slew;
 His white, grand locks ting'd in the altar-flame
 Shone a crown of glory. In evening's glow
 The golden smoke curl'd gracefully to heav'n.
 Bent silently, I vow'd to keep the Law,
 When, still as twilight's hush, peace sought my heart.

ELIA.

This seals thy doom. Walking at morn beneath
 The oleander's bloom, I Jordan watch'd
 Murmuring along its banks, while in its depths
 Vast purple clouds sail'd o'er the imaged skies.
 Crushing the grass and flowers, two sinewy men
 In deadly clutch roll'd struggling down the steep,
 Each bent to drown the other in the wave;
 Now this above, now that — frantically strong, —
 A silent strife for life. The waters boil
 And foam, spreading their circles wide around.
 At last the weaker wretch convulsive sinks
 With gurgling noise, and turns his blacken'd face
 Upward in its dark, hateful hideousness.
 The victor climbs the bank, and mounts his steed,

Swift as a vision spurring o'er the vale.
Antipater and thou must thus contend;
One pause is death, inevitable death.

ARISTOBULUS.

Nay, I prefer eternal truth to life.

ALEXANDER.

Weak is my faltering will, yet I perceive
The majesty of right. Help, my brother,
With thy stronger soul! You, like Carmel, stand
Lofty and grand above the tossing sea,
While I, a wave, am torn and dash'd by tempests.

GLAPHYRA.

Ye both are lingering on a precipice.
I know Antipater — his toils, his power,
His murderous hate. In this your innocence,
Ye seem unarm'd, with your strong foe in steel.
O let us fly to Cos, my father's isle,
Sacred to Esculapius, whose temple stands
High on a cliff, with altars blazing o'er
The distant waves! There smile our palaces
Beneath bright skies, where breezes kiss the flowers,
And with their fragrance load the murmuring air.
Floating in forms of grace, the gods of Greece
People the world with beauty's images,
And breathe elysian dreams of hope and joy,
While here, your Laws seem dark as Horeb looks,
Lifting his rocks in solitary gloom.

ARISTOBULUS.

Here I remain, and trust myself to Heav'n.

Hark, from the sacred porch the silver trumpets !
While Israel bows in prayer, let us too kneel,
Imploring light and strength !

[All kneel for a short space, and then arise together.]

How still the scene !

The Pentecostal crowd up hither sends
But a faint murmur. On each hill around
Jerusalem, white tents gleam in the sun,
Whose lingering ray touches the Temple's dome.
Bright, like the just in death, that circling pile
Burns with heav'n's last light, a matchless glory.
Jordan winds along the plain in silver.
Even the Dead Sea shines beneath the orb of life,
A glimmering radiance. The evening lamb,
From earth aloft the acceptable smoke
Inwreathing sends, our reconciliation.
Returning herds move slowly o'er the vale,
Where scarce a low disturbs the Sabbath scene.
Beams from that western cloud night's earliest star,
Like Hope's first trembling in a mortal breast,
And Nature hush'd breathes deep tranquillity.
If vow'd to Truth, and Faith, and Love we stand,
Her peace will then be ours, divine, eternal.

ACT II.

SCENE I. — *Palace in Petra. A Vale spreads below,
encircled by Mountains.*

ANTIPATER (*alone*).

THESE scenes the same! Yon cascade leaping o'er
Its fragmentary rocks to whirl in mist,
Or glitter through the verdant valley's bloom,
Those mountain-walls ting'd with the purple day,
And their sky-color'd hues delicate as flowers;
These sculptured tombs, and temples hewn from hills,
Are all unchang'd. Grim Hor, 'mid parted peaks,
Still stands on heav'n's blue, a monarch sentinel.
I have return'd, made hard as yon façade
Lifting its stony front against the storm.
Memory shall not melt me back to youth;
Nay! 'mid this gloom of rocks must I create
An empire. Swept from my path, Hyrcanus!
Aristobulus gone! Mariamne's ghost
Hovering round Herod's head, whose shrieks express
A frantic passion for his murder'd wife!
My puppet parent is my bloody tool;
The odium his, and mine the rich reward.
I am recall'd, and Doris shall return.
Beware, ye puny sons, this burning hate!
Your taunts, like poison-seeds, shall flower with death,
Shall pierce like swords, shall blast like serpent-stings.
Ye sickly satellites, when set in blood

Your sun shall soon expire. This brow shall wear
 Judea's crown. Nor as a vassal king
 Will I pay Rome my gold, impoverish'd
 To feed imperial pride. I have resolv'd
 Th' orient shall rise a Babylon,
 Illustrious with her ancient diadem,
 And Asia shine the glory of the world.

[Enter Doris.

Ha! mother, thou? Thine hour and mine arrives;
 Proudly we shall wear its blushing triumphs.

DORIS.

I tremble, son, to see thy height of pride.

ANTIPATER.

I know bold climbers only are secure.

DORIS.

Once, when a girl, I saw majestic Hor,
 Where shatter'd from his side, a naked rock
 Rose into heav'n. Alexis, a fair youth,
 Would climb the steep. Stepping from ledge to ledge
 With marvelous agility, he stands
 'Mid clouds, balanc'd on the airy pinnacle;
 Till, by a sudden wind hurl'd toppling off,
 He falls with shrieks, dashing from rock to rock,
 A mangled ruin, down the chasm infinite.
 Beware, Antipater, beware his fate!

ANTIPATER.

Dost thou remember what years since I was?

DORIS.

Thy youth seem'd dreamy, pure, and innocent.

ANTIPATER.

Transferr'd from Petra to Jerusalem,
 My birth was taunted, and my ignorance ;
 My race was scorn'd by proud upstart brothers,
 Boasting royal blood, in natural gifts
 Inferiors. Ages of gathered hate
 Burn'd centr'd in my breast. Idumean,
 Thus, and Jew were brought in fierce fatal strife
 Beneath one father's roof. Hate kindled rage.
 I lost my peace, my trust in God, and man :
 And then thy exile from my father's breast,
 Where lay the mother of these haughty sons !
 Each hour was added wrong and misery,
 Until my heart turned stony as yon hill —
 A ghastly sepulture of buried hopes.

DORIS.

Antipater, thy words recall my past.
 Here first Herod wooed me. Here I admired
 His manly majesty. Here I became
 His wife and worshipper. That stately house
 With brilliance flashing, saw our marriage rites,
 And round these rocks sent sounds of festive joy.
 He bore me to Jerusalem, his queen,
 'Mid splendid pomps, and bound about my brow
 A crown, and throned me at his side. Alas !
 Mariamne's birth and beauty proved my bane.
 Infuriate Pride and Envy waste the bloom,
 When a proud rival gains the smiles once ours.
 Her love, my love displaced, her son, my son,

Her presence, mine, till life made widow'd, found
A refuge 'mid our Petra's solitudes.

ANTIPATER.

I promise, Doris, thou shalt be restored.
Amid these mountains I have sway'd Judea.
There Eurycles has stirr'd perpetual strife ;
The palace hisses now a viper's nest ;
Jerusalem is bursting into flames ;
Wild rumors scare like tombs, by midnight mists
Half-hid beneath the moon, in their strange, dim
Uncertainties, while murmuring voices wake
Dark images of dread, till Herod's life
Is one great torturing fear, and I, here,
His unknown tormentor. His sons murder'd
By himself, to his throne my path shall clear :
Then to an Asian crown *one* obstacle.

DORIS.

Antipater, you chill my lingering blood.

ANTIPATER.

This world without a God, I now believe
Encircles all my being's hope, and hence
True liberty. Fearless, I brush away
These human insects glittering on my path.
Behold our victory! I see a speck
Move o'er yon mountain-top. Swift it takes form :
With neck of thunder dashes to the vale,
A rushing steed. Nearer I catch the glare
Of his protuberant eye ; deep in his side,
The rider's heel brings blood ; resounds the lash ;
One soul in horse and man breathes one fiery

Energy ; rings his hoof on Petra's stones,
Awakening hopes of crowns, and thrones, and glory ;
Steaming at our door the steed stands quivering,
Then falls in agony to gasp away
Exhausted life. Hail, trusty messenger !
Here, Doris, thy recall, and victory !

SCENE II. — *The Tombs near Petra.*

SONG OF SPIRITS.

SAY, spirits, say, is this our doom,
To linger 'mid the mountain gloom,
And lonely watch in hall and tomb?
Away! away!

What crimes beneath sepulchral stones!
What spots of blood on skulls and bones
What agony in guilt's hoarse groans!
Away! away!

Here ghastly, parricidal kings;
Here flesh-worms creep, and loathsome things;
Here Death enthroned, his shadow flings —
Away! away!

Where cloud-mists curl, now let us go!
Mount in the flame, drop on the snow,
Or breathe the scents where roses blow —
Away! away!

Come, we will skim the ocean wave,
Or glide within the coral cave,
To hear above wild tempests rave —
Away! away!

The morrow's dawn will blush too soon ;
 Haste! start before the midnight noon ;
 On silver beam fly to the moon —
 Away! away!

From star to star we love to roam,
 On lightnings ride round Heav'n's high dome,
 And feel the universe our home —
 Away! away!

*[Antipater appears amid the rocks, ascending the mountain,
 while a storm begins to gather.]*

ANTIPATER (*alone*).

Did I hear voices? 'Tis the rising storm,
 Whose first murmurs come in sweet, wild music,
 Till spirits seem to sing in halls aërial.
 Here sleep the sons of ages — king and slave.
 Did eyes of beauty from these ghastly skulls
 Flash fires of love? And have these fingers grasp'd
 The sceptre's gold, swaying populous empires?
 How grim the skeleton in its decay!
 Is this man's end? Why toil I, then, through blood,
 Hoping to bind a perishable crown
 Upon a brow round which shall crawl the worm?
 Does Passion, or blind Destiny direct
 My life, which seems 'mid solitary rocks,
 A path of gloom upwinding to a tomb?
 No star with eye of gold beams through the storm.
 I see a glimmering lamp. There Eurycles
 Courts death in this, his desolate domain.
 He hears my step. Peering, I see his face,
 Encrimson'd in the flame, look from a tomb.

EURYCLES.

Hold! who goes there?

ANTIPATER.

'Tis I — Antipater.

EURYCLES.

Enter my den.

ANTIPATER.

Is this, then, Eurycles,
 Begrimm'd with dust and smoke; this he indeed,
 The curl'd and jewel'd courtier who smiles
 To princes oft in fragrant palaces?

EURYCLES.

Am I not *sooted* in my employment?

ANTIPATER.

Fitting thy hue as black the raven's wing
 Which shadows fields of death. What led thee first
 To study poisons?

EURYCLES.

My history hear!

My childhood saw Minerva flash her spear
 On the Acropolis, while, bright below,
 The Agora's sculptured forms seem'd Heav'n's beauty
 Breath'd through radiant marble. Streets, temples,
 groves,
 Teem'd with immortal shapes. 'Neath brilliant skies
 I drew inspiring airs; the sports of Greece

Nourish'd to manly symmetry my frame,
 Till youth pass'd a glorified existence.
 But made Apollo's priest my visions fade ;
 I saw the ministers of Heav'n bribed by earth ;
 I saw Pythoness from her tripod reel
 To jeer the dupes who piled her glittering gifts,
 And show corrupt the oracles of empires ;
 I saw beneath the image of the sun,
 In his own temple, basest prostitution ;
 'Mid Egypt's mystic rites and monuments,
 The same abominations I beheld ;
 Till I, unanchor'd, floated with the stream
 Polluting earth, at first with pangs and fear,
 But finally with wild, delirious joy.
 My trust, my dreams of immortality
 Vanish'd. Of the divinity bereft,
 Man's shrunken life seem'd valueless and mean ;
 And I, within the pyramids, long search'd
 The easiest ways that lead to non-existence,
 Esteeming this the true philanthropy.

ANTIPATER.

Ay, and philosophy, my Eurycles !
 Behold man's liberty ! But he is free,
 Who blots from Heav'n its bright, annoying Eye
 Which blazes o'er the universe, and hurls
 Omnipotence to night and nothingness,
 Refusing praise, and tiresome gratitude,
 And forced obedience sinking men to slaves.

EURYCLEES.

God and Hereafter gone, life is devoid
 Of mystery. Is childhood troublesome ?

Snatch the sweet flower from the cold winter storms.
 Or is age querulous? The hoary head
 May find a speedy pillow in the grave.
 Or scolds your wife? A drop will soothe her tongue.
 Here groans the wretch who owns the glittering gold,
 Which earth would make a joy. A pellet gives
 Him ease, us useful wealth. A dagger's point
 Removes an empire's care, quiets the brow
 Which throbs beneath a crown, a tyrant slays,
 And thrones a king. The secret, thus, of life
 Is a calm way to death and nothingness.

ANTIPATER.

But, Eurycles, what has repaid thy search?

EURYCLES.

These vials see — their substance purest gold
 Closed by a diamond; this, mark'd Herod,
 And that, Antipater! The crystal drop,
 Brighter than Hermon's dew, which sleeps in each,
 Has cost long years of toil. Flowers from all plants,
 Leaves from all trees, roots from all vales and hills,
 Gather'd 'mid winter snows and blazing heats,
 Express'd, congeal'd, distill'd with chemic art
 Beneath day's glare, and the pale, waning moon,
 In their proportions, mingle strangely here,
 The sublimated essence of a world.
This charms man's life away in peaceful dreams;
 While *that*, with keen and fatal torture kills.

ANTIPATER.

But what proofs have you of their potency?

EURYCLES.

All kinds of birds and beasts from this wide globe
Have felt their spell. One shining drop has seal'd
The lion's thundering jaws, th' elephant laid quivering,
Nay! th' Egyptian river-horse, whose scaly pride
Laughs at the warrior's spear, brought gasping down
With wild terrific pangs. In the pyramids
I saw a slave, touch'd on his Ethiop lip,
Fall instantly, his head upon his hand,
Petrified, as if in sleep, to marble ;
While, manacled, his fellow, staggering, dropp'd
Before this vial's power, writhed on the floor
In matchless agony, and through the night
Of those vast tombs sent his unearthly shrieks.

ANTIPATER (*taking the vials*).

I place these, Eurycles, upon my breast ;
Thy furnace-flame will aid to spell their names.
Within *this* small circumference of gold,
A crown, a throne, a wide Asian empire,
A nation's destiny, eternal fame,
A reign to shine in splendor o'er a world ;
Or should the Fates decree that Herod live,
In *this*, my grave — extinction coveted
'Mid the calm realms of everlasting gloom.

ACT III.

SCENE I. — *A Palace in Jerusalem.*

HEROD (*alone*).

O MARIAMNE, my Mariamne!
Men call me Great! They see a dauntless brow
Beneath a crown, and a majestic look
That suits a conquering king who earn'd his throne
By his own enterprise, and deem me happy.
Alas! when in the battle's dust I ride,
With flashing sword, to victory; and when
The people wave aloft their palms, shaking
Our column'd city with triumphal joy;
And, diadem'd, I dazzle like a sun,
An image gazes through the splendor's blaze
With an immortal eye; sits, when I sit,
Arises, when I rise, when I walk, walks,
Stops, when I stop, forever at my side,
And in mine eye a still reproving spectre.
Night's last dim wakefulness beholds it stand
On sleep's vague confines. Starting from my dreams,
A mute, pale loveliness the phantom glides,
And in the morning, robed with purple light,
Smiles mournfully. There — there! I see it there!
Speak, Mariamne! Speak, O speak to me!
Thy silence kills me, wastes away my flesh,
And breaks my heart. Stung by love's jealousy,

My passion made thee die, but my own life
 Flow'd in thy blood. The beauty I adored,
 I frantic marr'd; sent to the grave my joy;
 Entomb'd my Heav'n in this dark, gaping earth;
 Each drop of thine burns a perpetual fire,
 Scorching my soul. Forgive me, Mariamne!
 A word — a word! thy stillness tortures me.

[Enter Hilkiah.

Priest of Jehovah, give, O give me peace!

HILKIAH.

Herod! eternal law is over kings,
 The angel rules and sways a universe;
 Nay, Jehovah's throne stands on his justice;
 Then that removed, the Deity would fall,
 And chaos reign in wild, outrageous gloom.

HEROD.

O Hilkiah, I have made cities rise
 From blazing sands, as visions beautiful
 On youth's bright skies; I have enchain'd the sea
 Where tempests lash'd, forcing his waves to sleep
 In prisoning walls beneath flag-floating ships;
 I too have laid before all gods victims
 Innumerable, whose smoke hung over earth
 Might hide a sun. Behold Art's boast, lifting
 Into the mingling skies its blaze of gold,
 Jehovah's dwelling, glorious from my hand!
 My labors, gifts, are vain; my heart yet groans
 In ceaseless misery.

HILKIAH.

The universe

Thy temple made, and thy priests archangels,
 Not Heaven's Eternal King in sacrifice
 Could buy thy peace without thy penitence.
 O'er guilt must flash the thunderbolt. Yet, mark!
 One honest tear dropp'd down o'er Sorrow's cheek
 Has quench'd a hell. Here, small and great alike
 Must bow before the Sovereign Majesty.

HEROD.

Why then your rites, your gorgeous mitred priests,
 Your burning beasts, behind the mystic veil
 Your mercy-seat, and God-enshrining light,
 Your solemn music, bursting to the skies
 With rival melodies, your prayers, your feasts,
 From age to age this vast magnificence
 Supplied to you by kings, if royal gold
 Cannot exalt the monarch o'er his slave?

HILKIAH.

Herod! the soul's eye is sincerity,
 Beneath whose glance the path of life grows plain,
 And, like a day-beam dimm'd by mists of earth,
 Will brighten as we near the fountain-orb;
 Yet as an obolus may hide a sun,
 One smallest falsity obscures the truth;
 That vail'd, the world is gloom. Not thy reason,
 But thy *right-doing* lifts the cloud from life;
 For slave or king, to see, and own our sin,
 Are the first rounds in that high ladder's length,
 Which leans on Heav'n. When at the altar stands
 Meek Penitence, soon Faith, with beaming eye,
 Will see above the smoke Jehovah smile.

HEROD.

Thy words seem just and right — for princes, hard.

HILKIAH.

On Olivet I saw ripe trellis'd grapes,
Whose luscious clusters, mantled round with leaves,
Hung purpling in the sun. Their glowing skins
Bursting with juice fit to be sipp'd by kings,
Contain'd the living of an humble Jew,
Whose wife sleeps on the hill. Passing, I saw
Beneath an olive's shade, on rustic bench
About the door, the father and two boys, —
One dark-ey'd, sturdy, brown, and beautiful,
But most sullenly still; the other show'd
A rosy face and open brow, hung round
With floating curls which waved their graceful gold.
Shadowing o'er their mother's grave, a vine,
Bent with the loading burden of the year,
Display'd its grapes, crimson'd in evening's ray,
Invitingly to tempt the lip and hand;
Forbidden to the touch, it had been pluck'd.
Behind a towering palm, the father's eye
Had mark'd the pilfering lads. He charg'd the theft.
The first denied with low-lisp'd; murmuring words
And downcast look, which made the parent frown;
The younger boy blush'd, like the sky of morn,
From cheek to brow, yet, with a lifted head
And steady voice, and a frank, manly air, —
In his blue eye a trembling tear, — confess'd.
At once with an instinctive love the child
Was press'd to the paternal heart, and shower'd
With glistening drops. And thus the honest
Which owns its guilt with penitential grief,

Potent, will melt the Majesty of Heav'n,
And from the Book of Life erase a blot.

HEROD.

Servant of God, thy boldness I admire,
Who yet could crush thee with a kingdom's might.
Men, smiling at his flatteries, yet scorn
The glozing priest, whose love of gold, or praise,
Or place, would hide from view the truth they need.
Now near the grave, my throne at last secure,
I own I mourn my past; nay, oft resolve
To live for Heav'n. For action impotent,
Yet Age with passions burns, while Habit stands
Grasping his chains to fetter struggling souls,
Till we seem bound to wrong, when choosing right.

HILKIAH.

Herod, there is a time, when in the scale,
Pois'd, tremble Death and Life. Eternity
On a moment quivering, balanc'd, turns;
Like a torrent down the rocks of Lebanon,
With rush and roar, then wild Temptation sweeps,
Whose fatal rage Omnipotence must stop.
'Tis thus now with thee. Behold Antipater!

[Hilkiah exit. Enter Antipater]

ANTIPATER.

Ha! sire, was that a priest? It is whisper'd
Thou and thy sons have been affecting piety.
Had we not better leave it to the women?

HEROD.

Stop! stop, Antipater! Report thyself!

Had your brothers last night a council?
What has transpired? Tell your discoveries.

ANTIPATER.

Sire, well thou know'st how I abhor the spy,
Who lurks, pursues, and notes men's looks and words,
Selling his heart for gold, and winds, a snake,
In darkness darting his envenom'd fang.

HEROD.

Duty to me, imperil'd by these sons,
Hallows thy acts, as the malarious mists
Shine bright and glorified in morning's sun.

ANTIPATER.

How painful is my task! Yet Right must speak.

HEROD.

Judea's crown rewards thy filial loyalty.

ANTIPATER.

Sire, I pity thee, since I must relate
What shows in those most loved, infinity
Of baseness.

HEROD.

I will hear, and must endure.

ANTIPATER.

Last night, my brothers met where Eurycles,
In secret, heard their treasonous plots against
Thy crown and life. The people, sects, and priests

Will be arous'd by artful pretexts drawn
 From Grecian spectacles, and rites design'd
 By thee to mitigate Judea's gloom,
 While thy submission to the Roman power
 And tributes will be urged to swell the storm.
 The legions on the hill will be assail'd ;
 Thy eagle, grasping on the temple wall
 His glittering lightnings, will be hurl'd to fragments ;
 Our race will be reviled and extirpated ;
 Then, freed from Roman vassalage, will rise
 An Asmonean king with splendid crown.

HEROD.

This my reward ! I have caress'd these sons,
 Striving by love to blot away my crime
 To Mariamne. Their palaces obscure
 My own ; the wealth of teeming cities, piled
 In heaps of gold, supplies their revenues ;
 They lie on couches brighter than their dreams,
 Breathing but airs of melody and fragrance ;
 Yet have they met my kindness with fierce scorn,
 Inheriting that hatred of our race
 Which in Mariamne blasted all life's joy.
 Jerusalem is fill'd with strifes, the land
 Inflam'd, and they would overturn my throne
 To build an Asmonean dynasty.
 Yes, they must die !

ANTIPATER.

O I beseech thee, sire,
 Stain not again thine hand with thine own blood !

HEROD.

It is the everlasting war of races —

Here waged between a father and his sons —
Jacob with Esau battling unto death.
That marriage curs'd where Heav'n's own hand has
 rais'd
High barriers of impassable mountains.
My love for Mariamne could not quench
A fatal flame, and now, in these her sons
Bursts forth the same resistless enmity.
Hilkiah, yes! th' inevitable hour
Has come. 'Tis Destiny. Vanish'd my vows!
An evil angel darkens with his wing,
Inflames my soul, and hurries me to fate.

SCENE II. — *Apartment of the Capitol of Rome. Augustus in his Purple on a Throne, with Herod on a lower Seat. Volumnius, Saturninus, and Pedanius, Officers from Judea, stand near the Emperor. Antipater, as Prosecutor, sits below his Father, while Aristobulus and Alexander appear as Criminals, Eurycles and Tero as Witnesses.*

AUGUSTUS.

IT is our wish that universal peace
Janus forever close. Thus shall Rome sway
Eternal empire. These domestic strifes
Are sparks which flame to desolating wars.

HEROD.

Cæsar, I think, dost own me for a friend,
Although first, Anthony bestow'd my crown.
To him I clung, till, snared by Egypt's queen,
He breathed his life away on her false breast.
I bow'd then at Rhodes before Rome's majesty ;
Thy conquering hand bound round this diadem,
While added provinces confirmed thy smiles.
Unrival'd tributes since have shown the world
And thee, Herod's fidelity.

AUGUSTUS.

'Tis true.

Populous cities lift, at thy command,
 Vast structures to the skies. Thy art subdues
 The billows of the sea, and decks the land.
 Jerusalem shines a marvel; while shaped
 From brass, my image stands at Cæsarea,
 Colossal o'er the waves — of Herod's love
 And loyalty, immortal monument.
 No king has pour'd such rich and golden stores
 Into our mighty reservoir of Rome.

HEROD.

Yet is this glory marr'd. Once, from a rock
 High o'er a precipice, where thundering streams
 Were whirling to the clouds their mists. I saw
 On a rude seat between the earth and heav'n,
 A soldier swung, and piling fagots round
 A robber's den, to smoke him from his crag.
 An agéd man, with wild, disorder'd locks,
 Glared in the flame, and drew son after son,
 Dragg'd by the hair, and hurl'd each, shrieking, down
 The deep, wild chasm. At last he grasp'd his wife,
 Screaming in fear, and with her, yelling, leap'd
 Sheer o'er the cliff, into the mad whirlpool.
 Alas! this seem'd prophetic of my life.

AUGUSTUS.

State more especially thy domestic griefs.

HEROD.

There, Cæsar, stand the sons of Mariamne;
 Here sits Antipater, my child by Doris;
 Long those I had design'd to share my crown,
 Giving to this some noble tetrarchy.

The first, the more they were enrich'd by gifts,
 Repaid the more my love with scorn and hate,
 Turning my kingdom to a blazing hell;
 The last, by reverence and by filial care,
 Has won a title to Judea's throne;
 And hence his brothers plot his death and mine.

AUGUSTUS.

Antipater, arise! declare the truth!

ANTIPATER.

Cæsar, how can I speak? My brothers, these!
 We on Judea's hills have play'd when boys,
 Growing there like Lebanon's young cedars,
 Whose intertwining boughs wave over heav'n.
 My father, this! my great benefactor,
 Who me has named heir to his wealth and crown.
 O cruel Fate, to force me here this day;
 But Duty bids; her voice must sway our lives.
 Tell, Eurycles, tell what thou dost know.

AUGUSTUS.

Grecian, proceed! Hangs on thy single word
 These royal lives, and a wide kingdom's peace.
 Before yon eagle, symbol of our Rome,
 Flashing imperial lightnings from his beak,
 Tremble to let a lie drop from thy lip!

EURYCLES.

Majestic Cæsar knows Judea's state.
 Deep within the temple of Jerusalem
 Convenes the Nation's court, compos'd of men
 For wisdom and for age most venerable.

These fathers spurn an Idumean king
 From Esau sprung, and hate the Roman yoke.
 Noting these facts, disguis'd, I heard their plans
 To stir the flame of universal war,
 That from the wreck of Idumean rule
 And Roman power, an Asmonean throne
 Should tower to heav'n. There, shaping these dark
 schemes,
 The soul of all, sat Mariamne's sons,
 Plotting their father's death, and Rome's expulsion.

ARISTOBULUS.

I here proclaim the charge a murderous lie.
 Let Tero speak!

AUGUSTUS.

Tero, beware! The rack,
 The serpent's fang, the agonizing blaze
 Of circling flames, the dungeon's chain and corpse —
 All Rome's worst tortures here ensure the truth.

TERO.

Cæsar, I am a soldier, blunt and plain.
 Once I stood guard at Petra. The full moon
 Had just gone down behind the mountain-top,
 Leaving bright stars to light the palace hall,
 When arm'd, the marble floor I silent paced.
 Upon my round low voices caught my ear;
 I, pausing, stoop'd, and saw in a recess
 Two whispering men, dimly, but yet well known —
 One, Antipater, th' other, Eurycles.
 I heard their words. Within an ancient tomb
 The latter had prepared a deadly poison,

With which the former should his father kill,
 Then mount his throne, and these, his brothers, slay,
 Expel the Roman from the Asian soil,
 And reign triumphant monarch of the East.

AUGUSTUS.

Ah! counterplots — agreed in hate to Rome.
 Herod, I dislike these family jars.

HEROD.

Such strifes have flung a poison in my cup
 More baneful than all drugs, till I could dash
 Away my life, and pray for nothingness.

AUGUSTUS.

Speak now, Antipater; defend thyself!

ANTIPATER.

Must I, imperial Cæsar, must I meet
 A charge of parricide? I rev'rence age.
 That silver waving o'er my father's head,
 Better protects than shields of brass above
 Mail'd warriors strong as was Hercules.
 Herod I have watch'd with fond, filial love,
 Ever his secret wish anticipating.
 Before the carol of a morning bird,
 His pillow saw me get the day's command;
 I kissing him, when Night her curtain drew
 Around the world, inviting it to sleep.
 A low soldier's word must not affect a Prince,
 Annulling years of dutiful affection.
 I, Herod's heir, rich in his wealth and smile,

Would never peril fortune, fame, and life,
When the inevitable decay of age
Prepares Power's glittering circle for my brow;
While my brothers, boasting their Jewish blood,
And claiming Israel's throne — hating my race —
Their brilliant hopes extinct to favor me,
To vengeance kindled by their shrieking slain,
Predestined seem to mine and Herod's death.

AUGUSTUS.

Aristobulus, rise! o'er all but slaves
Maternal Rome suspends her shield of law.

ARISTOBULUS.

Cæsar, I know, we, Mariamne's sons
Idolized our mother's race and beauty.
She, with an angel-smile and grace, grasping
Our hands, would lead us to Hyrcanus,
Most kingly type of venerable age,
Around whose feet we play'd, while our uncle
Stood watching our gambols. That grandsire died
By violence; his noble son was drown'd;
Our mother slain; while, as some slippery snake
In stealthy folds ascends a mountain tree,
Glaring, with burning crest and venom'd fang,
Above an eagle's nest, Antipater
Round Herod coil'd, to reach Judea's crown.
Wild passions blazed; our threats were terrible;
Heaven interposed. To save from parricide,
In solemn dreams majestically came
The shades of our departed, seen and heard,
With seraph-mildness to impress God's law
As never could the flaming mountain's thunder.

The Deity breathed in us filial love,
 Making our hearts still as the blue of heaven.
 We'd rather die by beasts, bloody and torn
 In Herod's spectacles, than touch a hair
 Of that paternal head, save with a kiss.

[Alexander rising, both lift their right hands.]

Near this imperial throne which sways a world,
 Nay! in the eye of Him who sits in heaven
 Ruling the universe — Great Judge of all, —
 We swear the charge is false, and stand aloft
 Bright in the glory of our innocence.

AUGUSTUS.

I adjourn the trial to Berytus.
 At once let a commission be prepared,
 Stamp'd with the seal of our imperial Rome,
 Wherein I authorize Saturninus,
 With Volumnius and Pedanius, to try
 The case, endued with power of life and death,
 That they may settle thus Judea's throne.

ACT IV.

SCENE I. — *Interior of a Palace in Jerusalem.*

ARISTOBULUS.

ELIA, my heart has wept out from mine eyes
To see my brother torn from his Glaphyra.

ELIA.

O, has the blow suspended long then fall'n!
Must thou leave me too, Aristobulus?
As some poor wood-flower, nestled in the root
Of a majestic oak, when the strong tree
Lies shattered in the storm, is crush'd beneath
Each foot, so I upon the world behold
Myself a widow'd fragment.

ARISTOBULUS.

True, Elia,
Rome's judges bribed by gold pronounce our guilt;
Yet Hope still smiles, and we will now forget
Our lesser sorrow in a brother's woe.

ELIA.

Pardon my selfishness, what hast thou seen?

ARISTOBULUS.

Alexander with his Glaphyra sat
 Upon the housetop, 'mid their sons and daughters;
 Eve's gentle star just trembling o'er our hills
 Ne'er saw a lovelier scene of quiet joy.
 Suddenly, a soldier, bright in his arms,
 Not even doff'd his helm, beneath whose crest
 A leaping tiger glared with open jaws,
 Burst on the group. The children cower'd in fear;
 The faithful slaves sent to the skies a shriek;
 Swooning, Glaphyra fell down on the roof,
 While Alexander passed to his sad doom.

ELIA.

O, why does Heaven thus see the wrong prevail?
 Shall we too fall before Antipater?

ARISTOBULUS.

Suppose we fall! Trial ennobles love.
 Elia, we at the altar stood mere children.
 Nourish'd in palaces, pillow'd on down,
 In purple cloth'd, and gold, the air we breathed
 A fragrance to enervate, while beauty
 Fed the satiated eye, and music made
 Life but a festival, our existence
 Smiled a dream of wild voluptuous joy;
 Unknown the common griefs which fill a world,
 We bloom'd like groves wall'd from the winds of
 heaven,
 Whose prison'd blossoms yield but sickly scents
 And fragile hues, then drop off pale and fruitless.
 Unshaken by a storm the mountain tree

Will give the ship no beam to brave the billow.
 Our young love was true, but pettish and coy,
 A thing of whims and dreams, that color'd earth
 And sky with false, perishable brilliance;
 Smiling like Cupid when he sips the rose,
 Or chases boyishly the bird or bee
 Through grove and bloom, but flies the cloud and
 storm.

Suffering gives to Love immortal strength,
 And faith, and fortitude, forging the arms
 Which men and women need for life's stern duties.

ELIA.

I have felt it thus, Aristobulus;
 Peril, too, draws souls together closely.
 Yesterday I mused along a vineyard,
 Watching a twig placed in a vigorous stock
 And held by bandages. The rain and sun
 With time will make each part of the other,
 While the same juices swell to leaves and buds
 And purple grapes, both made forever one —
 An inseparable life, more fruitful
 And more beautiful. Thus where love first joins
 Will trial bring to an eternal union.
 These tempests house me in thy manly heart,
 Where I now feel each thrilling pulse's throb.
 Each is the other's complement; two souls
 Grown one, forming a complete existence
 Not by death dissevered — nay! carried on
 To an eternity of mingled joy.
 O here what peace! What rich, what golden light
 Over creation spreads, then marks its track
 Of glory bright o'er the great Hereafter!

ARISTOBULUS.

Behold the key to our mysterious state!
 If thus with human love, more with divine.
 This discipline of earth must fit for Heaven —
 Each sharp pang of time paid infinitely
 By everlasting oneness with the Deity.

[Enter a messenger with a paper, which Aristobulus reads.]

Here is our test; Elia, we separate.

ELIA.

O fatal stroke — stroke long foreseen and mourn'd.
 Love touches all the springs of memory.
 How Fancy paints thee as when first beheld,
 Fresh from the mountain air, thy horn of gold
 Hung round thy neck, thy cheeks glowing with
 health

And exercise, around thy brow dark curls
 Waving in rich profusion, while 'mid shouts
 Awaking Petra's hills, the antler'd deer
 Was borne before, proud trophy of thy skill!
 Pictured on my soul in beauty infinite,
 Thy smile unseals the fountains of my grief,
 Till Sorrow in our gloom sits dropping tears.
 O, how my pettish words, and gay caprice,
 And womanly impatiences, shading
 Like casual clouds love's ever-shining sun,
 Will bathe my pillow with perpetual drops!
 When girt with truth's omnipotence you stood,
 In virtue's majesty, strong for the right,
 You seem'd a victim laid on Heaven's altar
 For sacrifice prepared. And must thou die?
 If quench'd that eye, O whence shall beam my
 light!

Low as Adonis on the fatal hill
 Where virgins mourn'd, and flowers were stain'd
 with blood,
 Must thou effuse thy life — that princely breast,
 The nightly pillow of my head, cold, cold,
 Cold in the tomb? How dark our being's night!
 Thy kisses seem the touch of angel-lips
 Made fragrant with the purity of heaven.
 How can my arms untwine from thee, my life?
 How can my murmuring lips e'er say — farewell?

ARISTOBULUS.

Elia, you wring my soul. More dear art thou
 To me in this thy noble womanhood,
 Than when thy beauty at the altar smiled
 In girlish rosiness, while love and hope
 Bloom'd in thy cheek touch'd with youth's morning
 hues.

Affection then was but a glittering drop,
 Made now by years an ocean infinite.
 How on thy lip shall I imprint farewell?
 How tear me from thy clasp? How on thy form
 And face turn a last agonizing look?
 Thy smile shall play forever o'er my soul —
 Thy lingering voice make music there forever.
 Adieu my home! These forms of grace I leave
 That in the sculptured marble seem to weep,
 Or on the canvas grieve around my walls!
 Ye books, farewell — silent immortal friends
 Whose treasures I shall bear to brighter worlds!
 How dear these halls, these walks, these trees, these
 flowers,
 Fountains, and birds! Ye circling hills, ye vales,

Bright in your green and bloom, ye streams, ye skies,
In memory ye shall live eternal!
Elia, thee I trust to Heaven. One last kiss!
Beyond earth's clouds, unharm'd by age, untouch'd
By foe or fire, smiles our celestial home.

SCENE II. — *A Room in the Tower of Sebaste.*

HILKIAH.

SEE in the east yon cloud which whirls itself
 Around the mountain's top! Flashed from the sun
 Just hung above the sea, bright-streaming rays
 Play on those darken'd folds, and lo, a bow,
 In silence stealing from the storm and gloom,
 Bends its majestic circle o'er the hills!
 That orb, whose parting beam such beauty paints
 On earth and heav'n, sets, not quenched in the
 wave,
 But pours a ceaseless brilliance wide o'er worlds:
 Type of the just, whose life made bright by hope
 Gilds even death, then sinks to shine forever.

ARISTOBULUS.

Hilkiah, I love liberty, and life;
 And yet this tower, which soon shall hold my corpse,
 I would not change for Cæsar's Pincian home
 Where Art exhausts herself to pamper luxury.
 This peace breathed in my heart amazes me.

HILKIAH.

Imprison'd Truth, chain'd to a dungeon-floor
 In pain and night, glows with immortal joy,
 Which Falsehood could not feel if bid to Heav'n.

ARISTOBULUS.

That moment I resolv'd at Duty's call
 To give the Right my life, a new world burst
 Upon my gaze. My spirit, soft by ease
 And luxury, was nerved with deathless strength,
 As if a giant bound in the silken
 Cords of some voluptuous love, should break
 The snare, and grasp his arms, unconquerable.
 I would not boast, yet then a power was born
 I feel defies all but Omnipotence.

HILKIAH.

This shows a true divinity in man,
 Obscured in most by custom, or by fear
 Or indolence, which yet by Heav'n's own breath
 Once kindled, burns inextinguishable.
 'Tis here alone, above created things,
 A soul can find its everlasting peace.
 Alexander, say, art thou too at rest?

ALEXANDER.

I first lean'd on my brother; in him strong
 And long trusting most effeminately.
 My faith, no more a clinging vine, now seems
 A vigorous tree, which stands with spreading limbs,
 And braves itself the storm, drawing its life
 From the exhaustless nourishment of Heav'n.

HILKIAH.

In this wild age of doubt, how precious Faith!
 The gods of Greece, base progenies of men,
 Offspring of Fancy to young Passion wed,
 Then wrought by Genius into beauty's forms,

First making earth as their Olympus vile,
 Have perish'd like their shattered monuments.
 Rome's superstition lies ghastly and grim
 As some imperial corpse, bedecked with gold
 And Tyrian dyes, yet loath'd for its corruptions;
 While Egypt's faith stands like her pyramids
 A vast gloom amid the ages. The Jew,
 Who should his God, and his Messiah see
 In outward forms, adores his boasted law
 More than its Maker, and his temple more
 Than Him enshrined within — its light and glory.
 The Truth and Right expire. Fierce Passion rules.
 From the brow of Poverty Wealth wrings out blood;
 Oppression makes its gain of writhing hearts;
 Luxury dissolves the fabric of the world;
 And while kings are grown to demon monsters,
 The priests laugh at their own gods, their altars
 mock,
 Deride their dupes, their temples prostitute,
 Plundering the shrines which they should die to
 guard.
 Philosophy, one cold sardonic doubt,
 Sneering and covetous, a taper burns
 Expiring in a tomb, and shows but death;
 And save to Faith taught by our oracles,
 Our world has naught but sin, despair, and woe.

† ALEXANDER.

Hilkiah, what I deem'd death, proves life.
 Decision for the right gave birth to love,
 And on my spirit's eye soon dawn'd the truth
 In which creation shines perpetual glory;
 While as a bud grows to a matchless flower,

The universe unfolds the will of Heav'n.
 Our oracles appear how beautiful,
 Brightening the world with an immortal hope!
 When last I in our gorgeous temple stood,
 And burst from thrilling lips responsive songs
 In ecstasy, Faith the Messiah saw
 Everywhere. Each victim, altar, priest,
 Proclaimed some sacrifice, perhaps divine,
 Through which our race shall have Eternal Life.
 Insensibly this Faith, diffusing peace,
 Spread through my soul a pure celestial day.

HILKIAH.

In glimmering eve the landscape blends confused;
 But when the sun his brilliance streams again,
 How the eye revels in his morning beam
 Kindling its glow of beauty over earth!
 And the Messiah thus will soon dispel
 The mists of ages, shining o'er our Law
 As day's majestic orb flames forth the light.
 Lately, 'tis said, a star bright as a moon,
 And large, moved in strange course, then paused,
 and o'er
 A stable hung to mark a lowly birth,
 While angel-songs burst from the golden clouds,
 Hymning perhaps man's Great Deliverer.

ALEXANDER.

Since with the morning Death will seal our eyes —
 This tower our tomb — I will relate a dream.
 Just from the temple come, when last I saw
 The sacrifice, I laid me on my couch,
 While in my ear linger'd the chanted Psalm

Where wide the portals of eternity
Unfold before one styled the King of Glory.
Soothed by the warbled sounds I sank in sleep,
When stood to view Jehovah's edifice,
Expanding soon into the universe.
Its dome, I thought, became the blue round heav'n ;
Its altar, earth ; then One, who seem'd a god,
And yet was man, died in an agony,
While darkness sat upon our shaking globe.
Soon He 'mid dazzling light circling a throne
With clouds of angels came, majestic Judge.
Instantly the earth took fire, and from flames
Bursting around its vast circumference,
As from chaos once, a new world rose
Glowing bright in an immortal beauty ;
And multitudes, joyful with harps and songs,
Him now adored who reign'd both man and God.

ACT V.

SCENE I. — *The Harbor of Cæsarea. Antipater just landed in a Storm, goes along the Street disguised to his Palace.*

ANTIPATER (*alone*).

JUDEA, rough this welcome to thy king!
How the sea boils! Those billows touch the clouds
Flinging white spray to heav'n. What thunders
shake
The shore! Quick flashes on the quivering sky
Red, ominous fire. The crown'd mountains nod,
And Nature's frame seems groaning to dissolve.
Not here I find my gay voluptuous Rome.
Where Pleasure wing'd my feet to thrills of joy
'Mid flowers, without life's blossom-killing worm.
A brooding fear sits aching on my heart,
Oppressing me. I seem a shunn'd pestilence.
Why these averted looks? Can I be known?
Over roofs I see eyes staring on me,
And from the cracks of doors. Has Eurycles
Betray'd my plots? These void streets are frightful.
Here burns the curse of Cain—cast out by man,
No faith, no hope, a wretch upon the world!
Impell'd to Herod by some Destiny,
Yet in Jerusalem most sure my doom.

Conscience I deem'd dead now stirs, yea, thunders;
Then God may be—my soul may live forever!
On that black cloud, and spotted with her blood,
Sits Mariamne. In the hoarse blast I hear
The deep and pleading voice of aged Hyrcanus.
Ah, there, his drown'd young grandson's last shrill
shriek!

Black towers Sebaste where my brothers died,
And in the gloom each stone drips with their gore.
This vial will cheat Fate. Yet, terrible!
Dread I the drop? Yes! I am a coward,—
Afraid to live, and more afraid to die.
O, that amid this roar and war of elements
The tempest might blow out my being's flame
As an expiring lamp, leaving for me
The void and calm of everlasting night!

SCENE II.— *A Palace in Jerusalem— Herod on his dying Couch.*

HEROD.

GOOD priest, my hour is near. Death spares not kings.

My bloated carcass see, ulcerous and sore,
Where torture riots in each quivering nerve!
A monarch's robe will not conceal this shame,
Nor Araby's perfume breathed round my couch
Steal from the air its pestilential stench.
But the soul, Hilkihah! Here burns what fire!
Here thrills what agony! Here shriek and tear
What guilt, remorse, and fear! Pass'd now the line
Between the earth and heav'n, where Mercy stood
Encircled in her light, and plead with tears,
Behold Despair glare from his gloom, and rise
Amid the slain struck down by this red hand,
Pointing to wounds and blood, then clank his chain,
While crawls and gnaws about his feet Death's
worm!

HILKIAH.

How small the clouds whence Justice hurls her fires
Above our world! But Love, like light, beyond,
Streaming, fills the infinite universe:
In her wide ocean plunge thy spotted soul!

HEROD.

Hilkiah, cease! No priest, with his set looks
 And customary cant, but hardens me
 To ice and stone. I am lost—passion's fool—
 The fiend's prey. I curse the earth, the sun—
 I curse myself, God, Heav'n, Eternity!
 Away, away! this land shall mourn my death!
 From base to roof crowd my great Hippodrome
 With youth and age! Hurl then within the torch!
 Let flames climb round its walls, and from its top
 Bursting in twisting fire leap into heav'n!
 As from the funeral pile wild shrieks ascend,
 Israel shall wail in tears, and 'mid the storm
 My frantic spirit find its destined hell.

[Enter Eurycles.]

Speak, Eurycles! am I a dupe—a sword
 Used by Antipater to pierce through hearts
 Most dearly loved—a famish'd tiger stirr'd
 To prey on his own flesh, and drink his blood?

EURYCLEES.

His lies have urged thee to wild slaughtering rage—
 Last, he would kill thyself, and wear thy crown.

HEROD.

Grecian, thy proofs! I will not believe it.
 Beware! Show this, or die!

EURYCLEES.

If I make plain
 His guilt, wilt thou here swear to spare my life?

HEROD.

I, dying, swear.

EURYCLES.

Produce Antipater!

[*Antipater brought in.*]

ANTIPATER.

Ha, father, I rejoice to see thy face,
But grieve to mark thy pain. Upon thy hand
A son would print his kiss of filial love.

HEROD.

Stop, viper, stop! Better the slimy snake
Should wind about me with his smooth cold skin,
And hissing, dart his venom in my blood!

ANTIPATER.

What mean thy words?

HEROD.

Thou, Eurycles, explain.

ANTIPATER.

Against thy son wilt thou believe a Greek —
A mere adventurer — a subtle wretch
Who on my death would climb to wealth and power?

EURYCLES.

I spare my words. At once his person search.
Shaped from pure gold two vials find — this mark'd
Antipater, and that, Herod. A drop
From each give to a slave. This proves his guilt.
[*Antipater seized.*]

ANTIPATER.

Villains, unhand me! stop! I am a prince!
Herod, shall thy son be thus insulted?

[*The vials are found, and examined by Herod.*]

HEROD.

Base wretch, confess! These fix thy horrid crime.
Thou parricide! Creation's blot! Thou stain
Upon the Deity that he should make
A fiend so foul! Thou shade of Satan,
Blacker than himself! *Me*, thine own father,
Appointing thee in love Judea's crown —
Me, making thee my hand, my heart, my head,
My hope, myself—*me* hast thou forced by lies
To slay my wife, and sons—*me* hast thou mark'd
For death to gain my throne—*me* hast thou sent
Through pangs and night to everlasting woe.

ANTIPATER.

Father, I confess; spare! spare! spare my life!

HEROD.

Where now thy creed? Ha! wretch indeed, no
God,
Nor a Hereafter, my Antipater?
Dog! why then dost thou kneel, and cry, and beg?
Dying I hate, I loathe, and I despise thee.
What! cling to these cold knees thy poison-drop
Was destin'd to make stiff? Kiss this the hand
Whose plunder'd sceptre was to be thine own?
Thou move with thy false tears a father's soul
Whose murderous arts would send that soul to woe?

Coward, away! Thy shrieks are vain! Touch me
 Not, thou foul infection! Drag him in chains!
 Pierce him with spears! Torture his flesh with fire!
 Drop down his treacherous throat the liquid flame!
 Then throw him to vile curs! Let vultures tear
 Him with their beaks! No more — to death! to
 death!

With thee I shriek into eternity.

[Antipater is dragged away to execution.]

Alone in night! no hope to gild my gloom!
 My past remorse! my future black despair!
 Barter'd immortal life for a poor crown!
 That blood-dyed bauble gone, and earth, and Heav'n
[Herod dies.]

HILKIAH.

A diadem shields not from Death's sharp shaft,
 Before whose touch how withers royal state!
 Yet in ruin here what kingly majesty!
 Schemes no more the brain whence sprang an empire.
 Justice, how stern! Not Heav'n could hide a sin
 When her indignant thunders scare the worlds.
 Ah! now I hear Antipater — the wretch!
 Dragg'd to his fate, how his despairing shrieks
 Burst piercing down the galleries of my ear!
 That cry will cut the clouds — mock'd by the God
 His coward heart would hurl to nothingness.
 How bright the place whence soar the good to bliss!
 How dark, how curs'd that spot which sees Guilt
 die!

Though earth may Virtue try, she springs at last
 From gloom to Heav'n. Thus o'er great Lebanon
 An eagle struggles in the cloud and storm;
 A blast now beats him back to this dark world;

Then he will rise, and, battling, pois'd aloft
On vigorous wing, hang buffeting the winds,
Until with noble strength he bounds above
The thundering elements into calm light,
Where, bathed and gilded by day's brilliant beam,
Upward he soars majestic to the sun.

THE ROMAN MARTYRS.

TH' eternal city burns in evening light:
See on the Pincian play its tremulous beams,
Which gild the Capitol's majestic height,
And Coliseum flood with living streams!
That pillar'd temple bathed in glory seems,
And Parian marbles turn to sudden gold:
Each faun, nymph, hero, in the brilliance gleams,
While wave on wave bright dying splendors roll'd,
Rome shines like sunlit clouds, most dazzling to
behold.

The curtains of the night fall round how soon!
The evening star is o'er the Pantheon seen,
And Cæsar's palace silvers in the moon,
Whose radiance trembling rests in mellowed sheen
On statue, column, dome, and groves of green.
Bright heav'n is mirror'd now in Tiber's wave.
How tranquil is the solemn moonlit scene!
In silent shadows mute the branches wave,
While stillness makes th' imperial city seem a grave.

The laugh, the jest, there through bright windows
fly,
Whence merry songs peal down the quiet street,

And pipe and harp unite their melody
For wall and arch the echo to repeat.
Now waving lights in fiery circles meet —
Torch flashing after torch its 'wilder'ing glare —
And curious crowds a wedding party greet.
Hark! as they pass along 'mid shout and stare,
What jokes salute the ear! what flames make red
the air!

How dance upon the Bride quick-quivering rays!
Gem-clasp'd, around her form a veil of white,
With purple fringe, floats in the blaze,
And jewels, catching splendors from the light,
Shine sparkling suns upon the gloom of night.
Her snowy hands a useful distaff hold,
And smile, and eye, and grace inspire delight.
Cecilia's beauty, not from art, or gold;
A thought from Heav'n she moves, shaped in an
earthly mould.

She looks as I have seen a queenly rose,
Blushing not yet in its maturest bloom,
When in the summer moon it waves and glows;
Or evening brilliance of some festive room
That through a lattice trembles in the gloom.
Sweetest the fragrant *promise* of its leaves,
Since *ripen'd* glories brighten o'er their tomb.
How nameless is the charm which fancy weaves
When simple Girlhood's breast first with the Woman
heaves!

Moves by her side Valerian's manly form,
From which a toga's graceful folds depend.

He seems a youthful tree, braving the storm
On mountains, when the thunder-bolts descend
'Mid lightning flames, and crashing, scathe and rend.
The boasted blood of Pompey fills her veins:
His eagle-eyes bright Julian flashes send.
All hear delighted their glad marriage strains,
And Hope gilds o'er the cloud which now Rome's
 empire stains.

Before Valerian's home at last they stand
Where clustering flowers hang mingling scents and
 hues.

What odorous beauty there does Love command,
Shining like leaves bathed in their morning dews!
A world is blushing round with wealth profuse,
And glows more brightly as the flames advance.
The bloom of each gay clime your eye may choose,
Now smiling sweetly in the moon's cold glance;
Now lifted by a breeze the torch-lit leaves will
 dance.

Not only, Rome, thy eagles from a world
Collect the vase, and coin, and flashing gem:
Not only does thy banner high unfurl'd
Wave over pillag'd throne and diadem:
Not only thundering legions empires hem,
Spoiling their wealth where'er thy conquerors ride.
Palace, and temple both thy power condemn —
But even pilfer'd flowers thy ravage chide,
Compell'd from every clime to deck thy festive pride.

The Bride stops trembling in Valerian's door,
And Modesty sits blushing in her face:

The husband draws with gentle force before,
Charm'd with Cecilia's unaffected grace.
The mistress in her home has found a place
Which makes that timid girl a matron now.
Parents and friends clasp in their warm embrace,
Shaking the flower-crown on her queenly brow,
While proffer'd keys received her reign within avow.

The wine no more is sparkling in its cup,
No longer glitter silver, gems, and gold;
No more the merry laugh and song go up,
Or dazzling lamps bright festive scenes behold;
O'er court, and hall Night has her darkness roll'd,
And stillness hushes in that sleeping home;
Not even dreams wild fantasies unfold;
While clouds veil o'er the moon on heav'n's bright dome,
What slumber deep and strong, subdues all-con-
quering Rome!

Tradition, here thy pen shows strange delight.
Within that bridal chamber what transpires?
Cecilia's veil, unclasp'd, folds round its white;
Her upturn'd eye beams with celestial fires;
Her lip drops eloquence her lord admires;
A glow from Heav'n has o'er her cheek suffused,
As she with stately loftiness aspires,
Seeming a marble by no stain abused,
With evening's crimson glory o'er its snow diffused.

In gazing wonder her Valerian hears,
Deeming a vestal at her altar stands.
What miracles salute his startled ears!
What Power omnipotent his heart commands!

He looks a captive chain'd by magic bands —
 A man turn'd statue — horror-chilled to stone;
 Stiffen'd and icy are his heart and hands,
 Until his toga from his shoulder thrown
 Hangs loosely round a form whence life seems to
 have flown.

Does his Cecilia, then, a Nazarene
 Before his 'wilder'd vision stand confess'd?
 Does Heav'n, or Hell inspire her altered mien —
 Does Truth, or Falsehood animate her breast?
 Blasts now a curse the home he deem'd most blest?
 Scorn, prisons, chains, within those words he knows,
 And darkening shadows o'er his future rest,
 Where for the nuptial-torch the fagot glows,
 And round the couch of love the tempest rudely
 blows.

Shall he, a Julian from great Cæsar sprung,
 Rome's lordly pontiff once, and virtual king,
 Who to majestic Jove the incense flung,
 And on his altars burn'd the offering —
 Shall he whose ancestors did trophies bring
 From distant climes, and gorgeous triumphs grace,
 On chariots rais'd beneath the eagle's wing,
 While monarchs chain'd avert the blushing face,
 And from immortal gods own Rome's victorious
 race —

Shall he, whose father climbing to be crowned,
 Once on the Capitol was proudly seen
 Standing, the laurel on his temple bound,
 That shaded with its bright eternal green,

And waved, and glanced as flash'd the sun his sheen,
 And dome and temple rock'd with wild applause —
 Shall he, a Christian, kneel in lowly mien
 Before a murder'd Jew's detested Cross,
 And life, and honor risk by breaking Roman laws?

'Till fades the harvest moon, day after day
 Cecilia prays and pleads. The beauteous dreams
 Of Greece and Rome dissolving float away,
 Like mists of gold which curl in morning's beams ;
 Soon in the Capitol delusion seems
 Jove's thunder, grasp'd to scathe and scare a world.
 The heav'n-climbing sun Valerian deems
 No more divine. Down faun and nymph are hurl'd —
 Th' universe from chance no more a sea of atoms
 whirl'd.

Eternal in his majesty, he hears,
 That universe from naught Jehovah made ;
 'Mid chaos and in night then Earth appears ;
 Light flashes from a word, and soon is laid
 The elemental roar. The sky display'd,
 Sun, moon, and stars begin the march of time ;
 Nor fluent waters more the world pervade.
 Lo, mountains heave their cloud-robed tops sublime,
 And streams, seas, oceans form, to bless each age
 and clime.

Cecilia speaks of man made, lost, redeem'd ;
 Promise, and type, and prophecy explains ;
 Points to the star which o'er a stable beam'd,
 While midnight glories burst upon the plains,
 And from exulting skies peal angel-strains.

“ Could Love from Heav’n descend,” Valerian cries,
 “ And print upon a Cross its purple stains, —
 Burst from a grave, and then triumphant rise
 To send the streams of grace in fire down from the
 skies? ”

Now Faith reveals the Saviour of a race ;
 Idols dethroned — altar on altar hurl’d ;
 Isles, kingdoms, empires glow, and burn with grace ;
 O’er sea and land a conquering Cross unfurl’d ;
 The Christian temple last — a ransom’d world.
 Valerian sees the end — the judgment-fire,
 Where flames are round the earth by tempests whirl’d.
 Emerging from the wreck new Heav’ns aspire ;
 Lo, through eternal days, the saints will Christ admire.

A universe without a God, how dark !
 Without a hope, how desolate a grave !
 How cold the creed which makes our being’s spark
 Extinct in night ! Give me in wing, and wave,
 And leaf, and cloud — give me where torrents rave
 Or streams in meadows murmur to the flower —
 Give me to trace the Hand which bled to save,
 Touching with gentle but majestic power
 From where the daisies bloom to where the mountains
 tower !

Sweetest the breath of grace where heart loves
 heart —
 One faith, one hope, one glory, and one joy !
 Far from my sky ascetic clouds depart,
 Nor man’s inventions darken and annoy,
 Mixing with truth’s pure gold a base alloy ;

Nature tormenting from her wise design
By terms of cant which narrow, and destroy;
Not left for Heav'n to ripen and refine —
Displaying on God's word and works one Hand
divine.

Valerian and Cecilia gently blend
The gravities of age with youth's bright glow:
In them nor cold austerities offend
Nor lawful liberties to license grow.
Free and yet bound along life's path they go,
Bearing the Cross, exulting in the Crown,
And thus the joy of Christian wisdom show;
Not theirs the worldling's smile, or cynic's frown;
While duties always draw, cares never weigh them
down.

Thus from one root two vines spring side by side,
Lifting their graceful branches wide and high;
One, strong, and stately towers in nobler pride,
Round which the other climbing seeks the sky,
And clings more closely when the storm drives by.
From the same light and dew their scent and bloom;
Through kindred veins the same life-currents ply;
And when Decay has fixed their fatal doom,
They intertwining lie on earth — the same sad tomb.

Has ever Faith escaped the bursting storm?
Not in the shelter'd vale the sturdiest tree
Rears into heav'n its tall majestic form;
Its roots 'mid mountain rocks — its branches, see,
Waving in clouds, where lightnings wild and free

Flame round their wrath. Yes! from that winter
blast

Its glorious strength. The elemental glee
Its loves and dares; and under skies o'ercast
It rising spreads e'en while the tempest thunders
past.

Where Christians would elude their murderous foes,
Far from the fiery fatal stare of day,
Valerian, taught by his Cecilia, goes
To find the Church's rites without delay:
His splendid toga chang'd for sober gray,
Soon from a suburb garden he descends;
A lamp directs his solitary way,
Whose glimmering circle to the darkness lends
A glare, as down his silent path in spirals bends.

Grows fainter on his ear the city's sound;
As ocean-billows when we leave the shore,
Or mountain-torrents hurling thunders round
Mellow in distance their eternal roar;
The fading hum at last is heard no more;
There, rattles down the noise of hoof and car;
There, bursting through the cavern's open'd door,
Subdued, a shout is rushing from afar,
While, laurel-crown'd, 'mid spoils, a victor shows his
scar.

That shout the Julian in Valerian woke!
His breath comes panting, and his heart throbs fast;
Bright dreams of glory o'er his vision broke
Like clouds sun-gilded when a storm has pass'd,
Whose burning splendors dazzle while they last.

He could have conquer'd 'neath the eagle's eye,
And rush'd to fame upon war's tempest-blast;
He could have heard *his* name borne to the sky;
He could have roll'd along the triumph proud and
high.

For crowns now chains; for glory now this gloom;
Now, for the altar-fire, the martyr-blaze;
And for the palace now the catacomb,
Where buried exiles drag out weary days.
Flames, dungeons, tortures, rush before his gaze,
'Till pain-drops burst and bathe his quivering form.
He stops: he gasps: he kneels: he trusts: he prays.
Soon, hush'd to peace the fury of that storm,
Hopè's pulses through youth's veins beat strong, and
fast, and warm.

On through the darkness, nor despairing more
He deeper and farther winds into the night.
Above, Rome's life, and press, and glare, and roar:
Beneath, Death's empire in his lamp's pale light.
City of tombs! where martyrs for the right
From racks and prisons were received by earth,
Or scathed by flames, or scarr'd in deadly fight,
Nobler thy memories of heroic worth,
Than purpled Cæsars boast who claim imperial birth.

What sacred dust! tier rising over tier!
Silent and reverent now, Valerian, tread!
Here sleeps a father borne on blood-stained bier,
And here his son stung by the asp till dead;
Here one sword-pierced, who on th' arena bled;
Here from the altar torn a strangled bride;

This martyr-youth to death was manacled ;
 There babe and mother slumbering side by side,
 With Bishops, Deacons, Priests, who chain and fire
 defied !

Crimsons imperial Rome thy queenly pride ?
 The song, the shout, the wreath, the arch, the spoil,
 Thy trophied chariots where crown'd conquerors ride,
 Do *these* repay thy blood, and gold, and toil ?
 Thy victors are *beneath*, not on thy soil ;
 Not in this darkness scowls an abject gloom ;
 Not slaves, but heroes here who hell can foil.
 Heav'n with glory gilds their midnight gloom,
 And immortality to triumph turns each tomb.

Now distant lights glance on Valerian's gaze ;
 In flickering circles here they wave and gleam,
 There through the darkness shine with steadier blaze ;
 Those sounds grow louder in the brightening beam,
 And words of worship soon distinctly seem.
 Hark ! mingling voices yet more clear and strong
 Their praises pour, which bursting swell and stream
 High to the roof, and echoing far along,
 Roll through that cavern's night to Heav'n the
 Christian song.

The people kneel : the prolong'd murmur dies
 As if should cease the solemn roar of seas,
 Or stop the winds, which, sweeping autumn skies,
 Herald yet stormier blasts to shake the trees.
 Ascends a prayer borne on devotion's breeze,
 Faith-wafted far, if breathed in subdued tone —
 An Eye omniscient through earth's tempests sees,

A Hand omnipotent will hurl down throne
And world, that an eternal Love may shield its own.

The rock his pulpit, Urban rises now
To preach the gospel in that hallowed place:
The lamp-light trembles on his silver'd brow,
And gleams of glory kindle round his face:
His theme, through Christ, salvation's matchless grace.
He shows his Cross, his Grave, his Throne, his Power,
Amid the tombs which closed the martyr's race;
And while the gloom may spread and tempest lower,
Faith sees through earth's dark clouds a Heav'n in
 brightness tower.

As parts the crowd, Valerian forward goes,
Clothed in baptismal robes of glittering white;
Peace in his silent heart divinely flows,
And Joy, a sun, shines in his trial's night.
Lo! round his brow a coronal of light,
He kneels by sacred drops forever seal'd
A martyr-soldier in the Christian fight,
Hope, Truth, and Faith his helm, and sword, and
 shield —
The arms which Heav'n bestows for earth's contested
 field.

Duty discharg'd, the soul how strong, how bright!
So shines a mountain in morn's gilding beam,
Lifting its brilliant head calm through the light;
Beneath, the thunder's peal, the lightning's gleam,
And o'er the torrent's voice the eagle's scream;
While roar and flash the clouds by tempests whirl'd
How beautiful those glittering summits seem,

Towering from gloom where vengeance round is
hurl'd—
Their pure eternal snows like Heav'n above our
world!

Restored to earth Valerian thus appears;
In every glance a Christian manhood shows:
Above all scorn, or hate, or wrath, or fears,
In Truth's own panoply he burns and glows,
And God his shield in peril's hour he knows.
Soon he shall feel Cecilia's warm embrace:
Hark! from her room aerial music flows,
And 'mid its murmurs beams what angel-face—
What meek immortal beauty mingled with what grace!

Cecilia and her maidens on a hill
With string and voice once tuned their melody,
And as the twilight notes with rapture thrill,
Down from a cloud of gold on evening's sky
Floats to the ear seraphic minstrelsy
That seem'd from glory's gate, so sweet, so grand:
Hush'd, charm'd, inspired, upturns to heav'n each eye,
And harp and pipe drop from the unclasp'd hand—
In that celestial brightness sings an angel band.

Descending from the tuneful circle now
Has this pure being hover'd in his flight?
How sweet his lip! how radiant is his brow!
That favor'd chamber beams in dazzling light,
To earthly gaze subdued, with heav'n yet bright.
The trembling pair before the angel kneel,
Two blushing rose-crowns reddening on their sight:

And while around Æolian murmurs steal,
On either head the martyr's crimson diadem they feel.

Too soon their faith is known to raging Rome,
Whisper'd by envious tongues to eager ears:
Too soon a storm-cloud darkens o'er their home,
And rack and torch too soon awaken fears,
While timid friends dissolve in tender tears.
Yet who from flames would keep the glittering gold?
Unscathed by fire no lawful coin appears.
Heav'n's current image would you then behold?
Heav'n in the furnace first the soul must melt, and
mould.

When rose before Judea's reverent eye
Jehovah's temple, over earth esteem'd,
Its dome on stately pillars lifted high,
While round eternal altars burn'd, and gleam'd,
And robed and mitred priests in brilliance beam'd,
When did from swinging censers odors rise?
Not till the *fire* had touch'd the fragrance stream'd;
But waked by *flames*, what sweet perfumes arise,
In clouds hang o'er the courts, and curl into the
skies!

Rome would have borne within her Pantheon placed
The Christ, with Jove, amid her gods arrayed,
Each sculptured image by Art's genius graced
With cross, or crown, or thunder bolt displayed —
By man, Jehovah into marble made.
Shall the Redeemer then with Rome agree,
His universal majesty degrade,
Receive with Jupiter the bended knee,
And thus before the worlds renounce His Deity?

Is Jesus God — from Heav'n to earth come down?
 Did He who stain'd a Cross burst from a tomb,
 Rising to glory and Creation's Crown?
 In this great truth, Idolatry, thy doom!
 Oppress no more the nations with thy gloom!
 Priest, altar, temple, worship, splendor fall,
 And Power, Wealth, Fame, must for the Cross make
 room.
 Never shall Error spread o'er man her pall
 When He whose blood redeem'd shall reign the Lord
 of all.

No wonder, Rome, thy tortures mark'd for death;
 No wonder dungeons darken'd under ground,
 And blasted with their pestilential breath;
 No wonder serpents stung, and fetters bound,
 And mobs thy burning victims yell'd around;
 And wild beasts in thy Coliseum glared,
 While on its sands were purple life-drops found,
 Since He, the Crucified, thy gods has dared;
 Thy Pantheon hurl'd down, no image shall be
 spared.

When through the city it was spread by fame
 A Julian and his bride had Christ confess'd,
 How madly burns the universal flame, —
 From slave to monarch vengeance in each breast!
 The temple's priest, and suppliant, rage express'd;
 He who adorn'd the shrine, he who adored;
 He who the victim sold, the victim bless'd;
 From rank to rank the blaze of malice soar'd
 Till round Rome's pontiff-throne its selfish fury
 roar'd.

Imagine thus a flame creep o'er a vale
By slow approaches to some towering height,
Wavering, and glimmering. In the sunbeam pale
It grows, and reddens with the storm, and night.
Higher it flashes, wider and more bright,
Until it roars, billows on billows hurl'd;
That mountain burns a pyramid of light
Whose top is fire by tempests dash'd and whirl'd,
While wild Destructions blaze to terrify a world.

The queenly city stirs in every street —
Crowd upon crowd — intense the streaming throng;
Here garrulous beggars in their tawdry meet,
Here artisans in silence pour along;
Here gladiators insolent, and strong;
Slaves, women, knights, and senators advance,
While the imperial eagle, bird of wrong,
Spreads wide his wing of gold, and darts his glance
O'er where the cohort wheels, and horses snort and
prance.

Into the Coliseum now is rushing Rome.
Behold the mighty pile majestic stand,
Lifting its wall without a roof or dome
Above the pigmied crowd, silent and grand:
Type of a Power which can a world command:
Rising to heav'n a monument of gloom
Whose shadow darkens earth's remotest land:
Glowing and pack'd with life, while yet a tomb,
Where nations see their sons dragg'd to a fatal doom!

Beneath, the cry, the growl, the yell, the roar!
Fierce through those bars Egypt's hyenas stare;

Near, whets his gleaming tusks a German boar ;
 Beyond, two Indian tigers, prostrate, glare ;
 That Libyan lion's thunders shake the air ;
 In madness paws a Spanish bull the ground,
 While Afric elephants in silence there
 Twist writhing trunks the bending iron around,
 And caged by Rome, earth's fury seems a hell to
 sound.

Above, tier rising over circling tier,
 Slave, citizen, ambassador, and king,
 Roman, Gaul, Briton, Greek, and Syrian here :
 Now for gay knights bright ivory chairs they bring,
 And vestals round in white, are glittering ;
 And Senators who walk with stately grace
 Upon the Podium stop, their coins to fling.
 Collecting there each costume, speech, and race,
 Rome boasts a world within that Coliseum's space.

Each whisper hush'd along the darkening seats,
 Odors seem breathing from Arabian skies.
 Its scepter'd sovereign, lo, an empire greets !
 Like ocean's roar the sound when thousands rise :
 Shout follows shout before that murmur dies.
 The purple monarch mounts his throne of gold
 Beneath bright stars while peal exulting cries.
 No more, O Earth, that spectacle behold
 Where *one* man's eyes thy conquest's humbling proofs
 behold !

When sways the huge *velarium* in the breeze,
 Shadow and sunlight mark its rise and fall,
 While gently wave the branches of the trees

Towering within the Coliseum's wall
As on their mountains, stately, green, and tall.
Lo, while the mingling music bursts around,
Above the hiss and yell which mark the brawl,
Valerian, heedless of each sight and sound,
His faith made strong by prayer, steps lightly o'er
the ground.

His limbs are cased in polish'd flashing steel :
No plumed or crested helm shines on his brow :
The round shield's massive weight he shall not feel
Whose emboss'd circle might protect him now.
A bow, which once had waved an Alpine bough,
And glittering quiver hung behind, appear.
Bright diamonds on his sword his rank avow,
While grasping a long brazen-pointed spear
He o'er the arena walks majestic, without fear.

Behold that glorious head, that noble face,
Where Peace is breathing from its radiant light !
What gentle beauty with what manly grace !
A Christian hero moves across our sight
Whose virtue, courage, meekness, wake delight.
Strange Jove's idolaters with cruel eyes
Should see Jehovah's child expire in fight —
Strange Error should o'er Truth in triumph rise —
Strange if no Judgment Throne shall flame upon the
skies.

One for the right, fierce thousands for the wrong :
Against Christ's champion ranged are Earth and
Hell.
Humble, yet bold, forgiving and yet strong,

He fears no monarch's frown, nor madden'd yell.
 Within his breast what triumphs glow and swell!
 Nor think Rome's Empire there surveys alone:
 Dark demons glare with malice grim and fell;
 And, pois'd above, to watch have angels flown,
 While the Creator views from His Eternal Throne.

Where sits earth's sovereign in his purple pride
 High-raisd beneath the eagle's sheltering wing,
 With guard and lictor flashing at his side,
 As music charms, and spices fragrance fling,
 Valerian, o'er the crowd-encircl'd ring,
 Moves with a Julian step but Christian heart.
 Never those hands to Jove shall incense bring;
 Never from blood's red test that spirit start!
 The martyr's pain, and death, and crown his nobler
 part.

Before Rome's gorgeous throne he meekly stands,
 Nor dreads the mob's vile rage, or monarch's eye,
 "Hail Emperor," he says with folded hands,
 "Behold a Christian doom'd by thee to die!"
 That name awakes a universal cry,—
 One wild discordant tumult bursts around,
 And shakes the earth, and peals into the sky
 As when tornadoes sweeping o'er the ground
 Rush up a mountain's side by tossing forests crown'd.

Hear the portcullis creaking now ascend!
 A low long growl comes lingering on the air;
 While straining from their seats the people bend,
 Behold a stealthy tiger stop and glare!
 Valerian, now that paw and fang beware!

As sunbeams swift, an arrow from his string
Flashes to an eye, and quench'd its stare,
The feather'd weapon stands quick-quivering —
Brain-pierced, the beast his purple life pours on the
ring.

Before have ceas'd the murmurings of rage
Which Disappointment whispers through the crowd,
A tawny monster moving from his cage
Stalks o'er the sand majestically proud —
His voice subdued, not thunderous and loud.
Crouching, he springs with a gigantic bound —
Valerian, watchful, has the leap allowed :
He steps aside. He waves his bright sword round,
He strikes while in the air that lion to the ground.

With trumpetings along the yielding sand
An elephant his twisting trunk uprears,
His ponderous bulk, so clumsy and so grand,
A mountain moving massively appears,
And gleaming tusks projecting waken fears.
He rushes, terrible from scream and blow,
While breathless stare those wonder-loving tiers.
See, glancing down his mouth a javelin go,
And as the monster turns, bright blood-streams chok-
ing flow!

The Coliseum madden'd sways and heaves,
And whisper'd murmurs swell to stormy cries.
Thus I have seen on tapering boughs the leaves
Quiver and tinkle when the breeze first sighs.
Lo, soon a tempest turn'd, it sweeps the skies!
Branch shrieks to branch; the forest tossing roars,

And as the splinter'd fragment whirls and flies,
Higher and wider yet the fury pours,
Till bursting to the clouds a whirlwind's tumult
soars.

With upturn'd thumbs "Release" exclaim a few,
But clamorous most Valerian's death demand.
Rome's monarch from his throne high in their view
The gladiators calls with waving hand,
And three hoarse savages rush o'er the sand
In horrid arms, and goaded by despair:
A Briton, Gaul, and Parthian form the band,
And sword, and club, and javelin bristle there,
While wilder roll the shouts which thunder on the
air.

How can a Christian into future woe
A spirit unprepared forever send,
When his own soul unfetter'd by a blow
Would to an everlasting Heav'n ascend,
Soaring where saints with seraphs shine and blend?
His weapons dash'd to earth, Valerian stands
Beneath celestial circles as they bend,
And placed across his breast his folded hands:
That multitude to awe his majesty commands.

See, from his face immortal lustre streams!
Upon his head a diadem of light!
Around his form a dazzling glory beams,
As if an angel stood before our sight
Whom Truth had arm'd to battle for the right.
Their weapons pois'd, those trembling wretches now,
Afraid to strike, would rush away in flight.

Brighter the brilliance on Valerian's brow
As Heav'n, inspiring faith, approves its martyr's vow!

The monarch's signs, the people's rising rage
The miscreants urging, break at last the spell,
Until, like wild beasts rushing from their cage,
They on their victim fly with blow and yell,
And fury kindled by the torch of Hell.

Valerian, wounded, staggers o'er the ground
Where bathed in slippery blood the lion fell,
Then sinking on the beast with gasping sound,
He waves a silver Cross in holy triumph round.

As touch'd by evening's ray that Christian sign
Around the Coliseum gleams and glows,
Glittering with brilliance which appears divine,
And o'er the crowd its splendors glancing throws,
From rank to rank what flames of hate arose!
Not Ætna blazes when wild earthquakes rend
Its solid sides of rock, and lava flows,
And flashing to the clouds red fires ascend,
Like those indignant tiers where rage and malice
blend.

Swift through the storm Valerian's spirit goes,
By angels guided into peaceful skies,
And in the distance sees with smiles its foes,
And mounting upward fainter hears their cries,
While they behold his clay with furious eyes.
A monarch's frown, a realm, a world, how small
To him who soaring through the clouds descries
The glittering battlements of Heav'n's bright wall,
Where light eternal crowns, and Christ is all in all.

Now from the Coliseum let us turn
 To calmer scenes. Along a quiet street
 A Lictor goes. Bright evening splendors burn
 Upon the Palatine, and glance and play
 'Till Cæsar's palace flashes in the ray;
 And earth and sky, with purple ting'd and gold,
 Give saddening tokens of a dying day,
 While gilded clouds, fold crimsoning over fold,
 Are round the sinking sun in solemn glory roll'd.

Cecilia sits expecting her sad doom,
 Viewing the fading splendors of the West,
 And sees death's type within the gathering gloom.
 In white baptismal robes behold her dress'd,
 A golden crucifix upon her breast!
 Her virgin fillet on her hair is bound,
 Whose clasp a wedding diamond shines confess'd.
 Day's lingering lustre o'er her head streams round,
 And floating to her room what strains angelic sound!

Chamber and Coliseum show the rage
 Against the Cross, waked by imperial power,
 Sparing nor rank, nor sex, nor wealth, nor age.
 Storms hurl down trees which on the Alps may tower
 To greet the sun, and crush the nestling flower
 Looking aloft with its blue trembling eye:
 Madly when the heav'ns, roaring, gleam and lower.
 Its bright and scented fragments whirl and fly
 With limbs of mountain-pines dash'd o'er the blacken'd
 sky.

If torn that flower, if spoil'd its fragrant bloom
 When darkens over earth the tempest's wing,

It is not swept to an eternal tomb.
Nay! wild tornadoes but its seeds far fling
O'er a wide world, and thus gay beauties bring
To brighten empires through each distant age.
Life stirring too in death will spread, and spring
When error's battles scepter'd monarchs wage,
And truth-germs rise, and fly upon their blasts of
rage.

Lictor and lady there together stand
Within a quiet chamber's hallow'd space,
A glittering sword grasp'd in his lifted hand;
He, strong in arm, and terrible in face,
She, meek and pure in woman's tender grace;
He a low wretch cloth'd with an empire's might,
She doom'd and hated, yet of Pompey's race:
He stands a man, now pale with tremulous fright —
She smiles an angel, robed in innocence and light.

Once, twice, thrice he strikes that breast of snow,
Heaving beneath its white baptismal fold,
When, gushing o'er, the purple currents flow,
And to the floor in martyr-drops are roll'd,
Staining the path of Faith to joy untold.
Cecilia falls; a glory round her gleams;
Hark! seraph-music breathes from harps of gold;
See! on her face celestial radiance streams;
'Tis Christ has flash'd o'er death those pure immortal
beams.

Sailing upon the blue of evening's sky
Sometimes appears a cloud of perfect white ;
It stops with yet no brilliance for the eye ;
Now, as the sun with face enlarg'd and bright
Pours level luminous floods, his parting light,
Into those mists, they curling blaze and burn —
Heav'n reflected upon mortal sight.
Thus o'er the dying saint a halo plays
From that Diviner Orb whence gild eternal rays.

Cecilia's spirit softly breathes away,
By seraphs wafted on low warbled strains,
To float in melodies where endless day
Streams wide its glories o'er celestial plains,
Above Time's fears, or cares, or hopes, or pains.
She dies like sound on some Æolian string,
Whose lingering whisper in the ear remains,
Fading from earth in faintest murmuring,
As if in Heav'n to burst, and thrill where angels
sing.

FAITH.

A POEM IN THREE PARTS.



PART I. — GENERAL SUBJECT.

WHAT curious bosom never throbb'd to roll
Mysterious darkness from the burden'd soul?
Who would not tear his being's veil away,
And burst to light in Truth's eternal day?
O, who glows not with ardent wish to find
Where tend these restless energies of mind —
Where point these burning passions, and desires
That hide in every breast their wasting fires?

Exulting Faith! from past oblivion rise;
Expand thy starry pinions for the skies;
Let Love and Hope soar with thee from the plain,
And with bright triumph swell thy glittering train;
Seek some aerial height, and pausing there,
Awake a world from ages of despair.

What strong attraction with resistless force
Retains the rolling planets in their course?
What universal principle can cause
The atom-armies to obey their laws?
True as the spell which lifts to Heav'n a soul,
What makes the needle tremble to the pole?

What in the star beams with soft twilight ray,
 And flashing in the sun creates the day?
 Or tell what power invisible can bind
 Insentient matter to immortal mind?
 Lo, Science points where quivering on the sky
 With vivid joy the frantic lightnings fly;
 "In yonder cloud," with triumph hear her tell,
 "Where tempests sleep, and secret thunders dwell,
 Its fire-fring'd throne, th' electric influence reigns
 Which binds Creation in its mystic chains."

Thus in the spirit-world, with sovereign sway,
 Faith rules, and call its energies in play,
 Over the unseen empire has control,
 Explains, pervades, and regulates the whole.

Turn where we may, the curious eye surveys,
 Through the wide circles of the social maze —
 From the lone hut where squalid Misery pines
 To where in pride the splendid palace shines,
 From the drear isle where rude barbarians dwell
 To lands where Science breathes her magic spell —
 Each living link within a world's vast round
 To all the rest mysteriously bound,
 While the whole chain on that Great Throne is hung
 Whence He rules All from whom Creation sprung.

Faith thus in others, from our infant breath
 Through all life's sorrows to the shades of death,
 Binds man to man, forms ties of sacred love,
 And points the way to Faith in Heav'n above.

Faith too in self, when obstacles oppose,
 Which in the breast of modest genius glows,

Alone can fire the daring soul for flight
 Beyond the clouds which veil the fields of light.
 Let dark Distrust enjoy her shadowy reign ;
 Let fears of failure haunt the troubled brain ;
 The arm will lose its force, the mind its fire,
 And every lofty scheme in night expire.
 When Danger scowls, when Penury's chill frown
 Palsies the heart, and weighs the courage down ;
 When withering scorn, the jeer of silly mirth,
 Would drag the bold adventurer back to earth,
 O'er doubts triumphant, and unmoved by sneers,
 His lifted eye will brighten 'mid its tears :
 On Faith's exultant wing then see him rise
 To drop in love his mantle from the skies !

Behold Columbus spread his venturous sail
 Where mountain-billows sweep before the gale !
 Ye lightnings, clouds, and tempests, all in vain
 Ye flash, and frown, and roar along the main.
 Let earth, sea, sky, unite in furious strife ;
 Let Murder grasp within the secret knife,
 Serene the hero's soul, erect his form,
 Through the wild ragings of the midnight storm.
 While gathering perils dark around him spread,
 Faith sheds her awful brightness on his head.
 "Onward!" he cries ; God smiles upon the brave ;
 No tempests now disturb the sleeping wave ;
 And soon, with raptured glance, his eyes explore
 The misty outlines of the promised shore.

Celestial Faith ! thy guardian hand appears,
 And points great Newton to yon wheeling spheres ;
 A halo binds around his brow serene

As he surveys the glittering starry scene,
Darts his keen eye through the wide realms of space,
And takes Creation in his mind's embrace.

Amid the battle-cloud, as freemen fight,
I see thy hovering form crown'd with the light.
While Briton's lion, glaring, crouches low,
And footprints mark with blood the shining snow ;
While low-brow'd Treason hides with specious smiles
A soul which gold has bought, and plans his wiles ;
While Disaffection murmurs through the land,
Chills Freedom's heart, and weakens Freedom's hand ;
While patriots groan, while shrieking Hope takes
flight

To leave the world in an eternal night,
From Heav'n I hear thy glad inspiring cry,
" Fight on, ye brave, your cause shall never die !"
From thy bright realms I see thee bring relief,
Seeking on wing of love our matchless Chief ;
Then bid him 'mid the tempest stand unaw'd,
And trust his country to his country's God.

Illustrious Hope ! with brighten'd glance my eye
Beholds thy glittering pinions on the sky,
And soon I see thy graceful image where
Yon son of genius sinks into despair.
'Tis thine indeed to bid the shades depart
Which cloud his brow, and agonize his heart ;
'Tis thine with glowing pictures to inflame
Immortal ardors for the wreath of Fame ;
'Tis thine the Future's curtain to unroll,
And pour its glories on the hero's soul.
But soon thy painted visions fade and fly,

Like morning vapors when a breeze may sigh,
Unless, with steadier eye and nobler mien,
Majestic Faith descends to rule the scene.

Mark that poor wretch whose jealous mind can trace
The villain's stamp in every mortal's face.
With Envy torn, to dark Distrust a prey,
He wears alone his suffering life away ;
For that cold breast, through Nature's wide domains,
Soon blank, unbroken desolation reigns.
Of faith in man bereft, the fetter'd slave
Drags on through life his chain down to his grave ;
And there his weary spirit, seeking rest,
Would with eternal nothingness be blest.

Distrust in man — the being of an hour,
Frail as the bloom which crimson on a flower ;
Frail as the cloud whose glories flush the West
When Evening's whisper charms to earth the blest —
Distrust in man thus wakes perpetual woes,
And over life Despair's grim darkness throws.
What deeper horrors then will veil the heart
Which dares from Him who shaped the worlds de-
part !

As some wild planet madly bursts away
And leaves the orb which spreads around its day, —
With shadows blackening as it onward flies
With fiercer winters sweeping sunless skies —
So man, from God, the soul's Eternal Light,
Still darkling rushes through intenser night.

What bursting thunders shake Creation now !
What clouds on clouds roll round Jehovah's brow !

How leap the lightnings of his fury where
Unbroken Peace breathed through the tranquil air!
While tempests rise, while Night without a star,
Enthroned in shadows, drives o'er Heav'n her car
On wheels of flame that leave behind the storm,
Why through the darkness sweeps an awful form?
Why rides the Son with anger-burning eye
Upon the trembling circles of the sky?
Say, why with vengeful fires, and tortures driven,
Rush those swift angels to the brink of Heaven?
For broken Faith, on seraph, seraph hurl'd,
They sink in fire, the demons of our world.

While loyal Faith in Adam's breast has sway,
The smiles of Heav'n on Eden's borders play.
But the sly serpent, with his crest of gold,
Towers from the grass, fold glittering over fold.
How bright his eye, how eloquent his breath,
As o'er life's path he spreads the gloom of death,
Plants the sharp thorn, and through the thundering
air,

Wakes every grinning phantom of despair,
Till Justice flashes leaping from his throne,
Waves his bright sword, and claims man for his own!

O say, ye angels, circling near the place
Whence beams of wisdom dart through distant space,
Say, as yon ruin darkens on your eyes,
And gathering shades of unknown sorrow rise,
Say, as ye hang in voiceless wonder o'er
Those scenes of death with glory bright before,
Upon your minds what life-restoring plan
Bursts like a sun to rescue ruin'd man?

Shall nobler fruits in wasted Eden bloom?
Shall purer light dispel that dreadful gloom?
Shall sweeter flowers breathe fragrance through the
air,

And darken'd Hope be kindled from Despair?
Can Death prove Life, reversed the awful doom,
And Adam spring immortal from the tomb?
Can Justice be appeas'd, and man arise
To shine more glorious, and in brighter skies?
What hidden link in Nature's chain shall bind
To a forsaken God a rebel mind?
Ye stand amazed; on frighten'd wings ye fly
To those fair realms where raptures never die,
And to a wondering host in Heav'n ye tell
That man, who blighted earth, must groan in hell.

From angels turn! Behold a mortal stand
Where glory dazzles round Jehovah's hand!
From Horeb's rock had flames burst on his gaze,
And glow'd around the bush with harmless blaze:
Thence, near the fire his rev'rent footsteps trod
Whence thunder'd forth the awful voice of God.
He waves his rod — the Nile's majestic flood,
With rippling circles, rolls a stream of blood;
Scourge urges scourge; the sun obscures his ray,
And universal gloom absorbs the day.
Now through the stillness of the night's dim noon,
With shadowy pinions glancing in the moon,
O'er each unsprinkled home Death shakes his dart,
And stops in some warm breast a beating heart.
That towering cloud which darken'd on the foe,
Burns in the sea with a celestial glow,
And Israel leads amid the glittering spray,

Where floods for ages veil'd from view the way ;
 While Egypt's host, chariot on chariot whirled,
 Steed piled on steed, 'mid yells which shake a world,
 Despairing sinks o'erwhelm'd beneath the wave
 Which makes for Pharaoh's pride a billowy grave.
 The fire within whose flames resides a God,
 Emerging, Prophet, owns thy matchless rod,
 Gleams o'er thy tents, and seems Jehovah's eye,
 More glad to guard the earth than watch the sky ;
 And manna drops, and rocks like fountains flow
 Where'er those moving folds their radiance throw.
 Up Sinai's side I now behold thee climb,
 On Sinai's top I see thee stand sublime.
 Rocks heap'd on rocks that pile the mountain's breast,
 The fire, the cloud, the thunder-peal, attest
 Jehovah stoops to earth, and veils his face,
 While Justice gives a law to rule a race.
 What more, bold Prophet, would thine eye behold ?
 Hid in thy rock yet brighter scenes unfold.
 Lo, through the gloom *Redemption's* radiance streams,
 Outdazzling Sinai's flames, Creation's beams,
 Whose halo, shaded, circles round the plan
 That with a Cross of blood brings God to man.

That plan survey ! See, tortured by Despair
 With what swift footsteps flee a guilty pair !
 The evening star is trembling into view,
 And on each leaf distills the noiseless dew,
 As day departing calls the solemn breeze
 To whisper murmuring vespers through the trees ;
 While over Eden spreads a twilight gloom,
 Like darkening shadows lingering round a tomb.
 Jehovah comes ! 'Tis hence the guilty fly

The dreaded vengeance of his burning eye.
But thundering in his voice does Justice now
Demand the seal of death upon their brow?
Nay! as the sun appears when tempests howl,
And blackening shadows o'er the landscape scowl,
To fringe the cloud, and o'er the sky to throw
The brilliant colors of his peaceful bow,
On that dread brow where Justice has his throne,
A halo bright with mildest Mercy shone.
His voice proclaims the curse which withers earth;
A thousand pangs unknown before have birth;
Death waves his sword, and wider empire claims;
Exultant demons leap 'mid fiercer flames;
Man trembles, as the fearful accents flow
Denouncing torments of eternal woe.
Shall greedy Death have millions for his prey?
Shall Satan o'er a world the sceptre away?
Shall God be mocked, and his dominions swell
The flaming precincts of extended hell?
While Adam kneels 'mid Eden's blasted bowers,
Where tempests sweep, and frosts now touch the
flowers,
Like the soft whisper when the mountain's form
Was wrapp'd in fire, and shaken by the storm,
Which hush'd Elijah's lip, and bow'd his head,
As Rev'ence round his brow her mantle spread,
Jehovah speaks, and glancing angels fly
To bear the glowing joy from earth to sky.

Rise trembling Faith! while seraph-lips proclaim
The covenant grace which kindles Heav'n to flame;
Rise trembling Faith! the voice of God has said
The woman's seed shall bruise the serpent's head;

Rise trembling Faith; for as the germ contains
The flower whose beauty brightens o'er the plains,
Within these words a promis'd Love appears,
To bloom in glory through eternal years;
Rise trembling Faith! though clouds may veil the light,
It yet shall stream unshaded on thy sight;
He knows thy weakness, and He therefore pours
But one faint beam from Hea'vn's exhaustless stores.

As evening's shadows lengthen o'er the plain
I see yon glimmering star lead forth its train;
I see the lingering sunbeams disappear
To herald morning in another sphere;
While Night, slow-rising from her depth profound,
Her mantle spreads 'with silent hand around.
Now as the darkness deepens on my eye,
World after world comes glittering through the sky;
In slow procession moves the bright array,
Till flashes o'er the dome refulgent day.
His stars of promise thus from age to age
Jehovah scatters o'er the sacred page,
With type, and precept radiates the gloom,
Kindling a way to glory from the tomb,
Till Life immortal bursts into the light,
When Jesus like a sun dispels the night.

Now, joyful Faith, now plume thy loftiest wing,
In notes of Heav'n Redemption's anthem sing!
Ye morning stars who at Creation's birth
Shouted from chaos the emerging earth;
Ye angel-spirits hovering o'er their way
To lead our race to an eternal day,

Assist the strain, — celestial triumphs raise,
Till glowing worlds thrill with Messiah's praise!

Alas, for man! Speak to the tombs, and see
If at thy voice their captives shall be free!
Tell ocean's billows when wild tempests blow
To bow cloud-mingling crests in gentle flow;
Bid those firm mountains towering to the sky
Shake at thy nod, and from their bases fly;
Or up through ether let thy voice aspire
To hurl the sun from his bright throne of fire!
Will these obey? Will these at thy command
Spurn laws impress'd by an Almighty hand?
Man may wake Faith amid his spirit's death
When stop Creation's wheels with mortal breath.

O'er Inspiration boundless mercies shine,
That kindled Faith may glow to Love divine;
Yet how rebellions flame, how passions rage,
And Unbelief sways age succeeding age!

Now through the gloom of earth a star appears
To gild again the sad despairing years.
Hark! seraphs sing. O'er Heaven a glory reigns,
Which pours effulgence on the midnight plains.
In that rude place where lowly shepherds bend,
And fraught with orient gifts the wise attend,
An infant sleeps — an infant, nay! a God!
See Him whose feet the Heav'n of Heavens have
trod,
Who spread yon skies, who taught yon sun to roll,
Then breathed immortal life within man's soul!

Ye sainted Prophets, ye who saw on earth
 Through mists of ages this illustrious birth,
 Here bring your golden harps, here wake the song
 While answering seraphs roll the tide along!
 Majestic walks your Christ. The crowd, o'eraw'd,
 Own in his look the impress of a God;
 The eye, the ear, the leaping limb proclaim
 His the dread virtue of Jehovah's name;
 The lightning his, the storm, the cloud, the wave;
 He wakes the pulse of Life within the grave;
 His brow, a sun, bright with celestial beams,
 Amid this night of earth its glory streams.

Alas! in vain. What though the Son resign
 His throne, his worship, and his form divine;
 What though his power o'er Heav'n, and earth com-
 pel
 The voice of demons, and belief from hell.
 His tears, his words, his groans, his blood attest
 That Faith expires in man's resisting breast.

Yon shuddering sun in horror hides his face;
 Deep solemn darkness veils the dreadful place;
 While the upheaving rock, the rending tomb,
 Mingle their terrors with the midnight gloom.
 Here, Unbelief, thy work! How streams that blood
 From those torn hands and feet, a purple flood,
 While cover'd with a cloud of wrath he cries,
 Breathes for his foes a prayer of love, and dies!
 Whose deed is this? Ye sons of Adam tell;
 Their fetters burst, have fiends forsaken hell?
 Nay! through the scattering gloom dim forms ap-
 pear —
 'Tis *man* who drives the nail, and points the spear.

Say that such scenes bid frightened Faith depart;
Say these wild horrors drive her from the heart,
And while Messiah slumbers in the grave
No trembling spirit trusts his power to save.
From Death's grim shadows let him now ascend;
Around his Throne again let seraphs bend;
Doubt will be conquer'd, and a world confide
In those atoning drops which stain'd his side.

The darkness disappears; Night's veil unroll'd,
The purple morning mounts her throne of gold.
Crown'd with a sun and wing'd with lightning flies
A radiant angel over blushing skies;
He touches earth — earth shakes beneath his tread;
He darts his glance of flame — the guard fall dead;
Immortal strength now rolls the stone away,
And in the grave pours an exultant day,
While conquer'd Death, chain'd in his own domain,
To the Incarnate God resigns his reign.

Does Faith spring forth victorious from the tomb,
When bursts Messiah from its mystic gloom?
Alas! his own, who saw the light divine
Year after year along his pathway shine,
Saw at his call departed souls obey,
And animate again their lifeless clay, —
His *own*, behold with doubt, his *own* demand
To touch the sacred side, and wounded hand.

Has Hope then fled? O say, is no relief
For this dire malady of unbelief?
Eternal Spirit, whose Almighty breath
Whisper'd in Adam's soul, and saved from death;

Made willing Abram's hand to point the knife,
 And draw in purple streams his Isaac's life;
 Won by his prayer, on Moses unction shed,
 When awful brightness crown'd his dazzling head,
 The Prophets fill'd, and burn'd in David's strain,
 And on the Church distill'd like gentle rain, —
 Eternal Spirit, come in storm and fire,
 And Faith's immortal flames no more expire!

Around yon hill a soft diffusive glow
 Shines like a golden evening o'er the snow.
 Apostles, gazing in the mellow'd light,
 See Jesus rise majestic from their sight,
 Till through the veiling cloud adoring eyes
 Behold the vision fading in the skies.
 Alas! their joy departs. What shadows now
 Oppress each heart, and darken o'er each brow?
 While Kings, and Priests with demons leagu'd appear,
 While flames and dungeons rise to waken fear,
 Faith shrinks dismay'd, and trembles to survey
 The fire, the chain, the blood along her way.
 Low at the throne to Heav'n she lifts her cries;
 High in a Father's ear her prayers arise.
 Now bursts the rushing storm, now streams the fire
 Whose lambent circles round bright heads aspire;
 The loosen'd tongue, the radiant face proclaim
 The Holy Ghost within the sacred flame,
 While Faith, attesting her celestial birth,
 Springs forward to the conquest of the earth.

PART II. — FAITH IN ITS RELATION TO
THE INDIVIDUAL.

HAIL smiling Spring! thy life-imparting breath
Wakes dreary Nature from her sleep of death;
When glows thy sun, and milder breezes play,
Through secret mazes steals the potent day;
O'er vale, o'er mountain spreads a grateful green,
Unfolds the infant leaves to deck the scene,
Paints the bright buds, scatters gay blossoms wide,
Till flowering Earth is robed a brilliant bride.
Thus, o'er the wintry deserts of the soul,
Where passions rage, where stormy sins control,
Faith sends her ray. Lo! matchless hues appear,
Brighter than all the glories of the year,
While fragrance breath'd by Heav'n is shed abroad,
Pleasing to man, acceptable to God.

The process trace Jehovah has design'd
By Faith to renovate a ruin'd mind —
Then burn each heart, while unknown joys begin,
And Life immortal springs from death within!

By passion dimm'd, by ignorance oppress'd,
Faith darkly dwells within the savage breast,
Subdues the man, and looks, his spirit's eye,
With secret awe upon the earth and sky,
Beholds a God, where'er its gaze may turn,

Smile in the flower, and in the planet burn :
 His Wrath a midnight over Nature cast ;
 His Love a sun when tempest-clouds have pass'd.

When Science lights her torch, and sends its blaze
 To distant worlds, conceal'd from ruder gaze,
 Tears from their glittering globes the veil of night,
 Measures their masses, calculates their flight ;
 To the minute descends, shows the bright dew
 Peopled with whirling shapes of blackest hue ;
 In our own frames reveals the matchless art
 Which sends its beating pulses from the heart ;
 The hidden laws unfolds which govern mind,
 With passion burning, and by thought refined ;
 Faith triumphs at the view — with brightening eyes
 Not Power alone, but Wisdom she descries ;
 Then owns a God on Fancy not impress'd,
 To fill with joy or dread a savage breast,
 But seen with Reason's eye in mighty Laws
 Traced on Creation by her Supreme Cause.

As when the brilliant monarch of the day
 Hides morning's star in his more splendid ray,
 Is Justice overpower'd? Does Love alone
 With blind compassions claim Jehovah's throne?
 On Nature look — her open'd volume scan!
 What burning truths flash thence on trembling man?
 Soft as some gentle Zephyr waves his wing,
 And breathes on earth the mildness of the spring,
 Where'er we turn does Nature's voice assuage
 The secret dread of savage or of sage?
 Say that the hues which flush in summer's bow
 O'er man their arch of covenant mercy throw —

Say that Jehovah whispers in the breeze
Whose evening sighs wake music in the trees —
Say that the flowers below, the stars above,
Unfold and shine the emblems of His love,
And from the insect glittering in the sun
To where effulgent worlds their circles run,
That wondering men, that glowing seraphs trace
The shining footprints of eternal grace —
Is this the whole? Does Justice never blaze
Her awful terrors on our dazzled gaze?
Behold again where with its rush of wrath
The desolating Storm has forced its path!
Stand in the midnight on some billowy shore,
While death-shrieks mingle with the Ocean's roar!
See Lightnings dart, and blackening corpses strew
The shatter'd mansion horrible to view!
See Flames consume! See mighty Earthquakes' tread
Devour the living, and entomb the dead!
See Pestilence and Famine, hand in hand,
Stalk breathing vengeance through a blasted land,
While, on his throne of skulls, grim gory War
O'er mangled nations whirls his thundering car!

Where gilded temples moonlight shadows throw
O'er murmuring waves which Gunga rolls below,
'Mid torturing flames the widow'd Hindoo dies,
While murderous priests leap round with frantic cries.
Here man, turn'd reptile, winds along the plain,
Burns in the sun, or shivers in the rain,
Looks from the skies, and weds himself to clay,
Till suffering years his manhood waste away.
Above yon crowd, why does the iron tear
Those quivering forms that whirling fly through air?
Why move those ponderous iron wheels around,

To mangle human hearts, and stain the ground?
 Ah! why such rites? Why does the idol-face
 With murder glare, instead of smile with grace?
 The horrid scowl, the blood that smears the chin,
 Proclaim the guilty consciousness within —
 Proclaim the terrors Nature's lessons leave
 When her wild elements in anger heave.

Hast thou, gay cultur'd infidel, profess'd
 Such needless pangs reach not thy marble breast?
 When Fortune smiles, when Health paints o'er thy
 skies,

Bounds in thy step, and flashes in thine eyes,
 Then like the angel at the gates of day,
 Love lights thy path, and dries thy tears away:
 But let some fiery fever wake its pains,
 Flush in thy cheek, and burn along thy veins;
 Let Death exultant grin, and shake his spear,
 To thrill thy bosom with tormenting fear;
 As gasps thy clay, as casts thy soul abroad
 Despairing glances through the grave to God,
 Alas! with Hope's farewell I hear thee own
 That Justice thunders on Jehovah's throne.

If buried Faith at last will burst her tomb,
 In life or death pierce even Nature's gloom,
 And show to man how angry Justice stands
 To wave o'er earth his sword with flaming hands,
 What shafts of fire from Revelation dart,
 Burning each refuge of a guilty heart!

View angels hurl'd from battlements of light,
 Chain'd to Despair in agonizing night!
 For Adam's sin a blasted world survey,

Where suffering millions gasp their lives away!
From thundering skies see bolts of vengeance leap!
See wild tornadoes burst upon the deep!
Hear cries ascend, as liquid mountains roll,
And ghastly corpses toss from pole to pole!
Now clouds of fire on cities stream their rain;
Now burning whirlwinds sweep the smoking plain,
Types of a day, when earth consum'd shall fly
A blazing globe across a melting sky,
While Pain's wild screams, from scorching seas below,
Outvoice the waves of fire in their eternal flow.

But cold as rays of streaming moonlight fall
Upon the sculptured stone or pictured hall,
These fearful histories of wrath, which show
How Holiness must bind our sin to woe,
Dance fitful shadows, till Jehovah's breath
Awakes the soul, and ends its dream of death.
Till then the Law from Sinai peals in vain,
And paints in flame its penalty of pain;
Till then in vain the voice of Mercy cries,
And pleads the blood of Him who rules the skies.

Thy brow, Alphonso, glittering Genius crown'd,
And polish'd Art refined the gift she found;
Wealth, Beauty, Station, smiled along thy way,
Until youth's morning glow'd to cloudless day.
Where Heav'n beholds, and lingering angels shed
Encircling glories round a Christian's bed —
Bright herald beams of that resplendent morn
Whose radiant realms eternal suns adorn —
There peals a voice — "Deluded child of earth,
Say, what are all thy painted visions worth?"

The Spirit draws the veil. Behold within
 Alphonso feels the guiltiness of sin!
 Above, suspended by a breaking hair,
 The sword of Justice flashes in the air —
 Beneath, pale Death enthroned upon a tomb
 Anticipates the day of judgment-doom.
 Soon, as some trembling star appear'd to save
 The shatter'd vessel on a midnight wave,
 Faith gilds his gloom — a whisper charms his ear;
 The Cross reveals to dissipate his fear.
 Joy swells his breast, Praise from his lips aspires,
 Love in his bosom lights her hallow'd fires,
 Hope plumes her brilliant wings, and every grace
 Shines with immortal radiance in his face.

Here stoop, Philosophy! Here learn the art
 Which dries the tear, and heals the aching heart!
 Where spread the walks of memorable Greece
 Thy stately wisdom search'd, and found no peace:
 Rome waved her eagles in perpetual light,
 Subdued a world, but left a world in night.
 Vain is thy dream, if Heav'n around thee smiled,
 While sin controls, and conscience is defiled!
 Then Guilt, tormenting, thunders through the veil
 That hides thy God, and Hope's own star grows
 pale,
 Till, pleasure poison'd, all the life remains
 One sad precursor of eternal pains.

Thou, Faith, must save. I see thy form appear
 Where Sorrow drops the penitential tear;
 Smiles on thy face, a pardon in thy hand,
 Bright clustering virtues shining round thee stand.

What Science sought through Nature's bound in vain,
While suffering ages linger'd out their pain,
From thee Alphonso finds, and over earth
Beams the calm morning of a heav'nly birth.

Thou, too, immortal Faith, in trial's day,
When gathering clouds hang o'er our painful way,
When from their depths indignant oceans rise,
And dash their fury to the trembling skies,
Like Him before whose majesty impress'd
The stormy elements were charm'd to rest,
Dost hush our fears, and turn our raptur'd sight
Where tempests never sweep in paths of night!

Inspired by thee, year after weary year,
While friends deride, and cynic skeptics sneer,
Aged Noah views his ark's stupendous form,
Defies the wave, and dares the bursting storm.
Inspired by thee, the knife, when God commands,
And glittering torch are grasp'd in Abram's hands:
Should Isaac's ashes scatter o'er the plain,
Then, Death made Life, the promise will remain.
Inspired by thee, a Moses cries to God,
And Egypt's sceptre shakes before his rod;
And seas divide, and rocks and skies obey,
Where gleams the cloud of fire along his way.
Inspired by thee, when Satan's vengeful art
Obscures life's sun, and desolates his heart,
Job hears Jehovah in the whirlwind's roar,
Then bows his suffering head, nor murmurs more.
Inspired by thee, how vain a monarch's frown
When millions to his dazzling god bow down,
To make yon captives bend. Let flames aspire!

The Son of God walks with them in the fire.
 Inspired by thee, a Daniel, strong and bold,
 Disdains an empire's hate, an empire's gold,
 And, daring death, kneels in the blaze of day
 To see an angel smile his night away.
 Inspired by thee, a Paul can bleed and sing,
 While listening seraphs pause on wondering wing;
 Thy strains exulting charm the midnight hour,
 And shakes a world before thy humble power.
 Inspired by thee, when, bursting through the air,
 Ascending flames stream round the martyr's hair,
 "Forgive their rage!" with glowing lips he cries,
 Soars from the blaze, and mounts applauding skies.

When Health departs, when Friendship's smiles betray,
 The pilgrim finds a path of sighs his way,
 And weeps, while busy millions round him tread,
 Lone as some mouldering mansion of the dead,
 Ah! then beyond the cloud, beyond the storm,
 Faith views her God effulgent in man's form.
 He felt life's woe. He knew death's dreadful gloom.
 He stain'd a cross, He slept within a tomb.
 Thus Heav'n embraces earth, and tears attest
 A joy which never thrill'd an angel-breast.

Let, blissful Faith, thy magic wand but wave,
 And thorns turn flowers, and Hope spans o'er the
 grave;
 When on the clouds thy rainbow-lustres play,
 Despair will smile, and midnight glow to day.

Fidelio's mansion blushes in the dawn
 Where trees adorn, and plants bloom o'er the lawn.

Art, Virtue, Learning, round their glory shed,
 And field and forest boundless beauty spread.
 Shall storms arise? Shall Sorrow drop her tear
 O'er scenes of bliss unclouded by a fear?
 By slander urged, the mob a torch applies;
 Wild flames at midnight leap into the skies;
 There, frenzied, glares a wife with maniac gaze,
 There, shrieking children perish in the blaze.
 Fidelio ask'd, press'd, guiltless, by a chain,
 'Mid taunting wretches red with murder's stain,
 "O why, my God, with vengeance-burning dart,
 Why do thy judgments torture thus my heart?"
 He sighs no more. Now, while the glimmering day
 Struggles through dungeon bars to find its way,
 He rises from his straw; his features shine
 As round him plays a flood of light divine.
 Each cloud dispers'd, a sun, his Bible there
 With glory gilds the shadows of despair.
 "Smite on, my God," his whispering lips exclaim:
 "All shall appear when earth is wrapp'd in flame;
 Thy hand th' obscuring curtain shall unroll.
 To show why sorrow thus has wrung my soul.
 When peals thy trumpet the eternal morn,
 My wife, my children, from this bosom torn,
 Bright and immortal from their tombs shall fly
 Where flames shall never burn, or raptures die."

Behold a mother kiss her weeping boy,
 While sighs delay the word which clouds her joy.
 She cries, while from her eyes the tears will flow
 To part with all she holds most dear below,
 "My son, when first thy velvet lip I press'd,
 What unknown bliss dissolved a mother's breast!

Now mem'ry sees thee in thy cradle lie,
 Stretching thy infant hands with laughing eye,
 While on thy cheeks bright smiles the roses chase,
 Reflected from some hovering angel's face:
 Or on the grass recalls thine image now,
 Where clustering curls again wave o'er thy brow.
 But O, my son, stern Manhood bid us part,
 And veils with sorrow's shade this widow'd heart.
 Thy father's God will guard thy youthful way,
 When tempests darken trial's winter-day."
 He goes, while filial tears his cheek suffuse,
 Flush'd with gay hopes his path of life to choose;
 And when Temptation spreads her glittering snare,
 And Pleasure smiles to drag him to Despair,
 Maternal Faith, a shield in peril's hour,
 Defies a world, and baffles demon-power.

And when tornadoes burst from angry clouds,
 When lightnings leap across the vessel's shrouds,
 When thunders peal wild answers to the waves,
 And ocean lash'd to madness yawns with graves,
 When Hope forsakes, and agonizing cries
 Above the battling elements arise,
 The wife at home bids storms no longer blow;
 Her Faith chains down the seas which heave below;
 And spread the sail, compels th' obedient breeze
 Speed him most loved safe over glittering seas.

Exulting Faith! Let Science from her throne
 Unveil earth's wonders round from zone to zone;
 On tireless pinion bear the spirit far
 To circle space, and visit every star:
 Let venturous Fancy sweep on bolder wing,

Beyond where Reason soars, or angels sing,
 All theirs is thine — yet wider thy embrace!
 Revolving worlds shall weary in their race,
 The earth shall burn, the skies shall melt away,
 And o'er creation Ruin's flames shall play,
 But from the wreck of fire thy glance descries
 New systems spring, and brighter glories rise!

Unrivaled Faith! thy hand has tamed the wave,
 And snatch'd from death, and burst the awful grave:
 Thy word has calm'd the boisterous tempest's force,
 And stopp'd the sun in his eternal course,
 And moved the Arm that guides with boundless
 might

The vast Creation in its forward flight.
 And Thou must rule with matchless power and art
 The warring passions of a human heart:
 Yes! thy omnipotence alone can bind
 The waves and tempests of a deathless mind.

Exalting Faith! eternally design'd
 To make the Godhead dwell in man confin'd,
 Behold from thee vivific virtues stream,
 Thy clustering fruits blush in a quenchless beam;
 Wide over earth a grateful fragrance flows,
 And cheerless deserts blossom with the rose!

Victorious Faith! Who, from yon mystic shore,
 Ne'er cast some anxious wondering glance before?
 And what subdues the universal fear
 When Death's grim shadow darkens round us here?
 I see thee stand amid life's evening scene;
 I see thee point to Heav'n with eye serene.

While pale the Christian's brow, and wrecked his
form,

Like some lone vessel shatter'd in the storm,

One look from thee will smile his fears away,

And lift his soul within the verge of day.

Yes! cheer'd by thee I see him upward spring,

And skirt the dark abyss on steady wing,

Glance at his clay, then soar to look abroad

Triumphant from the bosom of his God.

PART III.—FAITH IN ITS RELATION TO
THE WORLD.

ETERNAL Love! bright daughter of the skies,
Robed in the morn I see thy form arise:
Wide to the breeze thy standard be unfurl'd,
And wave its peaceful glories o'er a world!

What breast the brilliant vision never knew
That gilds earth's clouds with Hope's inspiring hue?
Whose Fancy ne'er the Future's veil unroll'd,
To see the universal bliss unfold?
Yes! from Time's dawn the varied ages share
The dream that lifts the nations from despair,
Since in the soul th' immortal wish has birth
Which spreads the glow of Heav'n bright over earth.

What Power omnipotent shall burst our chain,
And from the skies call Truth's illustrious reign?
Can Science, with her orient ray, dispel
A gloom which blackens from the shades of hell?
Can Reason, in her wisest laws express'd,
Restrain the raging passions of the breast—
Bind the wild nations to her stately car,
And wreath the olive round the sword of war?
Alas, for man! no potency within
May hush this stormy turbulence of sin.
Angelic Faith, wing'd with effulgent light,

Flash through these clouds that spread Despair's
 chill night;
 From Satan's cruel sceptre bring release,
 And Love shall give to earth the sway of Peace!

Halt, frowning, lo, a phantom-form appears,
 To cast her shadow o'er the future years.
 "Judge from the past, deluded man," she cries,
 "And from Hope's glittering vision turn thine eyes.
 Poor dupe of priests, no promised day shall shed
 Millennial brightness on thy suffering head."

Paint, Infidelity, in darkest hues,
 Paint from the past thy soul-contracting views,
 In all the cheerless colors of the tomb;
 Then let thy picture frown in sullen gloom,
 And fiercer flames than hate's within thy heart
 In lightning flashes from the blackness dart;
 Yea! mountains pile on mountains in the way
 That points a world to a millennial day.
 Vain is thy art — no shades at thy command,
 No master-touches from thy wither'd hand,
 Have sketch'd such paths of blood, such skies of fire,
 As Heav'n arrays when Prophets sweep the lyre.

But shall Faith tremble at the dread survey,
 And turn aghast her wilder'd eye away.—
 Behold o'er earth the deepening shadows grow
 Projected from that darker night below —
 To passion's power, to demon-sway give o'er
 Immortal men, soul-chain'd forevermore?
 Nay! from the skies majestic scenes unfold:
 Bright mighty angels wave their wings of gold,

Rank on radiant rank from Heav'n descend
And with the wrestling saints in battle blend.
Faith views the strife. I see her towering form
Rise like a sunlit rock above the storm.
High in her hand th' Eternal Word appears,
And gilds earth's darkness with sabbatic years ;
While as the scenes of future bliss arise,
Light crowns her brow, and kindles in her eyes.

Thus when the morn dispell'd the midnight's tears,
And glanced in terror on the Syrian spears,
While gathering foes 'mid clamorous yells of hate
With ponderous axes thunder at the gate,
The peaceful Prophet smiles, and turns his gaze
Where mountains burn, and angel-warriors blaze —
Steeds paw the fire, and flaming to be whirl'd,
Those rushing chariots soon shall shake a world.

But say that Earth shall be Messiah's throne,
And each submissive age his sceptre own,
What Truth immortal, wing'd by God, shall shed
Its light along the pathway of the dead?

Where yet the temple's matchless dome aspires,
Where Israel's priest yet kindles useless fires,
Where waving censers yet their fragrance fling,
And annual thousands glittering offerings bring,
Now crown'd with flame, now flashing light divine,
Behold round Peter's brow a glory shine !
He thunders not the Law ; not hell, not death
Blaze forth their terrors in his burning breath ;
He preaches Jesus to the murderous Jew,
Invoked to trust the blood of Him he slew.

Lo, bursting from the chambers of his soul,
Rush storms of hate, wild as when oceans roll,
Until the *Cross*, Jehovah's bow of peace,
Shines through his clouds, and bids his tumults cease.

When towers yon eagle in the blaze of day,
O'er mountains soars, and steers beyond his way,
No mortal arm can stop his sublime flight
As glance his pinions in still loftier light;
Jehovah's bolt alone can pierce his crest,
And hurl to earth that sun-aspiring breast.
Thus, Paul, thy pride that grasp'd Ambition's prize,
That gazed where Fame beams o'er her brilliant skies,
His power must feel whose hand hung out the spheres,
And guides their circles through the tireless years.
He leaves his throne — the dazzled sun sweeps by,
And bathes in light the world that saw Him die.
Yet with no fires of judgment blazes wrath;
No Sinai's lightnings play along His path —
He shows the *Cross*, and sends thee, Paul, abroad,
A flaming herald justified by God.

Heroic Luther, Heav'n alone can tell
The groans of midnight breathed within thy cell.
Throned on his clouds, the fatal storm had hurl'd
Death to thy friend in fires that fright a world.
Each brilliant picture smiling Hope arrays,
Bright boyhood's dream, the plans of manlier days,
Are sacrificed in vain — fasts, vigils, sighs,
The burning prayers which from thy bosom rise,
But deeper shadows o'er thy pathway throw,
But wake to fiercer flames the hell below.
When all seems lost — when Sinai's roar within

Has stirr'd to giant power victorious sin,
 When gaunt Despair would bar the gate of life,
 And glare in horrid phantoms o'er thy strife,
 Lo, yonder Book — which tyrant-hands would chain,
 Which papal thunders smite, but smite in vain —
 Reveals the *Cross*, and bursting from thy night,
 A sun of glory gilds our world with light.

Where Scotia's cliffs look o'er the northern sea,
 Where Scotia's hills tower emblems of the free,
 Thy vast imagination, Chalmers, flew
 To snatch from gorgeous skies each splendid hue,
 That as some painted vision charms the sight
 Might Virtue's beauty smile a world to right,
 While over Vice thy eloquence would throw
 Shades dark as clouds when midnight tempests blow.
 But vain thy gifts! No soul will start from death;
 Eternal Life is not from mortal breath.
 Thy Faith now sees the *Cross* — thy spirit bends —
 As rise thy prayers Omnipotence descends;
 Soon peace, and joy, and holy lives are given,
 And Love to earth imparts the glow of Heav'n.

Where bursts the panther yelling from his lair,
 And rolls through tangled woods broad Delaware,
 The silvery moonlight glancing o'er thy face,
 That shines more radiant yet with kindling grace,
 'Mid shadowy trees, and rapt to Heav'n in prayer,
 Brainard, thy sighs breathe on the slumbering air.
 Now with subduing love, and inspired art,
 Thy words are wing'd to pierce the Indian's heart.
 What sobs, what tears, as shakes his lofty form,

Show in his troubled breast guilt's fearful storm,
Till from the *Cross* breaks forth Salvation's ray,
And each dark shadow brightens into day!

On dreary Greenland, where rude tempests roar,
And towering icebergs line the wintry shore ;
Where, dark and bleak as Arctic nights and snows,
The frozen soul to half its stature grows ;
When, weak as polar suns, had science fail'd
To warm the heart and chase the gloom which veil'd,
Bright as some tropic orb the *Cross* appears,
And melts the icy chains that bind the years ;
Then from the soul calls flowers of grace to bloom,
Whose beauty shall adorn beyond the tomb.

But tell me, who to distant lands shall bear
The *Cross* which Heav'n bestow'd for Earth's despair ?
Shall angels, eloquent, with lips of flame
Proclaim the mercy in Messiah's name ?
Bright blissful hosts, glad from your glittering spheres
Your willing feet would touch a world of tears.
From waving locks each starry crown unbound,
Your glancing pinions flash with quivering sound.
" Harps, robes, and songs, farewell," I hear you say,
" Adieu ye mansions of eternal day !
All Heav'n we give to toil in gloom below,
And preach a grace which saves a world from woe."
Alas, in vain these seraph-ardors burn :
Back to your realms your drooping wings must turn.
Baptized with power, the *CHURCH* shall bear abroad
The *Cross* which lifts a world from self to God.

From Heav'n's bright hills, hear Faith with clarion-
cry,

As moves her angel form along the sky!
“Ye Christian warriors go — your standard raise,
Till over earth millennial glories blaze!
Where stormy winters sweep around the pole,
And suns unsetting weary circles roll —
Where Nature painted in a torrid ray
Seems gorgeous as the cloud-gates of the day,
Lift high the Cross! Let Brahma raise his fanes
And Gungah’s stream in blood wind through the plains;
Let Boodh’s dark millions in their temples bend,
While long-robed priests with mystic rites attend;
Let Feejee’s fires gleam through the midnight air,
To show the writhing victims of despair;
Let Moslem vengeance bolts of ruin throw,
And blood-red crescents o’er Judea glow;
Let Rome’s dark spectre tower amid the gloom,
Crown’d with her flames, and making earth a tomb,
Yet Heav’n a shield, ye Christian warriors go,
The world your battle-field, and Hell your foe!
Lift high the Cross! Lo, Science now will rise
To hail the Gospel angel as he flies;
Life’s pages shall disperse at her command
Like seeds which Autumn wings across the land:
Winds, waves she rules, while lightnings on her wire
Shall flash salvation in celestial fire.
Lift high the Cross! Soon War’s loud trump no more
Shall peal its battle-notes from shore to shore;
No chain shall clank, no superstition throw
Grim spectral shadows o’er a world of woe.
Lift high the Cross! the CHURCH shall scatter night,
Till Love’s bright morn sheds universal light,
And to the throne one broad effulgence streams,
While Heav’n and Earth commingle in Her beams.

Judson! the Love, with a millennial grace,
Which conquer'd thee, can conquer, too, a race.
Speak from thy skies! When tortured Ava's chain,
When torrid suns pour'd fire upon thy brain;
When sadly came upon the scorching gale,
With prison-curses mix'd, thy infant's wail;
When prostrate she, thy angel, nay, thy *wife*
From pagan bounty held her guardian life,
Ah, then, by demons mock'd, by man oppress'd,
Did Love subdue the storm within thy breast?
When, burst thy fetters, softest breezes now
Expand thy sail, and play upon thy brow,
Beneath the moon waft o'er a placid stream
From scenes which frown like phantoms of a dream,
Shall Love still bind thee to that cruel shore?
How can thy heart sigh over Burmah more?
When weeping sad beneath the Hopia shade,
Where all that made earth bright for thee is laid,
Still shall thy form bow down for Burmah there?
Still shall Love triumph in that dark despair?
Where frowns Helena o'er the sullen wave,
Where Sorrow's tear drops on another grave,
Still shall thy sobbing voice the cry repeat?
Still shall thy breast with warm pulsations beat?
Still shall thy lingering eye look o'er the sea?
Still burns the wish that Burmah shall be free?
Let gold allure, let Satan on thy way
Dark mountains pile on Burmah's path to-day,
In Burmah's tongue th' Eternal Word shall fly —
Thy spirit-kindled Love can never die.
Then, Judson, then, on some celestial height,
Where play the splendors of immortal light,
Far down through ether shall thine eyes explore

The CHURCH, by Heav'n ordain'd, crown Burmah's
shore;

On Ava's turrets see the Cross arise,
While Burmah's anthems peal along the skies.

The great Napoleon on his weary rock —
Hush'd now the victor's shout, and battle-shock,
A captive now amid the sea confined,
No schemes of conquest glowing o'er his mind,
As Meditation o'er Life's evening threw
A wisdom mad ambition never knew,
While down through vistas in the clouds of time
Eternal rays gild o'er a scene sublime —
His error saw — saw Force with tyrant sway
Might briefly make reluctant man obey,
But only Love's omnipotent control
Could found enduring Empire in the soul.

Peace-breathing Love! not on the whirlwind's wing,
High o'er admiring earth I see thee spring —
Beat down the mountains with resistless force,
While angry thunders play along thy course,
And earthquakes rock, and fiery lightnings hurl'd
From midnight clouds flash terror o'er a world;
Nay! blood, and battle, and the fierce debate
But fan to flame volcanic fires of hate,
And scorch thy breast, and drive thee to the skies
Where malice never burns, or wars arise!

While angels, smiling, open gates of gold,
Incarnate Love, man's Hope, now Faith behold!
The Judgment o'er, and purified our earth

In flames which make her true sabbatic birth,
Bright scenes of bliss emerging from the fire,
In glory glow whose light shall ne'er expire,
Where Christ, majestic, rules our world, his own,
Illustrious hence with Heav'n's Eternal Throne.

THE DELUGE.



THE heav'ns are chang'd, clouds piled on clouds
rush on,
Sweeping in mountain masses o'er the sky,
Then, mingling, stand a roof of angry black.
Storm shrieks to storm — thunders to thunders peal,
And lightnings blaze their fires. Wide-streaming
floods
Dash torrents down, by column'd waters met
From bursting earth. The brook which murmuring
flow'd,
Sweeps now the valley with impetuous roar.
Earth groans convulsed with pangs. Where fountains
roll'd
Their silvery waves, volcanic forces spout.
The rivers swell, then, breaking from their banks,
Bear houses down, trees, flocks, and struggling men.
Seas, oceans rise — onward their billows sweep,
O'er rocks, o'er hills, or rush along the vales.
Despair's wild cries outvoice the battling storm.
Crowds seek the ark — with glaring eyeballs kneel,
And stretching out vain hands, for mercy shriek.
Some scale the pitchy sides; but baffled soon,
Down from the fatal smoothness drop to earth.
Some ladders lean, which envious waves wash off.

Others with ponderous axes cut the wood,
Till strangling waters stop their useless blows.
Some climb the trees; the roofs, the towers ascend;
In frenzy vain rush screaming up the hills.
Mad floods pursue. The sudden roaring blast
A billow seizing by its crested top
Soon dashes down a mountain on their heads.
Trees, hills are hid. The tall-towered city sinks,
And wondering monsters swim its corpse-strew'd
streets.

One wretch, the last of earth, a summit scales,
Whose peak of crags views all the tossing main;
With tight-clench'd fists, and brow that dares the
storm,

He stands a moment, till a wave o'erwhelms,
Extorting yells that shriek above the flood,
While darting monsters soon entomb his corpse.
Then Heav'n is all a cloud, and Earth a sea.

THE BIBLE.

THE Bible is the sun from which Truth shines,
Bright world hung out to guide a wandering race.
When Earth was born, and joyful angels sang,
Coeval with the light, its page begins;
But link'd with all the history of Time
Its words shall live, and human bosoms thrill
Till stars expire, and skies are roll'd in flame.
What boundless proofs support thee, Book Divine!
Majestic Prophecy unfolds the Cross,
Glances through Time, and draws the Future's veil,
To stamp on thee her own eternal truth!
Creation's voices are thy miracles;
Style, Precept, Doctrine, show thy Father, God,
Proving thee elder brother to the sun,—
Conceived by Him who form'd each brilliant globe,
And bound its glory round the seraph's brow.
On Zion's hill, above the clouds of earth,
And crown'd with light, stood Inspiration's sons:
Not in the barren language of the schools,
Not with the pomp of eloquence they wrote;
Not to unveil the mysteries of things—
Their nobler aim to change the heart and life,
And guide through duty to eternal joy.
God gave them words of power, majestic, plain,

Grand as their theme, yet simple as the soul.
Life, and Death, Earth, Hell, Heav'n, the Cross, the
 Throne,
The Book reveals. Streams, winds, seas, mountains,
 clouds,
And skies, and worlds, through wide Creation's realm
Were form'd to give Salvation images.
The Past, the Present, Science, History, Art,
Their treasures yield, and lends the Muse her strain.
Not one, but all our being's chords are touch'd,
And notes awaken'd deathless as our powers.
Affections, Passions, Fancy, Reason, Will,
All own thy matchless magic, Book of God,
And slumbering Conscience hears thy thunders peal.
Minds small as drops, minds boundless as the seas,
Or dim as stars, or dazzling as the suns,
Here find their being's key, and being's cure.
Here flows earth's balm ; here Heav'n's foretasted bliss :
And when the millions rise. and Judgment flames,
Thy page, O Book, of mingled love and wrath,
Where Mercy smiles, and paints her peaceful bow,
Where Justice thundering flashes on his cloud —
Thy page decides Eternal Death, and Life !

THE PERIODS.



PART I.—THE DAY.

MORNING.

Now twilight dim
Lines ocean's brim;
Lo, clouds unfold,
And glow to gold.
As the sun above the sky
Lifts his royal head on high,
His beamy way
Where splendors play,
With flaming ray
Begins the day;
While the painted vapors fly
Like wild phantoms o'er the eye,
And the dew-drops glow
Where the flowers bend low,
And the sunbeams flash
Where the rivers dash,
See! the lark mounts his cloud;
Hark! the field, and grove sing loud,
As rosy MORNING'S voice
Bids waking earth rejoice.

NOON.

THAT monarch sun,
His race half run —
No robe of clouds around him spread;
A crown of beams around his head —
On the zenith's height
Sits enthroned in light.
Now the shadows grow small
From the quivering wall.
The field, the hill
With heat are still.

How the pulse of the world beats exhausted and low!
How the breath of the world comes hard, panting, and
slow!

How the face of the world is one broad burning
glow!

Since the Day in his ire
Like a furnace of fire
Scorches NOON.

EVENING.

O'ER the earth a holy hush,
O'er the sky a purple blush,
 Soft Eve proclaim.
Down the golden gates of day
Sinks the sun with slanted ray.
 From yon wooded hill
 In the twilight still
 Cries the whip-poor-will.
The night owl in his oak
Hears the frog's solemn croak.
The crickets chirp, the beetles drum,
'Till earth is lull'd with insect-hum.
 As shadows deeper grow,
 And the winds whisper low,
 Hush! with that fading light
 EVE sinks away in night.

MIDNIGHT.

THE silent stars are in the sky;
The moon amid her clouds rides high;
Light's quivering ocean, bright and still,
Silvers the vale, and bathes the hill.

The night-dog's bark
Comes through the dark.

Now mortals sleep
In slumbers deep!

The fox steals forth with stealthy tread;
Beneath its wing the barn fowl's head;
And mists creep low
Where rivers flow;
Nor dreams invade
From realms of shade,

While MIDNIGHT's awful shadow has its birth,
And wraps like death in deep repose the earth.

PART II.—THE YEAR.

SPRING.

WARM'D by the sun and breeze,
Silently through the trees
 Life-currents rise ;
And working in the dark
Expand the swelling bark,
 Beneath mild skies.
Heralds of a new-born year,
Infant buds behold appear !
 Waked from the dead
 Now young leaves spread,
Till the forests of the world
Stand with banners green unfurl'd !
 Broke Nature's sleep,
 The grasses creep,
 How slow, how still,
 From vale to hill,
Earth carpeting with grateful dye
Soft as the blue breathed o'er the sky !
Brilliant the birds of every wing ;
From field to cloud they fly, and sing.
 The streams unbound
 A voice have found,
 And shout around
 With joyous sound

We are free

In our glee.

The winds of March subdued now whisper low ;
The showery clouds float ting'd with April's glow ;
The sinking rivers glide with murmuring flow.

Flush'd with a purple ray,

Crown'd by the hand of May —

Where morning clouds in golden masses lie,
Like angels at the portals of the sky,
Beneath a rainbow's arch of gorgeous dye,
With shifting glories quivering in the eye —

Brightest blossoms thy zone,

Youngest rosebuds thy throne,

In a car of flowers,

Just wet with the showers,

And drawn by wing'd Hours,

Ride blushing SPRING !

SUMMER.

MAY flowers have faded soon :
Ah ! scorched the rose of June
Beneath the ray of noon !

Denser on the trees the leaves still grow,
And their silent shadows blacker throw
In the longer day's intenser glow ;

While a wide-quivering haze
Ascending in the blaze,
As brighter burn the rays,
Floats dream-like o'er the gaze.

Not wildly brawl the brooks, now swift and deep,
But painfully slow, faint-murmuring, creep.

Majestic rivers shrunken in the sun.

Leave glaring rocks where waters cool have run.

With dozing eye, and panting side,

The ox stands meekly in the tide.

Stretch'd their necks along the ground

Where wide trees cast shadows round,

The quick-breathing sheep are found.

Like a distance-muffled drum

Comes the city's subdued hum.

The heat has hush'd gay morning's choirs ;

Now shrinking from day's ardent fires,

Where scarce a glancing wing aspires,

Far in the grove the bird retires.

Deep the beast in his den,

Pants till night comes, again.
Without, the mountain bare
Glow in the burning air.
Not now the cheery song
As the reaper stalks along;
Not now shakes down the dew
As cuts his sickle through;
Not now as in the morn
Winds the loud harvest horn.

But like a furnace flames the sky,
And looks the sun with fiercer eye,
And lurid clouds float glaring by.
Where late o'er standing grain the sportive breezes
play'd,
Now resting reapers, dozing in the lazy shade,
Amid the bearded sheaves of wheat-cocks freshly
made,
And all the yellow wealth of harvests prostrate laid,
Show SUMMER'S reign.

AUTUMN.

THE gather'd sheaf,
The faded leaf,
The day more brief,
Show brilliant Summer gone.
See the evening's blush
In the peach's flush!
When the leaves unfold
Gleam apples of gold;
On the tangled vine
The smooth melons shine.

There peeping into view, when lifting breezes blow,
Broad mantling clusters on the trellis'd vineyards
glow,
Whose streaming currents soon shall gush in purple
flow.

With crimson face of blood
Above the deep-dyed flood,
The sun despoil'd of rays
Glares through a smoky haze;
His car of flame is whirl'd
Around the curtain'd world
To hang o'er ocean's bed
A globe of fiery red.

Gone from the vapory air the perish'd insect's hum,
Dim phantom pheasants in the thickets lurking come,
And beat the mossy log with whirring thunder-drum.

Hark ! from his rail,
On morning's gale,
The whistling quail !

With legs and tail uprear'd, 'mid leaves crisp'd brown,
The squirrel gay his tinkling nut drops down.
Swift chattering swallows, circling on the wing,
Debate long exile till the smile of Spring ;
And the high-clanging wild geese floating fly
In long wedged squadrons through the parted sky.

Now, here and there amid the green,
A chang'd September leaf is seen,
Which, in eddying circles wheels,
When first October's breath it feels :
Or clinging yet to its frail stem,
And flashing like a royal gem,
Displays in morning's sparkling dew
Its yellow tinge, or purple hue,
Until before November's storm,
And blasting frost the world deform,
Fields, orchards, forests, lawns, hills, plains, and moun-
tains bold,
Their mingling glories to the redden'd sun unfold,
Like crimson billows flaming o'er a sea of gold,
Or Heav'n's effulgent scenes to mortal gaze unroll'd,
And gorgeous AUTUMN paint.

WINTER.

Now Autumn's glory past,
And sober brown at last —
Ah! tempests gather fast.

The shutter close
Before it blows!
Quick! stir the fire
Till flames aspire.
The lamp now light,
Which shining bright
Makes shadows fall
Dark on the wall.

The soften'd brilliance of the room
Gilds age's brow, and childhood's bloom,
And curling ringlets you behold
Hide infant smiles with waving gold.

Without, the tempest howls;
Without, the black sky scowls;
Without, the beggar's form
Is shivering in the storm;
Without, upon the sea
What shrieks of agony!

The furious winds subdued, huge leaden masses lie
Like giant spectres dimly on the silenc'd sky;
Then dusky clouds weigh'd down, the noiseless scene
bend o'er,
And mingling Heav'n and Earth seem nearer than
before.

Now dropping through the air
 A flake melts on your hair.
 Lo, millions, soft and light,
 Float o'er the wavering sight.
 The feathery whiteness still
 Descends on vale and hill;
 Exhausted grows the cloud,
 And Earth lies in her shroud—
 Fields, forests, valleys, mountains, towns, together
 show

One vast interminable spectacle of snow.

Down the steep hill-side
 Let the brave boy glide!
 While glad voices sing
 Let the sleigh-bells ring!
 Circling o'er the sky
 Let the white balls fly!
 For the children's sport
 Rise snow wall and fort!
 Till a warmer sun
 Melts the scene of fun.

Are the nights now growing cold?
 Tapering icicles behold,
 With their silver and their gold.

At opening day
 Where sunbeams play,
 How brilliant trees
 Flash in the breeze—
 On leaf and stem
 The quivering gem!

When the stars shine small and bright
 In the stillness of the night,
 Each captive stream around

Stands in ice-chains firmly bound.

Now 'neath the moonlit sky

Let skaters glance and fly!

While frost, snow, ice, on vale, and hill, and plain,

Show scepter'd WINTER's cold, remorseless reign.

PART III.—THE LIFE.¹

INFANCY. .

IN a dark cavern of the earth
 My silent stream has mystic birth,
 Then finds the light,
 And flows to sight,
 Where leaning trees with arching tops ascend,
 And o'er a mossy rock dark shadows blend,
 With perfume
 In the gloom.
 Emerging comes my boat
 On waters bright to float.
 Beneath a smiling sky
 'Mid roses soft I lie,
 While wings of Hours waft by.
 Gay flowers on either side the waters kiss,
 Whose quiet shadows sleep, the types of bliss;
 Nor spirit-clouds that sail above I miss
 In beauty fairer than a world like this.
 With brow of light,
 With form how bright,
 To calm my fears,
 An angel steers.
 As with dimpled cheek I glide
 Where soft-rippling flows the tide,

¹ Suggested from Cole.

And sweet scented breezes chide,
Lo, what seraph bands preside —
Waving their golden wings while Childhood pure and
bright,
A brilliant morning vision, floats across the sight.

YOUTH.

BRIGHTER the rose's blush,
Deeper the cloud's red flush,
As I glide
O'er the tide.

Let the angel on the land
In his foolish sorrow stand,
Since I need no more his hand.
I am free, I am free ;
My own boat I steer ;
Adieu every fear !
Faster ye Hours !
Strain all your powers !
Hands try !
Feet ply !
Wings vie,

Till we fly, till we fly
Like clouds upon the sky.
At my boat of oak
Let Age snarl and croak !
Against the shore
Let waters roar !
With wild turmoil
Let whirlpools boil !
With hellish stare
Let demons glare !
See, smiling far above

Are Fame, and Wealth, and Love!
Scorning measure,
Brilliant Pleasure
Her temple in the sky
With its dome bright and high,
A glory in the eye,
Builds for YOUTH.

MANHOOD.

A 'WILDERING glare
Is in the air.
Now lightnings flash ;
Wild thunders crash,
While billows dash ;
And the earth wears a shroud,
And the Heav'n seems a cloud —
No angel guide
Smiles at my side.
But avaunt, grim Despair,
Each peril I can dare,
And my life-burden bear !
Let torrents roar and rave,
The manly and the brave
Will ride upon the wave.
Should lightnings swifter fly,
Storms fiercer rend the sky,
Rush waters wilder by,
Hell's fury I defy.
If Ruin's shock
Creation rock,
And helps no angel hand —
In MANHOOD I will stand.

AGE.

HOPE'S breezes seldom blow:
 Life's fires no longer glow:
 My fluttering pulse beats slow:
 This silver'd head bows low:

My shatter'd boat
 Just keeps afloat.

Then, near, Life's angel, near I pray,
 And, shedding here thy golden ray,
 O, steer my Age to cloudless day!

Deep, boundless, and free
 Around spreads thy sea,
 Eternity!

Yet from thy sky,
 'Mid darkness high,
 In radiant streams
 A Glory beams.

Where splendors like an autumn's mellow evening
 blend,

Lo, seraph forms, with waving wings, from Heav'n
 descend.

On slanted ray
 With upward way,
 I soar above,

Where Age shall turn immortal Youth
 As it beholds incarnate Truth,
 And Life be Love.

MISCELLANEOUS POEMS.

OUR FLAG.

FLAG of Beauty! wide and high
Earth saw thee given to the sky
 In Freedom's night:
Then through revolution fires
Flashing borne by patriot sires,
While a gazing world admires,
 To Freedom's light.

Flag of Freedom! where a spot
Darkening did thy beauty blot
 No stain we see.
Glad to God our song we raise:
Nations, swell the voice of praise:
Every star floats in the blaze
 Of Liberty.

Flag of Promise! let a world
Wide thy glories view unfurl'd
 O'er land and sea!
Float, since God has purged thy stains:
Float, till Earth has burst her chains:
Float, while Heav'n bends o'er our plains,
 Pure, bright, and free.

Flag of Glory! let no more
On war-clouds thy eagle soar
 While death-fires play!
Glow now Love where once glared ire!
Never may a star expire,
Till the Heav'ns in final fire
 Have pass'd away!

BOABDIL'S LAMENT.

SEE, Granada, thy King weeps in sight of thy walls!
Crown and Empire now gone, a sad exile he stands!
Behind him the memories that cling to thy halls,
While before him Fate shows a lone grave in far
lands.

Ah! how Fancy recalls thy groves, fountains, and
bowers,
The soft silver of moonlight, the beauty of art,
Till she hears the lute's note steal aloft to thy towers,
Where the maid at the window leans hush'd in her
heart.

Now thy festival music swells high on the air:
The forms of gay dancers float again o'er my sight:
My canopied throne towers 'mid the brave and the
fair,
And the Alhambra's glories stream wide through the
night.

In the palace and street turban'd heads I behold:
My snorting steed paws 'neath my banner unfurl'd:
And gleam from the minaret bright crescents of gold,
As the Bride of the Prophet smiles Queen of the
world.

Alas! Fancy's dream, now thy glory is gloom:
By the thunder of cannon thy battlements torn:
In the garden, no rose: on the orange, no bloom:
And thy brave knights in chains, while in tears their
wives mourn.

I see infidel swords in thy streets flash their flames:
I hear infidel songs bursting loud from thy halls:
Yea! the infidel priest thine own prophet defames,
And the infidel cross shines o'er Alhambra's walls.

Allah's will must be done. This my star did foretell,
Rising bright from a throne to set dark in a grave:
The Moor's empire is o'er: my Granada farewell!
Let thy King drop a tear for thy fair, good, and brave.

AYXA'S REPROACH.

LAMENTS for the coward! for frail woman be tears!
Let the weak breasts of lovers heave their sighs to
their fears!

But the eye of the warrior with lightnings should
flame;

And the lip of the warrior should battle proclaim.

Had my purple scarf broken o'er Alhambra's stones,
And thy proud father stifled the breath of thy moans —
Had the Arabic steed whose hoof thunder'd through
night,

From his curved neck hurl'd thee down some precipice height —

Had the stern Hassan's courage but flash'd from
thine eye —

Thy banner had Zagal wide unfurl'd to the sky —
Had chivalrous Musa worn thy crest and thy crown,
And thy steel gleam'd in death where thy gold was
paid down —

Had the zeal of the Christian burn'd hot in thy soul,
When we saw o'er our hills his red cross first unroll —
Had thy mother's own heart in thy bosom beat warm,
Spurning infidel leagues, and defying war's storm —

O Granada thy towers would now rise from the earth ;
In thy streets no plum'd guard ; in thy halls no rude
mirth :

On Alhambra now no silver cross would be seen
Where the crescent's bright gold flash'd for ages its
sheen.

And, Boabdil, know, a king his realm cannot save
Unless his soul says, " Give me a throne, or a grave."
Never, Fate, by thy star sank Granada in gloom .
Nay ! thy weak woman's heart was thy Empire's sad
tomb.

THE RAINBOW.

MYSTERIOUS Bow! born from the rain and light,
How silently thine arch is flung o'er Heav'n!
What Power invisible arrests his beams
Bright flashing from the sun, their hues untwists,
And curves them o'er our world in majesty?
Round, matchless Form! do spirits in thee dwell,
And bend thee down the sky, and weave thy charms,
And run along thy glittering sides, and smile
From thee o'er man rejoicing in thy peace?
Who lifts into the air these tints of earth —
The soft green of leaves, the violet's hue,
The gold of fruits, the crimson of the rose,
And all the varied garniture of seasons?
God first conceived thy grace: God breathes thy hues:
God hangs thee in his cloud a pledge of peace.
Fancy sees thee spring across a sea,
Glass'd in its solitary wave, ting'd bright
With thy glory. There o'er a boundless plain
Thy circling colors smile, or soar aloft
Above the lonely gloom of savage woods.
Glowing from emptiness thine arch again
Embracing looks on fields, and streams, and hills,
While towering here into its gorgeous tints
Float spires of cities. Grandly over vales,
Pillar'd on mountain-tops, bright Bow of God,
Majestically high, thy Beauty stands,
Pure type of Love, uniting Earth and Heav'n!

INVOCATION.

WHEN in the east bright purpling morn
Proclaims another day is born,
And o'er some hill the kingly sun
Rides forth his radiant race to run,
The blushing moon, the star retires,
Veiling from view night's modest fires.
But though invisible their ray
Within the brighter blaze of day,
They shine, they roll, no pause, no rest,
With angel-millions on their breast.
Thus Fancy, Reason, Art, engage
To pour your splendors o'er my page;
And yet, as stars when bursts the light
Withdraw their glittering globes from sight,
So may your radiance fade away
Before Religion's heav'n-born day!

THE PHOTOGRAPH.

As you toss on your bed what strange images roll,
Like wild clouds chasing clouds, o'er the turbulent
soul!

Alexander and Xerxes had laid by the crown
When visions of glory flash'd o'er pillows of down;
And Cowper, I dare say, beheld too from his bed
That unfortunate wig fly from famed Gilpin's head.
I had thus my strange thoughts from my home far
away,

And half robbing the night to make plans for the
day,

I, not a king, not a prince, or Gilpin, I trust,
But a poor common mixture of light and of dust,
I could not dispel the queer thought for my life —
How convenient a thing is a Photograph Wife!
I see the eye, cheek, lip, nose, the form, the attire,
With those touches of taste man was made to admire —
Muff, bonnet, glove, kerchief, all arrang'd for the fun,
And as anxious as Madame to smile to the sun.
Now, no poutings, no scoldings, no dark-gathering
frown,

Like a cloud in a storm when the bright sun goes
down.

Take her gently — kiss the lip — look into the face!
See how sweetly she smiles like a rose in a vase!

And is she demanded? Would you send her away?
Ah! no trunks are to pack, and no fare-bills to pay.
Just three cents will transmit her from Texas to
Maine;

Just three cents bring her back when you want her
again:

All done in a minute—like the flash of a rocket,
Wife comes from the letter-box straight to the pocket.
And Photograph Children, why would not they do?
No combing and dressing, no expense for a shoe;
No romping, and bawling, and fighting, and mussing;
No turning, and twisting, and fixing, and fussing;
No thought for the future, and no tear for the past;
Sweet, and gentle, and good, and beside it will last;
Not like some fickle summer that sleeps in the sky,
To mutter wild thunders when the tempest sweeps by.
Indeed such were my thoughts: I ask pardon of
all—

These strange pranks of the mind will not stop at
our call.

Just then I reflected—ah! no *soul* brightens there;
'Tis only a shadow, unsubstantial as air—

But a few fading lines which the sun in his play
On the paper has kissed with a frolicsome ray.
And that warmth of the lip, and that fire of the eye,
And that flash of the soul like a gleam of the sky;
That soft tone of kindness when Love breathes in
the face,

And those little attentions bestowed with such grace;
The low tender whispers far away from the crowd,
When Eve peeps with her star through the rift of
the cloud;

And the romp, and the chess, and the dolls, and the
fun,

And the shout, and the skates, and the sleds, and the
run,

And all that is bright, and sweet, and lovely in home,
Gilding earth into Heav'n if o'er deserts we roam,

O yes, give me these — all — trouble, children, and
wife —

Take the smile from my lip, take the blood from my
life,

But take not those I love, their Protector, their God,
Who, if smitten by Thee, will yet bow to Thy rod!

Yea, should dark Death invade, should we follow the
bier,

As we drop on the grave the soft light of a tear,

We will look in the hope of a home to the skies,

Where the eye never weeps, and the heart never
sighs.

MATIN.

WHEN Morning with her ray
Flashes the golden day,
Then let glad thanks arise
Bright glowing as her skies !

And when the bird-songs swell
From field, and hill, and dell,
Earth, in one chorus raise,
Thy matin-strain of praise !

With incense of the flower
Breathed from the wood and bower,
O, send, my Heart, above,
Sweet fragrances of Love !

And as the King of light
The Earth and Heav'n makes bright,
Christ, may we see by grace,
The glory of thy face !

VESPER.

WHEN evening stillness brings the dew,
Ere shadows veil a world from view,
Calm let my whisper'd Vesper rise
As the hush'd earth and twilight skies !

With the low murmur of the stream
Which ripples in the moon's first beam,
May the pure current of my soul
To thee, my God, serenely roll !

While Heav'n with stars bends vast and bright,
Aw'd by the majesty of Night,
Rev'rent in earth's temple now
Before Omnipotence I bow.

Thus when the Universe is found
With solemn darkness veil'd around,
High through the gloom, O Christ, I soar,
And with a tranquil love adore.

THE USEFUL AND THE BEAUTIFUL.

'Tis only when rough roots below
Unsightly masses tangled throw
 Both deep and wide,
Majestically the tree can rise
Which time and storm to age defies,
 In stately pride.

Unpolish'd rocks from hills convey'd
Upon the solid earth are laid
 By careful hands.
The temple then where Art would reign
Its beauty lifting from the plain,
 Securely stands.

While forms which please, profuse and bright,
Their brilliant colors flash in light
 For Fancy's view,
Yet firm as their Almighty Cause
Has Reason bound the worlds with laws
 Like numbers true.

Learn while the Beautiful may smile
From flower to star, and care beguile,
 Life's charm and grace,
The *Useful* yet beneath must lie
All loveliness of earth and sky,
 Creation's base.

INVOCATION.

THE ancient artist from each form and face
A soft expression steals, or line of grace,
Until in one great work all beauties glow,
And Heav'n's Ideal breathes on earth below.
Not from the body doom'd to sad decay,
Whose wasting features Death shall seal from day,
But from the *Mind*, immortal as its sire,
Whose flame shall burn when brilliant suns expire,
May choicest gifts to thy loved page impart
A brighter lustre than the painter's art.
Best Friend! let Reason smiling on her throne
With gracious sceptre claim thy work her own:
Let Memory all her varied treasures bring,
Let glittering Fancy wave her rainbow wing!
Then come, Religion, daughter of the skies,
Light round thy brow, and Love within thine eyes,
Thy garland weave, and more desired than Art
Paint the bright virtues of a Christian heart!

THE HEART'S MASTER.

WHEN Morning pencils on her brightening sky
The first faint trceries of the coming day,
One low lone bird will trill its melody
Responsive to a solitary ray.
But as the sun floods Heav'n and Earth with gold,
Each leaf is tremulous with exulting strains
That gushing, mingling, swelling, high are roll'd
Till burst glad orchestras from hills, and dales, and
plains.

And thus through some Cathedral's solemn walls
A single voice will chant in subdued tone,
While from a single stop the Organ calls,
Thunderous and deep, its supplicating moan.
Now hark! each tongue, each key wakes music round,
Peal upon peal — billows on billows rise,
Till altar, pillar, dome, shake with the sound
From that majestic choir whose music thrills the
skies.

In some lone vale of Heav'n an angel strays,
To view its glories in soft mellow'd light:
See, o'er his harp involuntary plays
His trembling hand — his lip moves to the sight.

That murmuring strain a thousand strings awakes —
Voice answers voice — to seraph, seraph sings ;
Lofty and full the gathering tide now breaks,
And in the mingling praise a Universe partakes.

Affected thus, behold a human heart !

Each single chord with earthly music thrills.
Wife, parent, child, and country have their part :
When Friendship strikes her string what rapture
fills !

But only Christ, the Master, wakes the *whole* —
Can touch each key, and harmonize each tone,
Until from *all* recesses of the soul,
Love's melodies eternal reach Creation's Throne.

THE MARTYR'S PRAYER.

WHILE weighs the weary chain,
And my limbs creep with pain,
 Chill'd by the place ;
O God, with weeping eyes,
A prayer breathes through my sighs
Which would climb to the skies —
 Jesus, thy grace !

The grass, the flower, the stream,
The blushing morning's beam,
 A mother's face,
With my home pure and bright
All rush across my sight,
As I cry from this night —
 Jesus, thy grace !

Dark, dark, dark here I lie,
Shut out from earth and sky,
 To end life's race :
Cold, cold, cold is this stone,
Where chains clank to my moan,
And the walls hear me groan —
 Jesus, thy grace !

But, Saviour, through my night
A Promise beams with light,

And shows thy face :
Lo, a bright beam of gold !
I see the gates unfold,
Heav'n's glory I behold —
Jesus, thy grace !

WRITTEN FOR A LADY ABOUT TO PRE-
SENT HER PHOTOGRAPH.

THE costly jewel, and the clasp of gold,
Oft glitter on the gift where love is cold.
I ask not hence the aid of brilliant Art
To gild the priceless friendship of the heart.
Will you accept myself, and her survey
You knew when Girlhood danced along our way? ·
Now as life smiles amid our clouds and tears,
The Woman seals the choice of earlier years.
When fades this image painted by the sun,
When shadows fade, and substance is begun,
May we ourselves arise from dust and night,
Where Friendship brightens in eternal light!

THE HILLS.

I WALK upon the hills. The autumn smoke
Beneath curtains the vale. Not only scenes
But sounds are mellow'd in the haze. The corn,
Yellow and full, torn from its wither'd stalk
Without a crackling sharpness, on the ear
Soft rustles. Half hid by elms th' ancient mill,
Gigantic in the mist, and spectre-like
And dim, hushing its huge ponderous wheels,
Now rumbles in the vapory distance.
Industry subdues its boisterous energy,
Made gentle by the spirit of the day,
And speaks to these heights in mingling murmurs.
The axe — no more with quick successive strokes
Piercing the ear — gives a dull lingering sound.
The far flail muffles its thunders, beating
Heavily like that scared pheasant's doubtful wing.
The shrieking train upon the rattling bridge,
Whirling with breath of smoke and eye of flame
Swift as a rushing tempest, fills the vales,
And sends along these heights the violence
Of a monster tamed into subjection.
Why, ye Hills, from you no murmuring sounds?
Why on you no cultured fields with loaded grains
Made golden in the sun? Say why upon
Your breasts no orchards drop their autumn fruits,

Or ripening clusters purple in the sun?
Why do these hamlets gleam, these cities lift
Their spires, lofty and bright, alone from vales?
O'er your ribb'd sides Art rears no monuments,
And Traffic wakes no hum. Bold how ye stand,
And rough, and desolate! Have ye no use?
Nay! not in vain is your sublime magnificence.
Ye wreath your cliffs with mists to feed the springs;
Ye catch the clouds, gigantic as yourselves —
Huge mountains in the air, from oceans drawn
By potent suns, to rise, and float, and fade
Before dissolving rays, unless *your* crags
Arrest the fleecy vastness in its flight —
To robe your forms, and crown your tops with snows,
Whose melted treasures bless in streams the vales.
Ye therefore clothe the trees; ye cheer the flowers
To breathe their scents; ye help the grateful grass,
And touch the grains to gold, and o'er the world
Bid Commerce spread her sail, diffusing life.
Your steps, ye Hills, the busy cities build;
From you the stately shaft, and graceful arch,
And circling dome. Art hews from you the rocks
She shapes to forms of majesty, which make
Immortal virtues palpable to ages.
From you vast navies spring, and float the seas
Bearing their conquering thunders round our globe.
Ye see the Empires rise: ye see them fall:
While worn by time, and marr'd by storm and fire,
The monuments ye give eternal stand,
The living witnesses of vanish'd Power.
Proud Hills, ye too the guardians rise of Liberty!
Expell'd by Luxury from the vales, she lives
Amid your cliffs, and breathes your air, and leaps

Your crags until her arm can bear aloft
Triumphantly the banner of the State.
Our souls with you soar to sublimity.
The Poet climbs your steeps, talks with your storms
Where lightnings play, and eagles wheel and scream,
And looks along your bright eternal snows
Until their whiteness mingles with the clouds.
Great Hills, ye rise the altars of Jehovah,
Reared by Omnipotence above the earth,
That man may kneel and worship nearer Heav'n!

CHRISTIAN LOVE.

CHILD of Heav'n, immortal Love,
Flashing from thy throne above,
Wing'd with light, appear, appear;
Sweetly smile away each tear!

Warm'd by thee my glowing breast,
With the Spirit's life-breath blest,
Burns with gratitude and praise,
While Joy gilds my happy days.

Duty, now, and Death and Hell
With no slavish fear compel;
But a Father's smile constrains—
In temptation's hour sustains.

Love, with thee life's path is bright;
Sweet the cross, the burden light:
Death no longer frowns in gloom;
Glory gilds beyond the tomb.

A PRAYER IN DARKNESS.

MY God, to thee I cry,
 With burning brow;
The prayer, the tear, the sigh
 Must move thee now!

Around what mountains rise!
 What clouds appear!
What tempests sweep my skies,
 And wake my fear!

O bid these rocks divide,
 These billows cease!
O bid these storms subside,
 And whisper peace!

Mountains fly from my way,
 Dispers'd the night;
Thy sun unfolds the day,
 Thy brow is bright.

Glory to thee, my God!
 I trust thy grace;
I kiss in faith thy rod;
 I see thy face.

A MARTYR'S TRIUMPH.

THE sullen river moans
By these deep dungeon-stones
 So drearily:
Yet, fetter'd by my doom
Within the midnight gloom
Of this cold prison-tomb —
 My soul is free.

Let tyrants screw the rack
Till my limbs twist and crack
 With agony!
One thought shall not depart,
If breaks my crushing heart;
While life-drops burst and start —
 My soul is free.

And should the morrow's fire
Flash round my brow its ire
 'Mid demon-gee,
One note shall swell the same
Through the roar of the flame
Which wraps my writhing frame —
 My soul is free.

And when I spring away
To an eternal day
 The Christ to see,
I will sing as I soar
Where smiles the golden shore
And earth's storms sweep no more —
 My soul is free.

A SAVIOUR'S SYMPATHY.

WHY dread the glance of envious man
When perishes each cherish'd plan?
Why should the stinging word or sneer
Start from my eye one trembling tear?

Let Fame, and Wealth, and Youth, and Power
Lie withered like a morning flower!
Let golden visions sink in night
As clouds when fades the evening light —

Let friends withdraw: let earth appear
A chilling prison-house of fear,
Where a torn agonizing heart
Feels human sympathy depart —

Yet, Saviour, in my hour of gloom
I will recall a lonely tomb:
I will recall a tender eye
That marks my sorrow from the sky.

O, if no solitary rose
To Heav'n unnoticed fragrance throws,
Then not unseen on earth's drear wild
A desolate, submissive child.

THE CHURCH'S PRAYER.

ETERNAL King!
While valleys ring,
While mountains sing,
With banner wide,
 Appear!

Lo, nations call,
See temples fall!
Earth disenthral!
Hail'd by thy saints,
 Appear!

From gates of day
Where sunbeams play
To evening's ray,
Mid seraph-songs,
 Appear!

War's banner furl'd,
Down Falsehood hurl'd,
To claim our world,
With lifted Cross,
 Appear!

Peace marks thy tread,
Joys from thee spread,

Love crowns thy head;
High on thy Throne,
 Appear!

Salvation learn'd,
When Earth is burn'd,
To Heav'n returned,
In Glory, Christ,
 Appear!

CHRIST'S MERIT.

SINAI'S flame no longer now
Blazes wrath around my brow;
Now the Law with fiery breath
Cries not for eternal death.

Not my groans, my griefs, my fears,
Not soft penitential tears,
Not confession of my sin
Merited this peace within.

Vigils, crosses, prayers are vain
To dispel the secret pain;
All we do, think, suffer, feel,
Sin's deep wound can never heal.

Did the Spirit's graces' bloom
Shed o'er earth their rich perfume
Bright as Heav'n's own roses spring,
These could not salvation bring.

Could our lives like those above
Glow with Holiness and Love —
Angel-virtues, pure and high,
Could not yet Salvation buy.

Jesus, thy shed blood alone
Merits at thy Father's throne,
Takes the guilt, the stain away,
Promising eternal day.

RESIGNATION.

FATHER, I all to thee resign,
And seek thy will alone.
Hush! struggling heart, nor dare repine,
Thy God is on the throne!

He leads a way I would not choose,
Where thorns and rocks appear;
Shall I His guidance then refuse?
Be dry, thou gathering tear!

What though the cross, the storm, the fire
Arise along my way?
Perish each earthly fond desire!
I look for realms of day.

With joy, with gratitude, with praise,
Thus disciplin'd below,
I burn the lofty strain to raise
Where angel-ardors glow.

LOOKING UNTO JESUS.

WHEN Guilt my suffering soul weighs down,
Jesus, one LOOK to thee
Dispels the Father's righteous frown,
And sets my conscience free.

When Sorrow's cloud spreads o'er my sky,
And gathers round my heart,
Jesus, to thee I lift mine eye;
A LOOK — the shades depart.

And in Temptation's dreadful hour,
When Earth and Hell unite,
Jesus, a LOOK from Heav'n brings power
And lo, my foes take flight!

When at Life's close Death's dark cold wave
Around my head shall roll,
Jesus, a LOOK to thee will save
A sinking, shivering soul.

And when beyond the realms of night,
Jesus, I soar to thee,
A LOOK through thy eternal light
Thine image gives to me.

INVOCATION.

No fabled muse I call from fount, or grove,
Or silent hill to waken song, and breathe
Heroic ardors through my timid verse.
Ye cloudy phantoms rule where God is not;
I dare not bow, or court your mystic smiles.
Will he whose thunders burst from Sinai's top
Around each sculptured form, not flame to see
Invoked wild fancies which give idols shape?
To Thee, Jehovah, infinite in Truth,
I lift my voice. Thy glory lights the sun
And gives the day: O, shed its radiance here!
Thy lavish hand spreads beauty o'er the world:
Inspire my Fancy to adorn this page!
Thy wisdom guides the stars: my Reason guide!
Rises to thee the melody of spheres?
O, now attune my verse to please thine ear,
In strains which suit Eternal Majesty!

EARTH AND HEAVEN.

INSTINCTIVELY the sad burden'd soul ascending
 To Heav'n would rise :
But ceasing soon the too wearisome contending,
 On Earth it sighs.

Staggering thus beneath his load the pilgrim dying
 Sinks down oppress'd :
And thus from his skies will drop the eagle flying
 With wounded breast.

Shadowy, and dim, and evermore retiring,
 To mock man's tear,
Is Heav'n a bright cloud-scene in cold mists expiring
 When man draws near ?

Nay! even Faith, on Earth, God's type no more
 despising
 Heav'n's shade behold, —
Substance to be seen sometime from flame uprising
 In Glory's mould.

THE NATIVITY.

BUT dimly the Prophets relate the strange story —
Their Jehovah, Creator, incarnate on earth ;
And cherubim faintly catch glimpses of glory
From the wide-beaming star shining bright o'er his
 birth.

The types and the shadows at last disappearing,
The long night of the earth shows the morn's gilding
 ray :

Lo, the mists of the ages from mortals are clearing :
Soon shall burst o'er our world the full noon of Life's
 day.

Fly, angels of love, o'er the Heav'ns fly singing,
And thrill the Creation with the anthems ye raise ;
Come, ye sons too of earth, your rich tributes bringing,
That frail infant your God, O adore while ye praise.

And say on a Cross He must hang for man, bleeding,
And say He must sleep in the embrace of the grave ;
Yet high on the Throne of his Light interceding,
Immortal in glory His redeem'd He shall save.

That babe, our Creator, will flame, all beholding,
Majestic, Earth's Judge, 'mid His clouds, thunder, and
 fire,
And then to his people forever unfolding,
God incarnate shall reign when the sun shall expire.

LIFE AND DEATH.

Wide-wing'd perish'd monsters o'er Heav'n once fly-
ing ;
Cloud-piercing trees that on the land stood dying ;
Fish in the sea, —
Show Life and Death through mystic ages vying
To fit Earth, man, for thee !

The primal elements recoiling, blending,
Fire, Flood, and Winds, and Snow, and Ice contending
This vast world mould,
Where Beauty from Deformity ascending,
And Life from Death unfold.

The Forests and the Harvests spring from their decay-
ing ;
Strength flourishes but when on weakness preying,
In air, sea, earth —
The world a tomb and cradle always saying,
Life has from Death its birth.

Our mortal race from dust to light returning,
Our globe made pure by universal burning ;
Our Christ's last breath
Which purchas'd Heav'n — for our eternal learning
That Life must rise from Death.

WINTER THOUGHTS.

UNSIGHTLY leaves, brown, curled, and dry
That orchard tree deform,
And clinging to its limbs defy
The dissipating storm.

Now through the snow they wildly wave
With melancholy sound,
Yet shrink from circling to a grave
On the hard frozen ground.

But when gay Spring's reviving breath
Enrobes a world with bloom,
The swelling buds, awak'd from death,
Push sear leaves to their tomb.

Thus Sorrow's storms, though wild and high,
Oft sweep no fault away,
Like tempests which the leaves defy
Through the drear winter day.

But when God's breath the soul doth wake,
And Heav'n's bright beauty bring,
Supplanting Virtues bloom, and make
An everlasting Spring.

SHADOWS.

WITHIN our gleaming river
Behold the mirror'd trees,
Whose deepening shadows quiver
When rippling breathes a breeze!

Trunk, and branch, and leaf appearing
Down in the waters lie,
To shape the elm uprearing
Its form into the sky,

Its image, true, is shimmering
In its deep liquid glass,
Darkening, distinct, or glimmering,
As wind and cloud may pass.

Thus in my soul reflected
What forms of Heav'n appear —
Confus'd, revers'd, affected
By every smile and tear.

Eternity's own morning
Will show for shapes of Time,
Where Beauty lives adorning,
Originals sublime.

ON A BIRTHDAY.

MEMORY, Love! recalls the day
When morning shade, and sunlight lay
 Upon the grass:
The Heav'ns look'd down in cloudless blue;
The rose breathed fragrance from its dew,
And Earth smiled in her loveliest hue
 To see thee pass.

Thy cheek was bloom, thine eye was light,
And Love, and Hope, and Beauty bright
 Were in thy face:
Now as I see thee through the years,
Untouch'd by time, undimm'd by tears,
No flower when opening Spring appears
 Unfolds such grace.

Along Life's path the cloud and storm
Have sometimes darken'd o'er thy form,
 And swept thy sky;
Yet Trial's years in heart and brow
Have made thee fairer to me now
Than when thy whisper'd marriage vow
 Brighten'd mine eye.

If blushing round some elder rose
The young bud bursts, the sweet flower glows

Beneath green trees ;
But statelier its maternal pride
To see such Beauty at its side,
And know that mingling perfumes glide
Upon the breeze.

CLOUDS.

How glorious the clouds! From the night distill'd,
Here, stealthy mists creep low upon the fields,
Hang o'er the streams, or climb around the hills
Whose forests tower like islands of the sea
From an expanse illimitably white,
Gilded and purpled by the morning's glow:
There, gathering on the sky-encircled deep
They hide its face, and veil its mirror'd stars,
And run along its shores, taking their shape;
Then, rising grandly with the kingly sun
Float through the Heav'n. How infinite their forms!
Now they seem a breath, confusing to the eye,
Scarce staining the pure blue whose dome roofs
 round,
Sublime and vast, our world; but whitening soon
Diffuse it o'er with noticeable dimness.
Stealing from ether, mysterious and still,
They find artistic shapes; touch'd by some hand
Invisible, a fretted ceiling form,
Or beautiful mosaic, regular
As the fine sculptures upon palaces;
Now leaden, dull; now tinged with bronze or gold;
Now fring'd with red volcanic hues of flame.
Behold, by tempests borne, they sweep near earth;
Straggling and thin below, ashen above,
And higher still, a midnight black, frowning

And terrible — mass pil'd o'er darkening mass ;
 Not torn and shatter'd by the driving storm,
 But in huge solid columns towering far —
 Rushing on demon-wing across the sky
 With sober, noiseless earnestness, that seems
 Intent to reach the limits of the world.
 The rain-clouds with their vapors fill the Heavens,
 Moist, uniform, and low. Loftier nimbus,
 With his casual showers, floats by itself
 Oft o'er the zenith hung. The cumulus
 Rises aloft with silent stateliness —
 Blanc lifted into air — rather the Alps —
 Peak upon snowy peak and ridge on ridge —
 With ever changing tops, involv'd and round,
 That circle with a boiling whirlpool's force
 By the quick lightnings cross'd, while from their
 deep
 Retiring vales will growl the summer thunders.
 Gorgeous the pomp of clouds that waits the sun!
 Behold his heralds flaming in the east!
 A fringe! a belt! fold burnishing o'er fold!
 What hues! what forms! varieties of glory!
 Purple and gold! mountains bright of flame!
 The wealth of Heav'n lavish'd on the mists
 That curl, and glow, and burn as lifts the sun
 'Mid floods of rays, his head above the world
 In silent, brilliant, dazzling majesty!
 The Evening's tints, how rich, how delicate!
 Those crimson stains! those vistas in the sky
 That fade into infinity, with hues
 Serene and exquisite! those silver lines!
 Those isles of light! those palaces of gold
 Where angels seem to watch, and wave their wings!

Excessive glory oft invisible
To man, pouring o'er Heav'n with a brightness
Which suggests the effulgence of God's throne.
Nor, ye clouds, are ye mere painted splendors,
Born to please the eye. No! mysterious
In your chambers form the friendly snows
To fold their mantling whiteness round our world,
And from the murderous Winter keep the grains.
Your treasures seal, or let your brazen masses
Sail the hot sky, glaring with furnace-flames!
How soon the flowers drop withering from their stems,
And fading grasses die, and harvests fail!
How soon the moaning forests naked stand
Waving dry ghastly branches in the air!
How soon will cease the murmur of the streams,
And oceans vanish in the burning suns,
And sink away the busy hum of cities!
From Famine born, Despair how soon will force
To tortured lips his low and sullen sounds,
While, white with skeletons, the Earth will roll
One universal tomb—silent, and waste,
And terrible—a spectacle of Death!
Ye bright fantastic shapes that deck the skies,
Man's life and hope—ye clouds that circulate
O'er land and sea, and float aloft to Heav'n,
Rise, in your beauty and your glory rise,
Wafting, like fragrance from the censer's gold,
Earth's gratitude, acceptable to God!

ABOVE.

How the winds are ever blowing
Which the veering clouds compel!
How the streams are ever flowing
The majestic seas to swell!

How the golden mists ascending
To the sun from ocean's face,
Drop the rain by Heav'n's intending,
Rills and rivers to replace!

Day and night o'er earth are throwing
Both their brightness and their gloom,
While Death, chasing Life, is mowing
Ceaseless harvests for the tomb.

Seasons pass, and Time, advancing,
Makes the empires rise and fall;
While man sees, wherever glancing,
Mournful changes which appall.

But *above*, I yet view glowing
Mystic worlds serenely bright,
With no tempests madly blowing,
With no shadows of the night—

O'er our changes always sweeping
In tranquillity sublime,

Held by Him within whose keeping
Are Eternity and Time.

Ever could their spheres decaying
Be hur'd back into the night,
Soul, believing, and obeying,
Thy Eternity is light.

REGRET.

A TEARFUL mourner kneels beside a grave,
Along whose green is mingling autumn's gold;
While through the hazy air mute branches wave,
And crimson leaves a dying year unfold.

Back from the mystic past what memories teem!
Angelic Beauty smiling rises now:
In evening's hush beside the moonlit stream
He hears again the silver-whisper'd vow.

The white-robed priest, the brilliant festal throng,
The rainbow glory Hope o'er youth did throw,
Bright wedded years like golden light and song
Gild e'en the tomb with momentary glow.

But why that sudden cloud? Why shakes that form?
Why does a tear-drop burn the throbbing eye?
Thus from the hills will sweep some midnight storm
To veil the summer moon and tranquil sky.

Does a wife's death-scene make this anguish-start —
The last seen smile, the agonized farewell,
The life-ties tearing from an aching heart,
That pang of lonely grief we never tell?

Ah, no! A *word* recall'd spreads now this gloom:
Its tone once thrill'd the ear which sleeps with pain,

And comes back thundering from the solemn tomb
By conscience waked, till heard through years again.

O, when we drop upon the grave a tear,
And Memory lifts the curtains of the past,
May scenes of love unstain'd and bright appear,
Nor dark *Regret* with clouds the heart o'ercast!

ART AND NATURE.

THE Picture view! what wild sublimity!
Omnipotence has waked and hurl'd the storm,
Tossing the deep to tumult. Round that tower,
Rising defiant on its ocean-rock,
Dashes the maniac wave, whose flying spray
Hung high in air, before the tempest streams,
While sea-birds circle on exultant wing,
Silent and calm, above the roar and foam
Of battling elements. A mystic spell
Enchains with mingled awe and admiration.
But draw near the canvas! Th' illusion fades.
What rough unseemly colors shock the eye
With horrible confusion! Ugliness,
Distorted, painful ugliness appears,
Where Genius breathed in line, and hue, and shape,
To waken ecstasy. Is *this*, then, Art?
Ye forms of grace that in the temples hung
Of ancient Greece — gods, heroes, goddesses —
Eternal inspirations of the ages:
Ye scenes of Beauty smiling in your pride
Along Italia's palaces — and ye,
'Neath colder suns — say, bright creations
Of immortal Art, from your mild glory
Say, are ye, too, crude before inspection?
Not Nature thus. Behold her worlds on worlds,
Systems round systems rolling thro' infinity —

Vast spheres of light which flood a universe —
The boundless, the majestic, the sublime :
And then, approaching, scan her parts minute —
The glittering drop; the blushing peach's down ;
The yellow dust that loads the murmuring bee ;
A feather's tint; an insect's golden wing ;
The bloom upon a flower ; a particle
That floats in morning's beam — *all* Nature's forms,
Her hues, her laws, alike are miracles ;
Remote, and near, the perfect work of God.

SOLICITUDE.

I TREMBLE, Love, when in my heart
 I see thine image lie, —
To me bright beauty which no Art
Could from the dreams of Genius start
 In forms to please the eye.

The morning Heav'ns which blush and glow
 Reflected in the stream,
But on its *surface* splendors throw,
Nor waters tinge which glide below
 Unconscious of a beam.

Thy Love through *all* my being reigns,
 As when the painter's dye
Each canvas-thread pervades and stains,
And if a fragment but remains,
 Its colors you descry.

I start to hear my heart-strings break —
 Each life-hope rent away,
The ruin fancy Death could make,
The weary blank, the dull cold ache,
 The midnight where smiled day.

Then Faith takes wing — beyond the tomb,
 In God's eternal sky,
Our Love shall live, where shades no gloom,
And Christ to all imparts the bloom
 Of Immortality.

LIBERTY.

'Tis not the chain that makes the slave,
Since, dared the tyrant's might,
'Mid dungeon-gloom may lie the brave
In liberty and light.

Let Power then to its minions say —
“Go, beat, and burn, and kill.”
That torture which the flesh can slay,
But animates the will.

A world defied, the man behold
Majestic in his chain;
Unaw'd by power, unbought by gold,
Unterrified by pain!

If Wrong a universe could pile
On the true honest soul,
Immortal, it will trust, and smile,
Uncrush'd beneath the whole.

THE DEITY.

O GOD, Thy temple is the Universe.
Thou Source of all, adoring, let me bow
And feel Thy Presence! Till Creation waked,
Eternal Solitude enshrined Thy Majesty.
The wise Omnipotence of Love around
Then pour'd in wide infinite profusion.
Yes! Being's chain begins and ends in Thee —
From whom, by whom, for whom all existence.
In the wild mystic circuits of their change
Impelled by Thee, the elements combine.
Light shines Thy brightness circled in vast suns
Diffusing thence Thy beams to glimmering worlds.
Th' electric essence bursting from the cloud
In thunder-bolts, or tamed to flash man's thought —
A universal power, the subtle link
Of flesh and soul — darts Thy swift volition.
Form, Number, Law, are what but Thee express'd,
And Beauty, Grandeur, and Sublimity?
Thy colors paint the world. Thy Hand bends round
The glittering rainbow's arch. Majestic stands
In Thee the dome of Heav'n. The breeze, Thy breath,
That lifts the flower and curls the wave, and steals
O'er murmuring leaves to cool the fevered brow.
The seasons pass — Thy visible glory,
Their Life by Thy Divinity inspired.
Volcanic forces which the mountains heave,

And storms which oceans dash through midnight
clouds
Are but Thy will. The rose-drop, and the world
Exist in Thee. Thy Throne the centre is,
Thy Power the bond, Thy Intellect the guide,
Thy Presence the circumference of all.
Mind is an emanation of Thy Deity —
Reason, Fancy, Passion, Will, must act in Thee.
Wrong Thy permission: pain Thy punishment:
Creation and the Cross are Thy decree —
The pang, the joy of an Eternity.
By Thy mystery aw'd, touch'd by Thy grace,
In this Thy Universe I lowly bow,
And since beyond my grasp, Infinity,
I trust, obey, adore, hush'd into peace.

LEAVES.

WHEN joyous Spring first clothed the trees,
How beautiful and bright
The leaves were dancing in the breeze,
And flashing in the light!

When Summer glow'd with fiery breath
Fresh vigors still they found,
And laugh'd away the spectre death,
And tinkling, spurn'd the ground.

On them what mimic suns had birth,
Resplendent in the dew,
And o'er the forests of the earth
Their sparkling brilliance threw!

The daring leaves triumphant waved
Like streamers gay unfurl'd,
When storm-clouds flash'd and tempests raved,
And thunders shook the world.

With dying glories Autumn came,
Before the Winter's gloom,
And kindled his funereal flame,
And deck'd them for the tomb.

Now, crisp'd and brown, and torn and dry,
 Before the breeze's breath
They break, and fall, and whirl, and fly,
 The saddest types of death.

Majestic yet from their decay
 Successive forests rise,
And man shall spring in Life's great day
 Immortal for the skies.

THE REAL, AND THE IDEAL.

SAY, Spirit, shall thy bright Ideal
Be obscured by mists of earth,
And the dull exacting Real
Stifle a celestial birth?

Why thrill senses form'd for pleasure
With intensity of pain?
Why do Powers without a measure,
Ne'er maturity attain?

Why are plans forever failing
In this selfishness of strife?
Why are hearts forever wailing,
Crush'd beneath the load of life?

Why are we to Heav'n aspiring
By earth's cares and duties bound,
Until with the struggle tiring
Groveling we love the ground?

As the germ by silent growing
Towers into the lofty tree —
As the streams by ceaseless flowing
Rush in rivers to the sea —

As the dawn whose modest glances
Look through clouds with feeble ray,
Brightening when the sun advances
Makes the brilliance of the day —

Spirit, thus all things are tending
To development *above*,
Where thy Powers will be ascending
In eternal Truth and Love.

Then seek, O seek thy great Ideal
Beyond fragmentary time,
And pursuing thus the Real,
Earth will end in Heav'n sublime.

THE ROSE.

HAIL, gentle Rose, crown'd queen of flowers,
What makes thy lovely hues?
Is it the drops of summer showers?
Is it the morning dews?

Say, can that dark repulsive earth
Which round thy roots is seen,
Give this delicious fragrance birth,
And soften in thy green?

Or do these whispers of the air,
Waving thy graceful stem,
A beauty give which kings despair
To purchase in a gem?

Or from the golden realms of light
Perhaps a sunbeam weaves
This bloom of glory, rich and bright,
Which lingers in thy leaves.

With the first purple of the morn
Perhaps an angel flies
To spread these colors which adorn,
Thus rivalling his skies.

Can a celestial spirit hide
Now in thy circling bloom,
And lift thy stem in stately pride,
And shed thy sweet perfume?

What, noble Rose, with matchless power,
Forever thus commands
To thee a perishable flower
Our souls, and eyes, and hands?

The eternal thought of God thou art,
His Beauty to enshrine —
The charm that binds thee to each heart
Resistless, is Divine.

WILLIAM THE SILENT.

NOBLY upon a mountain height
 Stood loftily and long,
A tree to greet the morning light,
 And wake the poet's song.

And often would bright sunbeams play
 Around its gilded form,
When o'er the vale the night-mists lay,
 Or swept the darkening form.

At last is heard a murderous sound
 Beneath the monarch's side,
That tree the *axe* brings to the ground,
 Which *tempests* has defied.

Thus on a tall commanding height
 The Martyr in the state
First caught the beams of Freedom's light,
 First caught the storms of hate.

Ah! didst thou fall by Murder's hand
 Who had the battle braved?
Earth's tyrants know that Truth shall stand,
 And Liberty be saved.

As from the mountain oak's decay
A nobler tree shall rise,
The Martyr higher lifts in day
The cause for which he dies.

OUR COUNTRY.

NORTH, South, East, West unite!
Beneath our Flag of light
 Be one, be true!
Ours is the old world's Past:
Ours is the furnace-blast:
Ours is to melt, recast:
 And shape the NEW.

The light of empire first
Over the Orient burst
 In morning ray;
It soon on Europe gleams,
Now o'er our West it beams—
A sun of glory streams,
 To make Earth's day.

Men of each clime, speech, race,
Under our Flag find place,
 And Freedom's rest!
Your blood with ours must flow;
Your life with ours must grow,
Till we a Manhood show,
 Earth's last and best.

Let sects and states no more
Hurl hate from shore to shore—

Let all be one !
Here smiles the hope of man ;
Here Time's last act began ;
Here closes God's world-plan,
And sets the sun.

It sets, to burst more bright
O'er man, a son of light,
Immortal now ;
See Earth from fire arise :
Her Beauty death defies :
While 'neath eternal skies
To Christ all bow.

THE END.



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