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Book .L 2

DRAMAS
OF THE
499
ANCIENT WORLD.

BY
DAVID LYND[✓]SAY.
" "



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IT may be necessary for me to say something respecting the singular coincidence of my having chosen the same subjects as LORD BYRON for two of my Dramas. I entreat permission to assert, and credit when I do assert, that it is entirely accidental : that my Dramas were written long before LORD BYRON'S were announced,—before I could have had any idea that his brilliant pen was engaged upon the Drama at all. The inferiority of the execution of mine may perhaps lead me to regret that I have selected the same subjects, otherwise I never can lament any coincidence with the admired Author of MANFRED and CHILDE HAROLD.

December 1, 1821.

OFFERING

TO THE

MANES OF ESCHYLUS.

DEIFIED Shade, upon thine altar, lo !
If that an unknown worshipper may dare
To throw a grain of incense, with deep awe
And sacred veneration, I approach
Unto thy Temple of the Universe,
To pay my deep-felt homage !—For thou wert
The elder-born of the majestic muse,
Pale brow'd Melpomene, whose lofty spirit
Was mingled with thine own ;—thou wert the sire
Of the majestic scene, and the great lord
Of wild sublimity,—the ancient world
Was thy high throne, from which thou didst extend
Thine empire, and didst seize on Heaven and Hell,
And made them tributary to thy power,
And they, obedient, sent their subjects forth
To homage thy omnipotence of skill.
Mightier than earthly kings, thine empire hath
Extended o'er our souls !—It is immortal,
For thy dominion and thy sceptre shall
Rule o'er expiring Time, who bears thy name

Stamp'd on his subject brow, that when he dies
He may bequeath it to Eternity.
O thou, whose throne is the broad thunder cloud,
On which thou sitt'st, crown'd with thy mother's fire,
Rob'd in sublimity, thy solemn eye
Surveying all things, penetrating worlds
Whose sport terrific lanceth lightnings round thee,
O let one beam of that ethereal fire
Strike on the rapt soul of thy worshipper,
That so he may become such part of thee
As is the atom to the universe!

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THE DELUGE.

THE DELUGE.

SCENE *Gardens.* CHASALIM *alone.* *Time near
Morning.*

CHASALIM.

BREATHE, mountain wind, around my burning breast,
And thou, blue water, in thy fresh'ning arms
Receive these wearied limbs, and lave this brow
Which the divinity of dreams hath made
His wild uneasy throne ! How look the stars !
Placid as they were wont, and smiling on
This world of their enlight'ning. And thou, Moon,
Goddess of Night and Beauty, thou art there
Still sailing on the blue sea of thy heaven,
And gladdening with thy light the dusky egg

Which, ere creation was, the Demiurge
Breath'd from his lip, and made this lovely world.
And Sun of glory !—bright and fire-clad God !
Thou didst retire to night unto thy couch,
The unspann'd Ocean, as thou didst of old,
Not angrily, nor veiling thy bright brow
In clouds of fiery blackness, but didst sink
Languidly, lovingly, upon the breast
That rose to meet thy kiss, and hide thy beam,
That thy soft sister's reign be not impair'd
By thy superior glory. Wherefore, then,
Came on my soul this dark and fearful dream,
This ghastly shadow of some coming ill,
Which, wrapp'd in dim obscurity, evades
My searching glance, but hovers round my couch,
And with uncertain motion threatens me,
And in low hollow accents fills mine ear
With the dark cry of Death !—Of death !—is that
A thing to fear !—it is but rest !—or sleep !
But stiller !—undisturb'd by rocking dreams.
The calm, soft present, fearing not the future ;
Darkness,—but sweeter,—all unpeopled by

Our tortur'd human fancy, for our spirits
Are fitted to its nature, and we sport
In that which now we shrink from. Our forefathers
Lie tranquilly in their high roofed graves,
And their pleas'd souls within their ancient home,
The uncorrupted body, sleep secure,
Loving the night of death,—the quiet rest
Which the pale king hath given. Shrink I then
From thought of death? No, fearless would my heart
Welcome the chill touch of his sceptred hand,
Could it but strike us both,—not break the cord
That binds it unto thine, belov'd Semronda!
Queen of my soul, without thee, life or death,
Day, night,—eternity and time, were one
All odious to thy husband!—But, she comes,—
I feel the sweet air perfum'd by her breath,
Exceeding all the odours of those flowers
Press'd, but not wounded, by her gentle step,
Who bend their heads in soft submissive duty,
As proud to kiss her foot.—Come, fairest bride!
My matchless bird of beauty, come and seek
Thy rest in this fond bosom! Rise, fair star,

Zohara of this earth, arise and shine
 Upon Chasalim's world ; chase hence his darkness
 Of sad despair, and make a paradise
 Of his benighted soul ! She comes,—fair queen,

SEMRONDA *enters.*

Daughter of angels, in thy bowers of bliss
 Could thy Chasalim's words arrest thy sleep !

SEMRONDA.

I heard thee not ; but on my soul, my husband,
 Came the form'd wish of thine ; this love, Chasalim,
 Hath made us one, so dear, so intimate,
 That every thought of thine is speedily
 Stamp'd on Semronda's bosom.—Unto thee
 I am the lucid stream where thou may'st see
 Thine own lov'd self reflected ! Mighty love !—
 Oh what a vassal hath thy wondrous power
 Made of the child of light !—for I, the daughter
 Of the proud angel king, am joined now
 With the mere son of earth !—It is the sin
 Of my high race,—for Semiazas fell
 From his dominion o'er the universe
 For woman's love,—shunning the courts of Heaven,

The star-pav'd glories of its wondrous halls,
And light eternal, for green vested earth—
Her transient day beam, and her dusky night,
Which, in her friendly mantle, hid the glow
That mounted quickly to his angel brow,
When, with impassion'd eagerness, he vow'd
The Demiurge himself, less lovely far
Than his too bright creation!—that the crown,
The star-gemm'd diadem that press'd his brow,
Was lustreless and pale to woman's eye,
And all Heaven's bliss a dream to woman's love!
I am of that high race, and I partake
Those tender feelings; for I love thee, son
Of mere mortality, and for thy breast
Shun the proud throne of my forefather's heir,
The angel born,—the monarch of this land,—
The magic-mantled Firaoun.

CHASALIM.

Sweet flower
Of the proud tree of Heaven! but gather'd now
To grace Chasalim's bosom;—I were blessed,
If that thy fragrant loveliness might bloom,

Without a fear that other hands may pluck
The bud, that I would waste a life to guard.
But sometimes comes uncall'd the bitter thought,
That Firaoun loves thee, that he courts thy kiss,
And knows not that thy heaven-dew'd lip hath given
That blessing to Chasalim. When he hears,
As one day sure he must, how rich thy love
Hath made the son of Enoch,—will he not
With hand of violence, and rage of blood,
Tear thee from this sad bosom?—In my sleep
Came images of horror on my soul,
And threats of coming evil, from my mind
Have vanished all forms, and of their speech
I hold not now the sense;—but still I see
The dusky darkness which appall'd mine eye;
Hear the shrill screams, and deeper groans of woe,
That burst upon mine ear; and still retain,
In all its freshness, the dire sense of horror
That bound up all my senses, and o'erspread
Me, and all things around me, with its gloom!
Some evil cometh, dearest:—I would know

If thou, who, though of angel sire, art mortal,
Be threaten'd by its nature.

SEMRONDA.

Weariness

And sorrow have oppress'd thee, and prepar'd
Thy mind for terrors ;—seek thy couch, while I
Ask counsel of my parent deities ;
They, who imparted knowledge to mankind,
Will veil it not from me ; but thou of Seth,
All mortal born, must not behold the rites
That bend the demons to my will.—Retire
Unto thy couch, Chasalim.

CHASALIM.

No !—O no !

Daughter of Heaven, call not to thy aid
Those proud rebellious spirits. This dire bond,
This fatal union of the angel kings
Unto the sons of nature, and the gifts
Of magic wisdom which from them they gain'd,
Have rous'd the anger of the Eternal God,
Who, slumbering long, at length in wrath awakes,
And doth with threat'nings loud forbid the sin,

By the stern voice of Lamech's holy son,
 The Chaldean magian Noah. My Semronda,
 Use not thy magic powers, but to guard
 Thyself against Firaoun.

SEMRONDA.

Unto his

Oppos'd my powers were nothing:—No avail
 My wisdom 'gainst the spells of him whose might
 Can bend the vaulted heaven,—shake the throne
 Of Demiurgus,—and untune the airs
 To which the Architect hath made his worlds
 Move in delighted measure!—Ere too late
 Let me exert my wisdom. Lie thee down
 On the green bosom of thy mother earth,
 A bed of richest fragrance;—rest, while I
 In thy behalf woo the pleas'd king of sleep
 With gentle blandishments unto thy couch,
 Courting the gentle pressure of his hand
 Upon thy heated brow. Come, soothing power!
 Thou soft, sweet Twilight, that doth link the day
 Of glowing life, with the dark night of death!—
 Come! Spread thy dusky mantle like a veil

Between the world, and this thy votary,
And shut it from his thought. O gentle king,
Come smilingly, and let his fever'd lip
Drink deeply of thy crowned cup, which bears
The draught of Time's oblivion. May it steep
His weary sense into forgetfulness !—
Or if it be thy will, that on his soul
Should rise the images of this world's deeds,
Then, let thy urn of shadows, gentle sleep,
Be fill'd with visions bright of future joy ;
That if it please thee from the world of night,
To give those winged visitants release,
They may, as spirits of beauty, float around
His weary couch ;—clearing the heavy air
From fumes of mortal grossness,—breathing heaven,—
Whispering of love and joy,—that on his lip
May sit a smile, and on his soul delight,
Sooth'd by that charmed slumber !

CHASALIM.

How resist

That voice melodious, soft as infant's sleep,
Or moonlight, kissing the enamour'd breast

Of the pale stream between the veiling leaves
Of envious Lotus, who for jealousy
Covereth the silvery god, and eagerly
Mounteth to steal that kiss his weeping sire
Waiteth with tender rapture ;—soft as hope,
The secret hope of love ; or as the day dream
That comes upon us when our hearts are full,
Taking the soul abroad to the wide fields
Of air-hung Fancy, leaving the dull house,
The body, tenantless !—What were the words
She sung ?—for it was music,—was it not,
That came so soothingly upon my spirit,
Charming it into rapture, floating round me
Like airs of heaven visiting the brow
Of the poor fever'd man !—the Paradise
Of sound,—the music hallow'd of the Heavens,
To which, at the Creation's birth, the stars
Mov'd in their orbits, and the radiant kings
Sung in immortal verse the victory
Of light o'er brooding darkness !

SEMRONDA.

Sleep ! O sleep !

While I prepare the offerings of power
For our angelic altars. From this vase
Of purest crystal,—lo!—the sacred dew
Gather'd from Hermon's top I pour;—the tears
Of Semiazas, when the mighty band,
The proud two hundred, swore eternal faith
To him, their chief, as, quitting their bright heaven,
They sprung to earth, and on that mountain's height
Thunder'd defiance to the shuddering stars,
Who veil'd themselves in dark and heavy clouds,
Dreading lest that their rage and desperate force
Should pluck them from their orbits, and to earth
Dash them, shorn of their glories!—Angel drops!
Fall on the stainless marble!—and with them
I throw the healing herb, the plant of power,
Wound closing Byblus, whose mysterious aid
To him we owe;—and then, the royal wood
Of the tall kingly cedar, and a branch
Of melancholy Gopher, scented Henna;—
And lastly, from thy parent stream, I take
Thee, golden daughter of the silver flood,
Thou sun-rob'd lily, and of thy rich flowers,

Form thus a conqueror's diadem to crown
 My gifts to Semiazas !—May the fire
 Consume my offerings, that, in golden clouds,
 Breathing celestial odours, they may rise
 Unto the air-hung palace of my sire,
 Filling its domes with perfumes grateful to
 His purer essence, till in tranc'd delight
 He beat the sweet air with his mighty wings,
 And light upon his altar !—Now the fire
 Creeps to the offerings,—and now ascends
 In spiral columns of celestial brightness.—
 Enter my virgins, and, as rise the flames,
 Lift up your voices to the middle air,
 And, with the song of sweetness, which he loves,
 Draw down the king of angels !

NOAH *enters suddenly.*

NOAH.

Vain thy charms ;
 Beautiful sin forbear ; for he whose presence
 Thou dost evoke, with sinful rites, abhorr'd
 Of his Creator, hanging in the air,

Hears and receives the perfume of thy vows,
But dares not venture hither !—

SEMRONDA.

Dare not !— who
Restrains the Prince of Angels ?

NOAH.

He, whose mercy
He hath outrag'd,—whose justice is provok'd
To make a dread example of the wretch
Who hath defied his master. God hath sent
His ministers of vengeance :—All the crew
Of daring angels lie in desarts wild,
Cover'd with darkness, and their haughty chief,
Swung in the air between the earth and heaven,
Looks with an agonizing eye upon
The sufferings of his partners. This is but
The signal to a higher, mightier doom,
And a more awful change. Rise, sleeper, rise,
Wake from thy vain deluding dream of bliss,
Unto the sad reality of woe.—
Death is among us ;—thine offended God
Hath sent to warn thee. Wake !—arise !—repent.

CHASALIM.

The voice of Iamech's son.—My gracious kinsman,
What good occasion now hath brought thee hither ?

NOAH.

Nothing of good, for good is flown for ever
Away from this stain'd world ; and spotless truth,
And weeping mercy, veiling their bright looks
With their spread pinions, have forsaken earth,
And sought a refuge at the sacred foot
Of the Almighty's throne. And he hath heard
Their sorrowing plaint, mingled with human groans,
And cries for " Justice ! Justice !"—and around
His sacred seat, and on the heavenly air,
Rose the foul scent of blood,—of brother's blood,
Drenching the sick'ning earth ; and he hath sent
Justice, for whom they call'd ; and she will come,
Arm'd with the power and with the wrath of God.
For thee ! thou son of the most holy race,
Child of my father Seth, though thou hast been
Corrupted from the worship of thy sires,
And mix'd with their unhallow'd rites to men,
And sun, and moon, and stars ; yet for that thou

Hast kept thine hand white from thy brethren's blood,
 And 'midst a cursed race, hast stainless been.
 And thou, though of the race of Heaven's foe,
 The fierce rebellious angel,—yet for that
 Thou wast a duteous daughter, and a wife
 Of stainless virtue, from this spot, this earth,
 This God abandon'd world, I have commission
 To lead ye forth, bear ye in safety hence,
 Ere seas of wrath o'erwhelm it !—

SEMRONDA.

Still the same

Dire threats of utter ruin ! Lamech's son,
 How long wilt thou continue to appal
 Our hearts with thine ill-boding prophecy,
 Thine oft told tale of death ;—yet still we live,
 And shall live on ;—but yet I thank thy love,
 That would from danger, fancied though it be,
 Shield us, thy youthful servants. Good Chaldean,
 I may not quit my country !

NOAH.

Thou, Chasalim ?

CHASALIM.

Am hers, and share her destiny, Chaldean,
 However dark its colour;—for thine ark,
 I cannot quit Semronda !

NOAH.

Son of Enoch,

For the last time thou hear'st the voice of Noah —
 If thou unto mine ark wilt trace thy steps
 With thy Semronda, I assure thee peace,
 When all is war around thee !—If thou stayest,
 Dark is the doom that threatens thee, dark the fate
 Of thy Semronda, for the shadowy voice
 Doth cry of Murder, murder ! But this earth
 Shall be the limit of thy punishment,
 And in the world of light thou shalt rejoin
 Thy bride, the child of angels. Doubt me not !—
 The universal horror is at hand ;—
 The waters, now, are struggling to break forth
 From their enforced bondage ;—they will tear
 A passage through the bosom of the earth,
 And cover all her creatures !—Earth is sick !
 Sick of the crimes of man ;—and she hath pray'd

To die ! And her Creator will accord
 That prayer, and bid her sufferings cease !
 And he will pour into her bruised breast
 The bitter draught of death, and she *will* die,
 And all things will die with her ! Now, I go
 Unto my task appointed, to forewarn
 The blood-besotted king of Mesre's land,
 That judgment is approaching ;—like to you,
 He will bemoek my warning, but like yours
 Shall not his judgment be, for hell is gaping,—
 The nether world by him unknown or scorn'd,—
 And will not be defrauded of her prey,
 But share it with the waters. Now, I go,
 And go from you, for ever !—

CHASALIM.

His dark threats
 Hold strange alliance with my fearful dreams.—
 Within my soul his words have woke a feeling
 Of wild affright.

SEMRONDA.

Somewhat of this in mine
 I found, when hence he parted ;—but this tale

He hath so long repeated ;—and what power,
 While Semiazas is our guardian god,
 Can harm our happy land !—He raves !—or dreams !
 Or the dark spirit of melancholy hath
 Enthron'd her in his brain !—Or he is old,
 And full of wayward fancies, and his heart
 Envies the bliss he can no more partake !
 Yet is he good, and sorrows much to mark
 The cruelty of Firaoun ! But, my husband,
 Leave me awhile to finish that wise spell
 His mortal presence broke. I will draw down
 Mine Angel Sire, and from his lips divine
 Obtain the promise, that no ill shall reach
 The husband of his daughter. Firaoun then
 May strive, in vain, to injure thy lov'd head,
 Even when our secret bond, before his eye,
 Lies open as my soul !

*Morning — The Palace of Mesre.—FIRAOUN starting
 from his sleep.*

FIRAOUN.

Off! Off! grim spirit,

Withhold thy scorpion lash!—a moment hold.
 Spare this torn mangled flesh ! Thy thirst for blood
 Shall be appeased ; grant me but the time.
 The best in Mesre shall, beneath thy feet,
 In crimson oceans roll. O spare me, spare me !
 I give thee empires, sceptres !

MANOAS enters.

MANOAS.

Son of Heaven !

Lord of the fertile earth, was it thy voice,
 Whose agonizing accents struck mine ear ?

FIRAOUN.

I am alive!—awake!—'twas then a dream !
 Yet my flesh quivers, and my heart still throbs !
 Thanks, Semiazas, thanks ! But—ah ! observ'd !
 My secret terrors known !—Shall the slave live,
 Who, with a sacrilegious eye, hath look'd
 Upon the naked heart of Firaoun,
 And seen it quail'd by fear ? The world would laugh,
 And scorn the coward's godhead. He shall die !
 The dead have closed lips ! Ho ! Ecros, hear !
 Ecros, thy master calleth !

MANOAS.

Mercy ! mercy !

FIRAOUN.

Hence, slave ;—thy doom is sealed. Ecros, here !

ECROS *and* LOUCHANEM *enter.*

Thy rival whom thou hatest, he hath dar'd
 To steal upon my privacy, and win
 My secret thoughts from sleep. Thou did'st forewarn
 Me of his treasons, which I doubted long ;
 Now I believe thy truth ;—bear him to death !
 Thyself, see thou the blow fall down upon
 His death devoted head !

ECROS.

Lord of the world,
 Thy will is fate ; and like to fate, it shall
 Be still unchangeable. [*Exeunt.*

FIRAOUN.

My friend Louchanem !
 Son of the royal house, of Cain's high blood,
 I need thy soothing, for my soul was scar'd
 By images of horror in my sleep,
 And scenes, whose meanings mock my wisdom's power ;

I will unto thy faithful breast repose,
 The strange wild visions of my dreaming hours.
 Not that I heed their threat'nings, for I laugh
 At danger, and my mockeries shall make
 Him cower beneath mine eye, and vanish from me !
 But thou may'st tell me, what I wish to learn,
 Their meaning, wise Louchanem, for thy skill
 Is potent as thy master's !

NOAH *enters.*

NOAH.

Though it be,
 It cannot ravel the high mystery
 Couch'd in thy dream of horrors. I am sent
 To open the clos'd eyes of Mesre's king,
 And tell him plainly what the Eternal hath
 In midnight visions shewn.

FIRAOUN.

It hath been said
 Thou troublest our land, and hast been long
 A dreamer of like horrors, threat'ning men
 With unheard judgments, deaths unnatural,
 And the wide world's destruction.—This I know

A thing impossible ;—yet, for my dream
 Was to myself, I will declare its shadows,
 And thou divine the meaning.

NOAH.

To the God

Who rules, and is all things, think'st thou, Firaoun,
 Ought is impossible? Lo! He who made
 The round earth, and the waters, may destroy them.
 The mighty Thought, that in the realms of space
 Made myriads of bright worlds suspended hang,
 May loose the golden chord that linketh one
 Unto his footstool, and that one the worst,
 The guiltiest of his millions,—it must be,—
 Thy dream will tell of this,—but speak its form,—
 I will divine the meaning!

FIRAOUN.

In my sleep,
 Methought I sat upon my golden throne,
 And all my lords around me. Music spake
 Sweetly my praises, and my people join'd,
 Voicing my triumphs with the instruments
 In harmony celestial. Suddenly,

An awful voice, unlike the tones of man,
Summon'd them from my presence. One by one
They went,—and ne'er return'd,—for by his name
Was each man summon'd !—I beheld them go,
And angrily, but had no power to stay,
Nor they to shun the voice ;—they went, and I
Was left alone upon my golden throne,
In my deserted hall !—Then I grew sad,
And went abroad to find some human face,
That might convince me I was not alone.—
But I found none !—not one ! and I was there
The sole, lone, living thing !—The king of death
Had traversed my realms, and all my friends
Had follow'd in his train.—Mankind was dead !
The world of animals partook their doom,
For in unnatural quietness they lay,
The tiger, and the lamb, at rest together ;
And all the air was dark'ned by the swarms
Of birds that dropp'd around me, without wound,
They fell, and died before me ! the trees groan'd,
And shook with dying agonies, and, anon,
They were all bare and blasted, and expir'd

With hideous crashings ! The plants shrunk, and va-
nish'd

Quite from the lap of earth.—The flowers wither'd,
And earth's green mantle, studded with bright buds,
Was chang'd to one of black ! a robe of mourning,
Which cover'd all her form.—The sun was gone,
And in his place I saw a gap in heaven,
From which there flow'd a cataract of fire,
As it would fall to purify the earth,
And be the grave of all things ! Then I shriek'd,
And ran unto my home, but one pursued.
I knew not whence he came, nor what his form,
But giant-like his step,—and his swart arm
Was as a god's for might ;—he held me fast,
And with a scourge, of living serpents fram'd,
Tore off my quivering flesh, and I had strength
Only for groans and prayers : They were not heard,
And in that mortal agony I woke.

— — — — [Pause.

Why speak ye not ? Louchanem, dost thou fear
A dream, a very dream ? the heated fruit
Of the last banquet, of the gay carouse,

We revell'd in together ? 'tis no more !
Come, laugh !—laugh merrily !—Some music, ho !
Let the loud instruments discourse of joy,
For even the Chaldean smiles at the conceit,
That woe should threaten Firaoun !

NOAH.

King, thou art
Threaten'd by mightier powers. God himself
Prepareth earth's destruction !—This, thy dream,
Presenteth what will surely come before thee,
The death of all the world.—The sins of man
Have risen up, a countless crowd, before
The Almighty's awful Throne, and they have call'd
Loudly for vengeance, and a ghastly train
Of haggard spectres, victims of those crimes,
Have crowded round the closed gates of Heaven,
And with their bloody fingers pointed down
Unto their gaping wounds, and pray'd their Lord
To hear, and to avenge them !—The bright sun
Shrunk from his daily task, and would not draw
The dews from earth, for that her moisture now
Was nought but human gore !—The moon hath pray'd

To veil her chaste head in the darkest clouds,
That from her eyes earth's foul impurities
Might be conceal'd for ever !—And the stars !
Your gods ! divinities of worship ! they,
Sick'ning from the vile rites your homage pays,
Your human offerings and blasphemous mirth,
Have shrunk from their high places in the Heaven,
And gone to hide their brightness in the folds
Of the Almighty's garment !—The lorn earth,
Forsaken now of all, lies broken-hearted,
By black ingratitude of her fierce sons,
And all her utterance is a deep curse
Upon her hell-bound children !—Ye have fed
With all the beautiful of God's own earth,
The direst of his foes,—the rebel band
Of proud revolted angels,—fatten'd them
With blood of those, who to their Master's name
Continu'd faithful, and that bribe hath gain'd
A portion of their secrets.—Ye have dar'd
To ape the power of Heaven, and with weak hand
And haughty heart, to throw the thunderbolt
Around ye, like to Gods,—with magic rites,

Striving at rivalship with Him who holds
 The universe in chains !—whose mighty palm
 Covereth the burning sun !—whose single glance
 Causeth the fiercest lightnings, and surveys
 At once the mightiest angel, and the grain
 Of sand in Ocean's bosom !—He hath sat
 Unmov'd, but not unheeding, still for ages ;—
 But now he riseth !—And his rising is
 Like to himself, most terrible, and is
 The signal of dire wonders. He will come
 Walking upon the waters, and will heap
 Destruction on destruction, as thy dream
 Show'd to thy sleeping spirit !—Man, repent !—
 Wake from this worse than death-like lethargy,—
 Lift up thine hands to Heaven,—bend the knee,—
 Grovel in dust,—lay ashes on thy head,—
 Rend thy rich garments,—beat thy sinful breast,—
 And cry for Mercy ! mercy !

MESRAM *enters.*

MESRAM *to herself.*

She whom I love hath wedded with my foe,—
 She whom I love is Firaoun's destin'd bride ;

And Firaoun, from the soul of his proud heart,
Doth hate Chasalim. Now to Firaoun's ear,
If I convey the tale, Chasalim dies,
And the mad king unto the widow'd eye
Will be a thing abhorr'd !—Then I may sooth
Her suffering ; and when Louchanem tears
From off his brow the band of royalty,
I will, for my assistance, claim reward,
And that shall be Semronda !—Ha ! the son
Of Chaldean Lamech ! the bold fearless man,
And Firaoun pale, and trembling to repentance !—
I must destroy his momentary virtue ;
It is unnatural, and he must be
Himself, for of his giant sins, bold crimes,
His super-human wickedness, I have
A powerful need ! Ho ! Master of the World !
Stands the great King of Kings before his slave,
List'ning to dreams of frenzy, idiot ravings
Of a distemper'd mind ?—O, not the son
Of harmless Lamech 'tis that scares our souls,
But the dull brooding spirit of despair,
Which hath subdued his soul, and from that seat,

Through his enforced lips doth vent his hopes
 And horrible forebodings. While, O king,
 Thou bend'st thy great heart to his oft told tale,
 Treason and danger gather round thy throne.
 For, aided by this dotard, Seth's young son
 Hath stolen thy beauteous bride, for she hath wedded
 The Prophet's friend, Chasalim !—Now, O king,
 Where is the traitor's truth ?

FIRAOUN.

Chasalim wedded !—

I will have horrid vengeance !—Some of ye
 Hence to his mansion, drag him forth in chains ;
 Convey him from the warm breast of his love,
 Unto the caves of death. My father's tomb,
 The monument upon the mountain's top
 Of mighty Saurid, and beneath the urn
 That holds the sacred corse, in the dark cave,
 Plunge down the bold Chasalim.—For the woman,
 Bring her unto the tomb, where I will meet her.
 I, the betray'd !—the terrible !—I will
 Have vengeance deep and bitter.

NOAH.

Firaoun, hear !

FIRAOUN.

Hence with thee, lying Prophet, dark deceiver !
Bansar, away unto Chaldea's realm,
And bid its monarch, as he fears the might
Of Mesre's master, burn the Gopher ark ;
So that whatever danger may be near,
The Chaldean seer shall share it. Seize him, slaves,
And throw him in the dungeon !

NOAH.

Earth ! Earth ! Earth !

I hear thy dying groan !

[He disappears.]

FIRAOUN.

Ah ! Mock'd my rage !

For once his demon hath o'ermaster'd mine,
And borne him from my vengeance ; but dispatch
Another messenger to Chaldea's land.
Bid Darmasel put fire to the ark,
But not till Noah be in it !

*Several days after the preceding Scenes, CHASALIM
alone in the Vault.*

CHASALIM.

Whence is this punishment to me decreed ?
What deed hath rous'd the wrath of Mesre's king,
And yet restrain'd his hand from shedding blood ?
Knows he of my espousals ?—No, for then
One hour had been the limit of my life,
And now nine days have wasted in this grave !
Food have they given, and bade me be secure,
They would not harm my life. Some slight suspicion
Of breach of faith hath anger'd Firaoun,
Or, the fierce tyrant's will-adoring slaves
Have charg'd me with a crime !—But my Semronda
I left in safety !—Well, let me not fear ;
Time be my hope ;—till then this darkness is
Design'd my punishment. The king's it might be,
But not Chasalim's !—What is there in thee,
Thou awful shade, to terrify the just ?
For me thy womb doth not bring forth sad shades
Of murder'd victims, nor a host of fiends
To madden me with mockeries !—I have peopled

The darkness with a world of my creation,
And now I sit, the sole, lone, human king
O'er thousand phantom subjects !—But their forms
Are beautiful to me !—Imagination,
The elder-born of darkness, the wild child
Of night and solitude, is busy now
Shaping a world of loveliness for me,
Where I am monarch, and Semronda sits
Crown'd like the Queen of Angels !—Ancient Night !
I love thy solemn shade, the sacred thoughts
Thy being doth engender—thou unborn
And uncreated,—for thou wast of old
Ere gaudy Day was made !—Thou wast primeval.
Great monarch of the deeps, from whose firm throne,
To chase thee, did the Eternal Spirit come,
Rob'd in his majesty of strength and power !
Of thee were all things born !—To thee they die !—
Thou art the first and last !—the womb,—the grave,
Are each of thy great empire !—Ancient father !
Most venerable king, I honour thee ;
And court thy shade, not fear it !—I am now
Imprison'd in the cave beneath the tomb

Of the wise monarch Saurid.—O'er mine head,
 Above the dreary opening to this den,
 Lies in his ponderous marble storied urn,
 The body of the mighty,—quiet now,
 In stern and sound repose !—He was a man
 Belov'd of Heaven. So, his noble spirit
 I welcome, hovering round me !—Virtuous dead
 More meet companions are than sinful living !—
 Then though a prisoner, am I not a wretch !—
 But calmness in my soul, and round my heart
 Hovers sweet airy hope !

SCENE—*Pyramidic Tomb of SAURID.—The Body
 raised upon the Sarcophagus.*

Time—Beginning of the Deluge.

FIRAOUN, LOUCHANEM, *Priests and Soldiers.*

FIRAOUN.

How wears the night ?

LOUCHANEM.

Great King, the night is dead ! The birth of day
 Ere long thy slaves will celebrate !

FIRAOUN.

The dawn

Is breaking then !—Now is the happy hour
 For incantations mighty. On this tomb
 Lies the cold corse, and round this grave the soul
 Of my forefather hovers.—He was wise,
 And for some purposes of safety, rais'd
 This giant tower o'er his cold remains !
 I will awake the slumbering soul, and force,
 By my compelling art, the subtle spirit
 To enter in the body, and reply
 To my demands. He shall to me declare
 From what dark fate this tomb must shelter me,—
 How I may banish evil, and command
 These rains that may destroy my bowers of bliss,
 Cease their o'erwhelming force.—But of Semronda,
 Bends she unto my will?—Will she consent
 To doom Chasalim, and to take her king
 For her espoused lord ?

LOUCHANEM.

Unmov'd, she still

Hears and receives thy promises,—with like
Indifference thy threats !

FIRAOUN.

Why then, the spouse
Of death alone shall the proud beauty be.
We need a victim for the sacrifice !
And for Chasalim—Aye ! The wretch shall live,—
Live, when his eye hath look'd upon her corse.
Go, summon her before me, I will try
Persuasive powers once more, if still unmov'd
She listen , she shall die !

SEMRONDA brought in.

FIRAOUN.

Well, thou hast now
Tasted the bitter fruit of powerful wrath !
Hath it subdued thee to obedience, child
Of my angelic race ?

SEMRONDA.

And, if I scorn'd
Thine artifice, or, as thou call'st it, love !
Think'st thou that tyranny could win my soul ?
I am unmov'd, Firaoun !

FIRAOUN.

Still beware !

Hast thou no fear ?

SEMRONDA.

Of thee ? Thou mock'st me !—No !

FIRAOUN.

For scorn like this, hast thou dar'd hope for pardon ?

SEMRONDA.

I know thee merciless and mighty !—There,
Thou hast mine answer !

FIRAOUN.

Slave ! Thy woman's heart
Is not for the dark journey fearlessly !

SEMRONDA.

Thou dost mis-judge me. What have I to dread ?
I am content, for that Chasalim's shade
Waits to conduct me onward !

FIRAOUN.

No ! he lives,
And shall live on.—Thou must pursue that voyage
Unaided, and alone.

SEMRONDA.

Within the circle

Of thy stern power, it is to tear the soul
 From its enclosing home ; but it doth mock
 Even thee, to chain it, when that home becomes
 A dungeon !—Firaoun, I know Chasalim !

MESRAM *enters.*

MESRAM.

Hasten your supplications, mighty lord,
 For awfully th' expanded brow of Heaven
 Doth blacken with the tempest,—whelming down,
 Fall cataracts—not showers.

FIRAOUN.

Then prepare
 Your solemn rites,—your pompous sacrifice,
 The victim is at hand. Priest of the Gods,
 Advance unto your duties,—shed her blood,
 While I prepare the incantation dread
 Which shall among us bring th' awaken'd soul
 Of the departed Saurid !

GANCAM *enters.*

GANCAM.

King of Kings,

Hasten the sacrifice,—the day hath broke,
 But horror still increases,—all the Heaven
 Is now a boiling sea, whose angry waves
 Have quench'd the rising sun,—the sheeted waters
 Fall down upon the earth, whose breast refuses
 To give them entrance to it.

SEMRONDA.

God is weeping

The sins of mortals !—Man, these are the tears
 Of thy outrag'd Creator !

FIRAOUN.

Woman, cease !

Thy life shall still the torrent, calm the tempest,
 For thou shalt die !

SEMRONDA.

Yea, tyrant, so shalt thou,

And all these murderers round thee ; thou art girt
 By a most bloody band, but it shall be
 Broken, remorseless tyrant,—stronger arm

Shall rend the links asunder !—'Tis the judgment
 Of which the prophet spoke !—Too late, I see
 The threaten'd ruin come ; but, I am ready
 For the bless'd change he promis'd. Holy seer,
 My dying hour is rapturous ; thou hast fill'd
 My breast with sacred transport !—God of Noah,
 Forget not thou Chasalim ! thou hast promis'd
 To pardon the mistaken ;—so, we come
 For refuge to thee from the sins of man,
 And from the groans of earth ! Now open, God,
 Thine arms of might, and clasp us to thy bosom !

FIRAOUN *stabs her.*

Clos'd be thy prayer. Deserter of thy fathers,
 Die wretch accurs'd !—Blasphemer die !—and may
 Thy life appease the angels !

SEMRONDA.

God of Noah !

Forget not thou Chasalim.

[*Dies.*

FIRAOUN.

Priests advance !

And at the foot of my forefather's urn

Place the slain victim ; while I invoke,
With solemn rites, the shade of Saurid !

Soul !

That in the air art hovering around
Thine ancient dwelling, the unalter'd corse,
I do command thee, by our parent gods,
Once more to tenant thy forsaken home,
And as thou wast on earth, appear again,
And with the same deep voice, with deeper knowledge,
Reply unto my questions. Sleeping corse,
Awake, while thus around thy bed I pour
The victim's blood, and touch thy blue clos'd lips
With drops of sacred gore, imparting life
Unto thy juice abandon'd frame ; and now
I touch thine eyes, and bid them ope and gaze
On this forgotten world ; and sense of hearing
Return unto the dead, and silent tongue
Beneath thy seat I place the gore dipp'd gem,
With necromantic characters impress'd,
Of power to force obedience. Now then, soul,
I do command thee, come into the home
Prepar'd for thy reception !

Silent, ha !—

By Semiazas, I command thee, spirit,
Thy great forefather, to arise, and speak
To Semiazas' race !

Still silent !—then

I do abhor the thought ;—yet will I try
The last most potent spell, the name of him
Who is the angels' foe !—The terrible word,
Unheard by mortal ear,—unthought, save by
The angels and their sons, and still unbreath'd
By all but Firaoun,—it may compel
The sullen shade to speak !—Into thine ear,
Dead corse of my forefather, lo ! I breathe
The terrible sound !—

LOUCHANEM.

'Tis utter'd—and—the spell
Hath mastered the demon !—See, O king,
The blue lips move, and a convulsive life
Heaves up the panting breast ; the weigh'd down lids
Quiver with tremulous motion, o'er the eye
Time dry'd and shrunk to nothing !—The dead hand
Rises with slow and solemn action ; points

Th' extended finger to th' expecting king,—
And now——

FIRAOUN.

Spirit of Saurid, speak!—What hath
The son of angel race to fear?

The Corse of SAURID.

Death! Death!

FIRAOUN.

But when, or where? What is the danger now
That I must brave or shun?

SAURID.

I am become
Once more a part of Earth, and with her groans
Mingle mine agonies.—Oh, murdered mother!
I will unto mine element or ere
Thine hour shall approach. With human sense
I would not look upon thy death, nor hear
Thy deep and dying groan!

LOUCHANEM.

He's silent! and
The enforced life hath fled,—the shadowy king
Hath back recall'd his wanderer!

FIRAOUN.

I am still

In darkness !—Hark ! a groan,—whence comes it ?

LOUCHANEM.

From

The vault where lies Chasalim. The warm stream
Of his beloved's life hath dew'd his head,—
His fears interpret well.

FIRAOUN.

Chasalim, ha !

Raise up the villain, let me mock his eye
With his Semronda's form.

[They raise him up.]

Welcome, proud son
Of Seth's untainted mountain !—How art thou
Found still among the scorners !—Righteous man,
I sent, that thou at last might'st truly own
That justice marks the hated race of Cain—
There is thy bride, I give her to thine hand,—
Take her, and get thee gone !

LOUCHANEM.

He cannot speak.

See how the big drops gather on his face,
 And his lips chatter, though they do not speak ;
 His eye is rolling, wild despair is fix'd
 Upon his moody brow ! He speaks—attend
 To his departing music !

CHASALIM.

Death hath gather'd

The flower I lov'd, to wear within his bosom,
 Enamour'd of its fragrance; and his breath
 Hath wither'd not its beauty !—Oh ! how gently
 He bow'd his cold regality to woo,
 And she hath grown enamour'd of his kiss,
 And met it smilingly.—See how she lies
 On his chill breast, as though upon a bank
 Of sunshine and sweet flowers.—Royal Death !
 King of pale loveliness, thou hast a spouse
 Worthy of thy high greatness.

FIRAOUN.

Ha ! he falls !

He must not die !—He shall not !—Raise him up !
 So ! there !—his senses wander'd,—they return—
 He knows us, and his doom !

CHASALIM.

Oh monster ! Monster !

Son of the cursed race, whose sin abhorr'd
 Was the first murderer, and struck out life
 When it was early kindled, when the Earth
 Was in her youth, and beautiful, and fresh
 From her Creator's hand ! Thou worthy son
 Of such a hell-struck sire ! gore dipp'd fiend !
 O mad Chasalim ! Thus, thus, is the doom
 Told by the prophet seal'd !

FIBAOUN.

Hark ! Screams and shouts,—

Whence are these horrors ?

*[Exeunt Nobles.]*ECROS *enters.*

ECROS.

King, the wretched people
 Ascend the mountain, and surround the tower,
 For refuge and for safety, calling thee
 To succour them in this extremity—
 The fearful shower hath buried all the plains ;
 And to increase the horrors of the time,

The mighty river hath o'erflow'd his banks,
 And like a sinuous snake, doth roll his course
 Above the ruin'd country.—Earth's green head
 Hath vanish'd from our eyes.—The high roof'd domes
 Of the proud city's mansions still appear,
 But men and herds gaze terrified, and stalk
 Amid the waters wading, as when men
 Traverse a river's bed.—

CHASALIM.

It is the doom

Told by the mighty !—God, thou wilt avenge
 This consummation of the crimes of earth !—
 Welcome avenger !—come with rapid strides,
 And hasten on the night of this stain'd world !
 I am no more myself ; this sight hath torn
 All human feeling from me ;—now comes on
 The desperate inspiration,—and I feel
 Myself in place of Noah !—Lord of Murder !
 Thy judgment is approaching, for the world
 Will die the white death of the pallid wave !
 Hark ! Firaoun, hark !—The waters of the Heaven,
 Which at Creation's birth did God divide

By the bright firmament, from floods below,
Are panting now to seek their ancient bed ;
And God hath open'd all the gates of Heaven
To give them passage forth—and those beneath,
Pent up for ages in the womb of Earth,
Will now be born of her, and 'midst her throes
Of agony, will burst into the world,
And rise to meet their brethren of the skies,
Swallowing, in their fierce course, earths, oceans, seas,
Who with rebellious joy will roll their waves
To join the broke-up fountains of the deep !

A Messenger enters.

Lord of the Earth, the people, madden'd by
The ruin of the valleys, climb the roofs
Of the high palaces and sacred domes ;—
Thy subjects of the coast are rushing hither,
Scar'd by a fearful prodigy,—the sea
Scorning his narrow bed, as too restrain'd
For his distended wrath, and boiling waves,
Rejoicing in the horror of the time,
Hath spread himself abroad upon the earth,

And now with awful threat'nings, foaming rage,
 Rolleth toward the city !—

LOUCHANEM *enters.*

LOUCHANEM.

King, the people,
 Bewilder'd by their terrors, force their way
 Into the sacred tower !

FIRAOUN.

Drive them back—
 Dash them into the waters !—let them die !—
 What are their lives to me ?—Secure the gates,
 And throw them down the mountain.

LOUCHANEM.

Thy high will
 Shall be obeyed !—

[*Exit.*

FIRAOUN.

It is the thunder ! hark !
 An awful peal ! and lightnings—ha ! mine eyes
 Were blinded by the flash !—The earth is shaken,
 For the tall tower rocks and reels, with strong
 And sensible motion.—

CHASALIM.

Aye ! The thunder 'tis,
 Singing the dirge of Earth's accursed sons ;
 And the wild lightnings, which do make a day
 In the sun's absence, are the fires which burn
 In unseen hands of demons, waiting on
 Their steps, to light them through the dusky path,
 Their shadowy forms now tread—The earth hath yawn'd,
 Th' abyss is open'd, and the hidden stores
 Of waters bubble up upon her breast,
 And rise unto the mountains.—

GANCAM *and* MESRAM *enter*.

GANCAM.

Gracious lord !

The city's towers have vanish'd from the face
 Of the o'erwhelmed earth—Thy people die
 By thousands in their homes—the waters rise
 Rapidly to the mountains—but there comes
 Succour and help to thee. Thy friend Louchanem,
 Steering thy royal bark, near to the foot
 Of this high tower, waits for thee to join

His little troop of friends—Descend, O king,
And be with us in safety !

FIRAOUN.

Traitor—No !

Thou would'st betray me to a horrid death—
I will remain within my lofty tower ;
Here *is* a place of refuge, for the waves
Will never reach its summit—I will stay—
I will not trust thee, Gancam.

GANCAM.

Sottish king

Remain, and welcome death—for me I go
To join my flying friends—obedience dies
In such an hour as this !—

[*Exit.*

FIRAOUN

Thou, Mesram stay !

Wilt thou forsake thy king ?—

MESRAM.

I have no king,

But only mine own will !—I have no king—

Empire hath died with earth.

[*Exit.*

FIRAOUN.

In agony,

Ecros, in agony of soul, I pray
Thee not to leave, in this sad solitude,
Thy master, and thy friend.—

ECROS.

I am the friend

Of life, and for it I will grapple hard
With death that threatens.—All are gone, save me,
E'en to thy lowest slaves ;—all have essay'd,
For safety, to the barks ;—why should I stay,
Coward, to die with thee ?

[*Exit.*

FIRAOUN.

So,—one by one !

They leave me ! Hark,—his footsteps,—they have
ceas'd,

And now I am alone !—I will unto
The highest terrace of my lofty tower,
And look upon the vessels ;—there will wait,
Until the storm expires.

SCENE—*The Terrace on the Top of the Tower.*

FIRAOUN.

Eternal powers,
How horrible this sight ! vanish'd all
The traces of the world, except the heads,
Still green, of the high mountains ; they are crown'd
By my affrighted people, and the barks
Are fill'd, and from this tower, with fear and toil,
Toss'd horribly they go !—I cannot bear
This sight, but whither !—I am here at least
Secured from the danger !—What a gloom !
A black red light, enough to show its horrors,
But not resembling day !—Ha !—footsteps !—sure
Some one doth mount the stair !—Oh ! though it were
My deadliest foe—He comes ! Chasalim, then,
I am not quite alone.

CHASALIM.

Thou art not.—No !
Chasalim will not leave the king ! Look out !
Lord of the earth, where is thine empire now ?
Master of the round world, thou wilt not, soon,
Have space to plant thy foot ! Oh, canst thou hope

That they, or thou, wilt 'scape the wrath of God,
 By mountain, bark, or tower?—He is there,
 And all around thee, for his might doth fill
 The air, and fights against thee! Will he break
 His solemn oath of vengeance? See the barks!
 The whirlwind hath them,—to and fro they're torn!
 And up in air! and down—into the gulf
 Of the unfathom'd waters:—There—that blast
 Hath shiver'd them,—and scatter'd now they lie,
 Floating upon the surface!

FIRAOUN.

No! not all!

The regal bark yet lives!

CHASALIM.

Thine emblem, wretch!

It shall expire the last,—but, first, behold
 The ruin of its fellows;—see, it strives
 To reach the green patch, which, when the earth was,
 Was a tall mountain's brow, but levell'd now
 With lower, meaner things! but 'tis decreed,
 She shall not touch that land.

FIRAOUN.

Have mercy, Heaven !

CHASALIM.

Yea, on the bark, for it hath sunk, and, lo !
Of all her burthen, but one waving arm
Appears above the surface !

FIRAOUN.

Still the mountain
Doth rise above the torrent !

CHASALIM.

Oh ! but one,
And that will soon receive a diadem
From the wave crowning waters.—Look,—the rest
Are cover'd,—and the wretches on their heights
Leap off, to swim unto the highest point !
Down, down, they go,—the avenger's foot is on them,
And tramples them down headlong !

Thou art pale,
Of what art thou afraid ? why, thou art safe,
At least till all have perish'd !—Hark ! that scream !
Now let it gladden thee, for 'tis the last
Thine ear shall ever drink of human woe.—

MANKIND IS DEAD.—The waters have entomb'd
 The last of human kind ;—the mountain's top
 Is cover'd ;—on the summit of our tower,
 We two, now watch alone !

FIRAOUN.

Man,—thy wild words
 Will drive me to despair.

CHASALIM.

They will ;—I am
 Thy demon ;—the stern instrument of God,—
 The angel of his vengeance, glorying
 In this wild, broad destruction ;—in this world,
 This universe of waters, where this tower,
 Beacon of desolation, is my throne,
 But shall not be my tomb ;—yea, I am sent
 To scourge thee, hell-bound, forward to thy doom,
 To add unto thine anguish, and to mock
 Thy tortures, and then leave thee, to rush boldly
 Into my grave of grandeur, the great waters !—
 Magnificent death ! who would not covet thee,
 Thron'd so majestically ;—all the powers

Of Heaven and Hell exulting in thy train,
And swelling out thy glory !

FIRAOUN.

Help ! Oh help !
Something upon the waters !—dark, but slow,
It comes towards us !

CHASALIM.

Cry aloud ! it is
The Gopher ark, which, in her bosom, bears
The living children of the future world,
The seed that shall replenish empty earth.—
It is the Gopher ark, which thou didst bid
Unholy fire burn !

FIRAOUN.

It is the ark !
Oh, then, salvation is at hand !—

CHASALIM.

It is,—
But not for thee.—See where it glides away,
Unto its destin'd rest.—If thou wert there,
Within her circle, all the holiness
She bears could not protect her from destruction ;

Thy weight of sin would drag her down to death ;
Earth could no longer bear thee, how then could
That little ark ? Thou art abhorr'd of both,
And spurn'd forth to destruction.—See the waters
Have risen round the tower.—Now, I leave thee,
To bear thine agony alone ;—to sit
Waiting for death ;—and shun him, shrieking, till
He tear thee out from life.—Look out, look out,
See where that giant shape, whose head is veil'd
In the black Heaven, whose form doth occupy
All that thine eye surveys, doth walk the waves,
And point towards the tower ;—his stern tread
Impels them onward, and with terrible force,
The dark, huge pall of the departed world
Riseth to cover thee, though last, thou worst
Of all earth's sinful sons ;—for me, I go ;—
I will not linger, till they drag me hence,
But plunge into them ;—for they are become
Mine element,—my nature,—glorious grave,
Where all mankind hath perish'd ;—Sublime Death,
Take me, for I am thine.—Now, bear me on

Triumphantly upon thy mighty breast,
 Bear me unto my glories. [Leaps down.

FIRAOUN.

Stay, oh stay !—

Mercy !—return !—he plunges,—rises,—waves
 His hand with shadowy motion,—beckoning me
 With horrid smiles of welcome !—God !—I grow
 Mad with these horrors ;—soft !—oh, let me think
 It is a dream, and I shall waken.—This
 I once have dream'd before.—Wake, sleeper, wake,
 Some of you help me there ;—my sleep is wrung
 By frightful visions.—Thanks, Manoas, thanks !—
 I am myself.—Ha !—bleeding. I have torn
 My flesh in that sore agony,—but it was,
 Praise to the gods, a dream.—I'm choking ;—what
 Is this now bubbling round me ?—Help ! oh help !
 It is no dream. I am awake ; it is
 A horrible reality.—Help ! help !
 Your monarch calls. Chasalim !—Noah !—help !
 O mercy !—mercy !—mercy !—

NOTES.

Note 1, page 1.

The Deluge.

THE Egyptians and the Chaldeans being the only people who have any thing like a history of their sovereigns before the Deluge, I have chosen the former country for the scene of action. The Arabians are the historians of Egypt, Berosus of the Chaldeans. The former write, that Kraus, the fifth in descent from Adam, (by Cain,) was the founder of the antediluvian kingdom of Egypt, of which Mesre, so called from his father, was the capital. It is to be observed, I am speaking of the second race of antediluvian princes, as, according to these writers, the first were the Pre-Adamite sovereigns.

Note 2, page 3, line 14.

The dusky egg.

The secret cosmogony of the Egyptians. Contrary to the general opinion that they acknowledged no Deity but Matter, (which is also the assertion of Eusebius,) they believed in a Demiurgic reason, (see Dr Cudworth's intelligent system,) the intellectual Architect of the World, symbolically represented as blowing an egg from his mouth.

Note 3, page 5, line 6.

The uncorrupted body.

Supposing it very possible, that the Egyptians, after the Flood, were not very different from those who were before it, since it was very early re-peopled by Noah's son, or, at any rate, his grandson, I have attributed to them nearly the same opinions, customs, and manners, as those which prevailed soon after that event. The immense expence in interments, their pyramidic tombs, and careful embalming, sprung from a particular belief in their secret Theology. Herodotus asserts, that that wise and great nation were the first who taught the immortality of the soul. This, they believed, (when the body was corrupted,) suffered transmigrations by a continual metempsychosis into all the animals of the different elements, for the space of 3000 years; but while the body could be preserved undecayed, so long the soul remained with it, in a happy though quiescent state; for this reason they called their tombs their "Eternal mansions."—Diod.

Note 4, page 6, line 1.

Zohara.

The beautiful star Venus.

Note 5, page 6, line 20.

Semiazas.

According to the Arabian authors, it was in the reign of Aryak, the fourth sovereign in descent from Kraus, that the watching or guardian angels of the world left Heaven, seduced by the beauty of the daughters of mortality. The observation of Moses led Josephus, and several of the fathers, into the same error. According to the forgery known

as the prophecy of Enoch, it was in the days of Jared, the fifth in descent from Seth, that the Egregori, or watching angels, to the number of two hundred, under the command of Semiazas, their prince, descended upon Mount Hermon, and took a solemn oath of fidelity to each other. They united themselves to the daughters of men, teaching their wives and sons (the Giants) magic, incantations, astrology, the use of metals, and of herbs, poisonous and salutary. The power and wickedness of them and their descendants at length drew upon them the wrath of God, who suspended some of them between Heaven and Earth, bound others in darkness, and destroyed the World by the Deluge.

Note 6, page 7, line 17.

Firaoun.

The last King of Egypt of the race of Kraus; he was a monster of wickedness and impiety. All authors, Arabian, Chaldean, and Indian, unite in imputing the Deluge to the unjustifiable violence and cruelty of mankind towards each other, and their love of magical art. "All flesh had corrupted his way." Firaoun was the very worst of all the Egyptian sinners, say these writers, and instead of being startled by the preaching of Noah, he sent to Darmasel, the Chaldean Prince, in whose dominions the prophet resided, to put him to death, and burn his ark. He was so drunk, they add, at the time of the catastrophe, that he was drowned before he was aware of his danger.

Note 7, page 13, line 19.

Gopher.

Supposed by different writers to have been Cedar, Pine,

Box, and Indian Plane. Others (Fuller's Miscell.) believe it to have been Cypress, as not being subject to decay.

Note 8, page 13, line 19.

Scented Henna.

The Egyptians perfumed their baths with Henna flowers.

Note 9, page 35, line 1.

Saurid.

The twelfth sovereign in descent from Kraus. According to the Arabians, equally remarkable for his wisdom and power, being forewarned of the approaching destruction of the world, he caused wonderful pyramids to be erected, to serve the several purposes of his own tomb, a place of refuge for his successors, and storehouses and treasuries for the learning and riches of his time.

Note 10, page 51, line 20.

Thy royal bark.

I have no authority for, nor yet against, these barks. It is neither impossible nor improbable, that the antediluvians might have ventured upon the water. The earliest historical notice of navigation is the account of the Egyptian Nile boats,—these were towed when going against the stream.

THE
PLAGUE OF DARKNESS,
AND THE
LAST PLAGUE OF EGYPT.

(Originally published in Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine.)

THE
PLAGUE OF DARKNESS.

Time—Beginning of the First Day of the Darkness.

MOSES and CALEB alone, watching.

CALEB.

Is it thy will that longer we remain
Upon this mountain's summit? Lo! young Day
Doth wearily unclothe his sleepy eye,
For slowly comes the radiance which he sheds
On our oppressed land! No joy to Jacob
Brings the bright sun-beam; for, with his first glance
Comes the fierce Tasker, and, with goad and lash,
Drives to the stubble-field the weeping race
Of him, Jehovah's chosen, the loved friend

Of angels and of spirits ! Their bound limbs
 Are tortur'd by the beam, their free-born sires
 Were wont to court and bless ; and when they sink,
 Worn by th' intolerable burthen down,
 The scorpion-whip doth lash them to new life,
 Or rob them of the wretched remnant left.—
 But let us down, and bid them stand prepared,
 Nor murmur when the Tasker's voice commands
 New treasure-domes for Pharaoh.

MOSES (*not heeding him.*)

Yes, thou art
 The Terrible ! the Just !—The might of man,
 What is it, Lord, before thee ! Thou dost close
 Thine eye of glory, and dark night descends ;
 Thou ope'st it, and 'tis light. Thy breathing is
 The rage of tempests ; and thy face, O God,
 Who can behold and live !

CALEB.

Jehovah's hand
 Is on his servant now. From his pale brow
 Darts forth the mystic light, whose lustrous blaze
 Scorches my human eye-balls. His high form

Becomes gigantic, and his clustering locks,
 Darker than night, swept by the Mighty Spirit,
 Wave in wild motion, and their homage pay
 To the invisible presence of the power
 Which every where surrounds him.

MOSES.

Hark ! He comes !

The One !—the Terrible !—the Lord of Woe !—
 The Angel of his Terrors !—On the air
 I hear the rushing of his mighty wings ;
 His broad palm bears the darkness, the dire pall
 Of miserable Egypt !—Hark ! He comes !—
 Woe to thee, Egypt, woe !

CALEB.

It is the Spirit,
 The Over-Ruling, which is passing o'er us !—
 The day is bright and clear ; yet in the air
 I hear the sound of tempests. All the winds
 Girdle his chariot-wheels.—My brow is cold,
 My breath is thick, and o'er my quivering limbs
 Breaks the damp glow of fear ! I will fall down,
 Nor see him pass above me.

MOSES.

Hail, O hail !

Thou Lord of Judgment !—Lo ! He comes ; but not
 In light-created vestments, nor his brow
 Circled by fire ethereal, nor his form
 Shooting forth sparkles of immortal light,
 Each one a brilliant day ; but now he rides
 The stern submissive whirlwind, in his purpose
 Robed as in some dark garment, like the cloak
 Which ancient Chaos wore, before the smile
 Of God, illumining the dark abyss,
 Created light.—He comes, the Terrible !
 In judgment mantled—dark, as darkest death !
 Before him horror, and behind despair !

[*Stands motionless.*]JOSHUA *enters.*

JOSHUA.

Master, the people murmur at thy stay ;
 And now, impatient of thy presence, come
 With slow steps up the mountain.

THE PEOPLE.

Leader sage,

Why hast thou left us? Why hast thou provok'd
 The rage of Pharaoh, and thy children left
 To bear his anger's weight?—O leave us, father ;
 Reprove no more, but leave us in our bondage.

MOSES.

Hush, hush ! let him not hear ! for scarcely yet
 Hath he pass'd onward to his dreadful post ;
 The loosen'd feathers of his jet black wings
 Are floating yet above us.—Silence, silence !
 Let him not hear thee, Jacob ; for he goes
 Brimful of wrath, the wine-cup in his hand !—
 Let not one drop be thine.

PEOPLE.

What shall we do ?

MOSES.

Be silent, and be humble.

PHARAOH *on his Throne.* JOCHANI. MAMBI. Nobles.

Time—The Third Day of the Darkness.

PHARAOH.

Shut out those groans ! I will not hear these cries
 Of horrible despair !—What, more than they,
 Am I exempt from suffering ? Is this throne

Sacred from horror? Hath it not more deeply
 Circled around my person?—Coward sons,
 Of an effeminate land! why mourn ye thus
 To share your monarch's draught of bitterness!
 For three whole days, with horror bound, have I
 Sat on this spot, nor tasted food, nor wine;
 And now I faint,—yet murmur not, nor groan,
 Nor vex my people with my vain despair!—
 Silence these clamours, then, ye coward slaves!
 And learn to bear what Egypt's master bears
 Serene and unrepining.

JOCHANI.

Mighty Lord,

Long since thy servants would have still'd these cries,
 Could they have found the mourners; but this shade,
 This deadly darkness, this drear night of death,
 Doth bind us to thy throne; nor can we leave
 The spot on which we stand. But Rampsinitis
 Hath dragg'd his way unto thy suffering slaves,
 To bid them be of comfort.

PHARAOH.

Rampsinitis!

How is it he can do, what Balaam's sons
Have found impossible? Jochani, thou,
And Mamri, thou, have, to your dreaded power,
Bowed the invisible world; Osiris lent you
A portion of his might, and father Nile,
Submissive to your pleasure, threw aside
His robe transparent to enfold his form
In the red mantle, which, it was your will,
He for a time should wear. How comes it then
Ye dare not, or ye can not, brave this gloom,
While Rampsinitis, in your wisdom's school,
An infant, thus goes forth at will, to aid
And comfort the dejected?

MAMRI.

Lord of Egypt,
King of the wondrous river, be it said
Thy servant Rampsinitis is the friend
Of Jacob's children, and that people's God,
Or else their leader's wondrous magic power
Hath spar'd him from the curse, and given his eye
A power of sight to wander through the maze,
Nor feel the plague of darkness.

PHARAOH.

'Tis your thought
That we are cursed thus by Israel's prayers,
Or by the might of their rebellious chief,
That bastard of our Nile, the spawn of Levi,
Nursed by the dreaming Thermutis, who left
A curse unto her country in the Boy
Her woe-fraught pity sav'd ! I'll not believe
His power hath compass'd this—he is a tool
In hands of our own Deities, to scourge
Our past and present follies ; therefore pray
For help unto our Gods. No solemn rite
Accompanies your prayers, but heart-felt grief
Will reach the ear of Isis, she will think
Of that sad hour, when deepest darkness came
Upon her heart, when to her widow'd lip
She press'd the cold cheek of her sacred lord,
And wept his death in anguish—she will hear,
And pity—this our sorrow. O, to thee,
Thou who art all that hath been, is, and shall be,
Thou, whose mysterious veil no mortal hand
Hath ever yet upraised, eternal Isis,
We supplicate for mercy !

HYMN TO ISIS.

O, ΤΗΟΥ, around whose sacred head,
The moon her wat'ry-beams hath spread,
Thy bright celestial crown ;
Thou, who, amidst the dog star's rays,
Risest to bless our feeble gaze,
Upon our woes look down.
O ! say, whence is the darkness now
Which hides from us thy radiant brow !
Is it that thy lord the Sun
Doth his beauteous heaven shun ;
And the realms of ancient Night,
Gladdening with his floods of light,
Plungeth thus our world below
In darkness and unutterable woe !

O, awful Power ! whose grief or joy
Can work us blessings, or annoy,
Look down upon our fear.
O ! Thou, who being one, art all,
To thee all powerful we call,
Hear, Isis ! Isis, hear !

Nature is convuls'd, and dies
Unless thou hear'st her bitter cries ;
Voiceless doth the sistrum stand
In thy right eternal hand ;
And the vase design'd to be
The emblem of fecundity,
Sharing nature's agonies,
Overthrown, and empty lies.

By the name of him whose birth
Gladden'd all the laughing earth ;
By his painful sojourn here,
By his reign to mortals dear,
By the murderous deed which gave
The God-fill'd coffin to the wave ;
By the ivy and the broom,
Which as the monarch's lowly tomb,
Veil'd his body from the light,
And accursed Typhon's sight ;

By thy bitter grief and fear,
By thy lonely journey drear,

By the shriek so loud and dread,
 Which struck the youthful list'ner dead ;
 By the sin of sins, whose birth
 Called Osiris back to earth ;
 By the thunderbolt, which burst
 O'er the murderer accurs'd ;
 By the lake, whose sulphurous bed
 Pillows Typhon's giant head ;
 By thy joy, when to thy breast
 Thy loved lord again was press'd ;
 Look upon our grief and fear,
 Hear, O Isis ! Isis, hear !

Enter RAMPSINITIS.

RAMPSINITIS.

Cease, cease these strains ! they cannot, may not, reach
 The ear of Isis, while a brother God
 Is scorn'd in Chemia's land. O king, the God,
 Worshipp'd by Jacob's children, doth command
 Their duties at his altar, let them go !
 This darkness is *his* dreadful visitation ;
 It came at call of Amram's might-clad son,
 And, at the beam of his uplifted eye,

Will vanish from our country. Me it harms not ;
A beam celestial hath that new God
Infused into mine eyes, and I can trace
My footsteps safely onward. I have been
The friend of Jacob, and for this I am
Less tortured than my fellows.—Let them go,
Thy people all implore thee.

PHARAOH.

Rampsinitis,

This visitation is the curse of Typhon,—not
The power of Amram's son ! Who is this God,
That I should yield me to his will, and bow
Submissive to his pleasure, as the law
Of our own deities ?—I know him not,
And Israel shall not go ! Command to me !—
To me, the lord of that all-bounteous land,
That needs not heaven's dew, nor rains, to bring
Its increase forth unto us !—Am I not
The king of that great river, in whose hand
The horn of plenty still is full, though pour'd
Daily around the footstool of my throne ?

Need I the help or aid of stranger gods?—
I know them not, and Israel shall not go !

RAMPSINITIS.

Son of the ancient Word, eldest of kings !
Let not the lightning of thy wrath destroy
The lowliest of thy servants, if he pray
That, in thy wisdom, thou betray not scorn
Against that God of terrors—Thou dost know him,
And Egypt trembles still, e'en 'midst this darkness,
At the remember'd horrors of his might.
Knew she not him amidst the horrid plague
Of the fierce murrain, which destroy'd her flocks,
Broke loathsome on our bodies, struck our wives,
Smote our young babes, and made even these proud men,
These magic-rampired sages, flee for shame,
And hide their livid bodies from the scorn
That sternly laugh'd within the heaven-lit eye
Of Nile's adopted son ! Oh knew she not
The God, by this no stranger, in the storm
On which he rode, when, scattering the hail,
He lit the sons of Egypt to their graves
By flames of lurid lightning !—But, O king !

If not for fear, at least for pity, hear
The voice of Israel's leader ;—look upon
The sufferings of thy people, for thy sake
Plunged in unutterable woe. The plague
So sudden fell upon them, that no thought
Was taken for their safety—in the fields
Were many when it fell, and they sunk down,
E'en in the spot it found them, and expired,
Believing the red fiend had broken loose
From his hard bondage in the Sirbon lake,
And, with its pois'nous exhalations, choked
The wholesome breath of earth.—And there was one
Who crawl'd through that black mist—an only son,
To meet his mother, for he heard her voice
Guiding him to her side,—he crawl'd and crept,
Until, when to a precipice he came,
He thought he grasp'd her garment—it was nought
But the thick air he caught—he slipp'd, and dash'd
Hundreds of fathoms down, o'er pointed rocks,
'Gainst which his mangled body struck, ere he,
Blown by mirac'lous tempests to and fro,
Reach'd his terrific bed, the boiling wave ;—

His horrid shriek broke on his mother's ear,
And with it—sure in mercy—on her soul
Roll'd wild insanity ; and now she goes
Crawling and groping through the dull, black air,
For that same spot from whence her darling fell,
Meaning to tread that path ; and then, when fails
Her wearied strength, and she has found it not,
Still from her bosom heaves the same sad sound—
“ It is not here ! it is not here ! ”—and then
Bursts from her lips the echo of that scream,
Which she, unconscious of her loss, believes
Is utter'd by her son to guide her steps
Unto the spot which shelters him.—There was
Another wretch, who, crouching to the earth,
Sat, in a toad-like form, within a cave,
And shriek'd herself to death with horrid fear
At the strange shapes her madden'd fancy had
Conjured from out the darkness.—Some there are,
Fainting for hunger, hear their infants' cries,
Yet cannot find them food, nor reach the spot,
To yield the comfort that their fond embrace
To the poor babes might give.—The husband cries

Not for myself, but them.—Go, therefore, now,
 Thou eye of Egypt, through this hideous gloom,
 And to our presence bid this wond'rous chief—
 This plague-deriving Magian !

MOSES.

Amram's son

Stands face to face with Pharaoh.

PHARAOH.

Isis ! what !

So close upon our counsels !—Let them go !
 And all the ills that Pharaoh's house hath known
 Follow upon their track ! Hear, son of Levi !
 We do repent our anger, and entreat,
 By thee, the mercy of thine angry God ;
 Restore us light !—Light, though before our eyes
 It places thee, our foe !—Light, then, wise Magian !
 Although I am not used in the tongue
 Of mild entreaty, yet I do beseech thee,
 If that indeed thy God within his breast
 Hath shrouded the bright day, restore it back
 To freedom and to Egypt ;—thy reward

Shall be thine own accorded prayer.—From Chemia
Depart—thou and thy people !

MOSES.

Mighty Lord !

Angel of darkness ! throw thy mantle down,
And clothe thyself in thine own proper robe—
The vestments of bright glory ;—let thy seat,
The black thick cloud whereïn thou art enthroned,
Sink into Chaos, at the pitying glance
Thine angel-eye doth dart upon this spot—
This footstool of thy vengeance !—Rise to Heaven,
And, as thou mountest, say again those words
Of might, and blessedness—“ Let there be light !”
And light will gladden Egypt !

[*The darkness vanishes.*

PHARAOH.

It is day !

A day miraculous, and brighter far
Than hath mine eyes e'er witness'd !—Am I blind ?—
My senses ache !—It is the lurid flame
Of vivid lightnings that doth blast my sight !—
Jochani, Mamri, are ye sightless too ?—

It is the day, and yet I see ye not !
 Where art thou, Rampsinitis ?—I am faint !—
 The subtle slave hath kill'd me !

RAMPSINITIS.

Our dear lord !

Revive, and all is well !—A moment more,
 And to thy sense oppressed strength will come,
 To bear the glory of the new-born day ;
 Look up, my lord, the magian hath obey'd
 Thy sacred will !—

PHARAOH.

Good Rampsinitis !—Mamri !—

How pale and wan ye are !—A corpse-like hue
 Reigns on thy face, Jochani !—O my people,
 How deeply have ye suffered !—If ye come
 To greet your sovereign with such looks as these,
 My throne will seem the awful seat of death,
 And I the crowned spectre sitting there
 Encircled by the dead—accursed the cause,
 These subtle dealers with us !—let them go !
 To draw all nations on us, and to rain
 Whene'er it pleases, all these tortures on

My own beloved land !—They say they go
 To sacrifice. No more !—Well, let them go,
 But I will be assured of their return,
 Ere they shall quit our Egypt.—Hear, thou son
 Of the misguided Thermutis, depart
 And pay the sacrifice which thou hast vow'd.
 Go with thy people, take their wives, their babes ;
 Nought ask I, as the hostage of thy faith,
 The pledge of thy return, but that the flocks
 Remain in Goshen, till the stranger dust
 Be shaken from your feet, on Egypt's soil.

MOSES.

We must not honour Israel's God by sin,
 He doth command that we should sacrifice ;
 May this be done without our flocks and herds ?
 We dare not go to sanctify our God,
 And shew him disobedience.

RAMPSINITIS.

Amram's son,
 Why, thus perverse, provoke the wrath of Pharaoh ?
 The king says well, if honestly ye mean
 To come back to your master, leave the herds

As hostage of your truth ; small is the lot
 Ye need for offerings ; take what may suffice,
 And leave the flocks in Goshen.

MOSES.

Rampsinitis,
 My soul is sad for thee !—Thou hast drawn down
 Upon thine head the wrath of Israel's God,
 Who hitherto hath spared thee. O, be silent,
 Avoid the coming tempest. But for Pharaoh,
 Thus much,—The herds must go ; no, not one head
 May stay in Goshen's valleys.—They *shall* go,
 We may not move without them.

RAMPSINITIS.

Now then, Levi,
 I plead for thee no farther.

PHARAOH.

Why, thou slave !—
 Thou most ungrateful to thy parent-land,—
 I am not blind to thy design ; but where,
 Where would thy proud ambition lead thy people ?
 Where is their country ?—Where the resting-place
 Fairer than Goshen ? or the river's wave

More bounteous than our Nile, to which thy spirit,
Thy patriot spirit, roused by the dear cry
Of "native land," is burning to conduct thee,
Defying toil and danger!—Hypocrite!
Thy parent was the Nile, thy country, Egypt!—
When the false Hebrew woman on the bed
Of mighty Nilus laid thy rush-built ark,
Witness, Osiris, witness, mighty Isis,
With what a care he nestled thy young form
In his broad bosom—he forbade his waves
To rise, lest their ungentle motion should
Break on thy quiet slumbers; he forbade
The wind to howl around thee, but he sent
Soft gentle airs to sing thee to thy sleep,
Mildly to curl his waters, and to bear
Thee, pillow'd on his bosom, to thy home,—
Thy royal home, the arms of Thermutis,
Who made thee great in Egypt.—For all this,
What hast thou done? Oppress'd thy brethren,
Headed our rebels, plagued us with thy power,
And, like the reptile of our river's banks,
Crept to thy mother Egypt's open breast,

To gnaw away her heart ! Hence with thee, hence !—
Who is the God, for whom thou darest me thus ?—
Go—thrust him from my presence—now, take heed
Thine own life be secure ; come not again
Before my face, for in the day thou dost,
By Isis, thou shalt die !

MOSES.

Thou hast said well,
No more again I shall behold thy face.—
Who is the God, for whom I dare thy wrath ?
Hear, Pharaoh,—Egypt, hear !—It is the God
Who rules your deities, the moon, the stars,
Who made them, not for worship, but for service,
The humblest service, service of his creatures.
He is alone, he is the ONE, the ALL,
From all eternity, to all enduring ;
The crowned with the sun, circled by fire,
Veil'd in thick clouds, through which the lightnings
glance
From his immortal eye. His breath is storm,
His voice the thunder, and a thousand worlds

Are shaken in their spheres, at his stern tread.
His garment is the heavens, and this earth
The signet on his hand !

THE
LAST PLAGUE.

SCENE—*Goshen.*

MOSES. *Israelites.*

MOSES.

PREPARE, O Israel, gird your loins, O Jacob !
For now, with the strong arm of power, your God
Doth break your chains, and draw ye forth from bondage :
Now will he shew his glory and his terrors !
And thus I stretch mine arm towards the heavens,
And thus I summon from his icy throne,
The pale cold King, to pour out his chill breath
On miserable Egypt.—Come, O come,
Come with thy crown of icicles around

Thy beauteous snowy brow—Come with thy look
 Of still calm majesty—motionless lip
 And eye, bright as the crystal, and as still,—
 Come, robed in silence, duskiness, and fear,
 And with thy sceptre goad thy phantom steed,
 Who tramps with noiseless step upon the air
 The faster for the touch, which human power
 May not endure, and live. Come, Lord of Shades,
 I call thee by the power of Him who reigns
 O'er thee, and hath permitted thy dread being,
 As the stern doer of his mighty will,
 The servant of his vengeance. Come, O come,
 I call thee, King of Death, approach and strike
 All the first-born of Egypt !

— — — — [*Pause.*

It is done !

[*Pause—Voices without—Deep groans*

Woe, woe, unutterable woe !

CALEB.

O hark ;

Whence, leader, is that melancholy sound,
 That heavy groan ?

MOSES.

It is a kingdom's voice,
Lamenting o'er her first-born. I can hear
The quick sob of maternal agony,
The shriek of female anguish ; and I see
The stern grief of the father, who beholds
The ruin of his hopes—his first-born son
Laid still and cold before him—he is silent,
For the proud sorrow is too mighty for
The feeble war of words.—O mournful sight !
The bosom of each mother is, ere now,
The grave of her sweet son ;—for there it lies,
The wither'd Lotus, on the mourning stream,
From whence it drew its life and nourishment.

Enter JOCHANI:

Hence from our bleeding land ! King Pharaoh sends
His hasty mandate to ye—speed ye hence
As swiftly as ye may ; this blighted land
Will long remember Israel ; his name
May parallel with Typhon's—from the throne
Unto the lowliest hut, the owner's heart

Bears in deep characters of blood, the name
Indelible of Jacob.

Enter MAMRI.

MAMRI.

Fly from Egypt,

Fly, while our king yet lives—our people send
Their riches now to bribe your swift departure.
Here are the gems ye ask'd for, silver, gold,
Treasures incalculable, all the heaps
That Egypt hath for ages call'd her own,
Take them, and get ye gone !

*Enter RAMPSINITIS with the dead Body of his Son,
which he lays at MOSES' feet.*

RAMPSINITIS.

The sacrifice

Unto your awful God is made ! Look there !
Mine own, mine eldest born ! O go—go, go,
Lest Pharaoh change—lest I, in madness, rush
Upon *thy* first-born, Jacob !—My sweet child !—
The gory drink, the livid boils, the hail
The lurid lightning, tenant of the air,
That did domesticate itself on earth,

And walk'd upon her bosom ! Locusts, fear,
 Famine, and darkness, all, unshrinkingly,
 I bore ! But this—O this !—Begone ! for I
 Have yet another son !

MOSES.

Jehovah heal

Thy bitter sorrows !—Israel, onward now,
 The God of Abraham guides thee ! Yea, behold
 He comes in visible form to lead ye forth
 Through the drear wilderness, and stranger lands—
 Yea, tremble, Jacob, bow thee to the dust,
 And kiss the earth, now doubly sanctified
 By his Almighty presence. In yon cloud
 He hides his terrors from your human eyes,
 And only shews his mercy !—Forward, Israel,
 With fearless heart, and firm-set foot advance,
 Follow your mighty leader ; as ye go,
 Charm his immortal ear with humble praise,
 And heart-felt gratitude for boundless mercy !

On to the free air of the wilderness !
 On to the desarts, where no tyrant reigns !

What though our feet no rich green turf shall press,
We walk unshackled, broken are our chains !
And rather on that burning soil
Would we through war and dangers toil—
Rather the free pure air, which now
Circles each, once more, free-born brow,
Should catch our latest breath, than we
Should draw it in captivity.

Fair wast thou, Egypt, O, surpassing fair !
Thy beauteous brow, endiadem'd with flowers,
The song and music, breath'd in thy sweet air,
And time was ever young in thy bright bowers.
Fair were the fruits that courted the dry lip,
Rosy the wine that bade the captive sip,
Beauteous the scenes that in thy bosom lie,
But we beheld them with a captive's eye,
Scorning thy gifts, and looking for the hand,
Which from our hearts should rend oppression's
band,
From deep distressing bondage set us free,
Give us the wilderness and liberty !

And now that hand is outstretch'd from on high,
To lead us through the long and dreary road,
From the sad cells of dark captivity,
Unto the promis'd land, our bless'd abode.
In thee, O God of Glory, we confide
To thee our hope, our own Almighty guide.
O may our songs of mingled joy and fear
Ascend, Jehovah, to thy pleased ear.
Rise, sound of transport, and upon thy wing
Bear the pavilion'd throne of Israel's King.
Rise, sounds of gratitude, with one accord,
Speak Jacob's love unto his mighty Lord.
Say, glory, honour, excellence, to thee,
Thou giver of all good, bless'd liberty !

Note 4, page 76, line 3.

Voiceless doth the Sistrum stand.

Isis was frequently represented with horns, signifying the appearance of the moon in her increase and decrease ; a sistrum (or cymbal) in her right hand, and a pitcher in her left.—HERODOTUS.

For the history of Osiris, Typhon, Isis, and Orus, see Diodorus and Plutarch.

RIZPAH.

RIZPAH.

2 SAMUEL, Chap. xxi.

“ Then there was a famine.—And the Lord answered, It is for Saul, and for his bloody house, because he slew the Gibeonites.—

“ Wherefore David said,—What shall I do for you ?—

“ And the Gibeonites said unto him,—The man that consumed us,

“ —Let seven of his sons be delivered to us, and we will hang them up unto the Lord.—And the king said, I will give them.—

“ —The king took the two sons of Rizpah, the daughter of Aiah, which she bare unto Saul, and the five sons of Michal.

“ And he delivered them into the hands of the Gibeonites, and they hanged them on the hill, before the Lord.

“ And Rizpah—took sackcloth, and spread it for her upon the rock, from the beginning of harvest, until water dropped upon them out of Heaven, and suffered neither the birds of the air to rest on them by day, nor the beasts of the field by night.

“ And it was told David what Rizpah—had done.

“ And he brought up from thence the bones of Saul and Jonathan his son, and they gathered the bones of them that were hanged.”

RIZPAH.

SCENE—*An open Field.* TIME—*Morning.*

JOAB, NATHAN, and *Attendants.*

NATHAN.

THIS is the spot, and there the mourner sits
Fixing her eye, now dimm'd by constant tears,
Upon the youthful slain. Since that sad day
When Gibeon in revenge for ancient wrongs
Cried to the King for these devoted lives,
And Israel, pressed by famine, join'd the prayer,
She hath not left this spot,—by day and night
Watching the ghastly remnants of her sons.—
Poor Rizpah !—her's hath been a heavy doom,
Which David's kindly heart hath bled to hear ;
High royal rites of burial shall close

The dreadful scene of their cruel fall,
 And she shall watch no longer.—Sorrowing child
 Of Aiah, lift the curtain of thine eye,
 And let its light fall on thy anxious friends,
 Who bring thee tidings that may sooth thine ear,
 And heal thy bruised spirit !

JOAB.

How she sits
 Stone like, but gazing on the ghastly dead,—
 Her rayless eye bent on their wounds, her form
 Crouching to earth, her livid face uprais'd
 On her white wither'd hands !—Soft ! doth she live ?
 Surely she is at rest !

NATHAN.

Ah no ! she breathes.
 All the rigidity of death is there,
 But life hath not departed ;—he hath put
 His signet on her brow, and her stern lip
 Is now the throne of his omnipotence,
 From which he looks upon us, and declares
 His visible presence, and the stern resolve
 That nought shall snatch the victim from his grasp,
 Or banish him that throne.—Speak to her, Joab.

JOAB.

Woman of the broken heart, and wounded soul,
Go down unto thine home ;—be comforted,
Thy sorrows will be lightened !

RIZPAH.

Whose the voice,
The mocking voice, that comforteth the dead ?

NATHAN.

Thy friends, good Rizpah ;—leave this dreadful sight,
And with thy brethren go unto thine home.

RIZPAH.

My home is here !

NATHAN.

Nay, go unto thine house.

RIZPAH.

My house hath fallen. The pillars lie before me,
Crumbling to dust amidst its ruins.

NATHAN.

Nay !

Seek food and raiment, and from thy stain'd limbs
Wash those foul spots.—Go, thou art faint and sad,
And by this cruel task thy tortur'd spirit
Must be oppress'd and weary !

RIZPAH.

Weary !—No !

When was the mother wearied watching o'er
The still sleep of her sons !

JOAB.

But they are dead !

RIZPAH.

I know it ! know it now ;—but once I thought
My noble sons but slept,—and when I heard
That Israel's king had called forth the sons
Of him, his sometime master, I did fear
Something, I know not what, of danger,—but
Then hope came smiling, and with her a train
Of long remembrances, how once the dead
Were dear to Jesse's son, and how he swore
Peace with the house of Saul ; and then I sent
My fair young blossoms, that the kingly arms
Of Judah's cedar might encircle them,
And that beneath his royal spreading shade
They might in safety blow !—Then came a cry
How Benjamin was bleeding by the stroke
Of the slave traitor Gibeon. Then I flew
Unto Jerusalem, and heard the wrath

Of God had pass'd away ; that Famine's rage
Was glutt'd, and her hunger quell'd by blood,—
Blood the most precious in all Israel's land,
For the majestic Saul had died anew
In his young beauteous sons. And then I rush'd
Rapidly through the city, while the shouts
And screams of men pursued me. This I heard,
But heeded not, but onward, onward flew,
Until I reach'd this spot, and there I found
Alone, deserted, murder'd, as thou see'st,
Mine own—my all !

I number'd each pale form,
And bade them rise and speak. They did arise,
And with unearthly utterings each blue lip
Did shake and shiver, and I heard strange sounds,
But nought of words or sense ; and then came down
Strange bursts of laughter, and afraid I crept
Close to the dead, and hid my face upon
Armoni's mangled bosom. I had slept,
But that I felt it heave, and then I sprung
Up from my bloody bed, and to the rest
Ran, shrieking loud, for help to bind the wound.

But they heard not, or would not answer me,
And mock'd my grief by smiles, or silence grim,
And stillness, till unto my labouring heart
Came the black truth, " Thy sons are dead ! dead !
dead !"

And then I shriek'd in horror, and a voice
Sweeping around me, rising, as from earth,
Or from the breasts of all my sons at once,
Cried loudly, "'Tis the deed of Israel's God,
And of his chosen David ;" but I clos'd
Mine ear against the sound, and my clench'd hand
Smote on my labouring breast, and deeply down
Forc'd that detested thought ; and then I rais'd
My dim eye to the Heavens, and cried aloud,
" Praise to the God of Jacob." Then I grew
Calmer and tranquil, and upon the rock
I sat among the dead, and watch'd the change
I saw them undergo. By day I strode
Around my sons, and, with my fierce look, scar'd
The savage beasts of prey. They shunn'd me, for
I was more fell than they ; they dar'd not war
With the wild desperate mother.—When the dews

Of night fell on the earth, I wip'd the damp
From their cold brows, and when the unclean birds
Came swooping for their food, my shrieks and cries
Scar'd them, though famine-struck, away ; and then
Rose the cold moon, and I was happy, for
She play'd upon their lips, and gave them life ;
And they arose, and held communion sad
With me, and with each other ; then I pray'd
That night might last for ever ; but the sun
Came all unwish'd, and with his cruel fire
Shrunk up the sinews of my beauteous sons,
And dried their unclos'd eyes.—I rose and press'd
My fingers on their eye-lids ;—they refus'd
To me obedience, for they shrunk away,
Drawing their friendly covering from the dim
And staring eye-ball, that, with dismal glare,
Fix'd on my living eye. How did I joy,
When the pale moon, again on their wan brows,
Pour'd once more light and life. Then, as I watch'd,
I saw a mighty form, with solemn step,
Striding among the fallen, and I bow'd
My head unto the earth with wondrous joy,

And awful gratulation, for I knew
 The solemn majesty of that crown'd shade,
 The father of the dead ! I saw them speak,
 But heard them not ; yet, all the weary night,
 The kingly form was watching ; and, at day,
 He vanish'd, looking piteously on
 The wretch, whose woeful task he deign'd to share
 And lighten. She, who once to him was—but
 That was a dream, a long forgotten thought ;—
 This—horrible reality !

JOAB.

But, comfort,
 I pray thee, take, good Rizpah, for I bring
 Tidings may sooth thy sorrows.

RIZPAH.

Man, I need
 No soothing thou canst offer, nor thy king,
 The son of Jesse, send. I am of comfort,
 My husband, and my sons have been with me,
 And that communion deep hath made me like
 Unto themselves. I sat among the still,
 Until I am of them ;—thy human aid

Were mockery and vain. I am beyond it,—
I, too, am dead !

JOAB.

Thou ravest !

RIZPAH.

Man, I speak

The words of solemn truth ;—do the dead lie ?
Doth the deep grave more voices use than one ?
I tell thee I am dead ! Last night, when came
Again the lofty shade to watch his sons,
And with the distant thunder of his voice,
Awaken them from sleep, I heard the words
That mutter'd thunder utter'd, a command
To them and me. Thus said it, “ Rizpah, come !
Daughter of Aiah, linger not, but haste
To join our shadowy wandering.”—Then I strove,
And struggled hard to die, that I might hear
The utterings of their thoughts, and make reply,
And be as one of them ; but I could not !
Although I lay stretch'd on the red dew'd earth,
And long'd to quit that crimson bed, my limbs
Refus'd to aid my purpose ; and though faint

From famine, woe, and weariness, though dying,
 Yet, yet I could not die !—But when the morn
 Broke faintly o'er the mountain, then the shade,
 Who look'd not as death's victim, but as though
 He had usurp'd his empire, and become
 Himself the lord of shadows, slowly strode
 To where I lay in agony, and turn'd
 His eye upon my face,—its light, intense,
 Drew mine into its orbit, and my soul,
 Ascending in that look, repos'd on his,
 Freed from all mortal anguish. Then I heard
 The language of the dead, and the drear sounds
 Breath'd to no mortal ear, and then I knew
 That I *was* dead, and in a juster world
 Than that from which I parted.

JOAB.

'T were in vain
 To reason with the maniac:—raise the bodies,
 And bear them to the cypress wreathed urn,
 That, by the piety of Jesse's son,
 Conceals the remnants of the mighty dead,
 The unclad bones of Saul.

NATHAN.

Stay, warlike Joab.

All violence will unto frenzy drive
 The bruised visionary ; let me speak
 And sooth her to compliance. Woe-struck woman,
 David, thy Lord, and ours, hath, with the heart
 Of generous pity, heard thy deeds of love
 Unto the tomb-denied dead ; and he,
 In pity of thy suffering, hath decreed,
 That they shall, with all honours, be resign'd
 Unto their father's tomb, and Benjamin
 Waits to conduct them onward. Wilt thou go
 With us unto thy home, and leave thy sons
 Unto their kinsmen's care ? Why dost thou smile
 Thus hollowly ? I pray thee, go with us.

RIZPAH.

Bury the sons, and leave the father's bones
 Rotting on Bethshan's walls ? They shall not sleep
 Honour'd above their father !

NATHAN.

That the care
 Of Gilead's grateful sons may now assure thee—

From Bethshan's towers, our ancient master's corse
 They have redeem'd, and with the mangled limbs
 Of noble Jonathan, in yonder urn
 Inclosed they lie, and waiting to receive
 These lifeless forms ; then, in his father's grave,
 Together they shall lie.

RIZPAH.

And Saul is come !

The King is come to fetch his mourner home,
 And take her to his rest.—This morn I doubted,
 But now, I doubt no longer.—I am still !
 I am with those I wept. Well, onward now !
 Conduct us to our home.

NATHAN.

Good Rizpah, thou
 Art yet among the living ;—but thy sons
 Shall be high honour'd victims.—They have died
 High offerings to God, propitiation
 For their afflicted land, a glorious doom,
 And of their God accepted.—I myself
 Will pay them royal duties ;—all the race
 Of Benjamin, beneath the high roof'd dome

Of Saul's once royal house, shall weep the dead
 To strains of solemn music ;—gracious songs
 Shall hymn their virtues, which the perfum'd air
 Shall hold discourse of, and, around the tomb,
 The Arab spiced clouds shall rise and shade
 Its honours, and shall purify the spot
 Where he, the mighty, slumbers.

RIZPAH.

Prophet, thou

Dost break upon my rest ; unto the grave
 Conduct thy charge.

NATHAN.

Take up the bodies, then,
 For thee, thou must with us. Secure her, friends,
 But, gently ! gently !

RIZPAH.

O ! my sons ! my sons !
 Part me not from my sons ; the tomb of Kish
 May circle all his children.—I am dead.—
 Touch me—this hand—hath it the warmth of life ?
 This lip, this eye—look on them—do they speak
 Of this world, or another ?—I am dead.—

Part not our ashes ;—let the children's dust
 Be mingled with their mother's.—We shall be
 United still.—O mercy ! mercy ! Men,
 Why wrong ye thus the murder'd ?—If ye say
 I still am living, strike ;—ye did not pause
 Before my children's bosoms, though deep oaths,
 And kingly vows, had promised to stand
 Between their forms and murder !—Spare not me,
 I am of Benjamin ;—strike,—strongly strike,
 One blow will fit me for the royal change
 I pray to undergo. Oh ! tyrants, monsters,
 Fiercer than beasts of prey.

NATHAN.

Her screams have scar'd
 My very soul !—Look how her face hath chang'd
 Its still despair, for wild ferocity,
 And horrid strength of vengeance ! 'Tis the eye
 Of Saul himself, and like to his, the hard
 And deeply lowering brow of death !

RIZPAH.

Mourn, mourn,
 But for the mourners ;—not the quiet dead.

They sleep, while ye lament ;—the day will come,
 When this foul deed will cry unto the Heaven,
 And God will not for ever close his ear
 Against the house of Saul.—Then, Israel, weep !
 Gibeon, cry out aloud !—Thou wilt have cause
 For thy lamenting voice—if, as ye say,
 I still am of the living, and your power
 And fierce oppression bids me fear I am,
 My life is ebbing from me ;—the strong hope,
 The longing that I feel for Death's cold kiss,
 And shadowy embracements of my sons,
 Will bear me to their arms, and I shall die
 Of that intensity of wish.—I go
 To fill the tomb of Saul !

NATHAN.

Jehovah ! see !

Look on this fearful miracle, good Joab
 With force and strength she raises her worn form
 From the ensanguin'd earth, and her torn limbs
 Bear steadily th' exhausted frame unto
 The death couch of her sons. The might of death
 Doth animate her spirit !—on their breasts

She throws her body—horrible !—I pray
Bear her from that sad sight.

RIZPAH.

O never, never !

Henceforth ye bear me but unto the tomb,
That waits within its friendly shade to hide
The mother and her sons.—Oh, Israel's king !
Saul, mightiest of the mighty, thou art there
Thron'd in that car of death.—O, while on earth,
Thou still art Lord of these bad men, now put
A voice unto thy breast, and they will shrink
From disobeying thee,—do thou protect me,—
Call me unto thy rest.—Oh, husband ! Lord,
Father of Rizpah's sons ! command her forth,
She hangs suspended on thy voice, and waits
Hovering 'twixt life and death ! Ha ! happiness !
He calleth !—Lord, I come !

[*She dies.*

NATHAN.

Praise to the God

Of Jacob, he hath bid the sufferer rest,
And call'd her to his peace. Poor Rizpah ! die !

Thou shalt repose with thy lost sons.—Approach,
Lead on the car, and with uncover'd heads,
And mourning locks flowing in graceful woe,
Bear the departed to their sacred home ;
And as ye go, the praises of the dead
Hymn with your solemn measures.

NOTES.

Note 1, page 108, line 16.

Peace with the house of Saul.

Sam. I. Chap. xxiv. and Chap. xxi.

Note 2, page 118, line 21.

Mourn, mourn.

This beautiful idea I have borrowed from a funeral song by one of the Jewish Rabbis, and have, I fear, expressed it in very inferior language. It stands thus: "Mourn for the mourners, and not for the dead; for he is at rest, and we in tears."

SARDANAPALUS.

SARDANAPALUS.

SCENE—*A deep Grove.* TIME—*Night.*

BELESIS *and part of the defeated Army.*

BELESIS.

COME down upon our Earth, O ancient Night,
Close up thy thousand wondering eyes, and let
Thy robe of deepest blackness curtain up
Our red and glowing shame!—and Hiddekel
Roll with tremendous force, and outcry loud,
Thy boiling waters, and so drown our groans
Of pain, and rage, and grief!—Oh counselling stars,
Why have ye thus deceiv'd me?—And thou, Lord
Once of this lower world, but monarch now
O'er myriads of bright regions, when I saw

Old belted Chronus, thy last beam divine,
 Glowing with light miraculous upon
 My star-devoted brow, I thought thy smile
 Predicted glory to me, and success
 In the spear-darting field,—not shameful flight
 Before th' Assyrian king, the Lord of feasts,
 Who three times in the embattled plain hath struck
 Despair and terror to our mighty souls,
 And drove us cursing to our sheltering camp,
 And this concealing grove.

ARBACES *without.*

On, cowards, on !

Once more attack the standard !—Oh, but once,
 To let me fall defac'd by noble wounds,
 And die a warrior's death !—I will not live
 On terms like yours !—I do disdain a life
 Thus branded with dishonour !—Back, Oh back !
 Follow me once again !—Oh should I die
 Thus scarr'd upon my couch, contempt and scorn
 Would mark my race for ever !

BELESIS.

Noble Mede,

Vain are thy glorious efforts,—all in vain
Thy strength and valour, till the angry stars
We shall propitiate. Withdraw thy force,
And join our weakened counsels.

ARBACES.

On thy stars

My bitter malediction !—If thou art
A true interpreter of their wild will,
As told by their bright aspects, then they lie
Horribly to mankind,—or they are mad,
And know not their own pleasures.—They have thrice
Counsell'd us to the battle, we have fought,
And thrice have been defeated.—By my sword,
For other God I know not, I could dart
Mine arrow at their mocking visages,
For making me their sport. And still thy cry
Hath been, “ Wait, wait,” and I have waited, till
Patience hath died of weariness !—And now
I hasten to my home, and will pursue
This idle quest no longer :—not to me,
However great their promises, thy stars
Have given th' Assyrians empire !

BELESIS.

Tarry yet !—

The day of glory hath not broke, but it
 Is dawning, warrior.—Thou *shalt* wear the crown,
 And thy right hand, that nobly knows to wield
 The mighty sword, shall no less nobly bear
 The mightier sceptre,—but, of those bright stars,
 Those counselling Divinities, which are
 The eyes of the unknown, and One !—Forbear
 To speak with scorn, lest they report thy words
 Unto their master.

ARBACES.

Babylonian, I

Disdain their influence,—they have bemock'd
 A noble warrior.—I will not trace
 My path by Heaven's lamp-light. Told they not
 That Sardanapalus should bow beneath
 My fate encircled sword,—that Nineveh
 Should yield her to my power ?—Lo ! their truth !
 Th' effeminate king hath beat the chosen chiefs,
 And, safe within his closed city gates,
 Laughs our attempts to scorn !—I will not stay,—

The Median forests shall conceal my shame,
That tongues of man may not within mine ear
Proclaim my bow'd presumption.

BELESIS.

Warrior, look !

O sight of glory !—Lo ! a brilliant star,
A bright intelligencer, hath shot down
From highest Heaven, unto his brethren, bright,
Who o'er our earth dominion hold, and o'er
The lives of men sweet influence,—it conveys
Tidings of happiness ; and see, ye chiefs,
The stars that rule the living have retir'd,
And in their throne in Heaven, and o'er the earth
The constellations of the dead arise,
And shine in mournful glory ; but above
Their orbits, dost thou see a fiery beam
Sparkling above their brightness ?—'Tis the ray
Of Sardanapalus.—Look how it shines
Vividly down upon us,—now it glares
As it would fire the Heavens,—now—'tis gone !
Shot to the stars of death !

ARBACES.

Well, I will trust

Their faith once more.

BELESIS.

Thou hast said well, Arbaces ;

Once more thou shalt,—that once shall be the last
 Of our terrific struggles :—thine shall be
 The might and glory,—thine the diadem
 Of the luxurious king.

ARBACES.

Luxurious, said'st thou?—

The warlike aspect of the crimson field
 Hath frighten'd luxury far from the side
 Of Sardanapalus,—almost mine eyes
 I have distrusted, as I've mark'd the deeds
 Achiev'd by yonder once effeminate boy.—
 I lov'd him yesterday,—by arms I did,
 I could have grip'd him to my soldier's breast,
 And held him there for ever ! Where the streams
 Of life flow'd freest, and the clashing spears
 Rose like a storm-toss'd forest, there the king
 Rode highest, loudest, boldest !—His broad blade

Was crimson to the hilt, whose very gems
Were turn'd to sparkling rubies ; his war-horse,
For he had spurn'd his chariot, as protecting
His person from the danger, foam'd and paw'd,
Proud, as he might be, of the royal freight
He bore triumphantly o'er death and fate.—
Both armies heard his voice !—that very voice
Which, when I brib'd my way unto his sight,
When in his palace surfeiting he lay
In sloth and luxury, I heard, the pipe
Of a vex'd urchin !—Yesterday it rous'd
Men to the combat, and its thunders deep
Scar'd Median warriors from the scene of fight.—
He follow'd like a lion, on our track,
Shouting of victory, and when I turn'd,
(Shame on the hour that saw it,) I beheld
Aloft, the golden dove upon his helm,
Still looking forward, cutting through the air,
As though it were an eagle. Though I sent
Twice at his valiant breast the fiery dart,
The arrow Naphtha dew'd, and once it struck
So hard upon the mark, that, as I guess,

The liquid fire must have search'd his veins,
 He neither groan'd nor fell, but calmly call'd
 For earth, and when they brought it to his hand,
 He rubb'd it smilingly upon the wound,
 And said, " The mother's breast was sweetest cure
 For her sick children ;"—then into the fight
 He rush'd again like frenzy, and o'erthrew
 Men, horses, chariots, like a thunderbolt
 Chafing at the rude sea !

BELESIS.

Most wondrous is
 The change by danger wrought.—'Tis but a year
 Since, plung'd in sloth and pleasure, wisdom was
 A jest, and valour but a shadowy dream ;
 Now is he crown'd of both ;—then all his days
 Were love, and mirth devoted, rioting,
 The very Phegor of the festival—
 Or in soft female garments, as the rite
 Prescribes, surrounded by his women, clad
 In warlike guise of men, low worshipping
 With song and dance, and sacrifice of doves,
 The goddess of Mount Aphac.

ARBACES.

It was thus

I saw him, when, by thy predictions fir'd,
The golden cup had won my passage to
His sottish presence. In my deep disguise
He knew me not ; a slave's dress had conceal'd
The Median's hardy form ;—free was the feast,
And careless was the song ;—the instruments
Of soft degrading tones, in concert spake
With women, and with slaves, to praise the king !
Fit praise for such a monarch ! On a couch
Of ivory he lay, emboss'd with gold,
And Babylonian hangings, purple dyed,
Shielded, from burning suns, his delicate form.
Fine was his vest, and his white mantle sham'd
The snows on Zagrus mountain. Round his neck,
(Girdled by chains of gold,) and on his breast,
Flow'd his rich curls, all bright, and fragrant with
The balmy Sesame oil, and near him stood
The eunuch, with his bright tiara, which,
Radiant with gems, outshone the brilliancy
Of the all-glorious sun. A signet grac'd

His finger, and his right hand grasp'd the sign
Of his great office, but e'en that was mark'd
By his debased mind ; for, on the top
Of his proud sceptre, as in days of old,
No lordly eagle sat, but a soft dove,
Kissing a fragrant rose ! I blush'd, to think
Men would obey the thing ; and then I vow'd
To liberate the land from such a yoke.
As I departed, some capricious mood
Made him recall me, and around me threw
A mantle of the Babylonian loom,
So rich in texture, that I sham'd to wear
The ignominious gift, and gave it straight
To one, his lowest slave. How comes it now,
That thus he is so parted from himself,
I cannot guess, unless grim danger hath
Put soul into his body.

BELESIS.

The high stars,
Divine inspirers, have grac'd him, thus
Doubly to gild our triumph ! But the night
Is wearing fast ; to-morrow's dawn must see

Our greatest, last attack. The tyrant builds
 His hope upon a prophecy, which tells
 That Nineveh's broad walls shall gird her safe
 From every foe, until the river shall
 Become her enemy. Now, saith mine art,
 This night the thing shall be, for Hiddekel,
 Swell'd o'er his banks by the tremendous rains,
 Will roll his waters o'er the ample walls,
 And rush into the city ! Then will we
 Attack the stunned feasters, nor give time
 For thought, nor space for action.—Noble friend,
 Let us rejoin the Chiefs.

SCENE—*Interior of the Palace of Nineveh.*

SARDANAPALUS, ATOSSA, SALOMENES, *Nobles.*

SARDANAPALUS.

Unarm me, come !

Nay, Salomenes, though I thank thy love,
 I will not tax thy service. Who would choose
 A warrior's hand, to free his fetter'd limbs,
 When he may ask a woman's ~~rosy hand~~?—*rosy hand!*
 I woo thy service with this gentle kiss.

See, sweet Atossa, thy own warrior comes
 In all his crimson glories. Start not, dear,
 From his encircling arms.

ATOSSA.

No, for I love
 These robes of victory. They speak to me
 Of sleeping honour waken'd, valour rous'd,
 And kingly triumphs purchas'd.—Warrior, thou
 Art far more lovely to my gazing eye,
 Accoutred thus, than deck'd in richest robes
 Of royal majesty.

SARDANAPALUS.

Look, fairest, how
 The timid dove, the Mede, Arbaces' scorn,
 And the keen jest of wizard Belesis,
 Hath dyed her in the eagle's colours, and
 Weareth the eagle's plume.

ATOSSA.

And nobly too,
 And most becomingly. Now at the feet
 Of Heaven's queen, my Sarac, place thy dove.
 Grace high Astarte with the offering

Of thy unmatched valour ; she deserves
This boon of thee !

SARDANAPALUS.

No, dearest ! at the feet
Of earth's fair queen I place it ;—it is thine !
Thou wast the sweet inspirer of my fame !
Thine was the hand that led me to the steps
Of Glory's temple, and, with fearless heart,
Bade me ascend, and on her altar make
The sacrifice of pleasure.—Thine the deed,
Be thine, oh love, the glory !—Little bird,
How hast thou sham'd thy scorners !—Belesis,
Without thy wings, flew quicker than thy speed
Could follow ; and, as he outstripp'd the wind,
He look'd up, muttering anger at the stars,
And rating, in his Babylonian cant,
The mildly laughing eyes of quiet Heaven,
Because they saw him fly, and would not wink
Upon the dire disgrace, nor yet drop down
With horror from their spheres. Arbaces, too,
The arm of yonder body, dragg'd along,
As rage and grief gave leave, his giant limbs,

Raving at fate and all things ; but he went
 Valiantly, like a soldier, for he turn'd
 Not from his post, until he saw and knew
 Fate, with our swords against him.

ATOSSA.

Let him go !

While we ascend our seats, and sharing, grace
 The stately banquet. Now, my royal Lord,
 Off with this iron vestment, to enfold
 This snow white robe, with rich embroideries grac'd,
 Of Babylonian purple, round thy form.
 And from thy victor's brow I take the helm,
 To bind this circle, where the fragrant rose
 Suffers the tendrils of the glowing vine
 To clasp her blushing beauties. Now, sit down
 Upon thy throne of chased Tyrian gold,
 Curtain'd by Tyre's rich colours, and beneath
 Thy sacred foot, the royal carpets, wove
 Of Babel's brightest hues, cheating thy sight
 With images of nature, the green breast
 Of earth o'erspread by flowers. Now, the wine—
 Fill high the golden cup, to welcome back

The King of kings unto his royal home.—
 And here are fruits, rich fruits, may please the lord
 Of this our nether world.—Curdistan's grape,
 Dried in the juice of violets ;—bowls of wine
 Spic'd with red roses, and all flowers that spring
 Kindly on Syrian soil. Now, King of kings,
 Pledge all thy faithful servants.

SARDANAPALUS.

'Tis a feast

Worthy the great Astarte,—or the sire
 Of our high race,—immortal Belus, who
 Looks from his throne in air, all smilingly
 Upon our graceful revels.—Come, to feast !—
 And Salomenes, place thee next my side,
 That was thy post in battle ; be it now
 Thine at the sparkling banquet.—Music, friends.
 Now may we smile at dangers past, and bless,
 With warriors' hearts, the gracious, laughing face
 Of the gay passing hour. Salomenes,
 Most bravely didst thou in the fight to-day,
 This, our third noble victory !—But where,
 Think'st thou, the haughty Median hides his head,

SARDANAPALUS.

As thou say'st,

Their proud presumption may to sleep awhile,—
But, bring those gifts which for my noble Chiefs
I have design'd.—This vase of purest gold,
Foaming with wine, spic'd with a diamond bright,
Rent from a monarch's crown, to thy red lip,
Fair Queen, I pray thee press ; a higher boon
No youthful warrior covets ; gallant son
Of old gray Ashur, thou a woman's kiss,
Lov'st well as hero's welcome. That bright cup
Henceforth be thine. Upon thee, Salomenes,
I gird mine own good sword ; and, pray thee, be
A giver to thy monarch ; let his hand
Wield thy death-dealing weapon,—may it shine
Hereafter, in my grasp, as on this morn
It sparkled, friend, in thine.—In my defence,
To-day, Tetzazes, thou receiv'dst a wound
Deep in thy warlike arm ; it may not be
That thou, my shield, be absent from my breast
In future fights ; nor can th' Assyrian throne
One column spare in thee : therefore, be thine

This broad and golden shield, whose hollow space
 Bears, for thy hurt, that scarce and precious balm
 Which under Judean suns alone may blow.
 Terrible raiser of the storm of war,
 Sethos, be thine the chariot, which shall bear
 Thee, like the Lord of Victory, above
 The bodies of thy prostrate vanquished !—
 Sun of the field of glory ! warlike Chief,
 Sosarmes, in thy helmet fix this star
 Of crimson gems, that its red glories may
 Be seen of all, and be unto the host
 The light that leads to conquest. To the rest
 High thanks and royal gifts.—Mithreus, thou
 Knowest in this my will, on all around
 Some token of my favour. Now a health—
 Of mine own cup ; libations rich I pour !
 Thanks to the Gods, unto the radiant Queen,
 And Father Bel, all honours ;—next my people ;
 High thanks for our great victories.

SALOMENES.

And praise

Be to ye, parent Gods, that on our state
 Ye have bestowed a leader like to Sarac !

Enter an Officer.

OFFICER.

Health to the King, peace to his sacred rest,
Though danger roar without ; the foe, O King,
Attacks the royal city.

SARDANAPALUS *starting up.*

Off ! Oh off ;

Thou rosy crown, and iron chaplet on !
Thou art as beauteous, and thy burthen is
To Sarac's brow as light—to love, to feast,
To wrestle to the teeth, with sternest danger ;
Each fill the circle, and in turn is welcome !—
Now, warriors !—Salomenes, to thy post,—
Heroes, ye know your duties.—Go, I join
The battle with my chosen, where the fight
Becomes the hardest 'gainst ye.—O, farewell ;
Morning is dawning ; if to-night we come
Safe from the danger, this high royal dome
Shall see us feast again ; if not, the grave
Hath place enough for all.

[*They go, saluting* SARDANAPALUS.

The haughty Mede

Doth reckon on the past, and hopes to find
 Sarac as once he was ! My idle hours,
 My life effeminate, which he hath scorn'd,
 Was of my birth and tutorage the crime,—
 Not of this royal heart : for when I am
 Myself, as now, I shall not stain the page
 Whereon the fame of Ninus' race is writ ;
 Nor will the annals of my later day
 Darken the glories of Semiramis !—
 Now, sweet Atossa, say at once farewell ;
 Unman me not by tears, lest I return
 Not in my robes of glory ! Sweet farewell !

SCENE—*On the Walls of Nineveh.—Evening.—The
 Assyrian Chiefs.*

SETHOS.

So goes the sun into his watery bed,
 So sink into the silent bed of death
 Assyria's noblest warriors !—Salomenes,
 Who led the fierce attack without the walls,
 Sleeps on his gory couch,—young Ashur's 'might

Is powerless now ; and brave Sosarmes, scorning
 To be among high-dead, the living last,
 Hath hasten'd on to join them.—The scar'd troops
 Are beaten back unto the city gates,
 And all the force of the reviving foe
 Is bent against our towers. We will fight
 And die upon our walls !—Well, brave Tetzazes,
 For one short breathing space the foe is driven
 Back from our ramparts.

TETZEZES.

No ; for now they pour
 With tenfold force upon my weakened post :
 Our slingers and our archers ply in vain
 Their ready arms ; for, where they strike, it seems
 As though new warriors arose from blood
 Shed on the teeming earth. I came to beg
 Some succour from the King.

SETHOS.

He fights, Tetzazes,
 As he were death himself. I wait him here
 For further orders ; and, behold, he comes
 Glittering in terrible beauty, earthly thunder

Follows his track ; for the broad wall doth rock
 Beneath his chariot's glowing wheels !—Great King,
 What wilt thou thy devoted servants next
 Achieve for royal Nineveh ?

SARDANAPALUS.

Pour down

Huge storms of stones upon them, liquid fire,
 And burning Tyrian sand ; for Salomenes
 Must be aveng'd, and Ashur's mourning shade
 Call not in vain for victims.—On, my brothers,
 Again to face the tempest ; single out
 The Mede Arbaces ; Media's realm shall grace,
 With hoards of golden talents, that bold man
 Who slays, or takes the rebel ; and to him
 As much who strikes the wizard. Now, Mithreus,
 What are thy tidings ?

MITHREUS.

Help, most royal lord,
 I beg for bold Tetzazes ; his brave band
 Hath dwindled to some few, who stalk the walls
 Like shadows of the vanquish'd !

SETHOS *enters.*

Gracious, my lord, the long expected aid
Of Bactria is approaching ; should they fall
Upon the rear of our bold enemy,
It would secure our victory.

SARDANAPALUS.

They come,
And in good time, for weakened is our band
Of noble warriors ; but, my gallant Sethos,
The Bactrians halt !—and, ah ! instead of fight,
They parley with the foe !

SETHOS.

The Babylonian
Rides forth to meet them ! Strike him, Heaven, dumb,
The glozing hypocrite !—Secure, just Gods,
Their faith unto Assyria. I will send
An arrow after Belesis.

SARDANAPALUS.

He is
Beyond thy arrow's reach !—Alas ! I fear,—
Yes, he hath won them ; for they fall into
The Median ranks, and, turning on our towers,

Defy us to our teeth.—Oh, that thou wert
Within this good sword's length !

SETHOS.

Courage, dread lord,
Still have we truth and valour in our walls ;
And these, conducted by our royal chief,
Will be invincible.

[*Exit.*

SARDANAPALUS.

Fresh showers of darts !
The enemy approacheth to the walls ;
Upon them, noble warriors.

MITHREUS *enters.*

Gracious lord,
Tetzezes prays the immortal Gods to guard
The sacred life of Sarac.

SARDANAPALUS.

Oh, dear friend,
Am I bereft of thee !—Revenge, Mithreus,
That is yet left Assyria !—

SETHOS *enters.*

Mighty Lord,

A fearful prodigy hath scar'd our souls,
 And palsied our strong arms.—Hiddekel's streams
 Are chang'd to waves of blood, and o'er our walls
 Pour in unbridled fury:

SARDANAPALUS.

What,—Hiddekel!

Then is the city lost!—What said I?—Slave,
 Am I the first to tremble?—Let us on,
 And die upon our ramparts!

SETHOS.

O there is

No footing for our might.—Our men are swept
 From off the walls; and, while dismay'd they stand,
 Terrific is the wide destruction done
 By Babylonian darts.—Retreat, dread Lord,
 Into the palace.

SARDANAPALUS.

Sethos, I will die

Even here, upon the ramparts!—Hark!—that crash.

SETHOS.

Another, and a shout,—the walls are down!—
 Meet them amidst the waters.—Should we fail,

Retire unto the palace; that may hold
 Still out against their force.—Their aim will be
 Thy sacred person living!—Royal Lord,
 Live not a captive to them.

SARDANAPALUS.

Fear me not.—

Now forward!—By my side—forsake not warrior
 In life, thy latest friend.

SETHOS.

In life I will not,—

Ha!—

SARDANAPALUS.

Dead! so suddenly!—the fiery dart
 Hath seal'd his generous promise.—All are gone
 That lov'd me!—Vengeance, vengeance!—On—
 Death to the treacherous Mede.

[*Exit fighting.*]

An Apartment in the Palace.—Night.

SARDANAPALUS *alone.*

There is a storm gathering in the black air.
 I heard the thunder rumbling long and low.

As rather venting groans of kindly grief,
Than roars of fierce displeasure ;—it did sound,
As if, reluctantly, it dirg'd me on
To meet my coming fate.—The wild blue glare
Of the broad flashing lightning shone around
With death-like brilliancy, as if to show
The path that I must tread, so let it be !
All is in harmony with this night's deeds.
The Empire of the world is dying—dead !
And Heaven and Earth perform her obsequies.
Media hath conquer'd—Nineveh is down—
Assyria but a name.—What hath her king
Now left for him ?—The morning of my day
Was spent in royal efforts, how to frame
My power with my pleasure, so to make
The day of life one constant festival.
Deep bowls of joy I quaff'd ;—the cup I drain'd
Still overflow'd, and to the very brim
The wine of bliss rose mantling.—After days
Had but one thought :—it was to gild the past
With some faint rays of glory.—Now, I have
One study farther, and that is, to die,

And nobler than I liv'd.—Although my life
Hath been degrading to the high reach'd fame
Of proud Semiramis, yet shall my death
Recover all, and add new fires unto
The bright high soaring flame.—The startled world,
When it shall speak of me, shall freely own,
Although I liv'd an alien, yet I died
True son of that world's wonder !—Belesis
Hath sent me terms of life.—Of life, the wretch !
He deems my spirit like his own :—he swears—
Pledges his life for mine—peace, honour, safety,
High place and riches, these the bribes he offers,
If I will yield me captive, and be led,
A chained wild beast, through his native streets,
And shown to Median foresters.—Peace ! honour !—
To bow (e'en if they keep their word) the knee
Before the Chaldean, and submission pay
To him whom I commanded ;—to adore
The cruel valour of the Mede ;—to find
Companions in my slaves, foes in my friends,
And masters in them all ! High place, he yields !—
High place in Nineveh, where I was born

The highest!—Insolence!—I will display
 Before his eyes what value I affix
 To treasur'd heaps of riches!—Counsel, counsel!
 Time's dusky wings are spread, and on them rides
 The beauteous King of Shadows—let me make
 A temple for his welcome!—My last guest,
 I would receive him nobly!—Ha! who comes
 To scare me from my purpose?

ATOSSA enters.

ATOSSA.

To confirm

Thy high resolve I come;—the world hath shut
 Her gaudy gates upon thee.—Do not knock
 At the clos'd door for entrance;—other realms
 Are waiting for the banish'd.—Thou must go
 A dreary road, and I must follow thee.
 I owe thee this; I have unwittingly
 Aided thy ruin; for the haughty Mede
 Pursues thee for my sake.—Command is given
 To seize and spare Atossa—do not start!
 He saw me in the palace, when his art
 Gain'd entrance to thy presence.

SARDANAPALUS.

I did think

I was prepar'd to die ;—to throw off life
As a rent garment.—Now I cling unto it
Close, close, and wrap me in its tatter'd folds.
The draught of death was rich with perfumes spic'd
By honour, glory, valour.—Now I taste
Nought but its bitterness !—O my sick heart !
Thou wilt not wait for high ennobling death,
But sink unto him weeping.

ATOSSA.

Then thou doubt'st

My truth, it seems ;—in thy all-idle day
Lov'd I thy careless revels ?—Did I bow
Before thy sun of pleasure ?—Strove I not
To wake thee from thy dream ; and when, at last,
Thy spirit liv'd, whose was the voice that hail'd
Its birth, and nurs'd, and watch'd its young existence ?
I lov'd thee best, stain'd with the blood of foes,
When victory was thine, ere Belus loos'd
The chain that bound her to his foot, and she
Flew to thy foe, and took her state upon

The Median helm.—Now can I love thee less,
 Because thine own must drench thy royal robe?
 No! last Assyrian!—Of Semiramis
 The only noble one—I still am thine,
 Still mock the haughty Mede's presumptuous hope,
 And choose to die a mighty sovereign's bride,
 Than live a servant's slave.—What! could'st thou think
 That I, thy tutor in heroic deeds,
 Would basely, by example, bid thee live,
 When Fate hath bid thee die?—Look on me, Sarac,
 Think'st thou this brow is deck'd for conquest, or
 This lip the shrine of love?

SARDANAPALUS.

What hast thou done?

O! cruel in thy virtue, hast thou stain'd
 Thy matchless loveliness?—Thy hand is chill;
 Glaz'd thy once sparkling eye.—O! do not say,
 Thou hast destroy'd thy life.

ATOSSA.

I could not look
 Upon thee, captive, and I fear'd thy heart
 Would shrink from the dark voyage, if I went

Not on to show the track.—The friendly draught
Hath fitted me to guide thee ;—now I know
That thou wilt follow quickly.

SARDANAPALUS.

O ! I will.

I needed not this piercing goad, Atossa !
Yet, yet, look on thy Sarac ! let me hear
Once more the music of thy voice.—Now lean
Upon my bosom ;—thou art in mine arms.
Atossa speak—speak to me once again.

ATOSSA.

My Sarac come !

[*She dies.*

SARDANAPALUS.

Still ! silent ! gone !—I am
Without a further care, and free to do
That which my destiny assigns—my task.—
Afar I hear the conqueror's shouts.—They come
To bid me live, to force me to endure
Life—without thee !—Oh, noblest ! let me haste,
Lest that I wrong thy spirit.—Footsteps, ha !
I have my dagger ready.

Captain of the Guard enters.

CAPTAIN.

Gracious Lord !

'Tis I thy faithful servant, once the leader
 Of those who had thy sacred life in charge,—
 I have resign'd my trust.—I came to pray
 Thee fly from these false towers ;—thy nobles all,
 The few that now remain, confederate are
 With my disloyal band, and for reward
 Plot thy most sacred person to surprise,
 And yield thee captive to th' abhorred Mede.
 Then fly, my Lord !—there is no safety here.
 When to the banquet thou return'st, the slaves
 Will seize and bind their sovereign.—Trust them not,
 But by a timely flight secure thy safety.

SARDANAPALUS.

It is the property of death to scare
 Fear from his victims' bosoms ;—there is nought
 On earth can shake me now. I will not be
 A captive ; nor, although I thank thy love,
 May I desert my country.—I must die
 Upon her ashes, and be coffin'd, friend,

Within the cinders of my burning throne.
 Faithful unto the last—Go, generous chief,
 Speed from these falling towers, and leave me here
 To pay the debt I owe these sordid traitors.

CAPTAIN.

Forgive me, gracious master !—Still I pray thee
 Escape with me.—I know a secret path
 Will lead us safe through Nineveh, beyond
 The reach of the stern conqueror.—Hark ! he comes.
 Not long the siege these feeble towers will bear,
 Then, royal master, fly !

SARDANAPALUS.

Look here, brave soldier,
 Here is my answer :—She is gone, that I
 Might not a captive linger !—Nineveh
 And my Atossa summon—I must go ;
 Haste to secure thy safety,—when I know
 Thou art at distance, I will think of mine.

CAPTAIN.

Oh pardon me, my royal Lord, if once
 I disobey thy mandates.—Shall I go
 And leave my gracious master, from whose hands

^{it}
 Hath risen all my fortunes, in the power
 Of the blood sellers?—Let me guide thee hence,
 I can, securely, to a place of rest,
 Where danger shall not reach thee.

SARDANAPALUS.

Friend, I am
 Above all danger now,—at his loud threats
 I laugh.—But tell me, faithful, generous soldier,
 Art thou a husband?

CAPTAIN.

Yes, so please my Lord,
 I am.

SARDANAPALUS.

And thou hast children, gentle warrior?

CAPTAIN.

So please the king, such precious gifts have crown'd
 My humble roof!—And I did hope my sons
 Might live to yield that unstain'd faith to thine
 That I have done to thee.

SARDANAPALUS.

Well, as thou see'st
 The duties of thy race will end in me,

Now for thyself and them, the last sad duty
 Perform for thy fall'n master.—Seek thy home—
 Be the protector of thy virtuous wife,
 The guardian of thy children, that their hearts
 Be no less true than thine ;—these jewels take ;
 War hath made rich men poor,—it may not spare
 Thy lowlier roof, for when a kingdom falls,
 All sink together with it.—I reward
 As I have power, thy service past, and love,
 Freely accorded now.—Go, warrior go,
 Me thy faith cannot serve, but may destroy,
 Since, while thou lingerest here, I cannot die
 Nobly as I desire, but may delay
 Until the Median chains upon my arm,
 Tell me the day of honour hath sunk down
 Into the night of shame.

CAPTAIN,

I go.—Great Belus,
 Look on thy greatest son.

SARDANAPALUS.

Where are the Lords?
 Still at the banquet, say'st thou ?

CAPTAIN.

At the board
 Join'd with thy guard they sit,—there they will wait
 Thy going back to seize thee.

SARDANAPALUS.

Say'st thou *all* ?
All would betray me !—Art thou sure that none
 Are found among the faithful but thyself ?

CAPTAIN.

Had I found one, I would, with brandish'd sword
 And naked breast, have bid defiance bold
 Unto the faithless troop. No, gracious Lord,
 There is not one,—not one within these walls,
 Who will not share thy spoil.

SARDANAPALUS.

Enough ! farewell,
 True honest heart, for ever ! Speedy, speedy !
 Atossa, thou shalt have a royal grave ;—
 Semiramis herself was not so shrin'd
 As thou, sweet bride, shalt be.—One kiss ! one last !
 Cold, cold !—When next we may again, dear love,

I shall not clasp thee thus,—then, in high state
Lie, till that hour cometh !

The Banquet.—Lords feasting.

SARDANAPALUS *enters alone.*

SARDANAPALUS *to himself.*

So revel, drunkards, treacherous in your wine !
So revel, till those gay and festive lights
Become your grave lamps, and a day dawn on ye
Ye never dream'd to see.—Most foul hath been
Your treachery, and bitterly I will
Deal out your punishment !—Nay, start not, Lords,
I come to revel with ye.

1st LORD.

It is he—

Soothe him until we hear the signal given,
The sound of Median trumpets. May it please
The king to grace the cup?—The wine may shed
Peace on his soul, and banish from his breast
Suspicion, care, and fear !

SARDANAPALUS.

And who hath said
 Fear and suspicion dwelt there?—Wary lord,
 What should thy master fear, or whom suspect?

2d LORD.

Not us thy faithful servants!—Thou art sure
 Safe 'mid this noble throng;—but if the king
 Will take the cup, it may dispose his heart
 To confidence—unlock the imprison'd thought,
 And let it fly for counsel to the breasts
 Of his tried faithful servants. Please the king
 To drink?

SARDANAPALUS.

No!

1st LORD.

Wherefore?

SARDANAPALUS

Question'd! Ha! who dares?
 But soft, a moment more, and then they will
 Behold their master!—True, ye say, the cup
 Opens the heart to confidence, and thus
 I take it from your hands; and thus I pour

Libations to Necessity, the stern,
 Inexorable Goddess,—next to Death,
 And last, to the dark dwellers of the shades,
 The demon Gods of vengeance !—Now, I drink
 My last of earthly beverage. Pledge me, chiefs,
 Here, noble, faithful lords,—by this deep draught
 I do devote ye to th' infernal Gods,
 The rulers of Sepharvaim,—Kings of fire,
 Flame girt Adramelech, and he who sits
 Thron'd on his burning cloud !

1st LORD.

Great King,—but hark !
 The Median trumpet.—King no more, but slave !
 Captive unto the Mede. Close grasp his arms,—
 Let him not touch his life !

SARDANAPALUS.

If I have fail'd
 In my great purpose.—No, it cannot be,—
 No wretch was yet so curs'd !—All quiet,—Oh !
 Shade of Semiramis arise, and aid
 The last of thy high race !

Enter an Officer.

OFFICER.

Oh, noble Lords,
Ye are destroy'd,—the palace burns, the fires
Burst fiercely all around us ;—as we try
'To quench them on one spot, another burns
With tenfold might and fury.

3d LORD.

Let all help :—
Some stay to guard the king.

SARDANAPALUS.

I triumph !—Fate,
I bow me blessing thee !—Loose me, ye slaves,
I am again your master :—Know me, villains,
Your king, and your destroyer. Ye did hope
To sell, for sordid hire, for basest gain,
Your monarch and your friend, to slavery,
To woe, and to dishonour.—Ye shall have,
Without that treason, gold.—My treasur'd heaps,
Pil'd in this palace ^{lie} ~~is~~, and soon around ye
Unsparing will be pour'd, in molten seas.—
Ye shall have gold enough.—Annamelech

Hath laid his burning hand upon the heap,
 And it will roll around ye.—Well I knew
 Your monstrous treason, and beneath the walls,
 And all around, huge heaps of burning brands
 I laid while ye were soting.—Traitors, die,
 More nobly than ye wish'd !

Some Lords enter.

LORD.

Oh horrible !

The flames are all unquenchable,—we burn,—
 Our brave deliverers try to pass the walls
 To rescue us.—Preserve the captive safe,
 He will repay their toils.

SARDANAPALUS.

Arise, Adramelech !

Protect me from the Mede.—Come, burning Death,
 Rescue my soul from slavery ;—burn,—burn,
 Ye hallow'd fires, consecrated to
 The manes of dead liberty !—Oh burn ;—
 I madden while ye linger, let me feel
 Your light upon my senses !—Ah ! it comes !
 Glory ! bright glory ;—I am safe !—I have

Inscrib'd in characters of fire, a name
Never to be forgotten !—Now it comes
Nearer, and nearer,—globes of fire proclaim
The great destruction !—Shrieks !—The traitors' cries !
Storm !—Storm, and drown their voices,—rage and rise,
And with your glowing glories shame the Moon,
Who, pale for envy or affright, retires,
Thy light eclipsing hers,—pale diadem
Of Queen Astarte, who, with cruel haste,
Pluck'd from her brow of light my radiant star,
To quench its beam beneath mine empire's ruins,—
Kindle with terrible strength, and fierce as those
Which burn within my bosom. I am still
The king of great Assyria, still I can
Exert my regal power.—At the base
Of this proud palace of Arbaces' hope,
I place my foot and crush it into nothing.—
Rise, fiery tempest, kiss the smiling Heaven !
Rise, power of fell destruction.—King of Death,
Throw off thy icy terrors !—Royally
Come, girt by robes of fire !—

Lords enter distractedly.

Heaven, help !

It is in vain !—O parent Gods,—this fate,
In sight of dearest friends !—aid all once more,
To crush these flames ! they are around us. Come
All to the effort ! All !

SARDANAPALUS.

They will not be
Quench'd by your feeble powers. Ye are lost,
So is your master Sarac. 'Tis in vain ;—
The whirlwind breath of Belus fans the fire.
The awful shade of Ninus is abroad,
And the stern eye of dark Semiramis
Doth add unto the flame !—Now, now I mock
The disappointed Mede ;—th' expecting slave,
Who sought to bind his master.—Ha ! the walls
Are falling on us !—Glorious death !—down ! down !
Down to eternal night !

NOTES.

Note 1, page 127.

Sardanapalus.

It would be equally vain and absurd to particularize the many opinions and discussions respecting the character and actions of this Prince. Ctesias and his followers have presented us with a most odious picture of his life, but a very opposite and extraordinary one of his death, which they detail in the manner I have described. This event occurred after he had obtained several victories over the combined forces of Belesis and Arbaces, the latter of whom gained admittance to his presence in the manner related in the scene.

The circumstance of the overflow of the Tigris, or, as the Chaldeans called it, Hiddekel, is (if the relations of Ctesias may be called so) historical.

The different character of this Prince's life from his heroic death has induced many writers to believe there were two sovereigns of this name, and the learned authors of the Universal History appear to be of this opinion; but there is nothing extraordinary in the sudden emancipation of a powerful spirit, from a state of torpor and inactivity, to one

of energy and motion, at the unexpected approach of danger, or that such a mind, feeling the occasion equal to its resources, should repel danger with firmness, or submit to destiny with heroism. Such, according to the more approved authorities, was the real character of the unfortunate Sarac, or Chynaladan, who was the last of the Assyrian sovereigns of the race of Put, or Belus, and who died exactly as Ctesias describes Sardanapalus to have done in the year of the Flood 1722. Before Christ 626.

Note 2, page 127, line 11.

Counselling stars.

The thirty stars, fifteen of which, according to the Chaldean system of astrology, took cognizance of the lives of men, and whatever was done in heaven or earth; the other fifteen attending to all transactions done under the earth. Once in ten days a star was dispatched from each of these stations to the other, with tidings and counsel, and thus maintained a constant correspondence.

Note 3, page 131, line 14.

Constellations of the dead.

They chose twenty-four stars from the Zodiac, placing them north and south; twelve were stars assigned to the living, and twelve to the dead. They were termed judges of all things. They were frequently much ridiculed by the ancients for these notions.

Note 4, page 133, line 17.

The golden dove.

Doves were sacred to Semiramis, Astarte, and Derceto.

Note 5, page 133, line 21.

Arrow naphtha dewed.

The Assyrians and Babylonians dipped their arrows in the poisonous bitumen naphtha, which was very abundant in these countries. They were shot from a slacked bow ; the only relief to be procured was rubbing the wound with dust.

Note 6, page 134, line 17.

Phegor of the festival.

The obscene divinity, Chemos, or Baal-Peor.

Note 7, page 134, line 22.

Goddess of Mount Aphac.

The Astarte of the Syrians, Succoth Benoth of the Babylonians, and the Derceto of Ascalon. Her temple in Babylon was upon Mount Aphac. In Assyria, she was worshipped as male and female, Mars and Venus ; and her votaries were obliged, in the ceremonies of her worship, to exchange habits, the men wearing the women's dresses, and the women the men's.

Note 8, page 136, line 13.

The ignominious gift.

Plutarch tells us, that Cato sold a Babylonian mantle, which fell to him by inheritance, being ashamed to wear it.

Note 9, page 142, line 10.

Primogenial egg.

Oannes was the first instructor of the Chaldeans, whom they fable to have sprung from the primogenial egg.

Note 10, page 167, line 9.

Adrumelech

And Annamelech, deities worshipped with fire by the Sepharvaim Babylonians, supposed to be the same with Moloch.

THE
DESTINY OF CAIN.

M

THE
DESTINY OF CAIN.

SCENE—*The Country.*

Youths and Maidens watching the rising of the Sun.

YOUTH.

BEAUTIFUL Sun, all glorious light, we wait
Thy first beam on this mountain, to kneel down
And bless the spot where thy life-giving ray
Kisses the dewy herb. Oh, angel bright,
To whose high rule the Holiest hath given
The air, the earth, the sea,—for each of these
Are gladden'd by thy light, and own thy power ;
Come ! for the earth, who needs thy presence most,
Who loves thee best, and basketh in thy beam,

Calls on thee with impatient eagerness,
And prays thee to arise !

MAIDEN.

O parent bright
Of Nature's children, well hast thou fulfill'd
God's all benign decree. " Increase," he said,
And gave the teeming earth to be thy bride.
Lo ! fruits and flowers, and all that on her breast
Springeth to life, are thine,—thy vivid heat
Giveth them all existence. Beautiful spouse
Of graceful Nature, come ! and on her breast
In tenderness recline, while we around,
With joyous songs, will celebrate the love
Of Him who gave thee to us.

2d YOUTH.

Not in vain
We call upon his presence.—See the cloud,
The mighty curtain, whose inclosing folds
Doth hide the golden gates of Heaven, retires,
Drawn by no hand, but banish'd by the light
Majestic of the slowly opening lids
Of the far glancing angel.

MAIDEN.

See, he comes,

He kisses this bless'd mountain.—Hail ! O hail !
Lord of the day, in joyous reverence, we
Press our high brow upon the holy spot,
Made happy by thy presence.—Now he pours
His wondrous glories all around.—The trees,
Plants, shrubs, and lowly herbage, share his love,
And praise him in their silent loveliness,
The still, but speaking hues of glory, all
Partaking his own brightness ; and the sea
Sings him her boisterous song, or tranquilly
Is radiant with her joy, all sparkling, and
Having no form so lovely to present
As offering of her homage, and her love
She gives him back his own.

A YOUTH enters hastily.

Break off ! break off

Your sacred ceremonies, holy songs ;
Descend this mountain, for a stranger step
Pollutes its holiness !—A giant form
Of demon grandeur doth ascend its steep,

With threatening gestures, and with rolling eyes
 Strain'd and distorted, and his lips with foam
 Are cover'd, and his hair doth stand erect,
 Disclosing on his brow a horrid stain,
 In hue like that red flower, but not so bright !—
 His words are curses !—And unto our God
 Frantically doth he toss his mighty arms,
 And strides with giant step of desperation !
 It is an evil angel, or that fiend
 Which did beguile our mother !

2d YOUTH.

Fly ! Oh fly !

Far worse than evil angel he who comes !
 It is the murderer Cain !—The wretch who bears
 Blood on his soul and brow. Away ! he is
 The elder-born of Murder, he hath slain
 Man !—And his God hath curs'd him !—Fly ! Oh fly !
 He hath admitted Death into our world,
 And his fell arm hath now become the sceptre
 Of that grim lord of darkness !—Now he comes
 To curse us with his presence, and to choose
 From our dear hills new victims !—Hence, away !

Hear him not, see him not !—Earth's children, fly
 Th' abhorred of his mother ;—she who shakes
 And groans beneath his tread, th' unnatural son,
 The horror-struck, the wand'rer !—Hark ! he comes !
 His eye doth bear pollution.—Shun it !—Fly !

[*Exeunt.*

CAIN *rushes in wildly.*

CAIN.

Stay, reptiles, stay !

Things of the earth, provoke not my fell wrath !
 Wake not my vengeance ; let me not pursue.—
 They shun me,—fly !—I will o'ertake them, and
 Rend them to atoms !—Scatter their torn limbs
 To air,—to earth,—to water !—What ! by all !
 Cursed of God,—the outcast of my father,—
 The banish'd of my brethren,—and now, scorn'd
 By these light insects, these gay fluttering sons
 Of mine own parent stock,—it shall not be.
 I will a desert make of this sweet world,
 To fit it for my own abode ; for I
 Will curse it for their sakes, as I am curs'd ;
 Sweep from its shining face those happy forms

That mock my deep-thron'd misery !—I am lord
Of anguish, and of death !—My mighty arm
Dealt the first blow !—First, o'er the life of man
Terrific sway'd, and hurl'd him back to dust,
His wretched origin. I have unlock'd
The gates of the dark world, and stern alliance
I hold with all its inmates. I am lord
Of them and theirs ; and, like their lord, I will
Traverse this world but for its devastation,
Unpeopling its vallies, to dispatch
Inhabitants to those black shades, where waits,
Lonely and sad, one victim. I will on,
Pursue, destroy ;—I will walk o'er this earth,
And leave the track of footsteps dyed in blood ;
I will sweep off all living from her face,
And be but one !—alone ! Azura shunn'd me,
Fled from my horror-breathing sight, and sought
The bosom of her father.—What is there
Now left of hope for me, not peace !—Ha, power !
What if I spare these gaudy sons of joy,
Who sing away their lives in gentle shades,
And live their master !—Yes, dominion shall

Blot out remembrance, and softer thoughts
Be banish'd by its powers. Hope and love
Died with the murder'd Abel!—Rage and strength
Live with the wanderer Cain. Come, objects, come,
Wretches return, provoke me not to tear
Your fear-bound bodies from the dreary caves
Where ye lie crouching! Trust not my fierce hands;
They that spar'd not a brother, will not pause
To dash your dainty forms against the rocks,
Spoiling the symmetry of those light limbs,
And leaving them a bleeding lump of clay,
Like his who—horrible remembrance, die!
Let me a moment rest—one moment stay
In these soft groves untortur'd!—Hark! the roar
Of the denying thunder, and the earth
Shakes, while I pause upon her breast.—On! on!
Not here my place of refuge!

Time—Evening.

SCENE—*Another part of the Country on the Coast.*

Across the Ocean another Shore is visible.

Enter JARED, his Sons and Daughter.

JARED.

Well ! we have nobly done, the day hath earn'd
 The banquet of the night ;—'tis time to feast,
 And we will revel gaily.—See, the dews
 Are falling on the earth, and the hush'd birds
 Are slumbering in the trees ; the flowers have clos'd
 Their eyes, oppress'd by gazing on the sun ;
 They, too, find rest in twilight. Come, beneath
 The rich shade of this parent of the wood,
 This Adam of our forests, we will sit
 And quaff the sparkling waters of the rock,
 And taste the ripe round fruit.

ENOS.

The fields are clear,
 Our brethren all have hasten'd to their homes,
 Let us to supper,—then, with grateful hearts,
 Sleep, while our angel watches.

[*They sit.*

CAIN *enters.*

CAIN *to himself.*

Whither now

Hath my distracted flight conducted me ?
Is it earth's boundary that I behold ?
Again I meet the sea,—and surely there
Seated upon its surface, I behold
Another earth, with rocks, and trees, and plains !
Oh could I reach that shore !—But the fierce sea
Rolleth his waves between us. What are these ?
More men !—Still men !—Avenger, why wilt thou
Afflict me with their sight ?—This morn they fled
My hated presence ; but, since then, a day
Hath pass'd, and these more distant, have not heard
The story of my wanderings. It may be
That I may shelter here !—And—Earth is still,
And Heaven is silent. I will speak,—but soft,
My murder-stamped aspect,—let me hide
My guilt and punishment, and gently tell
My name and misery ; for, looking on
This face of horror, they are struck, and fly
As from a savage beast ! Good brother, I,

A wanderer from a far distant land,
 Claim at thy hospitable hand, drink, food,
 And shelter till the morning.

JARED.

Be it thine,—
 Nought can the traveller ask of Jared's house,
 That Jared would deny ;—rest thee, and feed !—
 Whence com'st thou ? From the hills or the low vales ?

CAIN.

Straight from the hills, which some days since I left,
 On a long wearying quest, to find a land
 Where I might end my wanderings, and sit down
 To wait my close of life !

JARED.

Our bounteous shore
 Hath gifts enough, for more than those who make
 Their dwellings on her meadows. Stranger, here
 Abide with me, until our brethren's hands
 Have aided thine to raise a friendly roof,
 To shelter thee and thine !—Thou saidst thou wert
 Late from the hills, comest thou from the face

Of our great father, the progenitor,
The son of Nature ?

CAIN.

From his face I come,
I am the son of the created man, the child
Of thy progenitor ;

JARED.

And of his sons,
The fathers of the world, to which do I
Bend with all reverend duty ?

CAIN.

I am Cain,
The first-born of mankind, the elder son
Of this world's children,—the second man
Who breath'd the air of earth.

JARED.

Great father, stay !
Our homes, our herds, our riches, are thine own,
Live but among thy children,—from thy face
Throw down thy shaggy mantle, and permit
Our eyes to gaze upon the hallowed brow
Of fair earth's elder born !

CAIN.

My brow !—Thou shalt !

'Tis not permitted that I should conceal
My features longer. I must tell thee, too,
Why thus—but wherefore dost thou groan, or ere
My face is to thee known ?

JARED.

Son of the world,
No sound escap'd my lips, nor did I hear
Ought from another's.

CAIN.

No !—Again !—It comes
Up from the earth,—it is my brother's blood
Groaning from depths immeasurable !—Still
Crying aloud, as once before it cried
Unto the stern avenger,—and the earth
Heaveth again beneath me. Shall I on ?
Not here my place of rest ;—I will not !—No,
I will not heed these signs.—What should I fear
Even from their utmost vengeance ?—Power divine
Hath chain'd their devastating strength to me,
And bade all danger shun me. Earth may gape,

But dare not swallow !—Lightnings fierce may play
 Around my brows, but harmlessly, they know
 The mark, and dare not strike !— I will defy them,
 And rest here,—even here. Now, wondering man,
 Look on the face which thou hast pray'd to see,—
 It is the brow of Cain !

ENOS.

Oh father, fly !
 Linger not near that man of horrors !—Go,
 Horrible stranger, from our peaceful land ;
 Thou art accursed ; never face like thine
 Belong'd to Nature's children. Father, fly !
 Some fiend abuses thee !

CAIN.

Thou wretched thing,
 Rouse not my sleeping wrath. Begone, begone !
 Another moment, and thy sunny locks
 Shall circle round thy neck in closer folds,
 Grip'd by this desperate hand !—Avoid me, fool !
 I would not mar thy beauty !

JARED.

Enos, shun

This man of wrath ; thou hast most justly drawn
 His anger on thy head ; for though I feel
 Strange horror as I look upon his eye,
 Yet, till I hear his tale, suspicion base,
 Nor yet ungracious comment, shall pollute
 My heart, nor stain my lip. Retire all,
 And leave me with the stranger. Now then, son
 Of the progenitor, into my breast
 Pour forth thy tale of grief !

CAIN.

Thy son hath said
 The truth !—I *am* accurs'd !—am doom'd of Heaven
 To bear a lot too heavy for my strength.
 The curse *is* on me,—on my brow the sign,
 And in my heart the pang !—For me the world
 Is a wide desart, and its master, man,
 My hate and torment, for there is a war
 Between my soul and his ! I am his foe,
 And Heaven hath made him mine. Unto thine ear,
 I said, I was the elder son of man,
 The first-born of the world.—My hour of birth
 Was, when my father's soul was stain'd by sin,

The sin of disobedience, and his heart
Rack'd deeply by despair. My nourishment
Was bitter, for my mother's grief had spoil'd
The fountains of her bosom, and her eye
Look'd upon me with grief, for she beheld
Another cursed thing, who came to share,
More than to sooth her misery ! Adam's brow
Wrinkled with care, when he bethought him how
The sterile earth would tax his labouring hands,
To furnish food for more. To them I was
No blessing, but the cruel consummation
Of God's heart-withering curse ! Thus, I was born
In sin, and nourished by care. Where, then,
The marvel, that my mind was stern and rough,
Unbending and unseeking ? That my heart
Was cold, as earthly air, to Eden's glows,
And my affections sterile as the ground,
Which shot forth thorns, when we demanded food ?
Thus grew I, till the younger brother came,
When Time had flown, and, as he flew, had dropp'd
Balm from his healing wing upon the wounds
Of the progenitor, and parent Eve.

In happy time he came, when there was love
Within their hearts, and smiles upon their lips,
And they were both for him ! By Adam's side
I toil'd, uncheer'd by blessings, and my form
And face grew rough, and hardy, like the task
To which my life was doom'd ;—to guard the flocks,
To hymn soft songs unto his doting sire,
Was the luxurious, easy lot, which was
By partial love unto the fav'rite given.
I murmur'd not, although I saw him take
The sister, whom I lov'd, unto his breast,
And give Azura to mine arms,—though, since
I have not griev'd for that, for she was all
The husband's heart could hope.—Was ! said I not ?
But on, dark story ! Soon our race o'erspread
The vales and meadows of the smiling earth,
Now fertiliz'd by thousands !—Adam's sons
Saw generations blessing them, and stood
The Fathers of the World, but, of his sons,
The least belov'd was I, and my poor race,
Although the elder-born, were scorn'd of those
Who from my brethren sprang.—I murmur'd, and,

In the fierce violence of tempest rage,
Accus'd the God of Heaven ! but, ere night,
Repented of my wrath, and brought my gifts,
The produce of my toil, the fairest fruits
Wrung from the earth, and plac'd them at his feet.
Then came the flower-clad Abel, and he laid
His offering, a beauteous lamb, near mine.
I, with my harsher accents, join'd his voice
Harmonious, to entreat our God would deign
To shed a blessing on us, and accept
Our tribute to his power.—He heard but one,
And that was not the elder, for he look'd
Upon my brother's gift, and that bright glance
Consum'd the offering ! but he clos'd his eye,
And not regarded mine. I stood in mute,
But fierce despair, and when I heard the song
Of praise, and gratitude, that from the lip
Of Abel rose to Heaven, and turn'd, and saw
The birds of air, scattering with impious wing,
Mine unaccepted offerings, I grew mad,
And strove, with words of wrath, against my sire,
And my smooth brother, who decreed that sin

Had crept into my heart, that discontent,
And violence of wrath, and envy base,
Had stain'd my offering, and pain'd the eye
Of the Eternal ; and he said, the wrong
Which Heaven had render'd me was Justice! " Justice !"
The word grew into service, for all men
Were *just* to me, since all abhorred me
As Heaven had done, and at smooth Abel's feet,
Pour'd out their hearts' affections.—Could I bear
This deep, this bitter wrong ?—will the stern rage
Be pent for ever in the labouring breast ?
We were alone.—I saw him look, and then
A smile of scorn sat on his curled lip,
And in his eye a laughing pity ; then
The smother'd storm arose, and burst at once
From out my tortur'd bosom ! I did wish
For something that would chase that smile, and make
The favourite like to me.—My powerful hand
Flew on before my thought.—I rush'd upon him,—
Grip'd him hard—hard !—he shriek'd,—he struggled,—
fell,
And strove to rise again.—I press'd my knee

Upon his heaving breast, and with the tool,
The weapon of my husbandry, I smote
Strong on his sunny brow!—then he lay still,
Silent and motionless,—and I look'd on,
Pleas'd that the smile had vanish'd;—but, at last,
Rage was exhausted, and I bade him rise,
As he had strove to do;—but still he lay,
Silent and heedless;—and I left him then,
And hid me in the bushes, to observe
How he would rise and mock me!—but he lay
Quite still! I curs'd him, and retir'd. My thoughts
Were all distracted, but I strove to dig
And toil, and toil to banish them.—But no!
The instrument of husbandry was stain'd
With gory drops, and earth, disgusted, clos'd
Her breast against its touch.—At evening,
I sought that spot again.—He was still there,
Wrapp'd in that cumbrous slumber,—a deep sleep,
Yet heavier, and darker!—Night and fear
Came on me both at once, and while I stood,
The air became a voice, to breathe the words
Of the Creator to me. “Where,” it cried,

“ Where is thy brother ?” Then I answer’d him
Doggedly, for my wrath arose, and fear
Smote on my sinking heart, “ I know not ;” for
I hop’d the deed unknown ;—but he replied,
In tones of loudest horror, as he would
Proclaim me to Creation, “ Thou hast done
Murder ! Behold thy brother’s blood hath cried
To me from earth !”—and then he bade me fly
From human dwellings, for I had no claim
To human feelings, and the earth abhor’d
And loath’d my very footsteps ;—and then he
Cursed me for her sake, and bade me be
A wand’rer, and a wretch ;—and on my brow
He stamp’d the sign of Death ! and in mine eye
He thron’d the demon murder.—Thus all men
Shun me, and hate, yet none have power to kill.
All know the accursed, even the elements
Acknowledge and respect this bloody seal,
And howling, raging, spare me.—I would have
Peace if it may be,—war, if war is call’d.—
A wand’rer have I been, long, long, and now

I seek for rest. Within thy vallies, man,
Shall I lie down in peace !

JARED.

Manslayer, no !

Mine ear hath tingled, and my heart hath shrunk,
To hear thy horrid story ! We are of
The race of Abel, and to shelter thee
Were to renew his murder. Just is God !
Thou hast no claim to human feeling, for
Thy bloody hand hath rent asunder, wretch,
The bond of kind humanity.—O great God !
One of the earth hath called in our foe,
Open'd the gates of life, and let in death,
Who now will reign for ever, and for ever
Claim daily, hourly victims.—O my son,
My daughter, ye are doom'd ! Accursed thou
Of God, and of the earth, accursed now
Of me thy brother, and mankind doth breathe
His hatred of thee by my single voice.
Go, murderer, hence, and wander !

CAIN.

Hast thou doom'd

Me to another deed of blood, Avenger ?
O let me breathe.—Yes,—let me—let me keep
My hands upon my heart—My fingers still—
They quiver !—and mine eyes flash like the sun
At morning ;—but—I will not—I am calm !

JARED.

Wilt thou begone ?—thy presence may bring down
The wrath of God upon us.—Hark !—the storm
Is gathering ;—the thunder groans at thee.
Lightning will guide thee forth, the earth doth move,
She throws thee from this valley ! hence, accurs'd !
Wilt thou begone ?

CAIN.

No, reptile ! not thy prayers,
Nor threats, nor thunder, earthquakes, nor the storm,
Shall drive me from this spot.—I will reign here.
Although my throne be form'd of bleeding heads,
I will rest here, although my bed shall float
In seas of human gore.

JARED.

Then will we bind thee
Like a chain'd tiger ;—though thy life be safe,

We'll keep thee as a wonder.—Brethren, help !
 The murderer is among us ; the life stain'd !
 The death brow comes with all his blasting light,
 To wither up the opening flowers of life.
 Help, brethren, bind him, help !

CAIN springing upon him.

Thou fool ! thou art
 No stronger than thy father ! down ! and die !

[AZUBA rushes in between them.

AZUBA.

I've sought thee, day and night, with bleeding feet,
 And bleeding heart, and do I find thee thus ?

CAIN.

Azura !—Oh !—thy loss had madden'd me,
 Heighten'd despair, and now increas'd my sin.

AZUBA.

Long have I trac'd thy footsteps, since the day
 Thou fled'st the parent roof, but thy fierce speed
 Exceeded mine : but see, thy foe hath fled,
 Thou art in danger ; whither goest thou ?

JARED, calling from a little distance.

To rouse mankind to trace the Son of Death ;

To hunt him through the earth, nor leave the chase,
While he is on her breast !

CAIN.

Despair hath strength
More potent than his threats ;—I fear them not.
But oh, Azura, can I see thy form
Bound by their hated chains ?—Yes, they may chase
The murderer through the earth.—Oh, that I could
Spring to the air, or plunge into the sea !—
Or in the depths of Hell prepare my bed,
So I could shun but man ! But what is that
Which darkly moveth on the water's edge ?
More foes !—Look, dear Azura, for mine eyes
Are dried by the stern spirit which hath fill'd
Them, and my burning soul !

AZURA.

It is a tree
Fell'd down, and floating ; the returning wave
Hath rais'd it from its bed, and now it moves
Proudly on its broad surface.

CAIN.

That shall be

Our hope of rest ;—on earth we are accurs'd ;—
 Those waters then shall bear us to an earth
 Unsullied by the hated breath of man !—
 See'st thou that land, round which these waters roll ?
 We shall find refuge there ! This tree shall bear
 The wanderer to his rest !

AZUBA.

The sea ! Oh Heaven !
 The fierce devourer of all things.—Sure
 Thou knowest nothing on her surface stays.—
 E'en on our own Euphrates thou hast seen
 The flocks sink to the dark, where human eye
 Could not behold their fall. But the broad sea !
 Oh go not, husband. Man is far less wild
 Than yon devouring wave !

CAIN.

Wilt thou forsake
 Thy husband, for he goes ? The elements
 Have been commanded all to harm me not.
 The sea is one of them, and he will curse
 My soul by his obedience. He will spare
 My God-protected life, and aid my will !

Seat of the storm, throne of the tempest wild,
I love thee, for, of all of nature's works,
Thou, thou alone, in thy stern angry mood,
Dost hold alliance with my tossed soul !
Hark ! thunder ! and the earth doth rock ! It is
The signal for my flight ! and see, where comes
The band of the blood-hunters. Spring, Azura !
Trust to the seas for safety !—So ! gone, gone !
Reptiles, it is not yours to bind the arms
Of the death girt, the arrow of his might !
Hence to your homes ! the elements obey
My will, and bid me laugh, to bitter scorn,
Your baby hope of vengeance ! Not to man
Belongs the destiny of Cain ! nor shall
The feeble stroke of human justice reach
The brow of the God condemn'd !

JABED.

Oh, prodigy !

The waters bear them onward to the shore
Unpeopled, or by Angels ! On they go !
In all his giant majesty of sin,
He sits the crowned demon, on his breast

Pale terror taking refuge. Lightnings play
 Around his terrible head, and his wild locks
 Wave in defiance, and his garments are
 Unwet by the wild waters, though they roar
 And foam above, around him ! Yes, he is
 Sacred to God's own wrath. To him alone
 Belongs his fearful destiny !—Behold
 A cloud, dark as his locks, descends to meet
 The rising wave, and both now curtain him
 From our astonish'd sight ! It is the will
 Of Heaven we watch no longer, nor attempt
 To look into the mysteries of God ! Now, hence,
 The murderer is gone.—Oh may he ne'er
 Again pollute our land !

Roll, oceans, roll !

Part us for ever from the bloody eye,
 Which seal'd the heavy curse of destiny,
 And pour'd the night of Death upon the soul ;
 Yea, mountains high between us and the foe,
 Who first hath made th' ensanguin'd fountain flow,

Roll, oceans, roll !

Roll, oceans, roll !

Bear to some desolate and distant shore,
The man who feels humanity no more,
Who bears the linked demon with his soul !
Yea, wide between us and that distant land,
Which yields its stores unto that spotted hand,

Roll, oceans, roll !

NOTES.

Note 1, page 184, line 16.

Azura.

THERE are several causes assigned for the hatred and murder of Abel by his brother. Some of the Jewish authors impute it to a dispute they had respecting the existence and goodness of God ; the Oriental traditions to a quarrel about their respective sisters, Cain wishing to marry his twin sister, in contradiction to the commands of Adam, who had assigned her to Abel, and the twin sister of Abel to Cain. Azura was, however, according to the same authorities, the wife of Seth, Asuam, or Sane, being the name of the sister who was afterwards espoused to Cain.

Note 2, page 186, line 19.

Our brethren.

Although Moses makes no mention of his offspring, it is generally supposed that Abel was the father of families. St Ambrose and St Basil are of this opinion, and as he lived to the age of 130 years, it was unlikely, in the infancy of the world, he should have died unmarried. The other sons of Adam (except Seth) are not named by Moses, though he had doubtless many, or there could have been no reason for

Cain's personal fears of those whom he might meet in his wanderings. In the course of 130 years, those parts of the country, adjacent to the residence of Adam, might have become exceedingly populous, at least sufficiently so to justify the terrors of Cain.

Note 3, page 187, line 18.

My murder-stamped aspect.

Authors are by no means decided respecting this celebrated mark. Some of the opinions are as ridiculous as they are contradictory. Rabbi Solomon says it was the secret and ineffable name of God. Some assert it was a letter in the name of Abel; the sign of the Cross, the constant attendance of Abel's dog; the leprosy. Others insist upon a wild aspect, disordered mind, agonized frame, and the convulsions of the earth under him, wherever he paused in his wanderings. There are also many others not worth quoting.

THE
DEATH OF CAIN.

THE
DEATH OF CAIN.

CAIN watching the Corse of AZURA.

CAIN.

SHADE of the ghastly murder'd ! if thy thought
Can bend so low as earth ;—if in thine heart
Glow's ought of human feeling, bow thee down,
And smile upon thy foe ! Ages have flown !
Yea, centuries have roll'd up from the depths
Of Chaos, and have found their yawning graves
In the broad bosom of Eternity !
The buried years are gone !—but I remain.
The world hath aged grown ;—but I am young,
Still young in agony, which fiercer grows,

As the slow flapping wing of weary Time
Drags heavily onward.—Thy soul-searing curse,
Avenger, hath been multiplied,—my woes,
Like Hell's dark legions, many.—When thy wrath
Heap'd malediction on the suffering earth,
For Adam's earliest sin, she groan'd, and threw
The burthen back to me. I was her son,
And that was my inheritance, and yet
Still was the burthen doubled. When I pray'd
Not to encounter man, I did not deem
My children would have been among those foes
My tortur'd heart would shrink from.—This hath been
Part of thy bitter curse.—They hate me! They
Fly from the mark of him, who unto death
Gave the first bleeding victim, offer'd up
The first of human sacrifice.—Mine eye,
Glaring with fiend-like glory, scares afar
From my dread presence, the more senseless things
Of Nature's earliest children. On my brow,
The blasting diadem of burning crime
Withers the face of earth, and, through the gloom
Of darkness, guides her startled eye unto

The murderer's wand'ring form. Th' Almighty's glance
Kindled to flame the blood upon my brow,
And since that hour it burneth, I am crown'd
Monarch of death and sin.—I have uprais'd
Cities, and planted nations.—I have heap'd
Riches upon my children.—My reward
Hath been their fear, and their suppressed hate.
I ceas'd to wander, and I then became
A monument of scorn ; but still Azura
Was by my side,—still did her voice and smile
Pour comfort on my bruised heart and brain,
Like hallow'd drops of Heaven's own fountains, fall'n
Upon the fires of Hell. The Avenger saw
I had a gleam of peace ; the light by which
It was reveal'd was my Azura's life.
He quench'd that light, and plung'd my harrow'd soul
Deep into utter darkness ! She is gone !
She, whose unchanging love still stepp'd between
Me and the goad of vengeance. She, whose soul,
Unloosen'd, clung to mine ; whose wounded foot,
Untiring, follow'd mine, through all the paths
Of danger and distraction,—she is dead !

Wrapp'd in the sleep of Abel, she reclines
 Silent and cold before me. For her sake,
 When first I saw the shadowy hand uprais'd,
 To beckon her away, I wept and pray'd !
 I might have spar'd humility, and now
 I weep and pray no longer. Thou hast done
 Thy bitterest vengeance. Now, I may defy
 Thy lifted arm. Again, so heavily,
 Avenger, can it fall ?

IRAD enters unseen.

IRAD.

Although I wish
 From my heart's core his death, and though my hand
 Shudders not from the deed, yet when I come
 Near to his sight, seemeth it as some fiend,
 Some deadly thing had breath'd a blast of fear
 Over my swelling heart. The tyrant sits
 Gazing upon our mother's lifeless corse,
 Like the gored wild beast in his sullen lair,
 Watching his strangled prey. He hath grown late
 Tenfold a tyrant, and he chains our hands
 From that which once he taught ;—yea, he shall die,

Now let me nerve mine arm, and to his heart
Guide this unerring dart.

[He throws it.—It falls at the feet of

CAIN, who starts.

CAIN.

Oh, wretch, condemn'd

To more than mortal anguish ! My stern gripe
Is on thy throat ! The hand of Death doth grasp
Thy slender cord of life !—Shall I destroy ?
No !—to futurity I spare thee, nor will dye
Again this arm in blood !—Who art thou ?—Speak—
Why hast thou arm'd thine hand against the head,
To mightier wrath devoted ?

IBAD.

Strike, accursed !

I ask not, seek not, mercy at the hand
Red with a brother's gore. Strike, for thy brow,
Thy hell-stamp'd aspect, hath achiev'd the deed
Thy bloody hand would spare ! Know me, thy son ?
He whom thy fury curb'd ? Whom thy wild rage
Spurn'd with his brethren, for light offence,
Fair as the angels' looks, to demon's scowls,

Compared with thy own.—We are weigh'd down,
 Crush'd to the earth, by thy depressing doom,
 Which, while thou liv'st, we share.—We hate thee ; we
 Would rid the world of one, who in its space
 Finds nought to joy, but all to curse his days.—
 To us the earth is fairer, quit it, then,
 And leave it to thy race.—See, we unite,
 In this one prayer, our only one, thy doom.—
 And but for that Hell diadem which crowns
 Thy hideous brow, which shone with griesly light,
 And scar'd my senses from me, thou had'st now
 Been wand'ring with thy brother—heard the screams
 The shadowy mortal utters.

CAIN.

Thou ! my son !

My children ! all ! Oh, miserable man !
 What is thy frenzy, thus to dare the curse,
 The seven-fold punishment !—Oh, who could bear,
 Or willingly call down upon his head
 Cain's agonies, or the Almighty's wrath,
 In vengeance seven times told !—Oh ! agony !
 In sight of their own mother's corse they come

To shed their father's life !—Azura, rise,
 Shake off this heavy slumber—rise, and stand
 Between thy sons and husband ;—bid them shrink
 From spilling parents' blood !—Say, he who slew
 His brother knew no peace, but on his heart
 Bore the remembrance deep of that black sin !—
 Arise, and save thy children.

IRAD.

Man, thy hand
 Brought death upon our mother ;—thine the curse
 Of her destruction ; thou hast bid her die !
 When thou did'st link thee in a desperate bond
 Of amity with Death, could'st thou believe
 One victim would suffice his greedy maw ?
 Thousands will fail to satiate.—He will claim
 All that hath life, it is his meet reward
 For answering thy call.—Our mother dies
 The second of thy victims.—Man of blood,
 Aye, smite thy guilty breast, tear forth thine heart,
 Feed the grim king with that, to bribe him back
 From feasting on thy children !

CAIN.

Lo ! my crime

Hath curs'd my race ! falls down upon my sons
Like the air mildew on fair nature's flowers,
Or the ambitious angel's breath upon
The starry bands of radiant paradise.
Ages will rise to brand me.—Man increase
In sin and misery, until the hand
Of the Avenger shall, with reckless wrath,
Sweep them from off the earth ! Go, child of sin !
Vengeful I will not be.—More merciful
It were to judge thy crime, and take thy life,
Than leave thee to the stern Avenger !—Yet,
Go ! spare mine eyes thy presence !—O that thou
Had'st stronger been, or that th' Almighty's arm
Had shielded not this bosom.—Go, fall down !
Pray if thou canst, and by thy prayer avert
'The seven-fold hovering plague !—I must depart
From this detested city ; but, O where
Shall I direct my footsteps ?—Every hand
Is arm'd against my peace.—There is no spot
On earth which doth not loathe me ! Thunders ! ha !

And lightnings ! 'Tis the signal sound again,
 To warn me from my rest ;—to bid me on,
 Again, my weary journey !

AZAZEL rises.

CAIN.

Ha ! I was
 Alone I thought ! What is that scowling thing,
 Which stands before my face in demon pride,
 With nought of pity, nor respect, nor fear,
 Nor look of wondering horror ? How he stands,
 Silent and motionless ! Dark sullen thing,
 Whence art thou ?

AZAZEL.

Know'st thou not ? do I not bear,
 In this high form, the stamp divine of one
 Who shar'd Heaven's sovereignties ? I am thy lord,
 The angel of thy fate !

CAIN.

Thou ! demon ! no !
 Dark as that fate is, still thine aspect is
 Too fearful for its guidance.—He who bends
 My spirit to his scourge, would never yield

Its rule to such as thee.—Thou hast been here,
Busy to work us anguish ; dreams of Hell
Thou hast, with cunning malice, deeply pour'd
Into the souls of my corrupted race,
But they are guiltless yet of parents' blood,
And the Eternal, thy dread conqueror, hath
From murderous hand preserv'd this wretched life.

AZAZEL.

He hath preserv'd thy life, but to what end ?
To curse it with a bitterness beyond
The fleeting pang of death ! The glaring sign
Upon thy brow hath sav'd thy sinful head,
But scar'd all Nature from thee ! What hath been
To thee his vow'd protection ?—The black Heaven
O'ershadowing the ocean, but within
His hollow bosom, blowing up the storm
Which rends him in its fierceness.—It hath been
To thee exemption sad from human ties,
And human joys, but shackling thee unto
Mortality's worst suffering.—Thou hast been
Stamp'd by his hand, with the impression Fiend,
Yet lacking all the power the fiends enjoy,

To sting and mock their punisher.—Rise ! do
 A deed shall make thee mighty, like his foes,
 And one of them.—Thy griefs from Adam grew,
 For him thou art oppressed.—Well he knew
 Thy future woe, and yet he gave thee life.
 His selfish soul knew that his load of grief
 Must lighter be when thou wert born to bear
 The heavier part o' the burden,—him defy !
 Pour out thy life before him !—dare to die !
 So will thine agonies, redoubled, turn
 Back on thy father's heart !

CAIN.

Avaunt thee, slave !

Thou scourg'd of God !—thou trampled of mankind !
 Dost thou not tremble even from thy soul
 To *think* again of treason ?—Would'st once more
 Be trodden down by the Avenger's foot,
 Still deeper in the flaming mire, the sea
 Of thy infernal land ? What, have the fires
 Of hell grown stingless, or hath Michael's eye
 Not wither'd up thy beauty, nor his arm
 Scarr'd deep enough thy bosom ? Are the shades

Familiar grown to thy accustom'd sight,
Or is thine hell too light, that thus thou darest
Pull on thy head fresh ruin? Hypocrite!
To whom I owe my tortures, I have seen
Before this hour thy form, thy giant shape,
Cleaving the earth, and rising in the folds
Of the huge curtain of the dark, which girds
The silent sleeping world!—filling the air,
Groaning beneath thy foul polluted weight,
With cries of blasphemy, and mockeries
Of my sad thoughts and torments. I do know
Thy hateful features well, thy visage seam'd,
And stain'd, and blighted by th' undying fires
Of the infernal world. I know thine eye,
Impress'd like mine, but deeper, with the seal
Of the Almighty's vengeance! Thou hast sat
By me in darkness, and in the broad day
Thine eye-ball glar'd on mine;—in fellowship
Of deadly hate we sat, of savageness,
Cursing aloud each other! Thou my fate!
A wanderer and a vagabond again
I will become, to 'scape thy hated goad.

Far as the confines of this girdled world,
My step shall roam :—to shun thee I will go
Back to the holy mountain.

AZAZEL.

Fool! the earth,
The very dust, would back compel thy step,
Thy bloody foot must never press that soil ;
The stones would rise in vengeance, glowing red
Hot with the wrath of Heaven! Plants and trees,
The very lowliest things, the herbs, the grass,
Would grow instinct with life ;—the air would swell
Into a whirlwind, the Almighty's breath,
To hurl thee from its preciucts. Thou shalt stay
Here in these valleys, from th' accepted Seth,
By high decree far parted ; thou shalt live
Abhor'd of all, shunn'd of all eyes but mine :
No voice but mine shall strike thy list'ning ear ;
No form but this shall break thy solitude ;
Waking, I stand before thee,—when thou sleepest,
The rushing of my mighty wings around
Thy rocky couch shall scare away thy rest,
And make thee think that tempests are abroad,

Or that the Avenger cometh on the storm,
 To hunt thee through the earth. Thou art mine own;
 From the Eternal's grasp this hand hath rent
 The sceptre of thy doom. The God of Seth
 Hath given thy spirit up. Thy angel, who
 Hath hitherto upborne thee on his wing
 Above despair, now sinks beneath thy weight,
 And weeping, cowers to earth, while high above
 His humbled head, Hell's mighty monarch soars
 With outspread pinion, and with awful force
 Teareth the bright wing of the radiant form,
 And scattereth the fragments ! Thou art now
 Forsaken of all good ; resign thee, then,
 Unto my dictates ; I will teach thee how
 To spurn upon thy sufferings, and to crush
 Those who have scorn'd thee now.

CAIN.

I do reject,
 And utterly, thy counsel ! Though I have
 Fall'n, I'm not as thee ;—I am not curs'd
 With immortality of crime. Begone !
 No, God-abandon'd, deeper is thy guilt

Than mine,—thy condemnation more severe.
 Death doth await me, lingering pain, and woe,
 Which, though I shrink from, yet I would not change
 For thy eternity of power and sin !
 Back to thy hell. The curse hath nought so dread
 As is thy fire-scorch'd visage !—I will fly
 Before thee, reckless of encountering all
 Save thy detested form. Yes, I will fly,
 Although unto eternity, the race
 Extend its darkest limits !—Hark !—how roars
 The thunder of the upper world ! and glares
 Above thy blacken'd head celestial fires !
 Dost thou not fear their glory ?

AZAZEL.

No !—The prey

I follow doth present the danger light,
 A nothingness of horror ! Well, then, fly
 Like a tempestuous wind, I'll follow thee,
 Driving thee frantic onward ! Girdle round
 The very earth, my rapid step shall press
 Upon the mark thy footstep leaves. Yet on !
 Spring upward from her surface, through all space

Speed thy career, keen hope should bear me on,
To chase thee even there. We shall have worlds
For watchers of the chace, who shall retire
To leave the broad path free. The universe
Shall silently and shudderingly look on
Our great unearthly struggle. First-born man,
Thy soul establishes throughout all time,
Throughout all space our empire !—Mine thou art,
And I will not forego thee !—I had won
The soul of Adam's self, but that he bears
Too much of the Divinity within ;
The very essence of our foe himself,
Is of his clay the spirit ! Thou, the heir
Of his mortality created soul,
Not the pure breath of Heaven, thou begot
In sin, and sorrow, in a cursed hour,
And on a cursed soil, thou art mine own !
The first-born soul is ours !—Thou mayest howl
And shriek thine agonies in vain !—In life,
I am thy master !—death, and death alone,
Can make our spirits equal ; dare to die,
And my pursuit is ended, thy deep pangs

Will cease ; and on a throne of burning gold,
Lord of the elements, thou shalt defy,
And punish too, the things of earth and heaven ;
Thou shalt ride in the chariot of the sun,
Plucking from its proud angel's hands the reins,
And guide thyself its course. At will thou shalt
Cover with thy black locks the pallid moon,
And hide her light from mortals ; thou shalt pluck
The stars from heaven to diadem thy brow ;
Thy smile shall light hell's darkness, and thy frown
Shall poison the vex'd earth, and bring disease,
Plague, war, and famine on her !—Dare to die !
Accept now what I proffer ; tarry not
Till hell be forc'd upon thee ; till I drag
Thee downwards to her caves, whose deepest den
Shall echo back the long relentless roar
Of all her sovereignties, the shout of joy
Which they will utter forth, a welcoming
The first won soul of man. That joyous roar
Will shake the startled earth, will reach to heaven,
Stunning the angels, whose beseeching looks
Will turn for thee toward the throne, from which

Thy God will scatter the unbreathed prayer ;—
 Will turn him from the uproar, and resign
 Thee to thy well won torments !

CAIN.

How his words

Pour overwhelming on my sinking soul,
 Like cataracts grown mad !—I will not hear !
 While reason yet is left me, let me fly !
 I know not, reck not whither ;—but I go
 To shun this demon's goadings !—What if I
 Sink at the last !—I have no hope, and may
 Fall by the chace exhausted. Demon ! Fiend !
 Spare thy unhallow'd triumph !—Smile not yet ;
 The race is still to win !—Oh that thou wert
 But for one moment mortal, that I could
 Gripe thee close, breast to breast, and thy broad limbs
 Rend in the desperate conflict. I will try
 My earthly force against thee, for I deem
 Thy heaven-scarr'd form is palpable, and thus
 I tear thee in my vengeance. Ha ! the brow
 Of Abel, smear'd with blood !—Oh face of death !
 I dare not touch thy form ! Oh, mockery

Of madness !—Murderer fly !—Look not again
 Upon that ghastly sight ! Now, chase of hell,
 Thy wild flight is begun.

[*Rushes out.*

AZAZEL.

To close in death
 Distracted and despairing.

SCENE—*The Mountain of Seth.* TIME—*Morning.*

SETH, CAINAN, *with others of the Family of ADAM.*

SETH.

Yes, thou art beautiful, Oh graceful world !
 Fair are thy mountains, fair thy valleys green.
 More gracious thus attir'd in nature's robe,
 Than when thy laden bosom groans beneath
 The weight of ponderous cities. Man, proud man !
 He hath defiled thee, world, for he hath sought
 To add new tints unto thine azure sky,
 To pour new waters in the boundless sea,
 By his unhallow'd labours, seeking still
 To perfect his Almighty Master's work,
 And make that beautiful, which from his hand

Came matchless in its glories !—Holy Lord !
 Thy work is worthy thee !—And all thou givest,
 We render up a temple for thy name,
 Praising thee with creation, mingling up
 Our voices with the subject elements,
 Beneath the dome we consecrate to thee,
 Yon glorious firmament, now lighted up
 By the bright glow of thy majestic brow !
 Oh, thou all gracious !—What a blissful seat
 Is this, the couch of man !—Then let us not
 Lament thy Eden, but rejoice in that
 Thy bounty hath bestow'd !

CAINAN.

Hail ! chosen son
 Of the created man, we come to bow
 Our knees with thine, to offer up our praise
 With thine accepted voice, unto the God
 Who smiles upon our race, ere to our tasks
 We bend our cheerful steps ; and Oh—but hark !
 Music, divinest music in the heavens !
 Hearest thou, father ?

SETH.

On my soul it falls ;

It is the song of angels which we hear,
Mingled with motion's harmonies,—they praise
Their lov'd Creator, and so near to heaven
This mountain's height, that the sweet strains come
down

To charm our mortal ears, and tell fall'n man
What happiness awaits him. Once before
The father heard that sound, it was when fell
Into his early grave the virtuous slain ;
And then he deem'd the stars of heaven sung
His welcome to their glories. I, nor hope,
Nor fear, such is this hour, the cause, that swells
To melody the air,—the will of Heaven,
Howe'er it fall, be done !

CAINAN.

But I do hope

That call may summon me !—Oh, but to die !
To see new worlds more beautiful than this ;
To skim with eagle wing the flying clouds,
More light and swift than they ; to walk upon

The baseless air ; to hear the angels' songs ;
To sit upon the footstool of the throne
Of the Eternal, and to see his face ;
To hear the mysteries of this world's birth,
Her being, and her death ; to know the things
Gone, as the open present, and the deeds
To be, as though they were ;—to float upon
The pale soft flood of moonlight ; to recline
Upon the dazzling sun-beam, and to dart
To earth upon its gold-tipp'd ray ; to sit
Watching the wandering winds ; to trace their course,
Behold them in their birth, and follow them
Into their viewless grave ;—to live in bliss
In lands which in each hour present new joys,
And fresh delighting wonders,—and to know
All this will be eternal !—Oh, for this,
Who would not willingly surrender up
These atoms to the dust, whence they were ta'en !
Oh, God of glory, I can welcome death,
And love him in his beauty !

SETH.

Thou hast yet

Probation to endure, ere such reward
Be offer'd to thy soul,—deserve it, son
Of earth, ere thou entreat'st it. Yes, this world,
Fair as it may be, is beneath the glow
Of yonder sun, or of the sparkling stars,
Peopled by bands of Seraphim ; but all
This universe is lovely ; he hath bound
All with the cord of beauty, which himself,
Its origin and cause, in his right hand
Doth gently hold. But let us on, for, see
Where slowly comes the Father, the great son
Of God himself, the holiest of our clay ;
For, unbegotten in the dark gross bond
Of sad mortality, he sprung to life,
Fashion'd and form'd by an Almighty hand,—
His soul breath'd from th' Eternal's own, a part
Of his transcendant spirit. Bow ye down,
My sons, to earth, the image of your God,
His own reflected likeness, steps among ye,
The heaven-born child of earth, bow lowly down,
In him respect his Master !

ADAM enters.

ADAM.

To my sons

All peace ! The beauteous morn which blushing rose,
Is pale and trembling grown, and the sweet air
Weigh'd heavy down, exhales its grief in sighs ;
The flowers, oppress'd by the dull heat, have clos'd
Their soft sun-loving eyes, for from the sky
He hath in haste retir'd,—the distant wind
Groaneth upon its journey,—the leaves wave
With melancholy motion,—and the dust
Riseth with eddying motion to the air,
In curling clouds, to tell the things above,
That the far tempest creepeth on the ground,
Watching the moment to arise, and burst
And ride o'er all around ;—the sorrowing cloud,
Veiling the face of Heaven, silent hears,
And ere it bears its part in ruin's band,
Drops a few tears for the approaching pangs
Of the storm-threatened earth.—Oh, may its rage
Respect her stores ungather'd, lest our toil
Be render'd vain and fruitless.

SETH.

Lo ! how swift

Is Heaven's bright visage chang'd !—Soon will the storm
Pour all its rage upon us.

ADAM.

Ah ! how chang'd

Is all the earth, my son, since that sad hour
When she was doom'd to bear my curse of guilt,
Though guiltless of my crime !—Ere then, she gave
Spontaneously her store ; there was no need
To rend it roughly from her closed breast,
And wound her for our benefit ; but when
The blighting curse fell on her, she grew sad,
And grudgingly unto her rebel sons
Yielded her treasures ; she was wither'd by
Its terrible heat, the fire of the wrath
Of her Creator, and the scented air
Breath'd fresh'ning gales no longer, for it was
Not cool enough to cure the fever red
Of her accurs'd disease, so it was chang'd
To suit her temperament ; the winds came on
To soothe her agonies, and snows, and rains,

Descended on her breast, and lighter dews
Fell on her lip, and freshen'd it, to meet
The sun's espousal kiss. When our great Lord
Came down from his bright Heaven, she tranquil lay
In holy joy to know her honour'd breast
Was then become his footstool. Now, when comes
The mighty one among us, the air groans,
The day is darken'd, for the sun retires
From his o'erpowering glance, and the poor earth
Shakes with her fears, lest that his tempest tones
Again should curse her increase, and her dread
Rocks her with mighty force, as though it would
Loosen the cord by which in space she swings,
And hurl her with convulsive agonies,
To wander madden'd in the pathless skies.

CAINAN.

Still, better should he come, though horror-clad,
Than turn his eye for ever from our earth,
And watch our deeds no longer. Yet mine heart
Shrinks not from the fierce tempest ; even now,
From this high mount I see it gathering
Above, below, around. Here will I stand

And gaze on its convulsions.—Storm, I love thee !
For not to me doth thy wild music speak
Of danger and contention, but of sport
And a dark union of brotherhood
Among the elements, who gaily meet,
Not in destruction, or in angry war,
But solemn harmony. Now would I float,
Thron'd on that blackest cloud, and watch the mirth
Of air, and earth, and ocean ; hear them sing
Their moody song of triumph ; hear the rocks
And caves, and mountains giving back the roar
Of the redoubled thunder.—Mark the lightnings
Rapidly flashing, and evanishing
Again as rapidly, lest that the whirling wind
Should in gigantic playfulness, huge mirth
On his broad wings hurl them about in air ;
And I do love to mark old Ocean leap,
And play his mighty gambols on his bed,
Laving the pebbly shore, or in rude sport
Threaten the rocks, and wash away the cloud
That was their diadem. Yea, and I love
The dark red light, pour'd broadly round, by which

The elements do joy to celebrate
 Their high majestic orgies ; but because
 I joy in that grand uproar, and behold
 With transport the stern majesty of God,
 The pomp in which the Eternal visits earth ;
 Not less I love the calmer, gentler scenes
 Of our green-breasted mother : though there be
 Some black spots on her surface, yet she bears
 Mountains of virtue, and I sit among them,
 Glorifying in her perfections.

SETH.

Through the gloom,
 O father, look, there shines a wond'rous light,
 As if a band of suns above that spot
 Did shed their radiance down :—from heaven or earth
 Gleameth that light ?

ADAM.

It is the wall of flame,
 The fiery circle which doth circumscribe
 The hallow'd Garden, from whose sacred mould
 I took my frame,—it is the will of Heaven
 That holy earth should still be consecrate

To that sole purpose, nor e'er be profan'd
To other uses.—When from out its bounds
He drove us weeping, round its airs he drew
A girdle of the brightest fires of heaven,
To keep all evil thing from its pure gales ;
And this will last until its withering heat
Shall blast its richness, and deface its charms.
Oft have I mark'd it, in the heavy night,
With tearful eye, with more than usual glow
Light'ning up all the air, and then I deem'd
Some cursed spirit near its sacred bounds
With unblest'd feet, and evil longing eye,
Was wandering. Such think I now the cause
Of yonder splendid light.

SETH.

Methought I heard
Mingling with the loud wind a human groan.
Again,—hark !—Sure it is the voice of pain ;
And see where comes Mahalaleel ; the storm
Hath pal'd his glowing cheek, and dimm'd the light
Of his young joyous eye. May nought but fear

Have wrought upon thee thus !—Unharm'd thou com'st
From the death-dealing tempest !

MAHALALEEL.

Not the storm,
Though terrible it be, could shake me thus,
But that which rideth on it.—There is one
Wrapp'd in wild horror, who should rather seem
Its sport and victim than its governor,
For his unearthly shrieks are loud and shrill,
And speak of pain, not triumph. I did mark
How in his frenzy he did rend the locks
From his distracted head, and on the earth
Roll'd in delirious agony.

SETH.

Oh, sire
Of men, shall we descend the steep, and heal
The wounds of the grief-bruised ?—It may be
Some wretched mortal, who, by sin oppress'd,
Needeth our help and comfort.

ADAM.

Thy soft voice
Would yield it best, thou mild appointed, but

We will assist thee in the task, for be
The sufferer what he may, from me he springs,
And still must claim my pity.

SCENE—*The foot of the Mountain.*

CAIN *alone.*

CAIN.

So ! there comes
Nor help nor pity to me.—I am driven
Before despair, as was the rebel chief,
From God's wide scattering thunder ! Soft.—I am
Alone ! I see him not, though, through the night,
Close in pursuit, I saw his glaring eyes,
Gleaming with fires of the nether world,
Lighting him to the chace !—Here will I breathe
A moment ;—but,—where am I ? Driven on
Thus madly, nought I knew of the drear path
My goaded step was seeking.—Let me look
Abroad upon these objects.—My strain'd eyes
Are dim,—or I am mad,—or doth the fiend
Present illusions to my tortur'd sense,
To wound me with new mockeries ?—If I am
Myself, and this be no delusion, then

My wretched flight hath borne me to the spot
 I should have shunn'd for ever.—Oh, I know
 That giant tree, and those cloud soaring hills,
 And—God of vengeance, hast thou drawn me here,
 To make my doom more bitter, to assist
 The malice of the fiend?—It is,—it is,
 The crimson spot of earth, the wither'd bound,
 Where first into her sick'ning breast was pour'd
 The draught of her son's blood.—It is the spot,
 Where these fell hands grip'd his imploring throat,
 And smote upon his brain! He riseth!—see,
 Up from the earth he comes, a black'ned corse,
 To drag me to his grave,—to bid me share
 His deep and bloody bed!—Oh, agony,—
 We sink!—together,—down,—down,—deeper ye,—
 The earth is closing o'er me.—

SETH *and* MAHALALEEL *enter*.

MAHALALEEL.

See, my father,
 Where, on the earth, unto the tempest's wrath,
 Insensible the wretch extended lies.

Wounded he is, and speechless, let us raise
His head from that sad pillow.

SETH.

Sorrowing man,
Look up.—Thy wounded head reclines upon
A pitying bosom, open to the light
Of this world's kindness, thy sleeping sense,
That o'er its darkness soft compassion may
Throw her sun-tinted hues.

MAHALALEEL.

Thy gentle tones
Have back recall'd the scatter'd senses.—See,
He looks upon us.—Father, can this be
One of sweet Nature's sons?—My trembling heart
Shrinks from his fiery glance.

CAIN.

Methought I heard
The voices of my youth ; and that I saw
The forms of early days, the mountain's side,
And the young family of earth, the pride
And joy of their Creator.—'Twas a dream !—
Or am I dead, and, expiation done,

Have waken'd to new life?—*He* was with me
 But now, and I am still upon the spot,
 Where he did grasp me with the might of Death,
 And plung'd with me in darkness.—Soft,—I am
 Still in the world of living things, as yet
 Not blotted from its face; but who are these?
 And who is he that cometh, terrible
 In his majestic calmness?—I behold
 Not the griev'd father, but the accuser stern
 Of my remember'd crime! O, mountain, fall!
 Open, O earth; and, ocean, pour thy waves,
 And hide me from his glance!

ADAM enters.

ADAM.

Yea, let me hope

I gaze upon a vision,—that the breath
 Of the blasphemer doth not file the air,
 So near the courts of Eden; that the foot
 Of the manslayer doth not press the soil
 Red with his victim's gore.—Oh, righteous Heaven,
 Before thee I have sinn'd; I would not then
 Curse the destroyer, but, I pray thee, send

Him back unto his land, ere other sons
Glut his revengeful malice.

CAIN.

Misery

Is humble ! Father of mankind, behold
The wretched, prostrate Cain.—The earth abhorr'd—
The horror struck—the wand'rer—demon scourg'd,—
Of God and man abandon'd.—I have worn
Long on this aching brow the burning seal
Of the Creator's vengeance.—Now, I come
Unto my father's hand, to raze the stamp,
And take the malediction from my soul.
Start not, Oh brethren ; hither not my will,
But the Eternal's, bore me, for I knew
Nought of the path o'er which my frenzied speed
Drove furiously along.—O Father, chief
Of the earth's thousands, 'neath thy holy rule,
Within these sacred valleys, let my head
Lie down in peace. I ask a tranquil spot
Where I may die. I would not live among
Mine own all sinful race, whose hands are arm'd

Against their father's life, who struck the head
To God's own wrath devoted.

ADAM.

I may mourn

Thy miserable fate, but dare not change
The high decree of Heaven. Thou art doom'd
For crimes of later date, than that which tore
A glorious branch from the fair Tree of Life.
Long hath thy course been, and by violence,
And tyranny, and rapine mark'd. Thy hours
Number'd, not by the change of day and night,
But by the tears of those thou hast oppress'd,
And thy all shuddering angel's deeper groans,
When he inscrib'd thy name on that black page,
Where all thy deeds are number'd. Thy lost sons
Have follow'd but thy track, and are become
Such as thyself hath made them. Hadst thou come
Sinless, but as thine earliest crime had left thee, I
Had pitied thee, and pardon'd, to my sons
Have given back their brother. Now, I dare not.
Thy course of crime, thy wretched, sinful life,
Hath parted us for ever.—Get thee hence ;

Thou art the Almighty's foe, and being his,
Must ever more be mine.

CAIN.

Th' Almighty's foe !

What then wast thou ? the earliest sin was thine.—
Thine was the crime, the deed of this fierce hand
Was but its consummation. Thou didst bring
Sin into the young world, and when thy hand
Had open'd for her passage the broad gates
Of her deep dungeon, she compell'd thy son
To call and welcome Death.—What have I done,
That sprung not first from thee ? and when the curse
Was on thy soul, why did'st thou being give
Unto another victim of its rage ?
It was, that heavier crime might stain my soul,
And make thine own transgression look as white,
As unsunn'd snow, unto the crimson glow,
That must discolour mine.

ADAM.

Thy fierce reproach

I bear, and, as I should, with meekness—sad—
And consciousness, that I have well deserv'd,

Though least from thee, reproof ;—but these thy words
More firmly root my purpose, not to bear
Thy presence on our mountains ;—they bespeak
Thee harden'd in thy guilt, impenitent
Even of thy earliest crime.—Should I relent,
God's wrath were manifest ; thy brother's blood
Would cry against me from the hidden depths,
Where, in earth's womb, he lies ;—the very air,
The things that look'd upon him in his life,
Would call for vengeance on thee.—I should see
Rising up from the grave thy fierce hand dug,
Thy mother's startled shade, at thy approach
Stalking before the bosoms of her sons.
Mine ear would drink the sound of fearful groans,
Breath'd by thy brother's angels.—Who would trust
Their lives with such as thou ?—E'en now I see
Madness, and rage, and malice, glaring from
Thy soul betraying brow !—I do command,
In the great name of thine Almighty Judge,
Of whom on earth I am the delegate,
Thine absence from these valleys.—Force me not
To call upon the thunders of the sky,

Or bid the earth open beneath thy foot,
 And shew thee in the gap, the mangled form
 Of thy life refted victim.

SETH.

How his voice
 Pierces with awful grandeur, and his eye,
 A dark cloud flashing fire.—His glorious form
 Towers in regal greatness o'er our heads,
 As did the bright Archangel's, warring Michael's,
 (When, from the victory o'er rebel Hell,
 He rode to Heaven triumphant,) o'er the band
 Of his fair radiant brothers.—Our great Lord
 Hath rob'd him with a splendour all his own,
 And now unrivall'd, save by angel forms,
 He looketh, speaketh, with a wondrous grace
 Of majesty and power ; but, O Cain,
 Though thou art banish'd from thine early home,
 And sympathy with man, there are fair spots
 As bright as this, and Nature hath a voice
 Compassionate and soothing to the soul
 That courts her open arms.—Communion hold
 With her, and with her beauties.—He who loves

Her, and her whisperings divine, will turn
His heart to her Creator, for the link
Of love hath bound her to his bosom.—Call
On patience, meekness, penitence, with eyes
Beaming through falling tears, and cheering hope,
Beautiful hope, with her all radiant brow,
And uprais'd finger, pointing to the skies,
Springing up from the darkness, and on clouds
Of azure, darting onwards to the light
Which shines to guide her on.

CAIN.

Yes, I would fain
Listen to those sweet tones, but there is one,
Whose hollow mutterings confound the sense,
And overpower the sound ; whose words are death,
Whose threat'nings are despair.—I will not trust
Mine ear unto his breathings.—Fiend, avaunt !
I fly from thee unto that sacred spot,
Where thy pursuit is vain. Thy burning foot
Dares not pollute this soil.—Here will I lie,
Scorning thy hopes and thee.

ADAM.

Unhappy son,
May thy offence find mercy. May my prayer,
Unceasingly presented, on thine head
Call down a sacred blessing.—I have nought
But prayers for thee.—Go unto thine home,
Speed thee in peace.—Ha ! quit that holy ground,
For thy fierce step is on thy brother's corse,
Trampling again his bosom, for he sleeps
Beneath that blood-stain'd soil.

CAIN.

My brother's grave
Is now my place of rest, for never more
Shall I forsake that home.—This is the bed
Where I shall sleep for ever.—Hark,—there is
A voice which whispers to my soul, and cries,
“ Thy wanderings are past, here lie thee down
For thy last expiation.”—God, I pray thee,
Let not this be a mockery, for thou see'st
How all reject me. It is thy decree,
And now I murmur not ; but, if thy will
Summon me not, I shall devoted stand

Alone again, the outcast of the earth,
The loath'd of all her sons. My strength is gone,
And the dark fiend that doth beset my soul
Whispers me of despair. Oh, help me, God !—
The spurn'd of all, I turn me back to thee !—
Give me not up to Hell. My punishment
Hath mighty been, and mightily I have
Borne the severe decree. My bloody hands,
Now purified by suff'ring, I upraise
From that deep bed where the slain victim lies,
Unto thine eye,—avert it not, Oh God !
The red stain is effaced !—Oh look down,—
Look down with mercy on me ;—if my pangs
Have been an expiation,—if my soul
Be scourg'd not as my body, but may rest
Cur'd of its wounds upon thy healing breast,—
Then, call me from this earth,—arm thy right hand
With thy tremendous bolt, and strike me dead !
Come, vivid lightning, spare no more this head,
But crumble it to cinders, and upon
Thy wing of glory, bear my mounting soul,
To seek for pardon at th' Almighty's throne.

Come, God of justice—God of mercy, now
 Accept the sacrifice I place upon
 This grave become thine altar ; thou didst spurn
 The first I offer'd, let this one, this last,
 Find favour in thy sight. O Lord, come down,
 Burn, and consume the victim.

[Darkness, thunders, and lightnings.]

SETH.

Brother—Cain—

Oh may these horrors spare thee !

ADAM.

Sullen shades
 Of darkness veil the earth ;—thou righteous Heaven,
 From thy avenging bolt the sufferer
 Guard in thy mercy,—thou most awful night,
 That circleth thus our world, and blotteth out
 The glories of the day !—Th' unhappy—where' !—
 I hear no more the anguish of his cries,
 The thunderbolt hath still'd them.—Mercy, Heaven,
 Have mercy on the fallen.—Soft, the day
 Breaketh above the darkness. O my son,
 Mine elder born, where art thou ? Gone,—behold

The Eternal hath accorded his sad prayer,
And with the lightning is his being gone.
He came in misery into the world,
In darkness hath departed. Lo ! a heap
Of smoking ashes, on the mouldering bones
Of the first sleeper lies ;—it is the last
Sad remnant of the slayer ;—the grieved earth
Refuseth him a grave, the fiery doom
Devours the murderer, he is entomb'd
By that which hath consum'd him ; he hath been
Still sacred to his God, and sacredly
The wrath-devoted dies. May we to dust
Commit those ashes ? No ! the winds of Heaven,
The breath of the Almighty stirs them from
Their resting-place, and scatters them abroad.
Cain's atoms rise,—no more a heap of dust,
But mingled with creation. Air, earth, water,
Take each your several offerings !

NOTES.

Note 1, page 219, line 4.

Azazel.

ONE of the fallen angels, named in the prophecy of Enoch; he was one of the most powerful.

Note 2, page 231, line 3.

The song of angels.

A tradition of the eastern writers.

Note 3, page 238, line 18.

Wall of flame.

Those writers who place Paradise near Babylon, (where there is such abundance of Naphtha and Bitumen, and where at certain times of the year there are meadows which appear on fire,) have thus translated the "Cherubim with the flaming sword which turned every way," of Moses.

Note 4, page 254.

There are various accounts of the death of Cain; some insisting that he killed himself, others that he perished in the deluge, thus giving him a longer life than any of the pa-

triarchs, for which there could be no possible reason, making him near two thousand years old. The story of his accidental murder by Lamech is most generally credited, which I have rejected as inconsistent with the divine promise made for his consolation and protection.

THE
NEREID'S LOVE.

THE
NEREID'S LOVE.

SCENE—*A Wood near the Egean Sea.*

ARCAS and EGILONE.

ARCAS.

NAY, Egilone, wherefore fly me thus?
Oh, go not yet! old ~~Nox~~^{Night} hath still an hour
Of silent empire o'er the sleeping earth,
Ere yet the stars that gem her robe grow dim,
Or the black courses of her cloud-veil'd car
Shall bear her to the broad breast of her lord,
The wide dark Erebus.—Oh say, at least,
Whither thou wanderest:—when the beauteous Day
Hath with her lord the Sun retir'd to rest,

And hooded Twilight in her dusky veil
Envelopes the bright pair, then dost thou come
Radiant with beauty to my turfy couch,
And then to me this river's grassy bank,
And the broad base of high Olympus, is
More glorious than its summit, e'en when crown'd
By a coronet of Gods ;—but when first gleams
The faint tinge of the morning from the locks
Of the yet slumbering Aurora, then,
Thou flyest from mine arms, to hide thy smiles
In yon dark gloomy wood.—I hold thee fast !
Nay, longer stay !—Oh do not leave me yet,
Or tell me where thou goest ?

EGILONE.

No, dear youth,
The knowlege would be fatal to thy peace,
For it would tear me from thee ;—seek it not,—
But rest contented with my constant love,
And let me leave thee now. I must retire
Ere day-break to my home, lest that the nymph,
My sister Dryades, should guess my absence,
And punish the forbidden visit on me.

I leave thee now.—See, youth, the Pleiades
 Grow fainter in the heavens, and retire
 To weep their mountain sire, and give place
 To the white coursers of the golden car,
 Round which, with rosy feet, the laughing hours
 Trip gaily, heralding their matchless queen,
 The sun-beam rob'd Aurora.

ARCAS.

Nay, but she
 Hath lov'd, and would not with stern eye regard
 Thy sweet sin, gentle wood-nymph.—She did steal
 From his terrestrial bed young Cephalus,
 Teaching him falsehood to his wedded love ;
 But, for that love, he coldly look'd on Heaven,
 And scorn'd the fairest of its 'habitants,
 As I would do for thee !

EGILONE.

Would'st thou, indeed !
 Nay, I am not thy debtor, for I shun
 The Gods themselves for thee.—The mighty Pan,
 Our sovereign, and our leader, through the tones
 Of softest music, hath pour'd forth his soul ;

And Zephyrus, forsaking Flora's couch,
 Hath breath'd his softest sighs upon mine ear ;
 But I have listen'd not :—and now I go,
 Lest that their watching eyes should trace out thee,
 And wreak a jealous vengeance.—It is time,
 For now I hear the monarch of the woods,
 The great King Pan, summoning from dewy couch
 His sleeping court, the Sylvans and the Fauns,
 By the sweet sound he loves, the mournful voice
 Of the reed changed nymph, affrighted Syrinx.
 I haste to join the train.—Dear youth, forbear
 To chase my steps. When the soft twilight comes,
 Beneath her mantle I will steal to thee.—
 Follow me not.—Farewell !

ARCAS.

I will not !—No,
 I will not disobey thee !—Beautiful
 Thou art, and if thou dost indeed belong
 To nature, thou art her perfection.—See,
 She floats, not walks upon the air ; the dews
 Of Heaven fall not so lightly on the earth,
 As her ethereal step. The evening

Will come, but long the hours till then.—O speed,
 Speed Phœbus thy bright course ; a lover thou
 Hast ever been ; with pity look upon
 A lover's pangs in absence !—How shall I
 Banish the weary day !—I will descend
 The river's windings, and upon the breast
 Of old Egeus with my wary nets
 Snare his inhabitants, the finny slaves
 Of the tall blue-ey'd king, who rules the depths
 Of his proud rolling waters.—Sweet Peneus !
 Glide with me, murmuring thy happiness,
 Thy dwelling in this heaven-o'erlooking vale,
 This soft Olympus of the lower world,
 This matchless Tempe.

SCENE—*The Shore of the Egean Sea.*

ARCAS sitting on a Rock.

ARCAS.

Half of his course hath Phœbus still to run,
 And yet my task is finished.—Now I sit
 Upon the very rock where sat of old
 The mourning father, straining his dim eye

To catch the signal of his happiness,
The white flag floating on his Hero's bark,
But clos'd it in eternal night, when he
Rested it on the banner black, which stream'd
On the dull air,—and springing from this steep,
Buried his griefs in ocean!—Beautiful
Is this enchanting shore, and the gray sea
Puts on his robes of beauty, to bewitch
Our most admiring senses. Tranquil, too,
He looks, as though he knew his master slept
Upon the bosom of his Amphitrite,
And fear'd to break his slumbers. As I gaze
Upon the waters glittering in the sun,
Methinks I can distinguish forms that rise
And move upon their surface.—Yes, there comes
The cavalcade of the green-mantled king,
And all his train around him.—No!—The music
Is not so loud as Triton's, nor the car,
Drawn by the foaming coursers of the sea,
But beauteous dolphins, proudly bear its yoke,
Enamour'd of their office; and the form
That fills the coral car is not the God's,

The blue-ey'd Lord of Ocean, but a shape
More gracious than his queen's ;—it is a daughter
Of old Nereus, who did prophecy
Upon this lovely shore.—She comes to earth
In all her elemental glory, and
More lovely than the foam-born goddess, when,
Cradled by Ocean's snowy curls, she lay,
And wafted by the seasons into Heaven.

The NEREID.

Is it a god, who in that beauteous form
Veils his divinity from prying eyes,
And feeble gaze of mortals ? Is it thee,
Royal Apollo, who doth hide thy bow,
And thy unerring darts of death, to wound
With the soft fire of thy sun-beaming eye
Another loving Clytie ? Or art thou
Bacchus, disguis'd as when he saw the woes
Of Ariadne, and with soothing words
Heal'd the poor broken-hearted ? Beauteous boy,
Art thou of earth or heaven ?

ARCAS.

Goddess, I

Am of the earth, and mortal !—Of her sons
 The lowliest,—a poor shepherd boy, fair queen,
 Of Tempe's happy valley.

The NEREID.

How I stand

Like Dian, passing struck !—and gazing on
 The object of my wonder, and mine eye
 Drinking sweet poison, as did hers from looks
 Fairer than young Endymion's.—Gracious boy
 I love thee !—See the daughter of the waves
 Sues to the son of earth.—Thou hast enkindled
 Fire in the cold breast of the Ocean's child,
 Who sues to thee for love !—Oh, dost thou share
 My torture and my transport !—Comes this flame
 From that which only lights thy sparkling eye,
 Or that which fills thine heart ?

ARCAS.

Great queen, I am

A mortal born, and for a mortal love
 Have yielded up my heart.—Thou art most fair,
 But she I love, forgive me, frown not, Goddess,
 Is to this eye still fairer !—When she comes

Breathing ambrosia, and from sun-bright locks
 Diffusing light, as rais'd by Zephyrus,
 (The all of gentle violence he dares,)
 They throw soft beams around her,—O, I am
 The happiest, the blessed among men,
 And would not change that hour to be the lord
 Of crowned Juno, even though she came
 With all that loveliness, as when she wore
 The magic belt of Venus. Can I love!
 Oh fondly! wildly!—With a love that ne'er
 Can know a thought except of the belov'd,
 And not a dream of change.—She is mine own,—
 My heart's divinity,—she is myself!
 The spirit that doth animate this clay,
 Thron'd in my brain and heart!

The NEREID.

But hear me, youth,
 With such a love thou wilt not sure compare
 The daughter of the Ocean.—Come with me,
 And I will teach thee how to walk upon
 His yielding surface,—and within his caves
 Of crystal I will wed thee, youth, and win

From the storm-ruling monarch for my dower
 The gift of immortality to crown
 Thy almost god-like brow !

ARCAS.

Yes, queen, as did
 Aurora when she ask'd that mighty boon,
 Meaning to bless young Tithon, but forgetting
 That bright eyes will grow dim, she curs'd him with
 Eternity of age !

The NEREID.

But I will give
 Perpetual youth to grace thy circled life ;
 And thou shalt live in air, in earth, or sea,
 As suits thy pleased fancy :—thou shalt float
 In the rough waves of Ocean, shrouded in
 His robes of foam,—or in a coral car,
 Traverse his bed, and tread his deserts wild,
 Or walk his rock-built cities ;—thou shalt see
 The palace of great Neptune, and the throne
 Of diamonds, where Amphitrite sits .
 The mansion of pure crystal, with its dome
 And pillars of bright amber,—and the car,

The sea-horse harness'd chariot of the king,
Hewn of a single pearl,—and thou shalt see
The green rob'd god himself, the second Jove,
And hear him speak with voice as musical
As is Jove's own ;—and thou shalt live among
The marine lords of ocean, the proud court
Of Saturn's blue ey'd son ;—and thou shalt see
The monsters of the deep, but shorn for thee
Of all their dangerous power. 'Thou shalt hear,
Unmov'd, the Syren's music ;—thou shalt sport
Fearlessly with the wild and ravenous hounds
Of the perfidious Scylla, and shalt play
Amid Charybdis waves, and yet shall shun
Her all devouring maw ;—and when thine eye
Aches with these glories, or thy wearied soul
Would rest from happiness, thou shalt lie down
On beds of sea flowers, curtain'd by the white
And maiden coral, or within these arms
Pavilion'd, thou shalt charmed be to sleep
By the sweet music of the Syren's songs,
Dreadful to all, but subject unto thee !

ARCAS.

Goddess ! these glories of the silver sea,
Although most wonderous, yet move me not
To leave Earth's bounteous bosom, and the warm
And glowing hearts of her least worthy sons,
For the chill waters, and the chiller arms
Of Ocean's frozen children ! Beautiful,
No doubt, the empire of the mighty deep ;
But still Earth's face is fairer. Oh, how sweet
Her green clad mountains, and her valleys, dress'd
In many colour'd garments ; and her springs,
And her sweet rivers, singing, as they go,
The praises of their mother, for they rise
From her kind bosom, though into the sea
They pour their idle waters. Are these hills
(Round which the sportive queen of flowers, the gay
And graceful Flora, hath her diadem thrown)
Less lovely than thy cold, calm, crystal rock,
Which is but beautiful Death ? Here all things live :
The trees are peopled ; for the birds delight
To warble in the boughs, and the still'd winds
Do hush their murmurings, that the lesser things

Of nature may rejoice aloud, to shame
 Your world of silence, mockery of life.
 Ours is a world of sweet realities ;
 Thine but of shadowy promise.—What a world !
 Where yonder glorious Sun is all unfelt,
 And unacknowledg'd ! Look, what a rich light,
 A golden glory on our earth he sheds,
 A glory all men feel, for all men share it.
 We are a part of him ;—aye, and our nights !
 Our Heaven breathing twilights !—that soft hour
 Is coming now ; and, Goddess, fare thee well,
 I am the earth-born, and I haste to seek
 Mine own, mine earthly home !

The NEREID.

And earthly Love.—

Go, foolish youth ! dear wilt thou pay this scorn
 Of Ocean's daughter ;—but, of her who bears
 Within her breast thy heart, whence is she ? where
 Is this enchantress now ?

ARCAS.

Ah ! could I guess !—
 At night she comes to make my home at Heaven,

And with the morn retires. In the shade
 Of a deep wood she hides her from my view,
 Amid a cluster of gigantic trees,
 The Titans of the woods !

The NEREID.

She mocks thee, youth !

She seeks another love. The mighty Pan,
 Who is her master, doubtless loves the nymph.
 The Naiads and ^{the} Dryads are his slaves ;
 He could not, and he would not, sue in vain !

ARCAS.

She spoke of Pan ;—but no !—impossible !
 She could not love the odious deity,
 The king of Fauns and Satyrs.

The NEREID.

When he comes

To court the nymphs, and steal away their hearts,
 It is in beauty's radiance.—Is he not
 Lord of that earth, which now thy gentle voice
 Was boasting, youth ?—Is he not nature's God ?
 And when he woos the fairest of her race,
 It is in all her beauty, for he is

Her essence and her life, the very soul
 Of all her sweetest things.—In shape, he moves
 A graceful youth of airy majesty ;
 Bearing of earth nought but her loveliness,
 Unmix'd by earthly grossness. Violets
 Have lent their lustre to his dewy eyes ;
 Roses have dy'd his lips ; and hyacinths
 Have wav'd his locks, to which each flower that blows
 Hath lent its fragrance, and the golden Sun
 His bright and brilliant hue. He hath been lov'd !
 Who would not love him thus ? Pale Dryope
 Was all his own, and frantic Echo first
 Learn'd love from his soft lip. Nay, and they say,
 The maiden Moon once hid her brilliancy
 In his beloved bosom ! Therefore, youth,
 Thy beauteous Nymph, may with sad Echo's eye
 Behold the royal Pan !

ARCAS.

Now do I hate
 Thy cruelty, false Queen. Thou art as base
 And treacherous as thy smiling, mocking Sire,
 Who swallows those who trust him. Goddess, now,

I leave thee for my valley, and I go
To seek my constant love !

The NEREID.

Sweet youth, farewell.

But since I cannot touch thy heart, at least
Ask me some boon, that granting, I may prove
The tenderness I bear thee.—Tax my power,
My secret knowledge ; can I serve thee, youth,
Thee, or thine earthly love ?

ARCAS.

Oh, that thou mayest !

Shew me the spot, to which, from light of day,
And my fond heart, my secret Love retires.—
Shew me that spot, and not another wish
Have I for ought on earth, or sea, or heaven !

The NEREID.

When at the dawn of day, she quits thy side,
Follow at cautious distance.—When she gains
The cluster of dark trees, mark thou the one
By which she disappears ; it veils a path
Into the Earth's dark caves ; hew down the tree,
The passage shall lie open ; thou shalt find

Thy fair one's mystery, and not forget,
Mortal, the Nereid's love !

SCENE—*The Wood.* ARCAS *following* EGILONE.

ARCAS.

So ! Now she steals
Toward the towering cluster.—Now, she eyes
The plain around her.—Now, her backward glance
Is thrown upon the path she lately trode.—
Sweet Egilone ! could'st thou guess who sees
Thy timid caution !—Ah ! forgive me, dear,
'Tis love alone that thou must punish for,
This crime, if crime it be.—How different she
From the proud Nereid, who commanded love
As he were born her slave ;—but Egilone
Hath woo'd, and won him !—Soft !—the tree is found,
The centre, and the tallest ;—by its trunk
She vanishes.—Now, for a moment's space,
To give her time to sink into the earth,
And then hew down the tree !

Approach ye, youths,
Sons of my native valley ;—this the trunk

Which by the axe must fall !—A sturdy stroke !—
 Methought, the old oak groan'd ! a noble tree !
 Worthy Dodona's grove, and, like that grove,
 It veils a mystery.—Aye,—groan old lord
 Of the proud forest ; thou must fall to-day,
 For that, in pride of age and strength, thou darest
 To wrestle with a lover !—See, he bends
 'Neath their redoubled blows. Shame on thee, oak,
 How could thine aged boughs yield shelter thus
 Unto the flying maiden, from the youth,
 Who, as his soul, adores her ?—So,—come down,—
 How will she blush, and prettily will chide
 The daring Arcas, when she feels his arms
 Circling her graceful form ;—the prison-house,
 To which, for ever now, will mighty love
 Consign the beauteous wand'rer.—Lo, he bends !—
 Lower, and lower yet !—And now,—he's down.—
 I triumph, Egilone !

[*The tree falls.—A loud groan.—EGILONE appears
 standing on the trunk mortally wounded.*

EGILONE.

Hapless youth !

Dear hast thou bought that triumph!—thou hast slain
 Thy Egilone!—Nature hath decreed,
 The Dryad, from the eye of burning day,
 Should seek concealment in her parent tree,
 And every blow, that harms the forest king,
 Should fall upon the bosom of his child!—
 I die!—O Arcas, for myself, I feel
 No pangs,—but thee!—speak, gentle lover, speak;
 Oh take me on thy breast, and let thy voice
 Sooth my sad dying hour!—Oh, he looks
 Paler than palest marble;—and I die,
 And cannot say farewell!—Oh, mighty Pan,
 Have pity on thy children!

PAN and the Sylvan Deities enter.

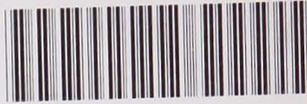
PAN.

Nymph, I grant
 Thy parting prayer. Sweet Egilone, die!
 And Arcas, to thy mortal life expire,
 But live for ever in another form,
 United to thy Dryad.—Beauteous pair,
 Become one fountain, and, throughout this wood,
 Roll your soft silver waters!—Near your streams

Yearly shall youthful lovers meet and swear
Fidelity, and your soft waves shall be
The binding oath of love, which none shall dare
Henceforth to violate ! Be it sacred here
Upon our Earth, as Styx is to the Heaven,
Or to affrighted Hell !—'Tis done,—they glide
United, and immortal !—

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