THE

FAKEER OF JUNGHEERA,

A METRICAL TALE,

AND

OTHER POEMS.

BY

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CALCUTTA.

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CALCUTTA,

THIS POEM IS INSCRIBED BY

HIS MOST OBEDIENT SERVANT,

THE AUTHOR.

My country! in thy day of glory past
A beauteous halo circled round thy brow,
And worshipped as a deity thou wast—
Where is that glory, where that reverence now?
Thy eagle pinion is chained down at last,
And grovelling in the lowly dust art thou:
Thy minstrel hath no wreath to weave for thee
Save the sad story of thy misery!—
Well—let me dive into the depths of time,
And bring from out the ages that have rolled
A few small fragments of those wrecks sublime,
Which human eye may never more behold;
And let the guerdon of my labour be
My fallen country! one kind wish for thee!

THE

FAKEER OF JUNGHEERA.

CANTO FIRST.

Affections are not made for merchandize.—
What will ye give in barter for the heart?
Has this world wealth enough to buy the store
Of hopes, and feelings which are linked for ever
With Woman's soul?

HOW like young spirits on the wing
The viewless winds are wandering!
Now o'er the flower-bells fair they creep
Waking sweet odours out of sleep;
Now stealing softly through the grass
That rustles as the breezes pass,
Just breathing such a gentle sigh
As Love would live for ever by!

The sun-lit stream in dimples breaks,
As when a child from slumber wakes,
Sweet smiling on its mother—there,
Like heavenly hope o'er mortal care!
The sun is like a golden urn
Where floods of light for ever burn,
And fall like blessings fast on earth,
Bringing its beauties brightly forth.
From field to field the butterfly
Flits—a bright creature of the sky;
As if an angel plucked a flower
From fairest heaven's immortal bower,
The loveliest, and the sweetest there
Blooming like bliss in life's parterre;
And after having pinions given,
As earnest of eternal powers,
To shew what beauty buds in heaven
Had sent it to this world of our's.
And wildly roving there the bee
On quivering wing of melody

From shrub to shrub enamoured hies,
Then, like a faithless lover, flies,
Giddy and wild even as he sips
Their honey from the flowrets' lips.
O! there beneath the chequered shade
By the wide-spreading Banyan made,
How sweetly wove might be the theme
Of gifted bard's delicious dream!
His temples fanned by freshning air,
His brain by fancies circled fair,
His heart on pleasure's bosom laid,
His thoughts in robes of song arrayed—
How blest such beauteous spot would be
Unto the soul of minstrelsy!

II.

The golden God of day has driven
His chariot to the western gate
Of yonder red resplendent heaven,
Where angels high to hail him wait;

But ere his couch he press to-night,
His rays a mournful scene shall light!
The laughing wave that rolls below
Gilt with the yellow sunshine's glow,
Shall hear, ere changed its hue may be,
A maddening wail of misery.
The minstrels gay that fondly pour
Their carols wild from brake and bower,
Will change their strains so sweet, so glad,
For lays still sweet, but ah! more sad.
The winds now walking o'er the wave,
Before they seek their prison cave,
Before they sink to nightly rest
Upon the billows' gentle breast,
Or ere they range the garden bowers
To cull their fragrance from the flowers,
Shall chaunt a requiem sad, and slow
O'er hope destroyed, and bliss laid low;
For ere the evening shadows fly,
Devoted woman here must die.

III.

Jungheera's rocks are hoar and steep,
And Ganges' wave is broad and deep,
And round that island-rock the wave
Obsequious comes its feet to lave—
Those rocks, the stream's victorious foes,
Frown darkly proud as on it flows,
Regardless of their haughty frown
The sacred wave goes wandering on;
And fishers there their shallops guide
Upon the rosy-bosomed tide!
High on the hugest granite pile
Of that grey barren craggy isle,
A small rude hut unsheltered stands—
Erected by no earthly hands;
And never sinful foot might dare
To find its way unbidden there.
The holy man who makes his home
That rock, beyond it ne'er will roam;
The light of day may never shine
Upon an aspect more divine;

The pilgrim moon may never see
A heart with more of purity,
Pure as her own unearthly beams,
Or brightest angels blissful dreams!
His spirit's sacred rays are given
To one perpetual thought of heaven;
In prayer for all the sin that lies
Beneath the soft and pitying skies,
His life unruffled, like the stream,
Flows brightly in devotion's beam.
And never earthly eye has seen
His hallowed form, his saintly mien;
Some say its holy heavenly light
Would be for mortal view too bright;
As never eye hath dared to gaze
On Surya's* everlasting blaze.
But others tell of deeds of death,
Of blood-stained hands, and broken faith,
Of outlaws leagued, of foemen slain,
The hamlet burned, the plundered swain,

* Surya—the Sun.

The peasant forced his home to flee,
The princely maiden's treachery,
Her youthful lord's untimely fall—
And he, the demon—cause of all!

IV.

Alas! in fairest seeming souls
The tide of guilt all blackly rolls;
And then they steal religion's ray
Upon its surface but to play:
As o'er the darkest sea a gleam
Of brightest sunshine oft may beam,
Gilding the wave while dark beneath
Are lurking danger, woe, and death.

V.

Lo! something moving o'er the plain
Like morning mist upon the main,
But dimly may the gazer's eye
Its indistinct advance descry;

Slowly it moves—thus slow we find
Truth dawn upon the doubting mind:
At first, a cloud its hues appear,
And then it rolling gathers near,
Just ray by ray, till robed in light,
It dazzling stands before the sight.
A glittering throng advanceth nigh
With drum, and gong, and soldiery;
Their spears of gold, in Surya's gleam
Reflect his splendour, beam for beam;
Their chargers brave are proudly prancing,
With silver bright their bridles ring;
While woman's brighter eyes are glancing
Like light upon a seraph's wing.
And there the priests with triple thread
And saintly mien, and solemn tread,
Pronounce, their golden God to please,
Religion's holiest mysteries;
Thus hallowing with their sacred power
The rites of that eventful hour

One lovely form is gliding there
As if 'twere pure embodied air,
With face half veiled, enrobed in white,
She, like a blessed child of light
Amidst her maidens seems to rise,
Like Chandra* in the jewelled skies!
A sound of song is on the breeze,
As welcome to the spirit bright
As love's delicious phantasies,
Or ladies' sighs in bowers by night;
As sweet as air-touched harps, and dear
As praise to youthful poet's ear.

VI.

CHORUS OF WOMEN.

On to the altar, and scatter the flower,
Sweeten the path as ye wander along;
On to the altar;—another blest hour
Brings to her spirit the Kinnura's song.

* The Moon.

Bright be the halo that circles her brow,
Thornless the rose on her bosom she bears;
Spread thy broad pinion now over her Thou!
Lord of the tempest, who hushest our cares.

Gay are the gardens that she shall inherit,
Blossoms that bloom there are golden, and bright,
When like a ring-dove her heaven-bound spirit,
Stretcheth its wings for that region of light.

Amaranths are budding in those sunny vales,
Crystal and amber are sparkling around;
Fragrance delicious is borne on the gales,
Music enchanting breathes soft in each sound.

Fountains are falling in melody rare,
Harpers celestial respond to their strain;
Stars are the lamps of the palaces there,
Triumphant in splendour that never can wane.

Rainbows undying their colours display
  Cloudless, and clear in that beautiful sky;
Joys are immortal, hopes never decay,
  Onward from glory to glory they fly!

Such is the boon that to her shall be given,
  Myriads of ages for her are in store;
She shall enjoy all the blessings of heaven,
  Till heaven, and its blessings themselves are
    no more.

Happy! thrice happy thus early to leave
  Earth and its sorrows, for heaven and its bliss!
Who that hath known it at parting would grieve
  Quitting a world so disastrous as this?

Happy! thrice happy! thy lord shall there meet
    thee,
  Twined round his heart shalt thou ever remain;
Happy! bright angels are longing to greet thee,
  Tuned are their harp-strings, and ready their
    strain.

On to the altar, and scatter the flower,
Sweeten the path as ye wander along;
On to the altar! another blest hour
Brings to her spirit the Kinnura's song.

VII.

O! like a breeze from the fresh south,
And like a passing angel's lay,
And like a sound from echo's mouth,
How softly dies the strain away!
The distant listener might have deemed
So sweet the choral voices seemed,
So like a soft ethereal hymn
Heard far and faint by twilight dim,
If half his griefs he might forget,
That earth and heaven had kissed and met.
Advancing toward the grass-grown bank,
In many a gaudy group and rank
The throng proceeds; the holy train
Wake into life the sleeping strain,

And loud and deep its numbers roll,
Like song mysterious o'er the soul.

VIII.

CHORUS OF BRAHMUNS.

Scatter, scatter flowrets round,
Let the tinkling cymbal sound;
Strew the scented orient spice,
Prelude to the sacrifice;
Bring the balm, and bring the myrrh,
Sweet as is the breath of her,
Who upon the funeral pyre
Shall, ere Surya sets, expire.
Let pure incense to the skies
Like the heart's warm wishes rise,
Till unto the lotus throne
Of the great Eternal One
High ascending, it may please
Him who guides our destinies.

Bring the pearl of purest white,
Bring the diamond flashing light;
Bring your gifts of choicest things,
Fans of peacocks' starry wings,
Gold refined, and ivory,
Branches of the sandal tree,
Which their fragrance still impart
Like the good man's injured heart,
This its triumph, this its boast,
Sweetest 'tis when wounded most!
Ere he sets, the golden sun
Must with richest gifts be won,
Ere his glorious brow he lave
In yon sacred yellow wave,
Rising through the realms of air
He must hear the widow's prayer.—
Haste ye, haste, the day declines
Onward, onward while he shines,
Let us press, and all shall see
Glory of our deity!

IX.

THE CHIEF BRAHMUN.

Surya! in thy course of light
Never saw'st thou woman bright,
Like to her who soon shall be
Robed with immortality!
Hear thy servant's prayer from high
Regent of the sapphire sky!
By the crown upon thy brow,
By thy face so brilliant now,
By thy splendour, by thy power,
By the glory of this hour,
By the service we have done
Now to thee Immortal Sun!
Hearken to thy children's prayer,
Make this woman all thy care!

X.

Slow moves the throng as 'twere a passing cloud,
The cymbal tinkles, and the drum beats loud,

As if in mockery of the solemn scene
And her who shall be something that had been.
O! this is but the world's unfeeling way
To goad the victim that it soon will slay,
And like a demon 'tis its custom still
To laugh at sorrow, and then coldly kill.
Yet dreaming sophists in this world there be
Who tell us man for man has sympathy,
Who say that tears arising out of pain
Soon see themselves reflected;—but 'tis vain—
Sure social love dwells not beneath the skies,
Or it is like the bird of paradise,
Which lights we know not where, and never can
Be found alive among the haunts of man.

Ye who in fancy's vision view the fires
Where the calm widow gloriously expires,
And charmed, behold her ere she mounts the pile;
Her lip illumined by a radiant smile,
Her tearless eye disowning fear's controul
Lit to reveal the heavenward soaring soul;

In hope exulting till life's hour be past,
With ardent faith, devoted to the last;
Fresh in the spotless loveliness of youth,
And all the native purity of truth:—
Ye who are lost in fancy's wondrous maze
At love you see not—O! could once you gaze
On those whom martyrs now you fondly deem—
'Twould break the magic of your golden dream!
To see the beauteous but the purchased flower,
The toy that pleases but a passing hour,
The suffering victim to the altar driven,
And bid to hope for happiness in heaven—
A heaven beyond the limits of her thought,
A bliss her spirit never yet had sought—
Ah! haply then might pity mourn above
Degraded nature, not exalted love!

XI.

They reached the pile of purest sandal made
Whereon her lord's cold livid corpse was laid;

The gathered crowd now forms a ring around,
And in the arms of silence sinks each sound.
Hushed is the zel, the trumpet's brazen throat
No more gives out its shrill unwelcome note;
And she, that lonely victim, stands the while
Like a pale flower beside the funeral pile.
The gaze of all is on her—there she stands,
Created perfect by Eternal hands!
What though the rose has vanished from her cheek,
Her eye speaks more than ever tongue may speak—
That large black orb too eloquently tells
All that within her suffering bosom dwells—
Wild thoughts, wild feelings that we ne'er can find
Save in a woman's wonder-working mind.
Think'st thou she dreams of love, and love for whom?
The parted dead whose home should be the tomb?

XII.

Her's was a heroine's choice—she nobly strove
With all that bound her to the earth—but love,
That one wild passion triumphed o'er them all—
And see! she comes unto death's festival
As to her bridal bed.—That busy crowd
Thus in her praise their voices lifted loud;
They little thought to whom her heart was given,
Whose love was all she sought in earth or heaven.—
What though her lord a monarch's son had been,
What though herself earth's undisputed queen—
She was not made a toy for others' play
The heart is free, and gives itself away!
The various passions in her bosom caged
All wildly maddening, war chaotic waged;
And though the throng attracts the passer-by,
She, only she can fix his wandering eye.

How like a being of another sphere
She stands, and looks most beautifully here!—
Her softened glance reveals the suffering mind
Gentle though racked, though agonized, resigned,
Pure as a pearl beneath the glassy sea
Though heaven and earth by tempests troubled be.
Her black unbraided tresses, like the wing
Of glossy raven darkly glittering
With morning's early dews, in graceful curl
Upon her neck, like waves themselves unfurl.
Around her head a coronal of flowers
All the most beauteous of our Indian bowers,
Like sunshine, gleamed, around a thunder-cloud—
With darksome grief her brow was gently bowed
Like a pale broken lily, and her breast
So quickly heaved, ah! the sweet spell of rest,
And soft emotions all were strangers there—
And yet majestic was her lofty air,
As if her feet should but have proudly trod
A floor of stars unto the throne of God!

XIII.

Ye mean, ye cruel! in whose bosoms cold
The thought springs idly that love may be sold—
What! dare you bid our feelings all depart
And give for golden dross th' impassioned heart?
Go! tell the ocean when its billows roar
To rest in peace, nor lash the sounding shore;
Go! when the winds are singing to the wave
Bid them be hushed, and flee unto their cave;
Go! when the spirits of the storm on high
Drive their mad coursers through the blackening sky,
Bid them return, and measure back their way,
And they may hear your voices, and obey!—
But oh! the heart enthralled can never be,
Lord of itself, created to be free!

XIV.

NULEENI'S eye is not upon the dead,
To one afar her parting thoughts have fled;

And she remembers now the blissful hours
That flew on odorous wings in those bright bowers
Where erst she met him!—Love's Elysian beam
Glides, like a golden thread, through life's dark dream;
Still turns the eye unto that glittering thing,
Nor dares to wander from its magic ring.—
O! if existence but in tempests pass'd,
And o'er the soul were gloom perpetual cast;
Though round the heart destructive lightning played
And low that fragile thing in ruin laid;
Still, life would still be sweet, if but on high
Love's rainbow gleamed along the blackening sky
Though for one moment—then its hues might fleet—
That one bright moment would make being sweet!—

She speechless stands, but her full heart is
fraught
With feelings maddening, and surcharged with
thought;
The close observer skilfully might trace
Her passions' workings in her varying face;
Like troubled waters in her breast they glow,
Dammed up, confined, but struggling for a flow;
And could they flow the multitude would see
Grief for the dead was wanting:—could she be
While by her husband's lifeless form, unmoved
If ever she that lifeless form had loved?—
Of woman judge not thus; her heart expires
Even like the phenix in its own made fires;
Her hopes, affections, happiness she brings
To her soul's deity, as offerings.

XV.

As flits the insect round the flame,
So wheels the heart round passion's fire;

Their blindness, madness still the same,
Alike in pangs they both expire.
Where'er the treacherous taper burns
Thither the headlong insect turns;
And fearless fluttering near it still
Regardless of all pain or ill,
Until the warmth that round it plays
Attracts it nearer to the blaze,
Expiring there, at last it learns,
Though bright the flame, it scathes, it burns.
So round the torch that Love hath lit
Mad as the moth the heart will flit—
On giddy wing it wildly wheels,
Th' enlivening glow its spirit feels;
And then it fondly fancies this
Must be what minstrels picture bliss,
Until into the fire it flies
And then, too late lamenting, dies!

XVI.

The crimson sun his burning brow
On Ganges' breast is pillowing now;
His bright beams on the waters dart
Like hopes when first they reach the heart,
Like hopes they soon will die away,
And gathering darkness dim the day.—
But few short moments now remain,
And then this world of grief and pain
To sad Nuleeni's soul will be
Lost in thy light—Eternity!
Her brow is bowed, she sunward turns;
And now the fire prophetic burns
Upon her lips: O they were formed
For language when the soul is warmed
With that pure flame, which ne'er is known
Save in the heart's spring time alone,
To fling its gladdening light on life,
And gild this world of storm and strife.

Alas! that woman e'er should be
Bowed to the earth with misery,
And that her soul from pleasure's sky
Should like a meteor fall from high!
Alas! that ever sound should flow
Of aught but bliss from woman's tongue;
And sadder still that e'er with woe
Her heart devoted should be wrung;
But ah! most sad when woman gay
Must swan-like sing her dying lay!

XVII.

"Fate's darksome fountain is unsealed;
"And bright my gifted vision sees
"The book of destiny revealed,
"With all its hallowed mysteries.
"The years to come around me rise,
"With sights unseen, and sounds unheard;
"Before me all the future flies
"As if 'twere some celestial bird;

"And every waving of its wings
"Still something uncreated flings.
"Bright in the scroll of doom I see
"The bliss that is reserved for me,
"With all the good whose ebbless flow
"Is only dreamt of here below.
"O! sure an angel might lay down
"His robe of light, his starry crown,
"And his exalted place resign
"For all the bliss that must be mine;
"The bliss all other bliss above—
"Love! Love! immortal, boundless Love!
"I see the wreath that sprites are wreathing,
"And o'er it forms of light are breathing,
"While bounteous gods the garland bless
"To give it life and loveliness.
"How beautiful!—each fragrant flower
"Is culled from Indra's greenest bower—
"And if above Immortals prize
"Those blossoms with delighted eyes,

"O! what were even a petal worth
"Of heaven's Cameeni* sweet on earth!
"Now, from the casket rich of night
"They've brought small jewels made of light,
"A few eternal stars to shine
"Like diamonds with those flowers divine—
"And this good angels weave for me,
"The wreath of immortality!
"And they have built an emerald bower
"Where with my loved-one many an hour
"We'll while away, like happy birds,
"Rich music breathing in our words,
"Soft odours stealing from our sighs,
"And pleasure laughing in our eyes.
"A sapphire rill is rippling by
"That shames the azure of the sky;
"And as its onward path it takes
"Ever delicious music makes,
"Like sweetest echo answering
"A minstrel seraph's silver string.

* The Murraya exotica.

" Its golden margin is a bed
" Where blushingly the lotus red
" Her bosom opens to the bee,
" As if it were invitingly;
" And all her scented sighs are given
" To float around perfuming heaven!
" And there the winged breezes bring
" Delicious hymns that planets sing;
" Each breathing such a blessed tone
" To ear of mortal all unknown.
" Oh! soon with purer feet I'll press
" That hallowed land of happiness;
" That court whose pavement is o'erlaid
" With gems and flowers that cannot fade;
" That temple where the footsteps bright
" Fall on a floor of chrysolite,
" Its diamond roof 's the bound of space,
" Itself the spirit's resting-place,
" By foot with taint of earth untrod—
" The glorious kingdom of our God!"

XVIII.

The vision's past, and heaven hath drawn
Its curtain 'twixt itself and her;
And ne'er had brighter vision gone
From eye of woman lovelier!
And as it dream-like fled, it cast
A glow on that enthusiast,
Bidding her pallid cheek unclose
The folded petals of its rose.
With upward gaze, and white clasped hands,
She, like a heaven-wrought statue, stands—
'Tis thus that woman fair should be
Worshipped as a divinity;
Just when her beauty beams so bright,
As too intense for human sight;
Just in that hour when all her worth
Is fitter far for heaven than earth!
The Brahmun breaks her reverie,
As Pubna* stirs the silent sea;

*The God of Wind.

The calmness of her face hath past,
As flies the rainbow from the blast;
Her hands upon her breast are laid
As in her ear the spell is said,
The world that shall her passport be
To regions of Eternity!
And now unto the God of light
Still beaming o'er this mournful sight,
Her holy hymn Nuleeni sings,
Whose voice is so divine a one,
That strain upon an angel's wings
Is surely wafted to the sun.

XIX.

HYMN TO THE SUN.

God of this beauteous world! whom earth and heaven
Adore in concert, and in concert love,
Whose praise is hymned by the eternal seven
Bright wheeling minstrels of the courts above!

God of this glorious universe!—the sea
Smiles in thy glance, and gladdens in thy ray,
And lifteth up its voice in praise to thee
Giver of good, Creator of the day!

God of th' immortal mind! with power to scan
Thoughts that like diamonds in the cavern lie,
Though deeply bedded in the breast of man,
Distinct and naked to thy piercing eye.

God of Eternity! whose golden throne
Is borne upon the wings of angels bright;
God of all goodness, thou art God alone,
Circled with glory, diademed with light!

Thou look'st from thy pavilion, and each cloud
Like fear o'ercome by hope triumphant, flies;
The angry thunder's voice, though raving loud,
At thy bright presence into silence dies.

When all is darkness, like the sad soul's night,
And tempests lower like grief upon our hearts,
Affrighted nature sees thy forehead bright,
The black storm furls his banner, and departs.

Thou mak'st the rainbow with thy golden beams
Span the blue ocean rolling at thy feet;
Set in the sky that arch of promise seems
Like hope still distant, and like hope still sweet.

The flowers, the beautiful of earth, implore,
Like woman in distress, thy rays to bring
Their beauty out of nothing, and their store
Of scent and sweetness from their latent spring.

The forest's green is of thy giving. Thou
Dost fling its emerald mantle o'er the earth—
Prostrate to thee let all creation bow,
For all creation at thy word had birth.

O Sun! thy herald is the morning star,
Like fame preceding greatness; but when day
Comes on advancing with thy gilded car,
Heaven's hosts of wonder melt like sparks
away.

Who shall declare thy glory?—Unto thee
My heart in fervent adoration kneels;
Thou know'st whate'er its sufferings may be,
To thee alone it tremblingly appeals.

God of this beauteous world, whom earth and
heaven
Adore in concert, and in concert love;
Thy praise is hymned by the perpetual seven
Bright wheeling minstrels of the courts above.

God of this glorious universe! the sea
Smiles in thy glance, and gladdens in thy ray,
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Distinct and naked to thy piercing eye.

God of Eternity! whose golden throne
Is borne upon the wings of angels bright;
God of all goodness, thou art God alone,
Circled with glory, diademed with light!

XX.

By sudden wrench to tear away
From all that makes existence dear,
The sunny smile, the love-breathed lay,
The joys that soothe, the hopes that cheer;

From earth, with all the stars and flowers
That burn and bloom beneath the sky;
From every bliss that life makes our's
Away for ever far to fly;
Like other wild and giddy things
To give the soul delirious wings,
And bid it, like its fancies free,
Wander beyond reality—
This may to colder spirits seem
As fearful as a maniac's dream!—
It is as if we left the strand
Of some delightful fairy land,
Where birds and bees their music twine
Making existence most divine;
Where perfumes breathe, and breezes creep,
Where skies their dew in diamonds weep,
And sweetness in each sigh is shed—
It is as if from these we fled
With reckless heart, and quite alone,
And trusting to some fragile bark,

Had madly risked our all upon
A waste of water drear and dark.

XXI.

Full soon the link of being's chain
That holds Nuleeni yet below,
Shall be for ever snapped in twain—
And then, adieu to mortal woe!
Before the pile she bends her brow,
With all affections she must part,
And those that cling to earth must now
At once be severed from her heart.—
And from her head the wreath she takes,
Seven circuits round the pile she makes,
And now with baleful brand on fire
She slowly mounts the dreadful pyre!

XXII.

Now all is silent, sad, and still,
As moonlight on a heath-clad hill;

No insect's wing is heard to whirr,
The very air has ceased to stir,
And expectation breathless bends
To watch the pile that grief ascends.
But hark! a voice in thunder cries
"Redeem th' unoffered sacrifice—
"Come, like the tempest gathering on."—
The crowd is broke, the victim won!
Quick through the thronging group they rushed
As if a stream from mountain gushed,
Or wild North-wester from its cave
Broke loose in madness there to rave!—
Each horseman couched his battle-lance
To check the headlong foe's advance,
'Twas all in vain, the craftier foe
With tempered sabre wards the blow—
The holy bands in terror fly,
The brave, the young, resisting, die;
The women weep,—for in her fears
Woman has nothing left but tears;

Disorder reigns:—the yell, the shout,
The dying gasp, the groan, the rout,
Alas! have marred the solemn scene
Where late mysterious rites had been—
But there Nuleeni's angel form
Beams like a rainbow in the storm!

XXIII.

Beneath the sacred wave, whose hue
Is changed from gold to deepest blue,
The sun has sunk to cool his brow,
And all is soft, and soothing now!
The shades of evening slowly creep,
As o'er the eyelid falleth sleep,
Advancing so insensibly
Its soft approaches none may see.
And sweet the vesper star appears,
Like beauty's eye just washed in tears;
And gently floats the zephyr by,
Like bashful maiden's timid sigh;

And unperceived the dewy shower
On bush and brake, on field and flower,
Descending, maketh all things fair—
As if a spirit scattered there
In playful mood, the brightest gems
Of loftier angels' diadems.—
Attended by the ruffian band
Has fair Nuleeni reached the strand,
And like a sea-nymph there she smiles
While gazing on those rocky isles,
Which frown like tyrants proud—and she,
In scarce a moment more, will be
Upon those crags so bleak and bare—
The only flower that blossomed there!—
"Our charge is safe—unmoor the boat—
"Now swiftly o'er the billows pass:"—
The wind is up, the bark afloat,
And oars have broke the watery glass.
The rugged crew now rudely sing
In triumph for the prize they bring;

Such music wild the tempest wakes
When wrathful from his cave he breaks.

XXIV.

SONG.

Our toil is done, our treasure won,
And now we homeward glide;
Our hearts are light, our hopes are bright
As this transparent tide.
Towards yon grey isle the waters flow,
Then brothers, brothers, bravely row.

The rising gale hath filled our sail,
It bends our slender mast;
And now the word is, like a bird,
We'll reach our home at last.
Towards yon grey isle the waters flow,
Then brothers, brothers, bravely row.

The moon on high adorns the sky,
Like us she onward fleets—
Towards home my men! and gladly then
Our presence pleasure greets.
And see! our isle of rock is won—
Now brothers, brothers, bravely done.

XXV.

Jungheera's craggy base is now
Beneath Nuleeni's silver feet—
And who descends its craggy brow
Her love-lit smile, and cheek to greet?
O! for the speed of swiftest hound
At once into her arms to bound!
O! for the speed of sunny beam,
Or eagle's wing, or airy dream,
Or lightning glance of rapid eye
From yonder rocky height to fly.—
And whence is he, and whose the arms
That circle fair Nuleeni's charms?—

His dusky brow, his raven hair,
His limbs of strength, his martial air,
His eye though softened into love
Far from the mildness of the dove,
His baldric round his manly waist,
His sabre hung, his pistols braced,
Bespeak him sure some bloody man—
The chieftain of a robber clan.
But whence came he?—'tis certain here
A sainted soul, a meek Fakeer
On whom religion's sacred ray
Shines bright, hath dwelt for many a day.—
This is the saint—nay can it be
The holy man?—'tis he! 'tis he!

XXVI.

The diamond tear is in her eye,
She madly clings to his embrace,
Breathing Love's warm impassioned sigh,
For she hath found her resting place.

Yes, for although the soul unblest
Like wandering, wounded bird may roam,
The one, the fond beloved breast
Is still, is still its happy home!
Like life to hope, she clung to him,
For now was severed sorrow's chain;
Away had passed the tempest grim,
And joy in sunshine beamed again.
Her voice its tone of gladness found,
Her eyes their lustre flashed around,
As if the spell that bound their light
Had broken been that blissful night.—
"O God! and am I here," she cried,
"Once more in these beloved arms;
"And do I in thy bosom hide
"From danger safe and death's alarms?
"O! let me kneel, and kiss thy feet
"Since now the hour of fear is o'er;
"For even to die it had been sweet
"Than live to see thy face no more.

" And death I could have better borne
" Than even a moment brief of life
" To be the object of my scorn,
" And with myself at endless strife.
" With thee a passing moment might
" Be all the bliss in store for me;
" But like an angel's vision bright
" That moment were Eternity.
" Without thee——but I cannot tell
" That on which fancy dare not dwell—
" And yet methinks, if aught should e'er
" Betide, and force our souls to part,
" With more than calmness I could bear
" A viper feeding on my heart—
" That agony were heaven compared
" To dreary life by thee unshared.—
" Such dismal fear hath past; and this
" Bright hour fulfils my dream of bliss:
" I dreamt, and now before my view
" My dream, my golden dream is true!—

" I dreamt how happy it might be
" To dwell in some lone isle with thee,
" To while the sun-lit hours away
" In singing thee my softest lay,
" While timid echo made reply
" With voice like tone of angel high;
" And when the sacred vesper star
" Drove through the sapphire sky her car,
" How sweet 'twould be to watch her light
" Upon the jewelled brow of night,
" To gaze on her so pure, so fair,
" And wish ourselves for ever there!
" And when the breezes nightly crept
" Like spirits' sighs, so sweet and soft,
" While heaven in tears of dew-drops wept
" For erring man who weeps more oft;
" Then I on this devoted breast
" Would pillow that dear head of thine;
" And seraphs kind would guard thy rest
" Since nothing save thyself were mine.

" And I would keep thee like a thought
" Which Memory in her temple keeps,
" When every sorrow sinks to nought,
" And all the past of misery sleeps—
" O thus should thy bright image dear
" Above my heart's warm altar sit,
" While every hope, affection, fear
" Of mine like lamps were round thee lit.
" O! thou I've said, should'st ever be
" My only worshipped deity;
" And I have made my breast a shrine
" For every look and word of thine.
" To thee, to thee my soul hath turned
" Whene'er with gladness it hath burned,
" Whene'er my heart at rapture's touch
" Has wildly thrilled in strange delight
" With soft and blest emotions, such
" As lutes awake when struck by night;
" O! thou hast ever been the one
" My faithful thoughts have dwelt upon;

" And in my hours of misery
" They 've turned to thee, and only thee!
" In calm, in shine, in storm, and strife,
" Thou, thou hast been my light of life;
" Whene'er the tempest flapped its wing
" My poor devoted head above,
" To one fond hope I still could cling,
" And that one hope was in thy love.—
" Hadst thou not snatched me from the pile
" Where late it was my lot to be,
" To death I could have given a smile
" If death from woe had set me free:—
" Then in the form of some small bird,
" When passed from life my spirit bright,
" I would have come unseen, unheard,
" To these grey rocks by deepest night.
" And in thy gentle ear alone
" I would have poured each melting tone,
" That from the dream-land I could bring
" Where sweetest winds, and seraphs sing!—

"Those fancies were but shadowy bliss
"Compared to half the truth of this—
"These moments quite o'ercome the years
"That I have seen of grief and tears,
"And all my sorrows past o'erpay
"By melting future fears away.
"How heavenly bright is this to me!
"Can it be all reality?
"May not these moments make them wings,
"And fly like other happy things
"To better regions far, and fast,
"Too fair and lovely long to last?
'Say, Love! to thee doth all not seem
'A bright but unsubstantial dream,
'A glorious vision kindly given
'To let us taste on earth of heaven?—
'It boots not, so ne'er dawn the day
'To chase the lovely dream away."

XXVII.

"Nay—this is now no dreaming hour—
"Beats not my heart reply to thine,
"And clasp I not my pearl, my flower,
"My star—the precious all that's mine—
"And feel I not thy burning sighs
"Like incense from a censer bright,
"And sparkle not thy speaking eyes?
"No—no—this is no dream to-night.
"Or if a vision fair it be
"It breathes too warm of ecstasy;
"And oh! too much, too much of heaven
"Unto this blissful hour is given—
"Come cheer thee, Love! betide what may,
"It will not, cannot pass away.
"Nay, weep not yet, it is too soon
"To cloud with grief our golden moon;
"I pray thee, dash away that tear,
"No sign of woe should threaten here—

" But if thy fears would prophesy
" Of gathering ill, and danger nigh,
" Believe them not my gentle Love!
" No vulture here shall scare my dove.—
" Ah! wherefore then through fire and sword
" To snatch from death essay did I,
" My best beloved, my most adored,
" If thus our joys must early die?
" No surely all the pitying powers
" So dark a doom will ne'er decree—
" Long years of sunshine shall be our's,
" And all in mercy, sweet! to thee.
" Thy tender heart, thy spirit pure
" Beaming through those celestial eyes,
" Shall cloudless days of gold secure,
" And happiest nights of diamond skies.
" Then fear not, gentlest! earthly woe
" Can never to our lot be given;
" Thou art too heavenly yet to know
" A single thought that's not from heaven;

" And earth a shadow dare not fling
" Upon thy spotless spirit's wing!—
" My night of life hath passed away,
" And thou—the orb that beamed afar—
" Art sparkling in the brow of day,
" My gem of hope, my rising star!
" O! thou hast broke the cheerless gloom
" That frowned my luckless lot above,
" And brought me fondly in its room
" The light, the life, the soul of love!
" The past unto my spirit seems
" Like tales long told, or fleeted dreams;
" The present shines so warm, so bright
" As if our souls were dwellers fair
" In day's resplendent orb of light,
" Enjoying all the bliss that's there;
" And oh! if brightness more may be
" The future beams so bright to me.—
" No more to Mecca's hallowed shrine
" Shall wafted be a prayer of mine;

"No more shall dusky twilight's ear
"From me a cry complaining hear;
"Henceforth I turn my willing knee
"From Alla, Prophet, heaven, to thee!"

XXVIII.

They're gone unto their rocky home—
O! such a bird in such a nest!
Yet, from that spot she will not roam,
To her the dearest, sweetest, best!
Yes! for where love in woman's form
Whispers soft vows in gentlest tone,
The very snow-clad cliff will warm,
The crag be smooth as eider down.
The pigeon on its pinion fair
From that grey islet never roves;
Ah no!—her constant mate is there,
With joy, and all its world of loves.—

* * * * *

The night went by, and morning's wing
Through eastern skies came waving grey;
The last lone star was glittering
With indistinct, and feeble ray,
Like hope, whene'er it beams afar,
A pale, a cold, a trembling star!
The breeze of matin roams about
Sweet as the sigh a rose gives out,
When she hath half the sorrows heard
At silent hour, in plaintive lay
Of her enamoured minstrel bird
Pining with passion pure away.
The heavens are tinged with many a hue,
Gold, amethyst, and softest blue;
As if the angels there had flung
Those colours from their plumes of light,
And when their morning hymn was sung
Had rushed away from mortal sight.
Each cloud or melts, or swiftly flies
Like strangest dreams from sleepers' eyes;

And lo! the sun now beams above
Nuleeni and her Robber-love.—
Would that the days might thus have passed
Of that divine enthusiast,—
For ever bright, for ever fair,
No angry storm to blacken there,
Or break the pure, the crystal stream
Reflecting heaven, like poet's dream!—
O! that the gems in pleasure's ring
Might never fade or fall away;
But 'tis, alas! a fragile thing
Breaking too like a rainbow's ray—
And oh! were bliss to mortals given,
Who, who would leave our earth for heaven?

CANTO SECOND.

There may be cankers in the sweetest rose,
Eating into its heart. The lightning bright
That cuts ethereal space with speed so great,
As 'twere upon an angel's errand flying,
Kills, though 'tis beautiful. Alas! alas!
The cankered rose, the lightning, and young Love
Are in their natures like.

DARK shadows are falling on holy Mandar,
Who rears his bold brow like a monarch afar;
'Tis the time when the dove seeks his mate in her nest,
And beauty lies pillowed on Love's gentle breast;
When seraphs their flight to our green earth are winging
To hear the sweet hymn that the wild winds are singing,

When the sound of the Pearl-fall enraptured
we hear
Like the strains of heaven's singers saluting
the ear,
And the gush of the fountain afar is as soft
As the flute of young Krishna* on mountains
aloft;
When the boughs of the forest all gaily are
swinging,
And flowers their rich fragrance around us are
flinging;
When the Bulbul's loved mate, the Zuleikha of
flowers,
Like a young eastern bride, blooms unseen in
her bowers;
When the sorrowful moon looketh out to awaken
A thought in the gazer of maiden forsaken;
The stars are expanding like young hopes above,
And bright as the eyes of the lady we love,

* The Indian Apollo.

And the heavens their gem-melted dew-drops
are weeping
O'er evergreen shrubs that in silence are sleeping.
On, on to the sea is the blue river flowing
Like Time to Eternity, ceaselessly going,
And glassed on its bosom the planets behold
Their faces as bright as the sheen of pure gold:—
The lamps are lit up in the Mussulman's towers,
And soft is the song in his emerald bowers!
And sweet's the sitar that the minstrel hath
strung;
And sweeter the lay that the Georgian hath
sung—
O! these are for Shoojah in Rajmahal gay,
The song-gladdened halls, and the minstrel's
sweet lay,
The hours that like moments of happiness fleet,
The scenes so enchanting, the music so sweet!

II.

The lamps upon each marble wall
Now echoing with the sound of song,
Have chased the night from Rajmahal,
Where flows the revel loud, and long.
Those lamps are all of glittering gold
Like sunset gleaming o'er the sea,
And scented is the store they hold
As ever maiden's locks may be.
Their rays are flashing free, and far,
As at some blest Immortal's call,
Whose hand from heaven had plucked each star
To gem that brilliant festival;
And still where'er their light they fling
New beauties out of darkness spring;
Like Memory casting back her beams
O'er years of past Elysian dreams
That dawn upon the dazzled view,
As brought from heaven, so bright, so new!—

A feast the prince hath made to-night;
And young, and old are glad, and gay,
And every feature beams delight,
As 'twere the spirit's holiday.
As if the pleasures man has yet
Brought down from brighter, better spheres
Had there in smiles together met,
And banished earthly griefs and tears.
Roses festooned, and gaily wreathed,
Scattered their sweets on all so fair,
As if in each an angel breathed,
Or love-lorn fay were sighing there.—
On carpet bright of velvet green
Whose broidered rim with gold is shining,
With pearls the glittering lines between,
The prince is all at ease reclining.
And golden cups and goblets bright
With spices sweet from Lunka's* isle,
And sherbets all like liquid light,
Sparkle around him there the while.

* Ceylon.

And crystal vases gemmed with gold,
Meet ornaments for heavenly bowers,
In fragrant heaps and clusters hold
The most enchanting fairy flowers:—
A shawl is wreathed around his brow
Flashing in purple pleasure's pride;
His eye laughs out, his heart is now
Afloat upon enjoyment's tide.
Behold a young Cashmerian girl
With cheek of rose, and neck of pearl,
Before him stands;—the fairest star
Burning in beauteous skies afar
Might trembling shrink away to vie
With the pure lustre of her eye.
And on her small, white ice-like feet
Just fit to fall on fairest flowers
In garden groves, by moon-lit hours,
Are golden anklets tinkling sweet.
Her arm is raised, so round, so fair,
So delicate, it looks as 'twere

Made of soft moon-beams; on her cheek
The blushes burn, and breathe, and speak;
The smile comes from her ruby lips
Like the sun rushing from eclipse;
And floats the perfume in her hair,
For careless hearts a fatal snare.—
Protect him Alla! who may chance
To be a youthful stander by,
As in the slow, the graceful dance
She shoots the lightning of her eye;
And when her voice of music flows
Like richest odour from the rose,
Let not her notes of magic dart
Too deep into her hearer's heart.—

III.

SONG.

O! lovely is my native land
With all its skies of cloudless light;
But there's a heart, and there's a hand
More dear to me than sky most bright.

I prize them—yes, as though they were
On earth the only things divine,
The only good, the only fair—
And oh! that heart and hand are thine.

My native land hath heavenliest bowers
Where Houris ruby-cheeked might dwell,
And they are gemmed with buds and flowers
Sweeter than lip or lute may tell.
But there's a sigh, and there's a tear
With passion's warmth, and glory's shine;
Than bud or flower to me more dear—
And oh! that tear and sigh are thine.

My native home, my native home
Hath in its groves the turtle dove,
And from her nest she will not roam—
For it is warmed with faith and love.
But there is love, and there is faith,
Which round a bleeding heart entwine,

To thee devoted even to death—
And ah! that love and faith are mine!

A mosque there is in fair Cashmeer
With all its minarets bright as day,
Where resteth now of sainted Peer*
The lifeless but unfading clay.
But there's a heart, a broken heart,
Where burns a thought as in a shrine,
And cannot, will not, all depart—
The thought's of thee, the heart is mine.—

IV.

The last note lingered on the ear
As if from thence 'twere loath to part,
Like memories of the one most dear
Still fondly clinging to the heart.
At last it fell, they heard it not;
It died so like a spirit's sigh
That Echo's faithful self forget
To make her farewell, faint reply.—

* A holy man, canonized for extraordinary piety and devotion.

And see a minstrel now appears
Familiar quite with griefs and tears,
Although his gifted eye hath shone
But few short years the world upon
So many turns of fate to know—
That eye is eloquent of woe!
Alas! alas! the poet's doom—
O! say not that his doom is bright—
His heart's a taper in a tomb
Flinging around sepulchral light:
The proud, the cold, the careless eye
That will not fix on genius high,
Has power the minstrel's pangs to wake,
And his enthusiast spirit break—
Then deem him not by fortune blest,
Child of the bleeding heart and breast.—
The bard all meekly bent his brow,
Then o'er the keys of memory ran
To try if they were faithful now—
Then bowed again, and thus began.—

V.

THE LEGEND OF THE SHUSHAN.

O! Love is strong, and its hopes 'twill build
Where nothing beside would dare;
O! Love is bright, and its beams will gild
The desert dark, and bare.

And youth is the time, the joyful time
When visions of bliss are before us;
But alas! when gone, in our sober prime
We sigh for the days flown o'er us.

For youth and love their hopes will build
Where nothing beside would dare;
And they both are bright, and their beams will gild
The desert dark, and bare.

The rain fell fast, and the midnight blast
Its horrible chaunt did sing,
And it howled and raved as it madly past
Like a demon on wildest wing.

The precipitous lightning beamed all bright,
As it flashed from the dark, dark sky,
Like the beautiful glance (which kills with its light)
Of a woman's large black eye.

It hissed through the air, and it dipped in the wave,
And it madly plunged into earth,
Then pursued the wind to its desolate cave,
And hurried to its home in the north;

Some spirit had charmed each gathered cloud
Till the mystic spell it broke;
And then uprising, oft' and loud
The heavens in thunder spoke.

And sooth it seemed as if save that gleam
All nature had lost her light—
The moon had concealed her beautiful beam;
'Twas a fearful, fearful night.

On the wings of the storm each star had past
To its home of rest far away,
As if in the blast there could not last
Of radiance even a ray;

As if like hope and joy they ne'er
Too long should brightly shine,
Lest if on earth they for ever were,
Existence might be divine!

'Twas a dismal night; and the tempest sang
As it rushed o'er flood and fell;
And loud the laugh of spirits rang
With the demon's midnight yell.

And the shriek and cry rose wild and high
From many an earthless form;
And roar and shout cut through the sky,
And mixed with the voice of the storm.

But Love is strong, and its hopes 'twill build
Where nothing beside would dare;
And Love is bright, and its beams will gild
The desert dark, and bare

And youth is the time, the joyful time
When visions of bliss are before us;
But alas! gone, in our sober prime
We sigh for the days flown o'er us.

For love and youth their hopes will build
Where nothing beside would dare;
And they both are bright, and their beams will gild
The desert dark, and bare.

O! why at this hour in the dark Shushan
Is the Prince Jogindra sighing?
Sure that cannot be a dwelling for man
Where the loathsome dead are lying.

Unearthly dogs are barking there
As to break the dead sleeper's dream;
And the grey wolf howls—'tis his dismal lair—
And the owl glints by with a scream.

The night wind moans, like a sick man's groans
When he fevered gasps on his bed—
Then why is the Prince here all alone?—
Ah! Radhika fair is dead!

The wind may moan like a sick man's groan
When he fevered gasps on his bed—
But why is the Prince here all alone
Though Radhika fair be dead?

Her spirit is gone to some region blest
Unhurt by the storm and the strife—
She will not wake from her dreamless rest;
And who shall charm her to life?

But there was a man, and a holy man,
A gifted Sunyasee,
Who bade him dwell in the dark Shushan
For days and black nights three.

"There demons shall come and bid thee do
"Full many a fearful deed;
"But if thou quail or shrink, thou'lt rue,
"And death shall be thy meed.

"Each night three trials must be past,
"Of earthly pain severest;
"And thou, if true, shalt win at last
"Thy Radhika fairest, dearest!

"*But there's one deed thou shalt not do*
"*Though a spirit bright bids thee—*
"Yet if thou dare, that deed thou'lt rue;"
Said the sainted Sunyasee.

"Now name that deed, thou holy man!"
Cried the Prince all eagerly;
"And I shall dwell in the dark Shushan
"For days and black nights three."

"It may not be," said the Sunyasee;
"Thy faith must yet be tried;
"And if great thy love and thy wisdom be,
"Thou Prince! shalt win thy bride.

"But all unarmed, that home of the dead
"And heedless of friend or foe,
"With feet unshod must Jogindra tread"—
Said the Prince—"With joy I go."

For Love is strong, and its hopes 'twill build
Where nothing beside would dare;
And Love is bright, and its beams will gild
The desert dark and bare.

And youth is the time, the joyful time
When visions of bliss are before us;
But alas! when gone, in our sober prime
We sigh for the days flown o'er us.

For love and youth their hopes will build
Where nothing beside would dare;
And they both are bright, and their beams will gild
The desert dark and bare.

Three days are done, and two nights gone
In painful trials past;
This night remains, and the bride is won,
If strong he be to the last.

He sat on a stone, all mute and lone,
By the corpse of his Radhika fair,
When the lightning flashed, and the wind made moan,
And a beautiful spirit stood there!

Her eyes seemed made of the pure star-light,
And her face was mild and sweet;
Her neck was white as the flower of night,
And her tresses kissed her feet.

Her form was like to the cypress tree,
And her cheek, it was young love's bed;
Her fairy step, was light and free,
Her lip like the lotus red.

Her voice was sweet as when ripplets meet
And sigh o'er a pebbled strand;
So soft was her song, it seemed to belong
To a happy, heavenly land.

The Spirit's Song.

Oh! now do not leave me
Since false friends have flown;
Dear Love! do not grieve me,
I've thought thee mine own.

Mid tempest and storm, love!
Mid good and mid ill,
Thy form, thy bright form, love!
My star hath been still.
Though prospects before me
Were darksome, and drear,
Though clouds gathered o'er me
Still, still thou wast near!
My visions have faded,
The tear fills mine eye,
My hopes are degraded,
They're hurled from on high.
Like thoughts that are straying
Where darkness should be,
Bright moon beams are playing
Above the green sea.
Now clouds are concealing
The face of the moon—
As onward she's wheeling,
She's darkened, too soon!

O! thus on my sorrow
There shone silver beams;
Alas! ere the morrow
They vanished like dreams!
My bird was the sweetest
That ever did sing,
But ah! 'twas the fleetest,
And wild was its wing.
But sweeter, far sweeter
Did hope weave her lay,
And ah me! much fleeter
She flew far away.
I've found thee, I've found thee—
My griefs would be done
If love's chain had bound thee,
And made us but one.
Then oh! do not leave me,
Or wretched I'll be—
For now what could grieve me
But parting from thee?

Her dawning smile breaks pensively;
With supplicating hands,
And sad yet soft beseeching eye
That fairy vision stands.

Jogindra's glance upon her dwelt,
As there were magic in her form;
He gazed, he sighed, he almost felt
His heart within him warm.

"But no! he cried, for constancy
"Is every charm above;
"And I shall still be true to thee,
My Radhika! my Love!"

The storm is hushed, and the moon her light
Has softly flung o'er all,
And the dark Shushan is a palace bright
With lamps on each crystal wall.

'Mid a glittering throng the sound of song
Now floats on the scented air,
As minstrel seraphs glad and young
Were waking their music there!

From heavenliest bowers they 've gathered flowers,
Red roses, and jasmines white;
On the wings of joy swift fly the hours,
For the night is a bridal night!

And high on a throne of azure, and gold
Jogindra in princely pride
All smiling sits,—on his arm behold
Leans Radhika fair his bride!

O! Love is strong, and its hopes 'twill build
Where nothing beside would dare;
O! Love is bright and its beams will gild
The desert dark and bare.

And youth is the time, the joyful time
When visions of bliss are before us;
But alas! when gone, in our sober prime
We sigh for the days flown o'er us.

For love and youth their hopes will build
Where nothing beside would dare;
And they both are bright, and their beams will gild
The desert dark and bare.

VI.

The youthful minstrel's lay is o'er;
But ere he bows him to depart,
A hundred princely nobles pour
A stream of plaudits on his heart.
O! lamps have never shed such light
In garden bower, or palace gay
As pleasure flung, so warm, so bright
On him who just had breathed his lay!

Alas! *we* live in iron days
When lips are sparing even of praise;
As though in one approving tone
Too much of heaven and rapture shone;
As though it were too pure a gem
Freely to cast away to them
Whose glassy joys a glance may break,
Whose happiness a smile can shake,
Their heaven the rapture-lighted eye,
And triumph, song-awakened sigh!

VII.

But now, a hum as when young bees
Come swarming round the rich date trees,
Creeps slowly on the listeners' ear,
Advancing near, and still more near;—
The crowd gives way:—with aspect high
And piercing quick impatient eye
Shooting its glances from beneath
A raven lash as dark as death;

With wrinkled brow, but still sublime,
Like the tall cedar scathed by time,
With haughty mien and unbent hands
A venerable father stands!—
I've gazed on many a ruined wall
And shattered tower at Rajmahal;
I've looked on many a battlement
By time destroyed or tempest rent;
And as their fragments round me lay,
Those mighty wrecks did I survey
Not with such feelings as a flower
May wake, when bowed by gust or shower:—
'Twas thus, not pitying, but amazed
All eyes upon that father gazed,
A stranger there—but when he spake
None else the silence dared to brake.

VIII.

He neither bowed, nor proffered gold,
His sorrows were too fresh and wild;

But soon the mournful tale was told
Of fair Nuleeni, his lost child.
He spake of feelings crushed, of shame,
Of ruined hopes, of blighted name,
Of all that man hath fondly thought
Brightens existence with its beams;
As if those idle fancies brought
Whate'er of heaven a poet dreams;
As if the visions which on earth
Have gained the sacred name of worth,
Could, for a passing moment, bless
The soul with aught like happiness!—
His tale was told:—of manly grief
He stood the statue, warmed with life;
Demanding vengeance, not relief,
Honour alive, or death in strife;
Yes—vengeance on the wretch abhorred
Who broke his heart's lone latest chord.—
Within the time-worn breast, revenge
Till slaked its thirst, has scorned to change;—

Though young and reckless spirits may
Forgive the wrong the stern repay:—
The tender sapling is inclined
Even by the passing summer wind;
The mountain monarch towers unbent
Although by lightning stript and rent.

IX.

A thousand of his bravest band,
The stars of Moslem chivalry,
At princely Shoojah's high command,
As though it were some god's decree,
Attend Nuleeni's injured sire
With all the vaunt of martial fire.
There's gold upon each glittering hilt,
And crimson is each velvet sheath;
But brighter shall each blade be gilt,
And redder flow the stream of death.
Undinted is each starry shield,
With silver every lance is bright;

But dazzling lance on battle-field
Shall shivered be ere morrow's light;
Even like the tall reed by the river,
Broke by the tempest's breath for ever:—
And many a broad shield shall be bent,
And many a broidered vest be rent,
And many a turban fair be dyed
In fearful slaughter's purple tide.

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X.

How beautiful is moonlight on the stream!
How bright on Life is Hope's enchanting beam:
Life moves inconstant, like the rippling rill,
Hope's and the moon's rays quiver o'er them still!
How soft upon each flower is fair moonlight
Making its beauty more serenely bright,

Bringing sweet sighs of fragrance from its breast
Where all its odours are, like thoughts, at rest.
How sweet to sit upon a bank, and mark
The soft moon looking on a little bark,
As if she watched it from her azure sphere,
The guardian spirit of its blest career;
Flinging her melted pearls upon its sail
That swells with infant pride before the gale,—
How speeds the shallop with its fleecy wing,
Like bliss or fancy—quite a fragile thing!
Thus shone the moon upon the hallowed wave
Bright as the wish for freedom in a slave;
Thus shone the moon upon Junghcera's flower,
Nuleeni, rosebud of the rocky bower;
And thus soft beams upon the shallop lay
Which soon must bear her Robber-love away.

XI.

Alas! that fate should come 'twixt heart and heart,
And, like a tyrant, force the loved to part!

Breaking the dream which comes but once to bless
Existence with a ray of happiness—
That golden vision which, in mercy given,
Seems as 'twere brought by seraphim from heaven;
And when 'tis gone, we wish that life were o'er
To dream in heaven that dream for evermore.
Alas! that warm celestial Love should know
The blights of earth, the agonies of woe—
The killing poison creeping through each vein,
The feelings crushed, and the bewildered brain,
The scorpion stinging every hope to death,
And life bereft of all but tears and breath.—
'Tis well these pangs it never twice can feel,
For hearts impassioned, wounded, never heal;
Like broken pearls, no power of mortal art
Can mend the gems or join the riven heart!—
When to some spirit we have linked our lot,
One who, through life, can never be forgot,

One, whom with fond affection we have placed
To light, and warm the bosom's dismal waste—
O! if that spirit from the breast be torn
Where like a precious jewel it was worn,
What, when 'tis gone, may memory hope to find?
A blank—a void—a dreariness of mind!—
It is as if upon a gloomy night
When one soft star alone is twinkling bright,
An angry, lowering cloud of blackest hue
Should gather o'er, and quench that lingerer too.

XII.

'Tis sweet upon the midnight moon to gaze
As o'er the waters shoot her trembling rays;
'Tis sweet at star-lit hour to hear the breeze
Waking o'er pebbles its rich melodies,
Like a young minstrel with his tuneful art
Singing to soften the unfeeling heart.—
But oh! to gaze upon the love-lit eye
To feel its warmth, and all its witchery;

To hear the melting music of that voice
Which bids the bosom madden or rejoice;
To know that every glance, and thought, and tone
Of one devoted spirit is our own—
O! this is joy, like that to angels given,
Filled to the brim, the heavenliest cup of heaven.

Her Robber-love, and young Nuleeni share
Each bliss as perfect as the heart may bear,
All those soft dreams th' impassioned spirit knows,
Those wild emotions Love alone bestows—
Ecstatic fancies which but once can be,
Making us quite forget Mortality!—
He looked upon her eye, as 'twere the star
Of life, and death to him—no gem afar
That sparkled o'er them in the clear blue sky
Foretold so truly of his destiny.—
There was a softened sadness on his brow,
But seldom there, though too apparent now—

The savage sternness from his face was gone
Where but that beam of Melancholy shone,
As 'twere prophetic of the grief that soon
Must fling its shadow on their blissful moon—
Or like a herald onward sent to tell,
That all within his bosom was not well.—
"Thee sweet! to-night for one short hour I leave—
"A daring conquest must my band achieve;
"And 'tis my promise, ere another chief
"Shall be selected for thy love's relief
"Once more to lead them to their prey alone,
"Then quit for ever, and be all thine own.—
"Quench not the light of that life-giving eye
"Swift on the wings of Love to thee I'll fly—
"But one short hour—and I demand no more—
"For ever thine, when that short hour is o'er."

XIII.

How dreadful is the storm, with flag unfurled
And sheathless lightning warring with the world!

Lost is of light the last remaining ray,
As if the stars had burnt themselves away;
Or, as the wind by furious demons driven
Had quenched for ever those small lamps of heaven!
Hark! how it rushes like a maniac by,
Raving and singing as it cuts the sky—
Hark! how it hissing o'er the river flies—
Chafing, the waves, and moaning till it dies;
As though the spirits of the storm unblest
Had been sent down to trouble all at rest.
Snatched is the moon from heaven, as she had been
Too fair a witness for so dark a scene;
As though her delicate, and gentle form
Might ne'er abide the gathering of the storm,
But like the beautiful on earth be still
Bowed or destroyed beneath the blasts of ill.
The heavens their flood-gates all at once unbar,
The waters wildly hurry to the war,

Madly to earth the rain in torrents gushed
As from its dismal prison-clouds it rushed;
Against Jungheera's rocks, and shelving shore
Loud howls the tempest wild—the breakers roar.—
Thus, as the tempest dimmed the moon-lit scene,
Upon Nuleeni's soul where all had been
At peace, those words of parting quenched the light
Which made existence most divinely bright.—

XIV.

"And must we part so soon?—an hour from thee,
"A single moment were Eternity—
"When thou art gone—alas! what can I find
"To fill the dreadful vacuum of mind?
"A thought, a feeling that may yield relief
"And, like a pitying angel, soothe my grief?

" Yes—but one thought, one feeling shall be there—
" 'Tis more to name it than my spirit dare—
" The doubt—th' uncertain moments which will bring
" Pangs that have deadliest poison in their sting—
" The dubious hour—the fear of losing thee—
" The pain—the parting—no—it cannot be:—
" Why shouldst thou leave me on this stormy night,
" And, like yon heaven, deprive my soul of light?
" Alas! when thou art gone, its latest ray,
" Its brightest, warmest beam will melt away.
" Why o'er the waters should my love career?
" Thy home's my bosom—come, and rest thee here!—
" Ah! yet before thy rash resolve be made
" Ere of the truth my spirit is afraid,
" Let me once warn thee that our doom so bright
" May darkly end—as darkly speeds the night—

"But now the moon shone fair in yonder sky;
"Like her, our hopes were fair, and far more high—
"The tempest's wing has veiled her silver brow;
"Thus fear is gathering o'er me, round me now.
"Turn not aside from me that brow divine,
"That gaze where I must read the lot that's mine—
"Nay—I will cling to thee—O! tear me not
"From thy embrace—is all, is all forgot?
"Are those fond vows which once to me were given
"Gone like thin clouds by winds for ever driven—
"Has love withdrawn at once his meteor light;
"Or why this madness—why this wish to-night—
"This wish to sever—is thy soul estranged
"From her it cherished,—or am I now changed?—
"Well, be it so—forsake me if thou wilt,
"And mine be pangs more keen than conscious guilt;

"But ah! not now—this wrathful tempest brings
"Unerring death upon its roaring wings.
"When Fortune turning from our path away
"Flings o'er our spirits but a darker day;
"When parting Hope no promise leaves behind
"To cheer the murky midnight of the mind;
"If then this cold world force our souls to part
"Breaking this fragile, this devoted heart;
"If from the gathered storm-cloud then the bands
"Of demons flash, like meteors red, their brands,—
"Let the wild tempest burst; and if one cry
"Rush from our anguished bosoms to the sky—
"That wail of woe, if we of Fate complain,
"Shall rise with justice, though it rise in vain.—
"But now to sever, even unbidden thus,
"Who dreams how long?—ah! no—'tis not for us—

"My fond entreaties shall thy purpose shake,
"This heart no parting of to-night shall break."

XV.

There was that conscious firmness in her tone
Which Hope but lends to trusting Love alone,
That certainty which dwells perchance above,
Unknown on earth, and least of all to Love.—
Why does the spirit thus itself deceive,
And all its own fond flatteries believe?
Is it because those soft delusive dreams
Like rainbows glow with heavenly-painted beams,
And that to make them we even shed our tears
If the glad sunshine come from happier spheres?—
Alas! 'tis true; for when those beams have flown,
The tears remain, and they—are all our own!

XVI.

'Nay, I must leave thee—passed is now my word;

"And who has known me shrink from truth or pain?

'Thou shalt not pine in solitude, sweet bird!

"Ere long I'll warm thee in my breast again—

"Honour at stake, it were degrading thee

'Here to remain in soft captivity,—

"Thou would'st despise me were I meanly driven

"To slight the promise to my comrades given,—

"Our schemes concerted, stratagems arranged

"Were lost, undone, if now my purpose changed—

"The spoil before us, and my craven hand

"Not stretch to grasp it, nor to wield my brand—

" As from my soul all firmness were exiled;
" O! that were weakness might disgrace a child.—
" But one short hour shall raise its shadowy screen
" Me, and the light of those dear eyes between;
" That past, existence shall be one sweet dream,
" Still lit, still gilded by love's brightest beam.—
" Behold, how rapidly the storm-clouds roll
" From heaven's blue face, like shrivelled leaf, or scroll.
" The deep-toned thunder booms not on the breeze,
" The tempest sings not through the tamarind trees;
" The soft, transparent air with perfumes sweet
" Just stirs the ripplets murmuring at our feet—
" Each star has set in heaven its urn of light,
" And lo! that black cloud wears a border white

"While all beyond it is of silver—soon
"Shall night behold upon her throne, the moon—
"One hour her progress shall but scarcely tell
"Ere I return—no more to say farewell.—

XVII.

Farewell!—alas! that melancholy word
Comes spell-like on the heart whene'er 'tis heard,
As if the spirit from that moment were
Bound with a curse to be dissevered ne'er.
It lingers on the ear, as if 'twould be
Still sounding, until slow Eternity
Came stealing o'er existence; and there seems
An omen in its echo, as in dreams
The trusting maiden fondly seeks a sign
Her hope's mysterious history to divine.
Ah! there's a mournful, a prophetic spell
In the faint fall of early love's farewell.

XVIII.

They're parted—O! that e'er the tried, the fond
Should severed be, and find that all beyond
That withering moment is but solitude;
And then the soul its dreary widowhood
Bewails in chaos!—Love's adieu when spoken
Leaves nothing to the heart for ever broken—
Of all the visions that once bright could be
O! what remains?—nought but their memory!—
They're parted.—With his band, that outlaw bold
For plunder armed now quits his rocky hold.
In starry fragments by the potent stroke
Of dashing oars the crystal billow's broke;
The bark swims onward, like a water sprite
At play beneath the beauteous eye of night;
Her pointed prow has kissed the moonlit strand
That now receives the Robber and his band—

Then to the secret haunt, and there to each
His desperate duty shall their captain teach;
Each man his charge * * * *
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XIX.

Hark! is the wind through the forest rushing,
Hark! is the stream from the mountain gushing,
Is it the whirlwind scouring the plain,
Is it the storm on his wing again?—
No! 'tis the voice of the trumpet loud
Speaking to horsemen, and horses proud;
Down to the plain like torrents they dash,
And the lightning that gleams is their faulchion's flash,
And the shout that rushes through silence on high
Like the tempest's voice is the battle-cry,—
The cry of the Moslem ringing afar,
The dreadful herald of madness and war;

To hear it ascending the thunder is dumb—
Arm and up, for they come, they come!
"Strike! 'tis the demon; deep, deep in his breast
"Let your lances be gilt, and your sabres find rest;
"Come on to th' encounter, ye faithful! ye brave!
"To night ye must give him a gore-crimsoned grave—
"Your shouts to his spirit shall thunder alarm,
"And the might of red vengeance nerve every bold arm;
"Come on!—to the spoiler no safety is given,
"No shelter on earth, and no mercy in heaven!"

Those words were like the tempest's breath
Rousing the breakers of the sea
To whelm the mightiest even with death,
Leaving them, things for memory—

The spirit of each warrior brave
Rose like a storm-invoked wave;
The wild halloo, the horsemen's cry
Hurried exulting to the sky;—
But who is he, the guiding star
That leads to vengeance, blood, and war?
Ah! know ye not that voice's tone
That ancient eye's wild flash of fire,
That brow that bows to heaven alone—
Ah! know ye not Nuleeni's sire?
And like an eagle's dashing flight
Down from his rock-borne aerie's height,
And like a bolt when earth, and heaven
Rebellious wake a maddening steven,
And like the disobedient main
Breaking his bounds to drench the plain,
Nuleeni's sire with sword, and flame
For honour lost, and vengeance came.—

Each robber has taken his sabre and shield,
And bounds like a blood-hound new-slipt to the field.

Heard ye the horrible roar of the gun?
Destruction is raging, the battle 's begun.—
Another dread peal!—and a flash again
With a flickering light illumines the plain—
'Tis gone, before ye might say 'tis gone,
But death it has borne to many a one;
The youthful, the gallant are falling around
Like corn just reaped on the damp cold ground,
And the blood flows fast of the fallen, and falling,
As if it came forth at the spear-point's calling!

The opposing hosts now madly rush
Like the destructive volcanic tide,
When forced by the throbs of earth's bosom to gush
Down a smoke-skirted mountain's side.
Behold! they join, and the crash is loud,
And lightnings fly as when cloud meets cloud;
And the shout of the royal chivalry
Is loud and wild, as the jubilee

Which the tempest-fiends, in their fearful wake,
Over a wreck exulting make.
Bravely the horsemen onward ride,
And each takes blood from his charger's side;
Their glittering lances are purpled o'er
As if with a sheath in their foemen's gore;
But each bold heart of the Robber-band
Shows them the strength of a good right hand,
And their swords have drunk of the blood that flows
Like wine from the hearts of their gallant foes.
The war-steed snorts as over the plain
He dashes regardless of rowel, and rein,
Enwrapt by the smoke like a battle-shroud
He replies with his neigh to th' artillery loud;
His collar of gold is gemmed with blood,
And his fetlocks are washed in that crimson flood.—
The earth is convulsed, as it quaked with fear
And countless demons were raging here;

As if unchained were the powers of air
And the spirits of wrath to do what they dare—
Save the carbine's flash, and the sabre's gleam,
To scare the darkness there is not a beam,
For powerless is the thin moon's ray
To pierce through the battle-rack its way.

Hark! a shout, a maddening yell
As if it rushed from the depths of hell;
'Tis the victors' proud exulting cry
O'er those who low on the cold sod lie—
The royal ranks are weak they find,
They waver like mountain reeds in the wind—
And though each steps where his comrade fell
The work of destruction prospers well!
Now Robber-chief! once more, once more
And the field is thine, and the triumph o'er!
His bold band of heroes tried, and true
Keep their ground, as if there they grew;

Their foes, like waves of the stormy main
By bolts of heaven, are cleft in twain,
The royal spears or break or rest
Deep in some gallant outlaw's breast,
Till these at length now reckless grown
Rush with a fury all their own,
Alike to them to live or die—
Their foes give way—they fly! they fly!

XXI.

Count on the field what numbers are lying,
List to the groans of the wounded and dying!
The horse and his rider are gasping there,
And they soon shall be but as things that were.
That morning's sun on the warrior's brow
Wrote pride and joy that are blotted now;
And the vesper star came forth to see
The soldier's heart in its revelry;—
But vainly will beam to-morrow's sun
Many a mangled form upon;

And the vesper star again will rise
But not to be hailed by those death-dimmed eyes.—
Ah! there a bold Moslem writhing lay,
And gasp by gasp was life ebbing away;
In that dark hour 'twas his doom to be curst
With burning, slakeless, maddening thirst;
He could not rise from his battle-bed,
And none was there to heed what he said,
But a fallen comrade lay by his side,
And he drank his blood, and sank, and died.—
A father hung o'er his perishing child
Whose breath heaved thick, and whose gaze was wild;
The light of his eye was passing away,
Like the sun's pale beams on a stormy day,
The beat of his heart waxed faint and slow,
And for him nigh hushed was all mortal woe;
His brow was cold as despair may be,
And the struggling spirit at last was free.

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XXII.

As the ocean-tides spring wild and soon
When slipped from their leash by the huntress moon;
As wayward spirits that ride on the back
Of the headlong, dismal, hurricane-rack
Come sweeping down over hill and plain,
With their lighting swords, and their arrowy rain;—
Thus cataract-like with his host, and his brand
The father returns on the robber-band;
And he rushes still though his banner is torn,
And still his shout on the wind is borne.
Like a comet fierce with a floating mane
On he comes with his fiery train;
The beaded foam on each charger's side
With spots of a ruddier hue is dyed—
The horsemen's lances are thickly drest
With ruby studs from each robber's breast,—
To the charge like storms that are onward driven
Blackening the face of the midnight heaven,

Scattering their brands through the darkened sky
On maniac spirits that are hurrying by,
Bidding their loud artillery rattle
And thicken the din of th' ethereal battle,
On they rush; and that ancient form
Still madly directs the madder storm,
The storm of slaughter wilder far
Than ever raged elemental war.
The sabres clash, and the lances ring,
And the demon of death has flapped his wing:
Hark to the shout of the royal band,
"Behold he falls—the curse of the land!"—
And though erewhile with heaps of the slain
His own right arm had strewed the plain,
Like the mountain torrent dashed aside
In its rush of destructive wrath and pride,
An unseen hand with a glittering lance
Checked the Chieftain's fierce advance,
And forth the blood from his bosom streamed,
And quenched hope's latest ray as it beamed!—

XXIII.

High from her cloud pavilion fleecy white
The moon rains down her showers of icy light,
And worlds in multitudes resplendent throng
Around her throne like minstrels with their song,
Loosening sweet music on the fragrant breeze
That silent listens to their melodies.
The earth sleeps listless;—she will wake again
When morning breaks her dream; but shall the slain
Whom now upon her bosom cold she bears
Yet find a land unreached by mortal cares—
A morning blushing in a brighter sky,
Than that above which seems for bliss too nigh?—
Mysterious sleep! whate'er of nothingness
Man learns, it is from thee:—but thou can'st bless
The heart to whom Hope's joy-inspiring name
Has long been but a sound; whose being's flame

Is almost quenched into the latest spark
That gleams to show how all around is dark.—
Though dread thine influence; the soul of grief
Woos thee alone, for thou can'st yield relief,
Such as the dreams of waking life may ne'er
Bestow on human suffering, and despair.—

Now all around is tranquil as the sea
When hushed it seems as in a reverie;
So still, so silent, you might hear the beat
Of your own heart, or seraph's viewless feet,
Or deem your mind's imagining had found
Some spell to form itself into a sound—
One of those thin ethereal tones that we
Oft' hear at night—the heart's best minstrelsy
Too pure for mortal ear, and earthly pain!—
But lo! alone upon the battle-plain
Pale as embodied moonlight glides a form,
Like a soft breeze when silenced is the storm!

Is it a spirit from a happier sphere
Come down to mourn o'er wrecked enjoyment here,
Or learn that earth has lost its paradise,
Or bear a tale of suffering to the skies?
'Tis poor Nuleeni!—pitiless despair
Writes thoughts of darkness on her forehead fair,
Sad doubt has hunted from her bosom peace,
And bid her hopes depart, her fears increase.
Passed was the hour that should have stilled th' alarms
That racked her soul, and given him to her arms—
She heard the thunder of the battle roar—
Might he be there?—she asked her heart no more—
That trembler answered as 'twill ever do,
Speaking its fears—alas! how oft too true!

And now though wishing that it spake not sooth,
She dared to learn, and came to seek the truth.—
Hark! does she hear the viewless breezes pass
And wake a deep, sad murmur from the grass?
Ha! 'tis a moan, and almost at her foot—
She bends her form, beholds, stands fixed, and mute:
Is it a dream, or does the night deceive?—
She looks again—she trembles—must believe.
'Tis he—that robber—not victorious now—
The cold death-damp descending on his brow,
The filmy curtain gathering o'er his eye
But vainly fixed—alas! on vacancy;
The tide of life fast gushing from his breast,
The spirit struggling for eternal rest.—
She sat her on the sod—there was but one
Lone object now her eye might gaze upon—

One in the world, and there that eye was fixed;
And in her soul one suffering, unmixed
With better hope, its dark dominion held
Bidding existence to its thraldom yield.—
She placed his head upon her bosom fair,
Watching the spirit as it ebbed; pale care
Had steeped her heart in sorrow's bitter stream;
And on her brow a melancholy beam
Like moon-light fell upon a drooping flower:—
O life! that ever there should come an hour
When love must see its healthiest hopes decay,
Its brightest glories perish ray by ray!
'Tis sad to think of youth, when youth has fled,
And all its blissful fantasies are dead,
When the young dreams of happiness are o'er
And grief has stolen fancy's golden store.—
'Tis sad in manhood's riper years to find
Truth wreck the fairy visions of the mind,
Those blest illusions which the cheated heart
Called into being, but Time bade depart.—

But these are suffering's shadows, when we see
Love watch the dying loved-one.—Misery
Herein exhausts herself—the bitter vial
Is poured out to the dregs—the fiery trial
Ends in the heart's destruction—and life's beam
Becomes extinguished like a vanished dream.

Evil and being 'tis ordained by fate
Like light and shadow ne'er must separate;—
Life's sunniest hour is when th' enraptured soul
Yields, willing captive to Love's sweet controul,
But 'tis that noon-tide hour which ever flings
The darkest, gloomiest shadow from its wings.

Nuleeni's settled glance is fixed upon
That dying form, as if for him alone
Her soft eye's lamp were lit—his brow is cold—
And now the soul is hastening from its mould—
Her hand is on his heart—does she not hear
Its faint, small beat still speaking to her ear?
Alas! deluded dreamer! 'tis thine own—
What seek'st thou now—his spirit?—it is flown!

XXIV.

Is ruin then the substance of that dream
Which soft descends on life's bright morning beam,
By angels sent from happier worlds above,
And poured into the soul that calls it Love?
Aye—break the chain of slumber from the mind
And watch the wreck that vision leaves behind—
Then mark the spirit in its solitude,
Its scorn, and torture, and despairing mood;
Its midnight hours unsheltered even by sleep,
Its griefs too wild, too hopeless even to weep;
Its memory brimmed with pains, its moments slow
By pangs divided, its existence, woe!
Alas! when misery comes, Time clips his wing,
And walks in fetters, and we hear them ring;
While still the vulture in the rock-nailed heart
Crimsons his beak, and never will depart!

The morning dawned—upon that sun-steeped
plain
What saw the peasant?—Steed and rider
slain—
But chief his eye was daunted by a form
So bold, in life it might have ruled a storm—
And fondly ivying round it were the arms
Of a fair woman, whose all-powerful charms
Even death had failed to conquer—her lips
seemed
Still parted by sweet breath, as if she dreamed
Of him in her embrace: but they who thought
That life was tenanting her breast, and sought
Some answer from her heart to hush the doubt,
Found that its eloquence had all burned out.—

NOTES.

NOTES TO CANTO FIRST.

Jungheera's rocks are hoar and steep,
And Ganges' wave is broad and deep—

Page 5, *line* 1.

Although I once lived nearly three years in the vicinity of Jungheera, I had but one opportunity of seeing that beautiful, and truly romantic spot. I had a view of the rocks from the opposite bank of the river, which was broad, and full, at the time I saw it, during the rainy season. It struck me then as a place where achievements in love and arms might take place; and the double character I had heard of the Fakeer, together with some acquaintance with the scenery, induced me to found a tale upon both these circumstances. From Forest's Tour along the Ganges and Jumna, I submit to the reader the following description of Jungheera. The foliage he speaks of did not strike me, probably in consequence of the great distance at which I saw the island, which in a subsequent part of the poem I have called *bleak and bare.*

"At some distance before reaching Monghyr, we saw in the river Ganges on our right, a singular mass of rock standing in the water, and somewhat resembling those of Colgong. It is distant about two hundred yards from the right bank, immediately opposite to the village of Sultangunge. It rises about seventy feet above the level of the water, towering abruptly from its bosom: there is one place only at which a boat can be put in, and where there is a landing-place, and a very steep and winding path leads to its summit. Here is found a small building, a *Madrussa*, or College of Fakeers, or wandering Monks, who reside in it."

* * * * *

"The whole forms a pretty object as you run past in a boat; and the thick and luxuriant foliage which crowns the summit, adds much to the effect of the picture."

And there the priests with triple thread.

Page 8, *l.* 15.

The Brahminical *Poeeta*, which consists of three threads. "*The fancy*" wear six, and others nine, increasing by threes. Some keep their *Poeetas* very white, and wear a great quantity of this thread by way of ornament.

Brings to her spirit the Kinnura's song.

Page 7, *l.* 16.

The Choiristers of Indra. Their business is to amuse the celestial powers with their music.

She shall enjoy all the blessings of heaven,
Till heaven and its blessings themselves are no more.

Page 11, *l.* 7.

The doctrine of absorption, which is here alluded to, has been called sublime by many speculative philosophers, and it seems to have led several enquirers in the field of Hindu Metaphysics, into a high estimate of Hindu philosophical opinions.

Ye who in fancy's vision view the fires
Where the calm widow gloriously expires, &c.

Page 16 *l.* 15.

The whole of this passage has reference to a mistaken opinion, somewhat general in Europe, namely, that the Hindu Widow's burning herself with the corpse of her husband, is an act of unparalleled magnanimity and devotion. To break those illusions which are pleasing to the mind, seems to be a task which no one is thanked for performing; nevertheless, he who does so, serves the cause of Truth. The fact is, that so far from any display of enthusiastic

affection, a Suttee is a spectacle of misery, exciting in the spectator a melancholy reflection upon the tyranny of superstition and priest-craft. The poor creatures who suffer from this inhuman rite, have but little notion of the heaven and the million years of uninterrupted happiness to which their spiritual guides tell them to look forward. The choice of immediate death, or a protracted existence, where *to be* only must content their desire, is all that is offered to them; and who under such circumstances would hesitate about the preference? The most degrading and humiliating household offices must be performed by a Hindu Widow; she is not allowed more food than will suffice to keep her alive; she must sleep upon the bare earth, and suffer indignities from the youngest members of her family; these are only a few of her sufferings. The philanthropic views of some individuals are directed to the abolition of widow-burning; but they should first ensure the comfort of these unhappy women in their widowhood,—otherwise, instead of conferring a boon upon them, existence will be to many a drudge, and a load. An eloquent writer in the late Indian Magazine, has some excellent remarks upon this subject, and perhaps the reader will agree with me that they are very judicious:—

"The question that now follows is this,—Whether the burning of Hindoo Widows, criminal in itself, be injurious to society? It will be allowed on all hands that with the mass of the native population, it is considered a high degree of glory to record the ennobling instances of concremation that occur in the family. The victim herself is supposed to enjoy the reward of millions of years of celestial happiness, and upon this principle it is, that she is as anxious to mount the funeral pile, as her infatuated relatives can be to assist her in the awful sacrifice. It will be impossible therefore to make an attempt at overthrowing this system, before education is generalized, without wounding the tenderest feelings of human nature. The effect on Society is not injurious, because the feelings of our Hindoo brethren have been curbed and restrained by early prejudice. They cannot be possibly rendered worse in point of their social affections, and sunk as they are in the utter gloom of ignorance and superstition, it will be long before they enjoy the light of proper civilized happiness. How then can we stand acquitted from the charge of intolerance, if we exercise our power in violently suppressing so popularly respected a ceremony among the Hindoos? Neither is society injured by the practice, nor will the poor native females be the bet-

ter for its abolition. Strange as the latter assertion may appear, we are prepared to contend for its accuracy against any body of Historians. In no country, where the inhabitants are a degree removed from absolute barbarism, is the character of women more degarded than in India. Secluded in early years from all converse with men, carefully kept back from every intellectual pursuit, their time is wholly occupied in the drudgeries of domestic life, and in administering to the common comforts of their husbands with all the servility of hirelings. Such is their state in the miserable capacities of daughters and wives; but doubly degrading and tenfold more unhappy is their situation as widows. They are then considered as outcasts, and, as such, are they trodden under. It is well if a poor widowed wretch, from a sense of duty, should wish to ascend the pile of her husband; she is courted, flattered and adored. But woe to her, if, braving the contumely of her green-eyed relatives, she cling to a wretched existence! She is thence to live in perpetual celibacy; she must limit herself to one solitary meal a day, and that must be food of a vegetable quality only, for all animal substance is strictly forbidden her. She is compelled twice a month to fast for twenty four hours in the most rigid manner. These, however, are but a few

of the hardships that the Hindoo widows are to endure; they are sufficient, nevertheless, to prove the utter desolation of their lives."

* * * * *

"We are not the advocates of Concremation, or any of the doctrines of the superstitious Hindoos; but as we are perfectly convinced of their right to the peaceable enjoyment of this their particular, though inhuman ceremony, we have ventured to submit our sentiments with candour and boldness. It is however our firm, and sincere wish that the day may soon come when the rays of intellectual greatness will awaken the benighted natives of India from their long trance of bigotry and error. May we live to see the period when education will smoothly and imperceptibly effect a grand moral change in the character of the Hindoos, over whose long continued gloom, the genius of History has scarcely ceased to weep!"

What though the rose has vanished from her cheek.

Page 18, *l.* 9.

It may be said that the rose never could have been upon the cheek of an Indian; but some individuals know that the text is not incorrect. True, "the warm south" does not furnish us with many such cheeks,

but they are to be met with in Cashmeer and the northern parts of Hindoostan. Besides, the heroine of a poem may be invested with beauties of an extraordinary nature.

And now the fire prophetic burns
Upon her lips:

Page 25, *l.* 12.

It is said that before the Suttee ascends the pile, she generally prophesies the number of transmigrations, or states of being, she is to pass through after death. I have taken the liberty of putting another kind of a prophecy into her mouth.

As in her ear the spell is said,
The word that shall her passport be
To regions of Eternity.

Page 31, *l.* 4.

This is an allusion to the *Mantra* that the Brahmun pronounces in the ear of the victim.

God of all goodness, thou art God alone!
Circled with glory, diademed with light.

Page 32, *l.* 11.

The Vedas, which are supposed to contain the essence of wisdom, declare in various places, wherever

the language of praise is employed, that the object of such praise is the Deity or Brihm. Thus fire is Brihm, the sun is Brihm, water is Brihm; and a number of other substances are deified in like manner. It is necessary to state that all prayers in the ceremony of female immolation are addressed to the Sun.

And from her head the wreath she takes,
Seven circuits round the pile she makes,
And now with baleful brand on fire
She slowly mounts the dreadful pyre.

Page 37, l. 11.

The following account of all that the Suttee does when about to immolate herself with the corpse of her husband, is taken from the Bengal Chronicle, and is in general very correct, except that the author does not specify, as in the text, the number of circuits she makes round the pile. Nor does she light the pile herself, as it appears in the poem; this is done by the nearest of kin; but I have taken a license with the fact which thus assumes a more romantic character:—

"I was sitting after dinner about five in the evening, when notice was brought that a female of the Caysht class, whose husband had deceased, wished to burn herself on the pile; and that she refused to listen to

any remonstrances. I lost no time in proceeding with another gentleman to the spot, where we found the woman sitting before her door on a charpoy, on which also was the corpse of her husband. She was about 30 years old, or perhaps younger, rather good-looking and profusely decked with jewels, she was likewise adorned with flowers. As a first step to effect the saving of the unfortunate creature, all her relations, who are generally the secret prompters to this act of immolation, were removed from about her, although they themselves declared that it was not done by their desire, and that they wished her to live. I then proceeded to ask her the reason of her burning, what good she could expect by it, what would become of her family, and whether she had been persuaded to it by her relatives or the Brahmins? To these queries she replied, that she was fated to undergo this; that she had passed through six stages of existence, and this seventh would end her miseries and send her to Heaven. That as God provided for her, so he would for her family, and that although the Brahmins had told her that burning herself was praiseworthy, yet the resolution was her own, and not produced by their entreaties. Lest such questions, coming from Europeans, should carry with them less weight, they were again put to her by a native, to which she returned

similar replies. From her manner of answering these questions, from her cool, calm and collected behaviour, and from her perfect perception of all that went on, I was fully convinced, (and so was the gentleman who was with me) that the woman was neither intoxicated nor stupified; but to render the case more certain, some respectable natives who were among the crowd, of castes different from the woman, were called and desired to report if she was actually in her senses, they unanimously reported in the affirmative. After using some further arguments, to which the woman turned a deaf ear, I could only proceed to enquire if the Suttee was in every respect legal, according to the orders passed by Government, the result of which was that nothing could prevent it. At this time the woman herself said, that the sun was fast declining, and begged she might be carried to the pile!!! Every expedient had been tried, and further endeavours were useless; she was lifted up on the charpoy as she sat, together with her husband's corpse, but none of her relations or Brahmins were allowed to come near her.

"Arrived at the place of execution (for such it literally was) she was placed on the ground and her relatives began to build the pile, which had not been previously commenced on. The crowd assembled to view this scene was immense, and their conduct simi-

lar to that of natives in cases of execution, or any other solemn occasion, was characterised with extreme levity, and want of feeling. At this period once more was every endeavour used to divert the woman from her purpose; she was offered a maintenance for life, with protection from her relations; she still persisted, and would listen to no dissuasion. As a last resource, her children were brought and put before her, with the idea that perhaps some latent feeling of maternal tenderness might be awakened. She placed her hand upon the head of one, but said not a word. A second time people were called to see if she was in her proper senses, and a second time they said she was, which I am convinced was too true. We awaited in silence the completion of the pile, and finding all endeavours useless, she was delivered over to her relations. Steadily, steadily she walked to the water, and bathed, while her husband's corpse was placed on the pile. Steadily did she walk round it, and with as firm and composed a countenance, and as steady a foot did she mount it. More wood was placed on the pile, but not one log that could have impeded her free motion; there was she told that at any time, even to the last, she might leap off if she wished it, and police officers were placed on all sides to hinder any one from mo-

lesting her, and to protect her in case of her attempting to escape. The woman sat upright on the pile, fire was set to it, and there she sat for three minutes, in the same position. The wind was fierce; ere the second minute had elapsed, she must have acutely felt the flames, ere two minutes she was completely surrounded and was burning, but neither cry nor groan escaped her. About the third minute, by God's providence she must have become insensible, and fell upon the pile.

"Be my readers advocates or enemies of disallowing this system, let them pause and reflect. In this case, every earthly persuasion was used, every earthly inducement called into action to prevent the female from burning herself. She was in the perfect use of her senses, she was not hastened on to her end by her relations, she might have escaped even to the last moment she possessed consciousness, even while she was burning, but she would not. To this I will vouch; I have stated that my name is to be obtained."

NOTES TO CANTO SECOND.

Dark shadows are falling on holy Mandar.

Page 57. *l.* 1.

This mountain may be seen at a considerable distance from the place which forms the scene of the first part of this Canto. It was used by the Dius and Assoors for the churning of the ocean when the Amreeta was to have been won. Vide Mr. Parker's delightful poem "The Draught of Immortality."

When the sound of the Pearl-fall enraptured we hear.

Page 58. *l.* 1.

"We obtained two beautiful glimpses of the Rajmahal hills, the first soon after rounding the point of land where this ridge of mountain falls abruptly in the river; the other a few miles further on, where in a profound ravine of the thickly-wooded mountains may be discerned from near the river's brink, a beautiful cataract of water, which apparently bursting from a deep chasm, descends in a sheet of silver for some distance, and then breaking into showers of sparkling spray, has received the appropriate and beautiful appellation of the *Mootee Girna*, or the "Fall of Pearls"—FOREST'S TOUR.

When the Bulbul's loved-mate, the Zuleikha of flowers.

Page 58. *l.* 7.

The rose which is here alluded to, may be well called the Zuleikha of flowers; Zuleikha, (the *chaste* wife of Potiphar, according to the Mussulmans) having been the most beautiful of women.

And see a minstrel now appears,
Familiar quite with griefs and tears,

Page 66. *l.* 1.

In the Upper Provinces of Hindoostan, there are to this day, in the families of the great, one or two dependants, whose sole business is to tell stories for the amusement of the lord. It has been conjectured that the tales in the Arabian Nights' Entertainment are of Indian origin.

The Legend of the Shushan.

Page 67.

A student of that excellent institution, the Hindu College, once brought me a translation of the Betal Puncheesa, and the following fragment of a tale having struck me for its wildness, I thought of writing a ballad, the subject of which should be strictly Indian. The Shushan is a place to which the dead are conveyed, to be burnt. In conformity with the

practice of eastern story tellers, who frequently repeat the burden or moral of the song, have I introduced the "O Love is strong," &c. wherever an opportunity offered:—

"Thereupon, he took the Jogee aside, and said, "O Gosayn! you have given me many rubies, but have never even once eaten in my house: I am therefore much ashamed, so pray tell me what it is that you want?" "Great King," replied the Jogee, "on the banks of the river Godavurry is a Shushan, where all I wish for will be gained by Muntra. Seven-eighths of what I want have been already obtained, and I now seek at your hands the remaining portion. You must therefore stay with me one whole night." "Agreed," replied the King, "appoint the day." "On the evening of the fourteenth day of the month Bhader, come to me armed." "Go," returned the Raja "and I promise to be with you on the day you have fixed." With this promise the Devotee took leave of the King, and proceeded to the Shushan. The Raja was lost in meditation, till the time appointed stole upon him, and then having armed himself, he went alone in the evening to the Jogee.

"Come in and sit down my son," said the Devotee; and the Raja complied with his request, while at the same time he, unalarmed, beheld demons, ghosts,

witches, and malignant spirits, dancing around him, and changing their forms. "Now," said the Raja, "what are your commands?" "Four miles south of this," replied the Jogee, "is a Shushan, where, on a tree, hangs a corpse; bring me that corpse, while I pray." Having now sent the King away, the Jogee sat himself down, and commenced his devotions. The dark night frowned upon him; and such a storm with rain come on, as if the heavens would have exhausted themselves, and never have rained again, while the demons, and evil spirits set up a howl that might have daunted the stoutest heart. But the King held on his way, and though snakes came wreathing round his legs, he got free of them by repeating a charm. At last overcoming all opposition, he reached the cemetery, where he saw demons beating human beings, witches gnawing the livers of children, and tigers and elephants roaring. As he cast his eyes upon a Serus tree, he saw it root and branch in flames, and heard these words sounding from all quarters, "strike, strike! seize, seize! take care that none escape." "Come what will," said he then to himself, "this undoubtedly is the Jogee of whom the Dev made mention to me." So saying, he went up to the tree, where he saw a corpse hanging with its head downwards. "Now," cried he, my labour is at an end," then fearlessly climbing the

tree, he made a cut with his sword at the rope, that suspended the corpse, which as soon as it fell began to cry. The King hearing its voice, was pleased at the thought that it must have been a living being; then having descended, "who are you?" said he to it. To his great astonishment, the corpse only laughed, and without any reply, climbed the tree. The King followed it, and having brought it down in his arms, repeated his question. But receiving no answer, he thought that it might have been the oil-man, who the Dev had said had been kept in the cemetery by the Jogee; then having bound it in his cloak, began to bring it away.

He who greatly ventures, will greatly win. "Who are you," said Betal, the corpse, to the Raja, "and where are you taking me?" "I am Raja Vicrom," said the King, "and I am taking you to the Jogee." "Let it be agreed between us," replied Betal, "that if you speak while we are on the road I shall return." To this the Raja consented, and proceeded with the corpse. While they were on the way, "O King," said Betal, "the learned and the wise spend their time in songs and study, and the indolent and ignorant, in frivolity and sleep. It therefore behoves us to make an easy journey of it with pleasant conversation. Hear then what I now tell thee."

* * * * *

But there was a man, and a holy man,
A gifted Sunyasee.

Page 72. *l.* 1.

A Sunyasee is a devote who lives in the desert—

" The moss his bed, the cave his humble cell,
" His food the fruits, his drink the crystal well."

But now a hum as when young bees,
Come swarming round the rich date trees.

Page 81. *l.* 11.

There are two lines, much like these, in Mr. Parker's very beautiful poem " The Draught of Immortality;" but mine had passed through the press, before I made the discovery. However, I am satisfied that persons who have been in the habit of reading and writing much verse, will not charge me with plagiarism. I have often struck out lines when I have been in doubt whether " that quaint witch, Memory" was deceiving me or not, and these should have shared the fate of many that have been so got rid of, but for the fact above stated. Mr. Parker's lines are—

Till they flew through heaven quick as bees
Swarm clustering round the wild date trees.

MISCELLANEOUS POEMS.

THE NEW ATLANTIS.

A FRAGMENT.

How sweet 'twould be
To live upon some distant lonely isle
Where all is beautiful; to sit and watch
The stars as they come smiling up the sky;
And then to gaze upon the face we love,
And find the eyes there brighter than the stars!

'Twas a green solitude; a fairy haunt,
Set like an emerald in a golden sea
Upon the vast Atlantic; and so like
Those isles of which the poet only dreams,
That he who once might visit the sweet spot
Would deem kind nature in a joyous mood
Had made it only for Romance and Love!
'Twas happiness to muse along the shore,
And hear the evening hymn which the soft winds
Sang to the weary sun as home he came

To the embraces of his ocean-bride.
And then to look upon the sea-born treasures
Stolen by the playful wave from that blue world
Where dwells the mermaid in her hyaline hall,
Were pleasure which the youthful heart can feel,
But never tell. The pink and azure shells
Left on the sunny shore of that fair island,
Like a small tribute paid unto its beauty,
Had something spell-like in them, which could
wake
Fancies, and thoughts as lovely as themselves.—
To mark the moonbeams cradled by the waves
Which clasped that isle; to feel the midnight
breeze
Playing around a honeysuckle bower,
And leaving, as it gently died away,
A legacy of sweetness, were to be
Partaker in the bliss enthusiasts paint.

Here—(a fit dwelling place for two fond hearts
That never needed more society,

But clung unto each other, and remained
Inseparable, like first love, and hope)
Young Eric, and his own Rosina dwelt.
Woes the world brings to all were not for them;
Pangs which the lightest heart has had to bear,
Griefs which the gayest have been doomed
to pass,
They had not felt—their days had all been gilt
With radiant sunshine; on their path of life
Flowers of eternal freshness had been strewed
By gentlest seraphs' hands; and Hope had set
Her rainbow in the sky; it promised peace
And happiness for ever.—O! that Hope's
Bright Iris were not made of rain and sunshine!
When the sun sets, the lovely rainbow breaks,
And nothing then remains, but tears which flow
Like rain upon the heart! But oh! the rays
Which made *their* arch of hope so beautiful
Were all perpetual; they ne'er took wings—
Herein they were unlike realities.

Young Eric oft' had seen the midnight moon
Walking unclouded through the azure sky,
Like a Sultana with her handmaid stars
Well pleased to gather round her; he had felt
The magic influence of such soft hour
Binding his soul as with a "clankless chain,"
And leading it a captive unto joy!
Oft when the skylark from his watch-tower high
Would send his sweet notes trembling to the earth
As heralds of approaching day, had Eric woke
To drink the freshness of the fragrant morn,
And see the golden floods of orient light
Rushing, like water from a fountain pure,
To gladden all things that it shone upon.—
He loved red roses, jasmines, and all flowers
Which make the soul soft, musical, and sweet
As an Æolian harp. But these with all their power
Could never wake that flame within his breast,
Which, while it burns, gives light unto the heart,

And life to light, and happiness to life;
But when extinguished, dark is all within,
And the crushed heart lies ruined, fallen, and low!

Love, woman, stars, and flowers! O! are not ye
The gifts which spirits in a pitying mood
Vouchsafed to man? Is not your power, enchantment?
Yes! ye were given for happiness; and we
When we would know what meaneth bliss, must turn
To gaze on you, and find it there, extracting
Like the bee, honey from the lotus red,
The sweets of Poesy divine from you.

O he was young!—Can minstrel's lay unfold
What 'tis to love in youth, to weep, to pine,
To answer sigh for sigh, and tear for tear?
Alas! the harp hath not a tone, and the fond bard

Essays in vain to weave a gentle verse
That might declare the history of Love.—
Oh! who can tell how strangely in that dream
The quick pulse beats, and danceth with delight,
And how the tongue hath not the power to say
With what the brain is burning—how the lip
Will lose its freshness, and the eye now brighten
Like a warm sunbeam, and anon be dimmed
With a fond tear to be kissed off again—
These are themselves so eloquent, 'twere vain
If minstrel spake for them to those who know
All that it is to feel hopes, fears, and griefs
Fluttering, like little birds, within the breast
Where they have nestled. He had watched her eyes
Until his own wept o'er their loveliness—
For there's a melancholy mood of mind
Which cometh when there is excess of joy
Within the breast, and waketh holy tears,—
Drops which o'erflow when the heart's cup is full!

His bosom was a temple; he had placed
Within that sanctuary all he loved,
Her image, name, and every word she spake—
These became deities to him; and then
His heart was their devoted worshipper.
Come listen, and I'll tell thee Love! who made
This isle a heaven; and as I heard the tale
I'll weave it into verse; for woman's ear
Should know no sounds but such as minstrelsy
Awakes to greet her.—Let me tell thee now
How, on a summer's eve when heaven looked gay
Clad in her loveliest vestment, and the clouds
Did chase each other down the southern slope
Of the great dome that canopies the earth,
This gentle pair upon the smooth green sward
Breathed vows of hallowed love, and whispered words
Melodious as the poet Nightingale's
Sad fall of music when he woos the rose!—

He held her to his heart; one hand was laid
Upon her neck, the other grasped her hand—
'Twas white, and delicate as a soft beam
Of the young moon upon a calm clear night,
'Twas made for touching flowers, and to be kissed.
Her eye was heavenly blue, and spake of love:
Oh! I can liken it to nothing, for
I've never seen, or heard, or dreamed of aught
To which I might compare it. Her dark hair
Hanging in glossy ringlets down her neck,
Would have been wove into a net of love
If she had been the inmate of a palace.
A coronal of flowers was round her head,
Circling her fair brow like a fragrant halo.
Flowers are fit ornaments for lovely woman;
They're like herself, fair, beautiful, and soft,
When fondly cherished—withered when forsaken!—
Rosina's voice!—To hear it were to taste

Of bliss like that which Eastern legends tell
The Arab Prophet's paradise bestows.
O! why doth woman string the harp and lute?
There is more dulcet music on her lips
Than all the power of art could ever wake.
Beneath her lattice let her lover's strains
Float on the gale which bears them up to her
As if it pitied all his pain; then she
Should but reply with her melodious voice,
Whose sweetness puts all minstrelsy to shame.—
Rosina was a young enthusiast:
Life without Love would seem unto her thoughts
Like to a rosebud robbed of all its fragrance;
But Love being as the vital air she breathed,
It was the element in which she lived!—
The heart of woman loves to cling; and oft
When after vain endeavour it hath sought
For something gentle, it will twine around
The hard and cold—but ah! few flowers will bloom

Upon the flinty rock;—they're delicate,
And need much kinder cherishing. But she
The girl whose history my lay declares
Was loved again, even as she loved; their hearts
Were like two mirrors, and each saw itself
Imaged upon the other!

This is bliss!
Oh! this is happiness which glides in dreams,
That come upon the wings of night to glad
The gifted minstrel's eyes.—Why do such thoughts
Like birds of paradise, flit through the heaven
Where poets love to gaze; why do they fling
Such dazzling brightness o'er the path they take,
Like a high angel's flight through pathless space
Unto the star which he hath made his home?—
I look upon the picture which I've drawn,
And then in mood of mind less wild, I turn
In calmer hour, to gaze upon this world
Of cold reality, and ah! I find
This is not Life!

THE NEGLECTED MINSTREL.

Like the harmonious nightingale he lived,
A lone inhabitant of sylvan scenes;
And to the passing gale his minstrelsy
With breaking heart he gave; for save the gale
None visited him there—he had no friend!

Dost thou remember, Love! that Banyan tree
Which, like a temple, by the river stands?
Thou canst not have forgot it; for 'twas there
Our early vows were interchanged; and we
Have often sat beneath its fragrant shade
As the hot sun at evening hour came down
To cool his burning brow in the gilt wave,
And hear the breeze's vesper orisons:—
O! we have listened with enraptured ears
To those wild birds which on the branches sang
Perhaps unto each other lays of love,
And then how often have we wished that we
Were birds to be so blest. Sweet flowers grew there

Even in the shadow of that regal tree;
And they were sheltered from the summer's fire;
But when the storm with all his ministers
Came wrathful down to chasten this bad world,
They drooped and died, too like our tender hopes
That ne'er survive the tempest of misfortune.
But that is not my tale.——In that thick grove
A tomb, white as an infant's innocence,
Has often caught mine eye. It gleameth there
'Mid all the winning loveliness around,
As if to mind us that the beauteous place,
Which seems a relic of lost Paradise
Is but a part of this decaying earth.—
I'll tell thee all the melancholy tale
Of him who sleeps, the tenant of that tomb;
And thou shalt learn what is the common fate
Of all those mighty spirits in whose breasts
The fire of genius blazed unquenchable,
But failing to attract the world's regard,
Consumed the altar where itself was lit,
And then the temple which it erst made bright.

His heart was like a soft Æolian harp
Whose sweetest chords are waked by gentlest winds.
Let no rude hand upon the minstrel's heart
Attempt to play; its strings are delicate,
And frail, and they will break when harshly swept.
O! woman when she loves, and truly loves
Can bring its music forth—all its sweet notes
Of hope and fear, love's many griefs and joys,—
And find their echoes in her own fond breast.
His days were in their spring; that joyous time
When the young heart will open like a rose,
And drink heaven's dew, and scatter sweetness round,
Too prodigal of all its odorous store!
He gazed upon this lovely earth, and all
The beauties on its bosom with a thrill
Of wild delight: and as the eye reflects
Those various objects upon which 'tis fixed,

The images of things he looked upon
Moved from his eye into his gifted mind;
And that they might not perish there, some power
Linked them with memory and blissful thoughts.

What was the sun to him but as a god?
Who, when he sat enthroned in the rich east,
Heard the young minstrel's hymn rise from his heart
Like incense from a censer! The sweet flowers
Blooming like emblems of his lonely self
In that most still and unfrequented grove
He made his hours' companions; and there grew
A sympathetic feeling in his breast
For those frail things. The melancholy moon
Flung on his mind sad thoughts of hopeless love,
And beauty in her trusting hour betrayed,
Walking the world unpitied and forlorn,
With shame and sorrow on her cold white cheek,

Looked on by every eye. And in the stars
He read what fame might be, a minstrel's fame,
Eternal as those lights which ne'er burn out.
And when he heard upon a moonlit night
The voice of the blue river as it passed,
He peopled with creations of his brain
The soft melodious wave, and fondly deemed
It was a spirit speaking to his soul,
Even from beneath the water. But the breeze,
The evening breeze which from its cavern crept
Like music from a shell, woke blissful thoughts
Like fragrance out of flowers in his fond breast,
And delicate as those which float in dreams—
The essence of delicious Poesy!
The gifts which nature to our world hath given,
Scenes for the eye, and sounds unto the ear,
All had their influence upon his soul,
And fitted it for minstrelsy divine.—

He loved:—O! love and song are twins, and they

Have aye been linked together from their birth:
Thus, it was fit the blossoms of his heart
Should at some shrine be scattered. Then he tore
All thoughts, all fancies from his breast, until
It was a fairy palace worthy her
Who there reigned queen alone. And they were blest;
So blest that oft' imagination deemed
They had a foretaste of that promised bliss,
Which is to be in worlds beyond our own.
He wore her in his heart as I do thee,
And oh! she was so lovely that she seemed
To be a fine embodied thought, like one
Of those which poets form of angel woman.
Alas! what is there in mortality
That fate should come 'tween happiness and us,
And dash the cup that's held unto our lips
Even as we kiss its brim? But this is doomed;
The roses of our life must have their thorns,
And storm and sunshine burst on us alike!

Hast thou observed an August sunset sky,
With all its colours, purple, gold, and red?
How beautifully dies the day! Each hue
Fades faintly out of sight, and every change
Makes heaven look lovely, though it brings
Dun night upon the world apace! and thus
Sweetly died she who was unto his heart
Like the red vital current there.—O Memory!
Canst thou not also die when all we love
Sinks like the lost star from our sight? Ah no!
Thou dost burn on like a pale charnel light
Above the grave of hopes, and smiles, and joys
Which made life's wake delightful.

Now, in that peopled solitude, the world,
He sought companionship to wean his mind
From melancholy thoughts on which it fed.
He was a stranger, poor, and friendless there,
A being of another sphere, who seemed
As if while searching for a happy home

To have mistaken his bright path; and none
Had so much charity as bid him turn
And dwell there for a while.—Alas! that gold,
Dross, worthless as it is, should be the charm,
The magic lamp commanding all things here.
But 'tis a cold unfeeling world, and flings
Its baneful shadow on the wretched head
Which has not wealth to light the gloom around.
At length he found protection, and a man
Who called himself the minstrel's friend, and gave
This youthful candidate for fame but hope
To live upon.
The end of his sad history
Is almost come. Hope like a faithless friend
Betrayed the heart which on its promise leaned,
And like the false mirage on Arab sands
Left him more wretched when the truth was known.
Then the world's scorn, the thought of buried love,

The recollection of past happiness,
And, oh humanity! his proud protector
Who soon forsook him, drove him to his fate.
He sought his Banyan grove and flowers again;
But like a stricken deer whose many wounds
And blood unstanched foretell his coming end,
At last the hapless minstrel brought his heart,
On which the bloodhounds of the world had rushed,
To break in that sweet spot. There is his tomb
Raised by some pitying hand; his history,
I have unfolded to thine ear. One night
As by his tomb I stood,—that place, his name,
And the soft hour which wakes reflections soft
So wrought upon my spirit, that its thoughts
Arrayed themselves in verse;—thus were they linked.

The sod is cold where thou art sleeping
Too dark a sleep to wake again;

But heaven its tears o'er thee is weeping,
And all the world's proud scorn is vain.

Their fragrance flowers around are flinging
To consecrate this beauteous spot,
And winds a requiem wild are singing
Which man, inhuman man, forgot.

Sure thou art weeping, Love! nay do not fear
A sad resemblance in his fate and mine;—
My hopes perchance are fragile flowers, but then
Remember on what soil they grow, and more,—
The friendly hand that rears them into strength.
Nay—nay—I shall be blest!

A few brief months
Have fled so happily, their plumage bright
Must have been dipped in Fancy's golden hues,
Since I this wreath of song entwined. But then,
With ardent step Hope's ladder was I climbing,

And fondly deemed it would have led to heaven,
That heaven which in my youthful dreams I saw,
Made of eternal brightness.—Now no more
Those golden visions on my spirit beam,
Like morning sunlight on a sapphire lake,
For sad reality has broke their spell.—O Truth!
Thou whom my soul hath sought like a rich jewel
For which th' adventurer will risk his all—
How hast thou taught me that my aspirations
Wore not a tint of earth!—th' Ithuriel spear
Wherewith thou'rt armed, has touched them, and they've fled
Far to the darksome caverns of the past;
And heaven-sent fancies needlesly descend
Upon my blighted heart—they fall like dew
Softly, but vainly on a withered flower!
My mind that wandered once like summer bird
From twisted brake and bush on wildest wing,

Swift as its own desires, must fall at last
Even from those sweet ideal worlds it made:
And, like my native earth, which once a star*
Blazed through the pathless ether must I roam,
Darkness without, within, consuming flame.—

* The theory of the Earth's being a cooling Star seems to be established by M. Cordier's late work upon that subject.

THE DESERTED GIRL.

These are sad records, things of every day;
They are around us like our atmosphere:—
O world! O world! thy other name is falsehood.

Wet, damp, and gloomy, 'twas a cheerless hour!
That night was not for blank forgetfulness;
And I who love to look upon heaven's face
Even when 'tis darkened into frowns, went forth
To hear the storm chide this affrighted earth.
A blackness, like despair, on nature hung,
Save when the lightning's fitful flashes gleamed;
As if each playful spirit in his sport
Wrote with phosphoric pen some unknown sign
To break the charm that bound the gathered cloud.
The thunder's voice was angry, loud, and deep;
It knocked against the heart as 'twould have learned

If fear were lurking there. The waters shrieked,
And ran from place to place, as if to hide
Even from the presence of the tempest wild.
Silence, and rest had no existence there:
The blast shook mightiest trees with its strong breath,
And bent the mountain forests, as it claimed
Their homage on approaching. 'Twas a night
That cannot from my memory be washed out
Even by thy ceaseless tide, vicissitude!
The thunder roared till waxing weak it slept,
And echo answered not; the lightnings pale
Which had been flashing through the sky like swords
Were sheathed at last; the waves grown weary too
Were as unruffled as a mirror clear,
Where the moon saw her face; the howling wind
Went like a beaten hound unto its cave;
And stars came one by one to join the court

Of night's most lovely queen. I heard a voice
Like to the silver sound a harp gives out,
When evening breezes wander 'mid its strings,
Waking delicious music out of sleep.
Then there were words so slowly, sweetly breathed,
I might have deemed 'twas an ærial bird
Softening man's language; but the words were sad,
And then I knew they were of earth, and human.

O human nature! sorrow is the sign,
That like the mark upon the brow of Cain
Has made thee separate from all things that breathe,
And all that are not cursed with life and thought.
Art thou not formed of tears, and countless pangs
That make the heart a ruin, and then cling

Like ivy to existence? Fleeting smiles
Flash o'er thee like the beams of polar suns,
Serving to show that what they light is waste.
Whose could have been that melancholy voice
Like a complaining seraph's, sweet, but sad?
Ah woman! griefs are thy inheritance;
Linked with thy weakness and devotion ever,
They fling eternal shadows on thy path
Which but for them were bright!—"Oh! hush thee, babe!
"If there be peace for thee, thy little head
"Will slumber soon upon the lap of peace,
"And then thy infant spirit shall be free!
"Where is the home that should have sheltered us,
"The arm that should have pillowed me, and thee,
"The breast that should have hid us in its folds,
"The voice that should have bid the winds be still,

"And soothed us in calamity?—How wild
"My fancy seems!—Can I so soon forget
"The lesson I have proved and learned too well—
"That words are nothing when they do not kill,
"And smiles most treacherous when most sweet. My child!
"Thy father—but I will not dream of him—
"And I for thee have nothing, my poor boy!
"But a disastrous world of woe before me.
"Ah! now thou 'rt cold, cold as thy father's heart;
"I cannot warm thee in my bosom now,
"Thou art past that, my child!—Let the storm rave,
"It cannot bring for me another pang;
"There is more mercy in th' ungentle wind
"Than constancy in man!—Now let it come,
"Whene'er it comes, my day of death shall seem
"Like the kind hand of an expected friend

"Breaking the chain with which my soul is
bound.
"My child, ah! where art thou?—I vainly call
"This form where nothing breathes, my child!
my child!

There's a magnetic power in woman's woe
Attracting sympathy. I asked the cause
That drew her sorrows forth, and she replied
In words as broken as her heart. I'll weave
As much of her sad history as I culled
From what she said, into a chain of verse;
And sooth it is too like a poet's dream—
Full of romance, love's madness, and despair.
Her memory was an urn, and it contained
The ashes of departed happiness. Alas!
There is no immortality for bliss;
And never shall that future be when joy
Awaking from its tomb shall live again!—
Her face must once have been such as youth's eye
Would fix itself upon: there still remained

A lingering lustre in her beaming glance,
Which said that though her soul was nigh consumed,
There had been beauty which was all her own
When heaven for her had sunshine. She was young;
But grief fed like a vampire on her heart,
And sucked its health and happiness away—
No marvel that her cheek had lost its rose—
And there she stood, pale as her sister moon,
Pining with love that never was returned.
O! woman's heart is like a blazing torch,
Imparting light where'er its beams may fall,
But burning all the while itself away.

There was a youth of expectations high,
Heir of a mighty line, with wealth so vast,
You might have deemed some favouring Genius laid
Earth's treasures at his feet. *Her* only dower

Was that which nature gave her on her face;
But when on her he smiled, her answering eye
Spake her soul's wish with all love's eloquence—
'Twas passion's language, known unto the heart
In its first thrill of feeling, but once lost
Forgotten ever after. Then the girl
Bound her affections for a sacrifice,
And having brought them to a fatal altar,
She offered them to him—her deity!—
The Memphian for his god a reptile takes,
And I will worship thee he says, but finds
When dying from its fang, the demon kills.

O! what a golden image was her soul
Upon a pedestal of glass—'twas fixed
On one who was unworthy her: he fled;
Her spirit fell—and all that I could see
Were beauteous fragments, which had once been parts
Of something most divine!

THE GOLDEN VASE.

With love's sweet tokens many things are linked;
Words made of music, glances which could speak,
And sighs that rose like incense from the heart:
These are reflected in love's sacred gifts,
Even as a mirror shows the form before it.

See, how she hangs upon that golden vase!
As if each flower it holds were a sweet thought,
Or the remembrance of a joy long past,
On which the heart will lean as for support,
That it fall not, and break. Her hair is dressed
With flowers, which speak of all that's in her mind.
One rose she wears upon her temple, 'tis
To show she hath one love; the stalk is hid
By a dark glossy ringlet, this doth say
None shall discover where that passion sprang.
Twined with her braided tresses you may see
The pale Cameeni, which though fair at night

Sweetens the earth, its bed of death, by morn.
Is not this meant to say her hopes have been
Like that ill-fated flower? their chain of life
Too short, and the first link too near the last.
There is a mournful stillness in her eye
Which tells, with too much eloquence alas!
What grief is preying on her heart:—it brings
A thought of the lone moon when nothing breaks
The silence of her reign, and to the poet's eye
She melancholy seems, though beautiful!
There are no smiles upon that lady's lip
Sparkling like sunbeams on a ruby rare;
And he who gazes on her cheek, may deem
That its rich hue is lent unto the rose
Which blushes on her silver brow. Her arm
So white, so delicate, so gently twined
Around the golden neck of that bright vase
Looks as 'twere made of moonlight. Has that arm

Not oft' encircled what it loved to clasp?
O gaze upon it longer still! it seems
As if it would invite young love to rest
His head even there, and slumber if he can.
That vase whose happiness might make us burn
Is fond affection's token; 'tis the gift
Of one to whom her heart is given in change.
And he hath left the bower, and beauty's side,
Her smiles, and tears, her soft persuasive voice,
That heavenly melody of which its heart
Dreamed in the spring-time of his youth.
These he hath left for war's blood-reddened field,
For horrid sights, and scenes of waste and woe;
The hamlet desolate, the wall o'erthrown,
The city sacked, the hostile town besieged;
The hoarse breath of the trumpet; the war cry
Of armies rushing to the charge; the neigh
Of steeds caparisoned with gold and purple;
The moan of soldiers dying gasp by gasp;
The howl of midnight hungry wolves, which feast

Upon th' uncharnel'd dead; and the shrill scream
Of ravenous vultures warring o'er their prey.

How do men leave beloved hearts, to pine
In wretchedness unutterably sad,
With no companions in their solitude
But thoughts as dark and dismal as despair?
Oh! when our country writhes in galling chains,
When her proud masters scourge her as a dog;
If her wild cry be borne upon the gale,
Our bosoms at the melancholy sound
Should swell, and we should rush to her relief,
Like sons, at an unhappy parent's wail!
And when we know the flash of patriot swords
Is unto spirits longing to be free,
Like Hope's returning light; we should not pause
Till every tyrant who on us hath trod
Lies humbled at our feet, or till we find

Graves, which may truly say thus much for us—
Here sleep the brave who loved their country well!

The Moslem is come down to spoil the land
Which every god hath blest. For such a soil
So rich, so clad with beauty, who would not
Unlock his veins, and pour their treasure forth?
The Hindoo hath marched forward to repel
The lawless plunderer of his holy shrines,
The savage, rude disturber of his peace;
And with that lady of his heart remains
The vase o'er which she hangs. How long we gaze
Upon the sacred pledge of youthful love,
Hoping its joys may be our own again!
Alas, such hopes too oft' are only dreams!—
See——a young minstrel stands before her there,
But she regards him not:——'tis said that grief
Hath been by music charmed away, and sooth
It is a potent spell. Her hand she waves

As if to try the power of magic sounds
In breaking sorrow's chain; and hark! he flings
Delicious strains upon her listening ear.

Those flowers are blest, are doubly blest
When two such eyes as thine,
Of all created stars the best
On them so brightly shine:
Were I a flower for such sweet rest
What rapture would be mine!
I would be blest, be doubly blest
By those bright eyes of thine.

That golden vase has golden lot,
When such an arm as thine,
Whose peer the goodly world has not
Doth round it gently twine.
Were I that vase—forgive the thought!
My bliss would be divine;
And I would bless my golden lot
For that soft arm of thine.

Scarce had he ceased, when with enquiring eye
She scanned his face; and sure his voice to her
Is as familiar as the cuckoo's note
Unto the ear of spring; she saw his breast
Rising with wild emotion; her heart's beat
Now became loud and quick, as if it sought
To know his feelings, and would fain have rushed
Forth from imprisonment to clear its doubts.
Her radiant eye upon his finger glanced,
And the gem there waxed starry in its ray.
She knew the ring, 'twas once her own; her tears
Came gathering fast for joy. 'Tis he! 'tis he!
Her lip is pressed to his for whom she lives,
Her arm entwines not now the vase's neck,
But taken from the gift, it fondly clings
Like a sweet tendril to the giver.

THE ECLIPSE.

When an eclipse is predicted, the Hindoos, men, women, and children, betake themselves to the river-side, and stand in expectation of the event, ready to plunge into the water with prayers to "all the Gods at once," that the moon may not be swallowed up by a monster, who they suppose comes for that purpose. This is the belief of the multitude; but the Brahmins know full well how eclipes are caused, and they can calculate them with the precision of the best European Astronomers.

By all the mighty powers above,
O! leave me not to-night, my love!
Let others in the sacred wave
Their sinful bodies seek to lave;
But leave me not; for sure thou art
Of spotless hand, and guileless heart—
There cannot be, my girl divine!
A sin upon that soul of thine.
Let others pray that night's bright gem
May not be lost to heaven, and them;

But what's the sickly moon to thee,
And all her cold inconstancy?
Let other maids whose nightly dreams
Of love are brought by Chandra's * beams,
Implore the powers of Heaven to spare
That Chandra to their pious prayer.
But thou, whose dreams are ever bright,
Awake, asleep, by day, by night,
O! why shouldst thou, my gentle girl,
My lotus flower! my precious pearl!
To-night implore the gods above?—
I pray thee, leave me not, my love!

Ah! go not forth; for shouldst thou go
Afresh will bleed my wounds of woe.
Encircled by the wave thou'lt be
While Chandra wakens fears in thee;

* The moon. Strange it is that the Hindoos suppose the sun and moon to be *brothers:* but I cannot so violate European taste as to use *he*, when speaking of the soft, the delicate moon.

But ah! mine eye will swim in tears,
And thou, oh! thou wilt wake my fears.
My life, my love, my spirit's light,
I pray thee, leave me not to-night;—
For when thy angel form is gone,
And my poor heart is left alone,
Although the moon be riding high,
Although the stars illume the sky,
Dark to my soul the world will be,
And heaven, and earth eclipsed to me!

Nay go not forth—for shouldst thou go
Her face the moon will shrink to show;
Her meaner light will never dare
To send one ray while thou art there,
And every envious star will fall
As thy bright eyes outshine them all:—
And when the monster armed with power
Shall come alas! in luckless hour
His prize, his valued prize to gain,
He'll seek his Chandra there in vain.—

Thy angel face my love! he'll see,
(For there who will not gaze on thee?)
And deeming thee a moon more bright
Than that which reigns supreme by night,
Thee, thee he'll seize; and dark to me
Thenceforth this dreary world will be!
Nor can I hope that prayers may fly
Up to the holy throne on high;
For though creation prostrate prayed
It would not save my beauteous maid:
And when from me thou shalt be riven
They'll make thee queen of earth, and heaven,
For ne'er may all in heaven and earth
To aught like thee again give birth.—

Then if to thee my peace is dear
For once my supplication hear;
I pray thee, by the gods above
O! leave me not to-night, my Love!

POETIC HAUNTS.

Doth not the gifted bard with nature dwell,
And finds he not companionship in hill,
And wood, and scented vale, and crystal stream,
Reflecting the soft melancholy moon?
These weave their charms into a mystic chain
And fling it on the heart.

Where the billow's bosom swells,
Where the ocean casts its shells,
Where the wave its white spray flings;
Where the sea-mew flaps its wings;
Where the grey rock in the storm
Rears its proud gigantic form,
Laughing as the lightnings flash,
Heedless of the billowy dash,
Heedless though the clouds may pour,
Heedless though the thunders roar;
Where the wind-god rideth by
Swiftly through the blackening sky,

Where the spirit of the sea
Wakes its matchless melody,
While the Naiads gather round
Gladdened by the magic sound;—
Far from human hut, or home
Let the gifted Poet roam.

Or, upon some star-paved lake
When the south breeze is awake,
Let him launch his little bark,—
Love's and Fancy's favored ark!
When the mellow moonlight falls
On the distant castle walls;
When the white sail is unfurled,
And the graceful wave is curled;
When the winds in concert sing
To the planets listening,
And the lady-moon rejoices,
Hearing their melodious voices,
While she bids her softest beam
Bear an errand to the stream,

Which upon its lucid breast
Wears an island, all at rest,
Like a gem it flasheth there
Beziled by the waters fair;
Such a spot as fairies love
When abroad they nightly rove;
Where the red deer roams unharmed,
And the wild dove unalarmed,
And the minstrel nightingale
Tells, in plaintive strain, his tale,
Which the young rose blushing hears
Like a maid who loves but fears;—
Such a sweet, enchanting spot
Where our griefs might be forgot,
Where, in youth, one fain would dwell
With the lady he loved well—
—Hither let the Poet be
Dreaming dreams of ecstasy.

Or, on some bright summer even
With his eye upraised to heaven,

Ere the ruby sun hath set,
Ere the waning day hath met
On the western mountain's height
Clad in widow's weeds, the night;
Let him muse on all around,
On each soothing sight and sound!
Let him mark the sun-gilt cliff,
And the fisher's infant skiff;
Let him watch the wild waves' play,
How they glide, like bliss away;
How they meet, and how they sever—
Lovers parted, and for ever!
And when every wind's asleep,
And the spirit of the deep
Maketh music on the main,
When her soft melodious strain
Charmeth Ocean's heaving breast,
  How the sun's last rays expire,
  How the weary waves retire
In each other's arms to rest!

Then upon the golden sky
Let him cast his gifted eye—
Such a dazzling, glorious sight,
Such a scene, so pure, so bright!
As if angels in their flight
With their plumage dipt in light,
Flung the radiance of their wings
(As the priest sweet incense flings)
On the western gate of heaven—
What a brilliant boon to even!
Hither let the minstrel be
Weaving wreaths of Poesy,
Lays of melody, and fraught
With th' immortal fire of thought,
Such as steal upon the soul
Like sweet spells beyond control,
Clinging, whatsoe'er may be,
Ever to the memory,
Like the first wild dream of Love!—

TO NIGHT.

When the bright stars like jewels on the brow
Of Ethiop Night are sparkling, O! ye sprites
That watch our slumbers, weave delicious dreams
And wind them round our souls!

O! let the breeze be soft, and bid it bring
Delightful visions on its noiseless wing;
That when half sunk in dark forgetfulness
My mind may catch some moments sorrowless,
And find that bliss in sleep, which waking life
Denies the spirit in this world of strife.
Send a fair seraph to my pillow, Night!
Wrapt in a mantle of transparent light,
And thy command unto that spirit be
To weave a dream of happiness for me;
Or disentangle from the coils of thought
Those blest realities, which once were wrought
By some unearthly, but sweet pitying power,
And placed before me in no dreaming hour.

They've fled for ever; but fond Memory
Keeps of the past a potent, mystic key,
And opes its portal, and holds up a lamp
To light its chambers dismal, drear, and damp.
Ah! in those caverns of Cimmerian gloom
Whose darkness dims the midnight of the tomb,
How many shapes of loveliness there be,
Which made us once forget that misery
Had in this earth existence, save in sound—
But being gone, we to our grief have found
That there is nothing in the garish day
Save woe eternal, which the sun's bright ray
Brings to our aching hearts and throbbing sight,
But we again forget them when 'tis night.
O! bid an angel minstrel on a beam
Of bright Arcturus glide, and pour his stream
Of heavenly melody to soothe my rest,
And lull th' undying worm within my breast.
Or, let a magic dream at thy command
Bear me upon its wing to Fairy land,

That with Titania in a flowret's bell
Like its own balmy odour I may dwell,
And wake its scent, and bid it wander far
With a sweet message to some island star,
Which floats upon that azure pathless sea,
Wafted by angels' sighs of ecstasy!
Or, if perchance so favored by the dream
I would (if to my mind it well might seem)
Ride with King Oberon upon a ray,
Which in its earthward flight had lost its way.
Or on a waving bridge of gossamer
Which, with their dying sighs, the breezes stir,
I'd walk from leaf to leaf, or seek the bower
Where youthful lovers while the midnight hour,
And I would steal with swift, but noiseless feet
Upon the boughs o'er-head, to hear the beat
Of their impassioned hearts between each close
Of their enraptured speech—and when Repose
Had locked them in its arms, I'd sit and sing
The sweetest strain that ever fay might bring

From elfin bower, or cave, or ocean-shell,
Or wheresoe'er soft Music loves to dwell!
Or I might scare the cricket that would shake
The diamond dew which falls on bush, and brake—
A heavenly boon upon a darksome spot,
Like joy unto a heart that feels it not!—
Let morning find me thus; and when the sun
Springs gaily forth with plumes of light to run
Like a young ardent spirit, a bright race,
And earth the mask of darkness from her face
Flings off—then must I wake to grief and pain,
And suffer ills—until thou com'st again.

LINES

ON THE UNFORTUNATE DEATH OF HENRY NEELE, ESQ.

Is it for this heaven's gifts of fancy, hope,
Love's soft imaginings, its flowers and stars
Are wove into a garland for the bard?
Sure sensibility like lightning gleams
Most beauteous, but destroying. Ah! what hap,
What melancholy fate that but to *this*
Genius at last must come!

There is a light that cannot be
  Quenched into nothing—so divine
It blazes on eternally,
  And lives along the poet's line.
That light is in thy breathing lay,
  As goodness pure, as glory bright,
And like a beacon far away
  It cheers the lone heart's murky night.

There is a crown, the richest far—
O! pluck those sparkling wonders down,
Set in a circle many a star,
And that shall be the poet's crown.
That starry crown is on thy bust
Decreed by doom itself to thee;
It will not fall, like man to dust
But like the sun glow deathlessly.

Soul of the minstrel!—gifted child!
Unfettered now, and unconfined,
That deed was wild, was passing wild—
The madness of a minstrel's mind.
Why was that longing to be free,
To break the link of being's chain,
To make thee wings, and dove-like flee
To the pure spirit's pure domain?

Was it that earth has fewer flowers
  Than blush in groves of other spheres;
Or didst thou dream of rosier hours
  In worlds beyond this world of tears?
Was it that hope's soft rainbow hues
  Like fleeting vapours melt away;
Or didst thou think joy's evening dews
  Should on the heart perpetual stay?

Was it that earth's idolatry
  Is not enough for minstrel high,
That pride forbears to bend the knee
  When godlike genius passeth by?
Was it that friends are all untrue,
  That smiles betray, that sorrows burn,
That storms obscure heaven's beauteous blue,
  That memory is dead pleasure's urn?

Was it that love's a night-born dream
  Whereon we weep when all awake—
A parting ray, a sunny gleam
  That leaves the cheated heart to break?
Was it that "Fame's proud temple shines"
  Too like futurity, afar,—
That grief dilates, that bliss declines,
  That life and hope are—what they are?

Was it that heavenly minstrelsy
  Ne'er finds a guerdon meet on earth,
That many a maddening woe may be
  Concealed beneath the mask of mirth?
O! who can answer? yet one day
  Will bring a sunbeam to thy tomb—
Till then, let sorrowing minstrels say
  The world's unkindness worked thy doom.

AN INVITATION.

O! sure the soft light of the moon was made
To lead fond lovers to their midnight bower,
That unto each it might be given to say,
Bliss has been mine!

To-night, to-night on bush, and bower
The lady-moon will shine;
Then come, and glad that rosy hour
With all those charms of thine.

The stars will twinkle in the sky
Like those bright eyes I love;
The soft breeze, like a lover's sigh
Will play around our grove.

The bulbul's song will be doubly sweet;
The wave will wander by,
And bring its music to thy feet,
And Lady! so will I.

My fairest wreath of minstrelsy
For thee I'll proudly twine;
And that the sweetest flower shall be
Which tells those charms of thine.

Around my bower the woodbine twines,
The rosebud blooms there too—
But what are these, and the clustering vines,
And the myrtle, without you?

My cup will flow with regal wine,
Like thy lips so rich and red;
And there the moonbeams white will shine
Upon that ruby bed.

But what's red wine or moonbeam white,
If thee I meet not there?
Thy cheek shall be the red wine bright,
Thy brow the moonbeam fair.

Thy fairy feet on flowers shall tread
By angels scattered round;
Each sight for thee shall beauteous be,
And musical each sound.

Then come—to-night, on bush, and bower
The lady-moon will shine;
O! come, and glad that rosy hour
With all those charms of thine.

ASPIRATIONS.

Our hopes are like young birds, and where they fly
We know not; but alas! they soar too far,
And then, with broken pinions fall to earth.

I would I were a ray of light
To play upon the wave,
With the spirits of the water,
And the Ocean's lovely daughter;
Or down to dart with arrowy flight
To the mermaid's coral cave!

I would I were a dream to glide
Into a poet's brain,
That he might tell of world's unseen,
And flowers and stars that ne'er have been,
And mark the flow of pleasure's tide,
And sapphire skies serene.

I would I were a mellow tone
Of a young lover's lute,
That Zephyr me might onward bear,
And pour me gently in the ear
Of some beloved and lovely one,
Her soft heart to salute.

I would I were a starry gem
Upon the brow of night,
That lovers' eyes might turn to me
To witness all their ecstasy;—
How blest I'd be in blessing them
Though with a trembling light.

I would I were the tear that flows
From woman's pensive eye;
To be on woman's rosy cheek
Were rapture words may never speak,
And when her cheek with passion glows
'Twere sweetest there to lie.—

I would I were the hope that fires
A youthful minstrel's breast,
While to his lady's ear he brings
Strains, such as a seraph sings;—
O! there if ever Hope expires
It sweetly sinks to rest!

SONNET.

TO HENRY MEREDITH PARKER, ESQ.

THE FOLLOWING TRIBUTE OF ADMIRATION IS RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED.

Delicious minstrelsy alone can bring
Down to this earth the rainbow hues of heaven;
And Oh! to fly upon an angel's wing,
To highly favored bards alone is given—
To weave a deathless wreath of "leaves and flowers"
None but the gifted poet's hand may dare;
To gild with sunshine this bleak world of our's,
And chase its darkness, is the minstrel's care.
Bard of our sunny land, and golden sky!
My heart has gladdened o'er thy magic lay;
'Tis like the hymn of seraphim on high,
That once awakened never dies away—
My soul hath drank it—and it is to me,
Sweet bard! "a draught of immortality!"

SONNET.

Scarce has it blossomed, ere the vernal flower
Is forced to feel the storm's destroying power—
Scarce has the sunlight quivered on the stream
Before a black cloud hides that beauteous beam—
Each Iris made of rain with many a ray,
Even as you gaze upon it, melts away—
And Hope—ah! heavenly Hope o'er cheated hearts
But flings its hues, then faithlessly departs.—
Oft have I looked upon the morning's red,
But like a passing thought it quickly fled—
Yet fleeter than that tinge, or rainbow hues,
Or fancies brought by wildest Poet's Muse,
My aspirations mounted, but in vain—
They fell like wounded birds to earth again.

SONNET.

TO THE MOON.

Lonely thou wander'st through wide heaven, like one
That has some fearful deed of darkness done,
With grief upon thy cheek; while sad despair
Coldly refuseth thee a shelter where,
Repose might give thee welcome. Or hast thou
Washed with pale light thy melancholy brow,
Because the dreams Hope brought thee once, have fled,
And left thee thoughts of sadness in their stead?
Ah no! it is that thou art too near earth
Ever to witness rosy pleasure's birth;
And ceasless gazing on the thousand showers
Of ill that inundate this world of our's
Has touched thy heart, and bid thine aspect be
For our misfortunes, pale with sympathy.

SONNET.

Regret has ne'er brought back a vanished day,
And sighs are vain for dreams that pass away
Even like themselves; then let me cease to mourn
For those bright visions Time can ne'er return,—
For those warm fancies, aspirations high,
And thoughts that gleamed like rainbows in the sky.—
Where are they now those air-built visions strange,
Why should they perish, wherefore should they change?
Go! seek the wrack upon the sea, or beam
Which played at noon-tide on the summer stream;
Like light upon the wave, or trace on sea,
Those fancies are but things for Memory;
And henceforth Hope with faithless, meteor ray
Shall never cheat, or lure me from my way.—

SONNET.

Dreams to the care-worn soul are kindly given
Like revelations of the joys of heaven,
Without a taint of earth—so warm, so bright,
Like spirits born of happiness and light:
And it is this which makes me fondly deem
That Love's a gilded, soft, ethereal dream!
That dream once glided through my heart and brain,
Giving new life to every parched-up vein,
Waking those fancies, which like scents are hidden
Until the breeze upon the flower hath ridden,
Bringing to light those thoughts like pearls that be,
Till by the diver from obscurity
They're brought for whiter necks.—O! thus Love shone
Upon my spirit—dark since Love is gone!

SONNET.

Death! my best friend, if thou dost ope the door,
The gloomy entrance to a sunnier world,
It boots not when my being's scene is furled,
So thou canst aught like vanished bliss restore.
I vainly call on thee, for Fate the more
Her bolts hurls down as she has ever hurled:
And in my war with her, I've felt, and feel
Grief's path cut to my heart by misery's steel.
But man's eternal energies can make
An atmosphere around him, and so take
Good out of evil, like the yellow bee
That sucks from flowers malignant, a sweet treasure—
O tyrant Fate! thus shall I vanquish thee,
For out of suffering shall I gather pleasure.

SONNET.

Where are thy waters, Lethe?—I would steep
My past existence in their source, and sleep
In Death's cold sheltering arms, if they but turn
The shafts of grief aside, and keep me free
From all the bitterness of misery,
And all those tyrant agonies, which burn
My brain, and heart eternally. O! Life
Why dost thou love me so—do I not hate
Thee, and thy gifts accursed?—but there's a strife
My soul has long engaged in—'tis with fate;
And in my sorrow, I am half elate
With something kin to joy, that I must be
Soon in that conflict vanquished—then from thee
Loathsome existence! shall I separate.—

SONNET.

O! could my wandering, breeze-pinioned mind
True brotherhood in earthborn spirit find,
One that might ever on unflagging wings
Companion me in my imaginings,
One that from earth could take its earthliness,
And robe it with the mind's own light—'twould bless
The wheeling of existence—we should rise
Like wild twin comets hurrying through the skies;
Or swift as starshoots dart into the chasms
Of earlier planets. These enthusiasms
Which ceaseless glow in my volcanic brain,
Because unshared, have ever brought me pain,
And left my mind in dark, despairing mood
To feel, and think upon its solitude.—

SONNET.

Fair Lady! I was but a minstrel boy
When first thy dark glance told my soul, that joy
Might be, perchance, by heaven bestowed on me,
If thy soft heart heaven's almoner would be.
Why should my spirit deem its lot unblest?
For, howsoever 'tis now robbed of rest,
And forced to war with a malignant world
Whose blood-red banner against me unfurled,
Floats as in orient skies the purple sun
Half veiled by morning's rising mists of dun—
Still faithful Memory will fling back her beams,
And bring to light those wild, unearthly dreams,
Which were, in mercy, to my spirit given
When thou didst teach me all I know of heaven!

SONNET.

TO THE RISING MOON.

Why art thou blushing lady! art thou shamed
To show thy full, fair face? Behind yon screen
Of trees, which Nature has enrobed with green
Thou stand'st, as one whose hidden sins are named;
Peeping the leafy crevices between,
Like Memory looking through the chinks of years
For some fair island-spot unsoiled by tears.—
Now thou'rt ascending, melancholy queen!
But the red rose has sickened on thy cheek,
And there thou wander'st sorrowful, and weak,
And heedless where thou'rt straying, sad, and pale,
Like grief-struck maiden, who has heard revealed
To all the world that which she wished concealed—
Her trusting Love's, and hapless Frailty's tale.

SONNET.

Misery on misery!—I soon shall be
Like Atlas with a world upon my back—
My heart's almost worn out— could any see
Within my bosom, they would ken the track
Which sorrow there has made; I cannot flee
From thoughts which crush my soul upon the rack.
O! what a curse is immortality!
We feel it but in pain, when Fate's attack
Leaves the mind vanquished, but to suffer still
Such tortures from the despot, Memory
As Hope despairs of healing. Human ill
Is with our nature linked eternally.
Man and misfortune are twin-born—I feel
This to be true, at least 'twas so with me!

THE END.

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