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A D D R E S S.

THESE Meditations are submitted, with Christian respect, to those who love the thoughtful sacredness of subjects like those which the master-spirits of Painting have immortalized. The facts of Religion, the forms of Art, and the feelings of Poetry, are related to each other by a beautiful and holy concord ; and the writer of this will be grateful, if, in the remotest degree, he may have succeeded in illustrating their alliance.

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THE JUDGMENT OF SOLOMON.

THERE is a magic by mysterious night
Evok'd, when dreams, like messengers from heaven,
Rise from eternity, and round the soul
Hover and hang, ineffably sublime ;
But mocking language, when it tries to catch
Their fine ethereality of truth, and power.—
Yet, all are dreamers, in the heart or head,
Pursuing ever some prefigur'd good ;
Some fairy Eden, where the flow'rets bloom
Beyond the winter's blight, or serpent's trail
To waste or wither !—Life itself a dream,
An unreality of wondrous things,
Of change abrupt, or crisis unforecast,
Often in hours of high-rais'd fancy grows.

And how religious is the sway of dreams,
Which are the movers of that secret world
Where most we live, and learn, and love,—
Building our being up to moral heights,
Stone after stone, by rising truths advanced
To full experience, and to noble aims !
The tombs of time they open, till the forms,
The faces, and the features of our dead
Lighten with life, and speech, and wonted smiles !
While mem'ry beautifies the Thing it mourns,
And to the dead a deeper charm imparts
Than their gone life in fullest glory had.—
And thus in visions of the voiceless night,
(Apparell'd with that beauty which the mind
Gives to the lov'd and lovely when no more,)—
Rise from their tombs the forms of fledged days,
Friends of bright youth,—the fascinating dear !
Till back returns life's unpolluted dawn,
And down the garden walk, or cowslip'd field,
(Where once he prattled, full of game and glee,)
The man, transfigur'd back to childhood,—roves
Tender as tears ! So, on the wind-bow'd mast
The sailor-boy in dreams a mother hails,
And hears her blessing o'er his pathway breath'd ;
Or, pale and gasping, ere his life-drops ebb

For ever,—how the soldier thus depicts
In the soft dream of some remember'd day,
The hands that rear'd him, or the hearts that heav'd
With bodements, when the charm of tented fields
Seduced him from the sweets of sainted home
And virtue!—Dreams are thus half miracles,
All time they master, and all truths embrace,
Which melt the hardest, and our minds affect
With things profounder than our creed asserts.

But when creation with its primal bloom
Was haunted, and the spirit-world appear'd
With thrilling nearness on this world of sense
Splendours, and secrets, and mute signs to bring,
Beyond what modern grossness can receive,
Or sanction,—then to patriarchal mind
In that young period did JEHOVAH come,
And unto conscience syllable His Name,
By voices deep, in visions most divine ;
Or, apparitions oft at noon of night
Dimly the future to a seer unveil'd,—
Woeful, or wondrous, or with mercy charg'd.
Such dreams the mystery of slumber made ;
Heralds of grace, and harbingers of Heaven,

And prophets of the infinite To COME,
They were, and minister'd high truth to man.
Sleep was religion, for it glow'd with God ;
And that which daylight could not, dar'd not see,
Oft in some trance when mind o'er matter rul'd,
The night uncurtain'd, and to soul reveal'd
Grandeurs and glooms, and glories without name !

'Twas thus at Gibeon, to the royal sage
Of David born, JEHOVAH, at deep night,
Descended in the shadow of a Dream ;
And bade him, round His large and loving Heart
Wind a petition, vast as prayer involves !
But, how, O king ! did thine encourag'd soul
Climb the dread height of this accorded boon,
Celestial ?—Far as thought could fly
Upward and heavenward thy permitted prayer
Might travel ; systems, suns, and worlds,
Yea, nothing save the ESSENCE UNCREATE,
From thy request was hinder'd ; all was pledg'd
And promis'd : what then was thy spoken will ?
Not power—though that is property divine ;
Not genius—though it be a dazzling spell
That makes, or mars, or glorifies mankind ;

Not wealth—though that be worshipp'd like a god ;
Not beauty, fame, nor length of honour'd life,
Kingdoms nor thrones, with provinces for slaves,—
No ! not for these the destin'd Son of David ask'd :
Above all matter, and beyond all mind
Created, did the royal dreamer mount ;
For, in his full magnificence of faith,
A gift as boundless as the GIVER was,
He dar'd to ask !—and that, was God himself,
In wisdom granted ; “ Give me,” cried the king,
“ Give me, oh ! God, an understanding heart !”

Wise was the prayer, whose comprehension grasp'd
In one behest, the brightest of all dowers,—
A wisdom pure, that eyesight of the soul,
Which looks through morals, up to morals' source,
The Will Almighty !—But the dream departs,
And calmly dies, like some cathedral strain
Solemnly deep, slow melting into Heaven.
Then wakes the king : but though the vision ends,
The promise fails not ; for his prayer begins
Already, through the mind's exalted powers,
And in the many-chambered heart,—to prove
How God by wisdom gives Himself to man.
For, lo ! at once, oracularly wise,

And all unparagon'd by Grecian sage,
Or Roman sire, in proverb, or in speech,
The kingly Solomon himself approves !—
Judging the heart, and with such cloudless eye,
As if omniscience to his gaze had lent
A beam directive—perfect as profound.

Two mothers with their new-born infants slept ;
Each to the breast her bud of being clasp'd,
The young heart beating near the mother's own
In thrills and throbs of answ'ring sympathy.
Alone they slumber'd, in one chamber hous'd,
No eye to watch, save His who watches all—
The Slumberless :—But, lo ! at night's dead calm,
The one o'erlaid, and unto death deform'd
Her helpless, hapless, unresisting babe,
Who died beneath her, like a roseleaf crush'd
Beneath the pressure of some careless foot,
Bended and broken. Then arose that 'reft
And childless mother, and the living babe
From the warm nook of its maternal heart,
(As there it slumber'd like a tiny lamb
Sheltered at evening by its parent's side
From blast or peril)—took it gently forth ;
Thus for the living left the dead, and laid

In pale cold mock'ry on the mother's breast
That infant breathless !—Morning oped its lids
At last, and with the rising day arose
The tending mother, to embrace her child,
And pour her life-stream through its little veins !
When—hark ! a shriek, a shudder, and a groan
As if the soul were stifled, and all words
Were chok'd to silence by o'ermost'ring pain.
All stark and chill th' affrighted mother feels
A pulseless baby on her beating heart,—
Whose breathings were with healthful life attun'd,
At midnight—can it be, her own indeed ?
Those sunken features, and that waxen form !
Not e'en by death could such disguising change
Be acted ; therefore on the child who liv'd
She fix'd, she fasten'd, her most yearning gaze
Of tenderness ; and, oh ! instinctive love,
The babe and mother eye to eye reveal'd.
Strange was the sight, and almost awful too,
To mark *that* parent of her babe bereft,
Living and warm, and with an infant dead,
Born of another, in her arms outlaid ;
And then, to look on *this*—who held a child
With mock affection, miserably like,
But on the lifeless body of her own

Cast a cold gaze, as if her eye were dead,
Or nature frozen at its very fount !

Here, in this blank, where truth's detecting ray
Is wanting, and no evidence of eye,
Or ear, or tongue the misty doubt can break,
And disenchant—where person, plea, and all
That for the sentence of adjudging law
A basis forms, is unapparent found—
How shall a Solomon with all his skill
Truth from the cause, like lightning from the cloud,
Elicit? Torture may not be the test,
Lest falt'ring nerves for guilt should be mista'en :
Nor can those lines of heart, that o'er each face
To him upturn'd, most eloquently rise,
Crimson, or pale, or livid with despair,—
Assure the monarch *which* the mother is,
Or whose yon breathing child. Thus judgment, balk
If mortal only, must be paralyz'd, or dumb.
But, now, THE UNDERSTANDING HEART behold !
By grace accorded in that Dream of night,
Itself shall manifest, and come abroad
Divinely real, in full act declared,—
Like melody from some deep chord outdrawn
By master-touch of skill's exacting hand

That gives it being. Difficult and deep,
And thick as darkness by the night of sin
Begotten,—though the ravell'd cause appear,
Yet will the shading mystery of guilt,
The pall of crime itself at once uplift,
And guilt its own abhorr'd confessor be,—
Touch'd by a spell, and summon'd by a wand
Resistless,—by a power from heaven derived.

Though passion, pride, nor jealousy, nor tears,
Nor loud acclaim, nor clamour's fierce rebuke,
Nor all the blazonry warm feeling wears
On mien and manner,—can the secret draw
Forth from its hidings ; nature still remains :
And to that sense of motherhood, enshrin'd
In the safe temple, where th' affections lodge,
Will Solomon a thrilling charge send home.—
For all can tragedy, save mother's love
(Profoundly genuine as the source is deep,)
By mere emotion parody, and act.
Thus both may weep ; and sorrow might assume
In each keen parent what the childless wear
When grief pines madly ;—but for living babe
No heart like mother's with its heat intense

Could throb, with feeling in each pulse alive,—
Yearning, as if her body's frame refin'd
And grew all spirit, by excess transform'd !

“ Now bring the sword, and into halves divide
The child which lives, that each her half may have.”
So spake the king ; and bade each parent take
A bleeding portion of the child she claim'd
Home to her bosom !—But ere sword could fall,
To cleave the beauty of th' unconcious babe
Asunder,—Nature ! what a moving scene
Didst thou uncurtain,—like a prophet's word
That cites the future into action by a tone,
The flash of that adjudging sword unveil'd
Secrets that else in safe eclipse had slept
Unvoiced and unreveal'd :—forth shines the truth
At once by instinct summon'd from the soul !
“ Cleave the live infant,”—was the royal cry ;
But was there, could there, can there be
In breast maternal, to such voice of blood
Assenting echo?—one with envy pale,
Stern as the rock, and like the murd'rous steel
That glittered fiercely o'er the infant babe,
Both cold and cruel,—mute and motionless

There was, who look'd unthrill'd upon the child,
And, like some tigress into woman shap'd,
Assented!—"Let the babe divided be,
And each her palpitating half receive
Nor mine, nor thine:"—e'en thus the she-wolf spake:
Nor sigh'd, nor shook, nor shed one feeling drop
From mercy's fountain; tearless did she stand,
A heartless mother into granite turn'd!

But she, the parent of a stolen child
With what an outburst did her heart speak out
In that dread pause!—Before the throne she fell,
As if the sabre through her grieving form
Plung'd its fierce way; and there, with lifted eyes
All agony, and hands whose shudd'ring clasp
With strange convulsion bodied forth a grief
Beyond the tragedy of tones to tell,—
All pale and prostrate round her babe she twined
Her arms maternal, took one moment's gaze
To feed her mem'ry with a farewell sight,
And then—"Give *her*, O king! my child;
The dead be mine, the living babe be hers!"
Thus cried affection; and the truth was *there*!
There in that motherhood of genuine heart

Apparent. Dear, indeed, the infant was ;
And, like a ray from her own being drawn,
To lose it, from her nursing breast, would be.
But still, at times, perchance, to see it smile ;
Or, often in some walk, or meeting-spot
To view the motion of its tiny feet,
Or hear it lisp some little word, and know
That yet beneath the arch of heaven it lived
And grew, a living, loving, blessed Thing
Of beauty, though from *her* fond cares remov'd,—
Were better far, than now in welt'ring gore
To view it mangled !—Therefore back recoil'd
Her life-spring, ere the cleaving sword could fall ;
And by that instinct, rushing deep, sublime,
Outcame the mother !—like a sudden gem
Full on the soul of Solomon then flash'd
The right decision ; and in her breast of love
That living infant was at once re-laid,
Stole by the childless robber of the night,
While she had slumber'd.

Mercy, nature, truth,
Concentred all in that sweet judgment met,
A coronation of pure feeling made ,
And soft as mother's grew the monarch's voice,

While the big tear of bright emotion hung
On his long eyelash quiv'ring, when he spake,—
“Sheathe the drawn sword ! and spare the doubted child ;
Behold the mother in that yearning breast,
And quickly let it rock the babe it bore !”

CHRIST AMONGST THE DOCTORS.

How beautiful the brow of JESUS was,
Methinks, imagination's hallow'd dreams
Would fain adumbrate,—Virgin-born was HE!
Not shap'd by Sin, but through th' o'ershadowing POWER
Of THE GREAT SPIRIT, his conception took
Human reality, in flesh and form
Embodied ; never did one taint of earth,
A touch of sensual feeling, or a tone
Of temper, harshly loud, or rudely quick,—
Assail the Soul of that mysterious Boy.
And, therefore, Beauty's most ethereal power,
Haply upon his forehead's arching grace
Was thron'd ; and from his eye's divine appeal
Broke a soft radiance, exquisitely deep ;
Or, on his lips pure inspiration sat,
Or, from the glory of his Heaven-born face
There beam'd expression, on the gazer's mind
Awfully mild, and full of melancholy ;
And, like the cadence of an angel's sigh,
(If such were sadden'd)—moving more than tears.



But though we image on our mental glass,
How beautiful the young EMANUEL'S form
And features, must in stainless truth have been,—
Yet is there myst'ry, pall'd with awe profound,
In the felt knowledge, that no eye hath look'd
On that which *outwardly* with answ'ring truth,
The perfect JESUS which poetic faith
Within hath imaged,—bodies forth to shape?
Though miracles conceptive art achieves;
And grace and loveliness the witching hand
Of Genius, out of senseless marble cites,
(As feeling calls expression from the face,)
Till sculptured beauty, to our wonder seems
Like inspiration into stone transfused;—
Yet never Art, though rapt, and raised, refined,
Can shadow forth, what yet the soul perceives,
A Saviour's beauty,—in our flesh enshrin'd!

And why? but in the VIRGIN-BORN there met
Finite with Infinite, in ONE conjoined,
Th' Impersonation of both God and Man!—
That miracle, where all the Attributes were crown'd,
And the vast Trinity their secret grace
At once centered.—Therefore, mortal eyes
Can ne'er with such a saintly lustre shine,

*As did the eyes of Jesus ; nor can cheek
Of manhood, such unfathom'd meaning wear,
As on the visage of th' INCARNATE sat,
When for our sin this fallen world He trod
In woe and weakness. Thus no type we have
No model, out of mind or mem'ry drawn,
Wherewith to fashion into form, or fact,
That awful beauty which devotion grants
To CHRIST imagined.—And, how wise, the GREAT
DIRECTOR of our spirit's creed hath shown
Himself, in leaving thus a want sublime !—
For could we in the sculptor's breathing stone,*

But glimpses are there, which divinely hint
The life and love of that celestial Babe
Of Mary born, and, through her meek estate,
Laid in a manger : hence must faith perceive,
That e'en as infancy to childhood buds
Under the watchings of maternal eyes,
Helpless as tender,—did the CHILD-GOD grow ;
Our very Nature from its primal seed
The SECOND in the Trinity assum'd ;
And from the womb the same to manhood bore
With perfect glory, through all woe, and want,
Temptations, trials, and unspoken pangs :
And from the cross, in bleeding merit nail'd,
And from the tomb, in taintless death consign'd,—
That Nature carried with triumphant love
Far o'er the angels'—up to highest Heaven !
And placed it under God's parental wing,
 ' Shelter'd and shadow'd, 'mid the harpings loud
 ' Intelligences, who round the Throne
 with commingled awe,
 —for the WORD made flesh,
 fallen mind,

As did the eyes of Jesus ; nor can cheek
Of manhood, such unfathom'd meaning wear,
As on the visage of th' INCARNATE sat,
When for our sin this fallen world He trod
In woe and weakness. Thus no type we have
No model, out of mind or mem'ry drawn,
Wherewith to fashion into form, or fact,
That awful beauty which devotion grants
To CHRIST imagined.—And, how wise, the GREAT
DIRECTOR of our spirit's creed hath shown
Himself, in leaving thus a want sublime !—
For could we in the sculptor's breathing stone,
Or in the painter's miracle of hues,
Or in some poet's paradise of men,
The very features of our vision'd CHRIST,
Faithful and fair, as once on earth they shone,
Indeed have witness'd,—Reverence, awe, and fear,
And solemn faith, by radiant hope illum'd,
Perchance had been enfeebled ; Sense alone
A false religion would have mainly felt ;
And sentiment in colour, shape, or stone,
In form adored, but yet in spirit spurn'd
The Crucified, whose meritorious cross
Our trembling conscience must for peace admit,
And character, for purity prolong.

But glimpses are there, which divinely hint
The life and love of that celestial Babe
Of Mary born, and, through her meek estate,
Laid in a manger: hence must faith perceive,
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Temptations, trials, and unspoken pangs:
And from the cross, in bleeding merit nail'd,
And from the tomb, in taintless death consign'd,—
That Nature carried with triumphant love
Far o'er the angels'—up to highest Heaven!
And placed it under God's parental wing,
Shelter'd and shadow'd, 'mid the harpings loud
Of bright Intelligences, who round the Throne
Circle MESSIAH, with commingled awe,
Worship, and wonder;—for the WORD made flesh,
E'en to the grasp of *their* unfallen mind,
The secret of Eternity remains,
At once their science and their study too.

And thus, with reverential joy, thy heart,
Believer ! back on CHRIST, in boyhood, looks,
Rapt in mute prayer ; and dreams what holy life
JESUS the child, in Nazareth's hill-girt vales
Experienced. There his early being grew
Strong in the Spirit, with calm wisdom grac'd,
As day by day, some deep'ning charm endow'd
His finite nature ; or with vaster forms
Of truth inspir'd, a seven-fold unction fill'd
His large capacity ; while earth and sky,
Sea and wide air, with all the powers that wait
On soul and sense from this material scene,—
To Him administered their service due.
But where hath dream-eyed Poesy survey'd,
In vision high, or ecstasy enrapt,
Experience, such as Earth's INCARNATE felt ?—
A Splendour Infinite by flesh begirt !
At once, in Godhead on the Throne Supreme
Below,—in Manhood, but a human Child !—
Oh ! 'tis a myst'ry, deep as Heaven contains,
A paradox of glory unreveal'd
To thought created,—*how* the WORD combined
The Natures two, but kept the Person one,
Distinct, yet undivided. Yes ! the Son

Of Mary, walk'd the earth His wisdom fram'd,
Breath'd the live air His goodness had produced,
Climb'd the tall mountains by His arm uprear'd,
Gaz'd on the sun whose radiance He inspir'd,
Handled the flowers whose beauty He supplied,
And o'er the billows, by His power controll'd,
Mov'd in dread majesty!—and when the Night
Around Him on the dew-cold Hermon's top
Unroll'd her veil, His lifted eye of prayer
Fix'd its far glance upon the glittering orbs
His fiat into blaze of being called.

But still more wondrous is the whelming thought,
That He who breath'd the Bible into man
By inspiration from His Spirit drawn,
Studied that book! and from its pages drank
Sapience and Truth,—though in Himself, as God,
Subject and Spring of Revelation all!
For what is Scripture but Immanuel's type?—
A Christ in language all its words present
As God in flesh, the incarnation proves.

What were thy views, divinely-perfect Child!
The tainted spirit of our troubled world
Imagines not, when Thou on this low earth
From the hush'd loneliness of lofty hours

Didst reap a harvest of unutter'd thoughts
'Mid rocky glooms, or Galiléan dells,
While subject to thy parents. Meekly wise,
Indeed, thou wert, and wonderfully graced
Beyond all prophet, priest, or Saintly King
Terrestrial! Thoughts were in Thee, great as God!
Grasping Eternity and Truth at once;
And all relations which attach all worlds
To their bright Author, were by Thee perceiv'd
Transcendently; but yet there still abides
A moral gulf, impassably profound,
Between a BEING—born of virgin-seed,
Pure as mere light, without a shadow, speck
Or stain Adamic—and *our* fallen state,
Scarce at the brightest, but embellish'd sin,
Or spotted virtue! No, the souls which strive
For ever with a base and battling host,
Earth-born, of feeling and desires unrein'd,—
Oh! how can these the high experience guess,
Or by their language image, what THE CHILD
Of Mary in His sainted bosom knew,
Whose nature made a harmony complete,
A living answer, perfectly attuned
To Law celestial, and to Will supreme?
But vaster still the separation grows

Between the life of Jesus and our own ;
For HE from all eternity had been
In Godhead second, and in flesh enshrin'd
Feeling and memories—how far remov'd
By exaltation unimaginably pure,
From frail and fev'rish man, whatever height
Of purity, his heaven-taught spirit scale !

And yet, Redeemer ! wert Thou very flesh
Entire, and born of woman's breathing clay :
Thy tears, Thy sorrows, and Thy bosom'd pangs
Our own resembled, yet by sin unstain'd ;
And o'er Thy loveliness did Mary bend
Her eye maternal with as deep a gaze,
And hover round Thee, as Thy childhood grew
In form and vigour, with as watchful step
As mothers now. And thus thy childhood comes
In dreams of beauty, awful, but serene,
Home to our mem'ry, when it ponders how
The young Immanuel up to wisdom grew,
And strengthened.—Far amid the quiet dales,
Or past'ral haunts, of wave-bound Galilee,
Where dwelt the Virgin, did He muse and roam,
And o'er that nature, which His mind produced,
Cast the clear ray of his reflective eye ?

On the blue ceiling of the boundless Heaven
How often gaz'd He ? Or, along that lake
Whose waters oft upbore his walking feet
Like liquid pavement,—did Messiah rove ?
Still lay the billow, like a basking child
Asleep in sunshine when its play is o'er,
Smiling in slumber ? Or, when breeze or blast
Ruffled the waves, and whiten'd them to foam,
Did the deep heart of that most holy Boy
Solemnly listen to the stormy chant
Lifted before him ? Flower, and fruit, and tree,
Whate'er seems beautiful and bright and blest
In nature—did such to his soul convey
Something beyond what Prophecy reveals,
Or Piety, with purest awe, conceives ?—
Creation is the poetry sublime
Of God, in matter's elemental page
Written for all, though rarely thus perus'd ;—
But did this poem to the Child-God breathe
Meanings of love, or melancholy truths,
And tones of finer harmony impart
Than saint can utter, or than seer can tell ?—
There breathes no answer ! earth and heaven are mute ;
But Art may follow where Religion leads
The footsteps of obedient Faith, and paint

That moral vesture which in childhood clad
The life of Jesus—bringing forth, for praise
To glorify, or prayer to comprehend,
Some fact, or form of feeling nobly great
In the meek annals of His early days.
And here the painter of the Gospel sheds
A charm of colours o'er that touching scene,
When sire and mother wonderingly found
Their absent Boy, ere twice six years had roll'd
Their seasons o'er Him—in the Temple mix'd
With Doctors hoary, and Rabbinic chiefs
Hearing, and asking, much of Truth and Heaven.

Lo! where He sits ; and round about Him hang,
With breath almost suspended, and with souls,
E'en to the centre of the conscience thrill'd
By awe unspoken—priestly eld
And learned age ; and from His lips there pours
A stream instructive of surpassing mind,
Richer than Time had ever heard to roll
From saint or prophet. See! the hand how rais'd
With eloquent appeal, and on His mouth
What soften'd majesty, what melting love
There sits, and to Him, by attraction held,
Gather and group that reverential throng.

But not regardless of maternal laws
The holy JESUS ! In the perfect glass
Of His example, childhood yet can mark
All bright reflections of that beauteous love
A son exhibits, when parental ties
Most on the soul their sacred power impress.
Home to fond hearts, the heaven-born Nazarene
At once returneth—subject, like a child.
But thou, oh ! Virgin, pensively inspir'd
With calm and incommunicable dreams
Thou art ; and while the world's unresting tongue
Rings with rapt wonder at MESSIAH's speech,
Thou in the depths of motherhood dost hide
His words of glory, e'en like gems of truth
Lock'd in the cabinet of silence there.



THE SMITTEN ROCK.

Down from the Scorn'd, with celestial glide,
Inaudibly majestic, there enshrin'd
Himself, THE GOD OF ALL DAYS, unseen:
And from the echoing sound a voice profound,
Whose accents were with earthly music deep,
Commanded his peerless guide to strike
The rock of Merioneth; that, break and bare,
And black, rose on the then unwater'd plain
Of Rhyd-y-nod, and uprear'd.
Around the threshold a parch'd and pale
Array of marble lay the sleeping babes,
Dry as the baked dust on the lifeless soil
On which they languish'd! Seldom yet had earth
A mother's sighing bosom felt,
Direr and deeper than the father'd ground
Did now, in groups of ghastly victims bear
Unsooth'd! There lay some haggard hoary man
With beard disshevel'd, down his sun-burnt skin

Long trailing—while his lean and livid face
With upturn'd agony to Heaven was rais'd,
As the chok'd murmur of his gasping breath
Pleaded for water!—There some wasted youth
Clench'd his hot hands with agonizing clutch
Despondingly : and on his lap sustain'd
The shudd'ring limbs of his devoted wife—
Parch'd with a death-pang, while her babe,
Pining for food upon its mother's breast,
Droop'd in pale death, and like a flower of life
Shrivell'd and shrunk,—in fever's thirst expir'd.—
But, see ! before the sacramental pile
Stands a veil'd Leader of the wayworn Tribes,
Summon'd by God beside that tow'ring rock,
To charm it into water, by a word
From Heaven deputed.—But, alas ! the tried
And tested Heart, not Moses could restrain
Within obedience : storms of anger rise,
And sometimes o'er the gentle rush, and sweep
Feeling and faith beneath their lawless track !
Thus did this man of Heaven, the meek : the wise
Now in the hour of peril'd faith succumb
Before emotion in its sinful ire,
And gave to temper what to God was due,—
Obedience !—“ Hear ! ye rebels !” rose the cry :

And in the passion of his pride he rear'd
That wand mysterious, at whose magic wave
Earth, Air, and Ocean had their laws resign'd
Like slaves beneath it ;—and with smiting wrath
Twice on the Rock he dash'd the mystic rod,
In fury ;—and the rock that blow obey'd !
For, fleet as summon'd melodies the hand
That cites them from an instrument of sound,
Elicits,—so from out the rocky depth
Of yon dark granite gush'd the waters forth,
Ebullient, fresh, and fill'd with healing life,—
But, at the sound of their outbreking flow
A thousand lids from sunken eye-balls oped
And sparkled with the gleam of life restor'd !—
Like rain on fire the rushing stream descends ;
And, fever'd with protracted thirst unslak'd,—
How the parch'd mouths of that consuming host
Welcome each gush ! and bathe their blister'd hands
In the soft coolness ; and with blending voice
Lift unto Heaven hosannas long and loud
Which shake the Desert, till its arid leaves
Vibrate beneath that jubilee of souls !

But can we, in this miracle of might
And mercy, nought beyond some parched lips

Fir'd with the fury of a scalding thirst,
But in a moment by the summon'd wave
Subdued and soften'd,—can we nought but *this*
Behold and welcome? No! that Rock was Christ,
A mystery of stone, aloft it tower'd,
Typing the properties of HIM to come,—
The ROCK OF AGES!—Christ our Rest is made
And Refuge, in whose riven side is hid
The Church blood-ransom'd: And the ancient Type
With eloquent exactness fits the truth
Of Him, in whom all ritual shadows find,
Their ans'ring substance,—CHRIST the perfect Lord!

For e'en as rising to the vaulted sky
The rocky form of Meribah appear'd
Both sky and earth conjoining,—so doth Christ
In Godhead, reach the Infinite Supreme,
In Manhood, touch the finite of Mankind,
And both together with Almighty bond
Ineffably in one True Person join,
For ever thus. But when amid the heights
Serene, if some calm mountain you ascend,—
Casting your eye-glance with delighted gleam
O'er the wide prospect that around you spreads
Magnificent, and mighty,—know thou, well,

Believer! even thus with eye unfilm'd
Placed on the summits of redeeming Love,—
May Faith, a landscape of divinest sweep,
A moral prospect of amazing power,
And sacred grandeur, thrillingly survey,
And glory as she gazes!—Yes, the Rock is Christ,
From whence Religion up to God may look
To read His statutes, in full-orbed blaze
Together magnified. And truths which bind
Eternity by their relations, rise
Before pure vision there: for Heaven with all
Its splendours, Hell with all its hoarded pangs
And penalties,—upon this Rock the Soul
May shadow forth: while Earth and Man and Time
In the clear light of this commanding view,
Resolve their paradox, and half unveil
Secrets beyond the philosophic mind
To read, or master.—Providence and Life,
And Death, with that which dwells beyond the tomb,
And Judgment, at whose bar our Thoughts will stand
As well as actions,—these upon this Rock
Of mercy, on the eye of conscience pour
Meanings that strike the memory with awe,
Yea, sometimes make imagination pale
As terror's hue! But when the destin'd wand

Wav'd by the Leader in this ruffled hour
Of ire and anguish, smote the craggy pile,—
Behold an image of that Legal blow
Hereafter on the perfect Flesh to fall
Of Earth's dread VICTIM, whose vicarious blood
The wounding stroke of Heaven's avenging law
Should from his heart's unutterable deep
Of mercy summon. But the Stream that rush'd
From the rent side of that symbolic Rock,
What was it, but a liquid sacrament
Of grace and gospel, and the Spirit's gift
Purchas'd by pangs, and the priceless death
Of God's own martyr, for mankind secur'd ?
And, oh ! methinks, when Israel's fever'd mouth
Black with the burnings of their horrid thirst,
Touch'd the cool water,—their delighted sense
In the keen rapture of its first relief,
Was to the lip, what pardon to the soul,
When conscience, in the blood of Christ baptiz'd,-
At once is soften'd by that healing balm :
And e'en as that mysterious water prov'd
Exhaustless,—o'er the arid wilds of Zin,
To thousands, in its pilgrimage of life
Freshness and health, with ever-flowing tide
Imparting—hath the Spirit's ceaseless love

Through the vast wilderness of this vain world
The Church companion'd, giving endless grace
To all her family of faithful souls.

Then gaze we with no unaffected glance
On Meribah ; but mark with musing eye
The mighty gushings of that God-sent stream,
By Moses summon'd from the smitten mount.
For in that Rock a figur'd rest we find ;
And from those Waters, our refreshment flows
By imaged virtue. Come then, Grace divine !
And on the fever of this fretted life
Soul-wasting, all thy holy dews respire ;
Or through the channels of the arid minds
And hearts sin-wither'd, send thy fresh'ning pow'r
To cool them : life without thee is a thirst
That the parch'd soul with slakeless fury burns,
Till thou allay it with that mystic stream
Which Mercy from the ROCK OF AGES wrung.
Then all is vigour, peace, and purest joy !
Th' infernal bloodhound who pursues the soul,
Satan himself—the frailest in the flock
Of Christ can baffle ; and, by faith transform'd,
Afflictions into future glory change,
And weave their iris out of very tears.

THE RAISING OF LAZARUS.

Who hath not ponder'd, with an awe profound
As wordless, when beside a grave he stood ?
And, while his soul dim speculation held
With truths that touch on Deity and dust,
In cause, or consequence—himself allied
With dread eternity, and doom to come ?—
Oh ! solemn are thy shrines, thou sovereign Death !
However humble, and wherever rais'd :
For tombs are preachers, and with tongueless power
Harangue the conscience, that, like Felix, shakes
Before the throne by apprehension rear'd
Of future judgment ! But this stern appeal
Not from the fanes where mausoleums hold
The wreck of heroes and time-laurel'd kings,
Alone comes forth ; but oft is truly felt
E'en by the brightest slave of earth-born glee,



After Rembrandt by J. Thomsen.

John VI. 45

John VI. 43

Engraved by J. Thomsen.

John VI. 43

When some green churchyard, with its rustic mounds
And grassy hillocks, on his eye intrudes,
A sad memento,—as when mournful Thought
Wanders adown the dim cathedral aisle
Piled with pale cenotaphs, or sculptured tombs,
Where Silence hath an intellectual tongue
Whose accent by the mind is heard alone.
But what are poet's dream, the patriot's sigh,
Reason's alarm, or meditation's gaze,
Around the dark grave gather'd,—with that groan
Compar'd, the grieving Christ of God sent forth,
When by the cavern'd tomb where Laz'rus slept,
He pray'd and ponder'd!—till the tear of thought
Bath'd his pure eyelash with the gracious dew
Of mortal pity, by immortal love
Etherealized.—But, what a sight was there
Embodied Deity by tears o'ercome!—
Surely, if ever from the scene of earth's
Great hist'ry, Heaven a solemn lesson took;
If e'er the pathos of afflicted time
Thrill'd through eternity with sad appeal;
If e'er those Watchers, who the church protect,
Learning divinity by loving man,
Before the INFINITE of Grace have bow'd
O'eraw'd and mute,—'twas when a weeping God

On earth apparent, by a grave appear'd,
And, mild as woman, shed compassion's tear!

But feel we not unfathomably charm'd
When looks religion on that weeping Lord?—
Not when the Angels with descending blaze
Burst into vision over Bethlehem's plain,
Startling the shepherds, while the speechless air
Vocal with Heaven's bright choristers became;
Nor when the Elements their Master own'd,
While Nature's laws in rapt suspension hung
Obedient, on the motions of His will,
Or, word imperial,—can Messiah move
The soul, and thrill it into throbs of praise
With such attraction, as with that blest tear
By Martha witness'd, and by Mary felt
As though it dropt upon her naked heart,
With soothing overflow, from Pity's fount.

“And Jesus wept”!—how soon that period dies!
A breath, the syllables, but all the sense
It holds, eternity alone can tell.
For if there be in tears of erring man
More of the soul than language ever speaks,
In some high mood, when rais'd emotion rocks

The heart with myst'ry,—who can say, how deep
The source, how awful was the spring
Of that, which from the mind of GOD-MAN drew
Those tears that trickled, when the grave He saw,
And groan'd aloud beside the cave of Death?—

The Saviour wept; but what, or whence, the Thought
Which hung the tear-drop in those eyes divine
Baffles the mind, and balks our mental guess
To explicate.—Perchance, the sight of men
Around him weeping, drew responsive drops
Of pure compassion, proving how he wore
Our tested nature, down to very tears?
Or, did unblotted Eden, with its bowers
Of bloom, with all of man's unfallen state
And grandeur, then before His mem'ry glide?
Or, did he ponder how accursed sin
Had marr'd the masterpiece of Heaven, and maim'd
The mind's proportion, and the spirit's peace
Ruffled for ever? Did he mourn that Death
Creation to a charnel-house had turn'd,
Which might have been a paradise of joy
In thornless beauty, without tombs or tears?—
Or, haply over unbelief He wept
Soon to be witness'd, when the startled dead,

Woke by his fiat from the rock-hewn grave,
Should rise, and prove a miracle of life,
Attesting HIM, th' Apostle of the Skies,
Mission'd by God, for guilty Earth to bleed?—

Here let us pause ; for Revelation folds
Around such theme an untransparent veil ;
And pray before it, though we cannot pierce
The sacred darkness that we long to end.—
But Nature, kind interpreter for man
Beyond cold reason's analyzing law,
In that fond burst of unaffected truth,
“ *See ! how he loved him !* ”—the dejected Christ
At once deciphers, and the whole illumines ;
And bids us to yon vale of Bethany
Waft the hush'd mind on meditation's wing.

Home of the Christian ! where Messiah comes
A scene of Heaven in miniature art thou,
Where all is redolent of charms divine,
Temper renew'd, and souls by grace becalm'd.
Thy quiet precincts of a purer world
Breathe to the heart of faith ; and when compar'd
With what the worldling in his home enjoys,—
E'en like the vexing hum of some large street

Where all is hurry loud, and tramp, and strife,
In contrast with the unpolluted calm
Of some cathedral, where a spirit's hush
Hath brooded—seems that worldling's noisy home.

But not for this, is nought but halcyon rest
Experienc'd ; nor because the hidden life
Of Jesus, sanctifies the soul it saves,—
Calamity, Disease, or cruel Death,
Refrain their havoc : No ! some cross must be ;
The lov'd in heaven, on earth are lesson'd most
How grief to glory must the way prepare :
The more we image forth Thy suff'ring life,
IMMANUEL ! must the soaring mind ascend
The summits bright where Thine example shines,
In glory. Oft do such corroding pangs,
And griefs convulsive, round our spirit throng,
As if God's frown, and not his favour, mark'd
Our pathway—shrinking nature half suspects :
And when perchance those weeping sisters watch'd
O'er the pale visage of the ebbing life
Of him by Jesus lov'd ; nor heard the step
Of coming aid in their celestial Friend ;
But day on day, and hour on hour went by,
And still, like colour from a sunset cloud,

Faded their brother from their grieving eyes ;—
Oh ! how the rebel heart of reason throbb'd
With doubts unsaid ; or sicken'd into gloom,
Pining and prayerless ;—still, no Saviour comes !
For Lazarus the gate of death must pass.
And well may fancy see that brother die,
Watch'd by the hearts of those two sisters dear.
But in that moment—in that breathless pause,
Half life, half death, when soul and sense divide
Their empire,—mark ! the sign religion loves.
A pallid gleam of his departing soul
Kindles a moment on the sunken cheek,—
As if from God's own countenance there came
A token-smile, mysteriously illum'd,
And sent athwart the universe to man !

How blest the chamber where a saint expires,
And on the bosom of Almighty Love
Pillows his head, in everlasting peace !
From time's bleak darkness, from disturbing shades
Of sin and sorrow, unto perfect light
At once escaping,—what a thrill intense
Through each fine nerve his new-awaken'd soul
Must feel, when first the everlasting beams
Flash on his eye from crown'd IMMANUEL'S form !

*But when around him rolls the mingled swell
Of raptures high from loud Salvation's harps,—
Never can angel like a saint redeem'd
Sing to the Lord, whose wounds in heaven abide,
“ Worthy The Lamb !—for He was slain for me !”*

But now, that home, where quiet Feeling built
Its temple for the hearts of household love,
Under the shade of that most awful mount,
From whose mid crest the Son of Mary soar'd
Back to the Bosom whence His glory came
To be incarnate,—looks a lonesome haunt,
And cold as desolation's darkest chill
Can make it.—But awhile, and all was clad
With the calm radiance of their cheerful loves
Who dwelt there, in a threefold bond of heart,
By blood and fondness fervently allied.
And in the welcome of a brother's smile
Bask'd the soft feelings of those sisters fond
Who now lament him. Here MESSIAH came
Oft when the weariness of this bad world
Hung on His heart ; there found a fostering shade,
And to that family of love unveil'd
The holy meekness of His stooping mind,
In bland discourse, that richly breath'd of heav'n.

But, oh ! what aching solitude profound
The sisters feel, as out of memory's tomb
Shades of the past athwart the chamber steal,
While o'er the aspect of familiar scenes
Before them, a funereal sadness lies,
Wearing that hue a mourning fancy bids
To colour all things. Yet, though one in grief,
Distinct the mourners in their traits of mind
By power of shaping circumstance, were seen.—
Martha was like the bright and breezy morn,
Elastic motion, and exulting stir,—
Hither and thither with unresting foot
Gliding about, to show a duteous zeal
And urgency, by prompt affection mov'd
As hostess to the Lord of life and worlds :—
But Mary in her vestal bloom appear'd
Placid as twilight, on the dewy flowers
Serenely radiant. Mild and thoughtful maid,
She lov'd the hush of meditative hours,
The shaded walks, the lapse of bubbling streams,
The meek-voiced Evening, or the moonlight trance ;
While the soft grandeur of the silent hills
Sank on her heart like music sad and low,
As oft she wander'd, 'mid the rocky glens
Round Zion gather'd. At the feet of Christ,

While restless Martha at the household plied,
She sat and listen'd ; and with eye uprais'd
Beaming with prayer, and breath almost absorb'd
By pow'r of rev'ence, to his words she clung,
And in the manna of immortal truth
Found the rich banquet hunger'd souls require !

Sweet Mary ! privileged indeed wert thou !
Thus in thy peace and purity to choose
That better part, which none can take away.
Needful as breath to corp'ral being is,
So to our souls a Saviour's truth becomes,
If to His own, our nature be attun'd ;
And such was thine in this devoted hour.
But shall the brother of this blessed twain,
(Sisters in faith, as in affection found)
Awake no more till Time's dread clarion ring,
Pealing the dead to life beneath its blast ?
Behold thine answer !—There the Prince of Life,
By whom the pulses of creation beat
Or pause, according as his will decrees,
Stands by the tomb where Lazarus is laid
In man's long home.—But not by Him unwatch'd
His breath departed ; nor unseen the pangs
He suffer'd ; nor unheard the sighing prayer

Sent from the bosoms of those loving two,
Now at His feet adoringly abas'd.
For He, whose aid was immaturely sought,
Had from eternity this scene design'd.—
The hour, the spot, and yon sepulchral cave
That frown'd before him, with its gloomy mouth,
Where death and darkness fitting emblem found,—
Nought came by chance, but all by Heaven's decree
Was plann'd and overrul'd.—And now, as tides,
When near to ocean, rush with grander swell,
So Christ, as near to glory's brink arriv'd,
His miracles to mercy's height uplift
High as Omnipotence itself can rear
Its arm creative!—Now, the dead shall hear
A Voice, whose echo this creation was!
And at whose summons to the judgment-bar
Hereafter, sea, and air, and graves, and vaults,
And whatsoe'er an atom of the dust
Which once was human, doth contain or hide,—
Thrill'd by his power, shall into flesh resolve
Till the vast dead be living forms again!
Each with his eye upon the wounds of Christ
Concenter'd ; while the soul upon itself
Reverted,—Heaven's own verdict shall approve.
But, lo ! The Lord of resurrection lifts

Upward His fix'd unfathomable gaze,
And by that look, the dwelling-place of God
Perchance was mov'd, throughout its glorious Halls
Of light and beauty : but no sound is heard
Of adoration ; though for prayer approv'd
The SIRE divine mysteriously He thanks.—
Inaudible as thought, beyond the clouds
Into the region round about the Throne
Celestial, must He then have wing'd his prayer !—
By words to man ; by will to God, He spoke,
Who was all echo to His pleading heart.
But now with mien of most unearthly calm
And hand uprais'd, before the open'd tomb
He stands ; and seems dilated with the sense
Of glory, as He gathers up his form
August ; but, hark ! that cry whose loudness mov'd
The hearts around Him till they shook with dread
Religious, and the blood with backward flow
Stream'd on its fountain, while their souls were touch'd
With awe, beyond Imagination's eye
To shape a vision : thus they stood :
Till the deep thunder of that kingly voice,
“ LAZARUS, COME FORTH ! ”—awakingly was heard
Throughout th' abode where souls unbodied wait
Th' archangel's trumpet ;—and the dead emerg'd !

Burst from the grave, and into breath reviv'd ;
Then, what a spectacle its awe enforc'd,
On the mute throng, who saw, with grave-clothes girt,
The pallid tenant of the tomb appear!—
E'en in a moment, ere the loud command
Of Jesus died upon the list'ning ear,
The pulse of being like faint music woke,
The chill blood warm'd, the fallen eyelid mov'd,
And through the wrappings of his shroud were seen
The limbs, with sudden animation stir'd ;
Till up he rose, and from the dust stalk'd forth
Sheeted and silent, from the shades of death,—
Back to this breathing world again recall'd
By power creative of resistless Love.

But what a force of superhuman dread
Fell on the circle, who beheld him rise !
As if eternity itself impress'd
Full on their souls the creed of life to come,
Awhile they trembled, thrilling with a shock
That to the root of consciousness assail'd
Their being : rapt the hush'd disciples stood,
And e'en the mockers of Messiah shook
As did the Temanite, when sleep unveil'd

A Spirit—causing his pale flesh to creep
And hair to shudder, as the Undiscern'd,
The formless Image! glancing like a dream,
Glided before him! But, prevailing love
Not all the bands of darkness, nor of death,
Nor time, nor terror, can thy zeal o'ercome,
Or master: for, with ecstasy inspir'd,
And with a cry whose very sound was soul
Made audible, and eager as the light,
Forward yon sisters of the waken'd dead
Rush to the grave! and when his robes of death
Were loos'd, and his unmantled visage met
Their welcome, and those eyes they clos'd erewhile,
As if no more on this bleak world to gaze
Till time were ended,—once again their own
Saluted, bright with all a brother's love;
And when the accent of this voice was heard
Solemnly tender, and the thrilling touch
Of his embrace their panting bosoms felt,—
Not poetry, with finest pathos arm'd,
Nor sculpture, with its eloquence of stone,
Nor all the soul-expressing power of words
Description borrows, could that scene portray!—
Where God and Nature, Life and Faith, and Love,
Immortal Goodness, and reliev'd Despair,

Met by a tomb ; and round the risen dead
A picture form'd, which from the walls of Heav'n
Regarding angels reverently watch'd,
And lyres seraphic could alone describe.

But thou, who from the damping gloom of death
Wert cited, once again to bare thy brow,
And breathe the airs of this terrestrial life,—
Living, as though on earth thou ne'er hadst died,
Say, did thy memory the secrets hold
Of what the viewless world beyond the bounds
Of time embosoms ? Didst thou in that home
Where dwell the bodiless from clay set free,
On Adam gaze, on earth's first mother look,
Talk with the patriarchs, with the prophets muse,
And hold high converse with the sainted host
Of dead Immortals, still in soul alive ?—
Or, wert thou by permissive God empower'd
To read those secrets whose unshrouded awe
From man embodied, are in mercy kept,
Because too terribly their glory beams
For flesh to master ? Did the moans of hell
Boom on thine ear ? Or, did the harps of Heaven
Float their rapt music o'er thy spirit's chords ?

There comes no answer!—speechless as the grave
From whose chill gloom thy body was recall'd,
Scripture on this, eternally remains,
No fact unveiling ; but where *that* is mute,
Be our religion that of silence too :
Enough for man, the mourner of the dead
And soon death's victim,—this gigantic truth
To grasp invincibly, with glorious hold,
That He, whose summons from unconscious clay
Cited dead Lazarus to second life,—
But gave a prelude of that trumpet-peal,
Under whose blast, (by His command awoke,)
Death shall restore whatever Time can take,
From Abel to the last of living men
Crush'd by his power, and into dust absorb'd !—
For ev'ry particle that once made man,
The RESURRECTION and the LIFE will bring
Back to our souls ; and not a tomb in space,
That will not open when the summons rings
Far as the winds can waft, or waters roll
That cry to human nature, from the Throne,—
“Come from thy tomb ! thou dead Creation, Come !”

ON ABRAHAM OFFERING ISAAC.

THE love of the Almighty in Christ Jesus towards perishing and polluted man, is, like Himself, a great deep of unsearchable wonders. And hence, among other properties of redemption, there is one that distances all thought, dazzles all idea, and defies all expression—even that of INFINITE Glory ! For herein God may, reverently, be said to expound his own nature, and to illustrate his own attributes ; and by so doing, has enriched the world with new truths, as well as the church with “ a new song.” And thus, we may further conclude, that if Redemption (in its upward aspect touching the very summits of the Father’s Glory) be Infinite, then neither the Works of Nature, wondrous though they be ; nor the Ways of Providence, marvellous though they be ; nor all the power and pathos of the affections, exquisite though they be,—can adequately

picture out the surpassing mysteries of the Atonement. In this respect, God's word can never be representatively equal to God's work : for the Bible itself, though infallible and inspired, is an intellectual creation ; but, Jesus Christ, as the perfect manifester of invisible Deity —is “ THE BRIGHTNESS of the Father's glory, and the express IMAGE OF HIS PERSON !”

But while it is thus undeniably true, that finite illustration can never *adequately* portray the “ unsearchable riches of Christ ;” yet may we delight to remember that all Scripture is a vast and varied exposition of the one, full, perfect, and sufficient Sacrifice for the sins of the whole world. Thus may the Saviour be considered as the animating Centre of all its principles and revelations : and that even as the planetary system would dissolve into darkness and ruin if the sun receded from the sky, so would the firmament of Scripture be confounded into moral chaos and doctrinal midnight, if the “ Sun of Righteousness” were removed, as that almighty Orb of truth, from whom all its promises, prophecies, and mysteries receive their light and signification.

Among the adumbrations of Christ in the Old Testament, the one which the artist has here presented, has ever been allowed to be most exquisitely beautiful, and most pathetically accurate, when considered as a pro-

phcey by action, of the future Sacrifice of the Son of God on the Hill of Calvary. We need not be surprised, therefore, that the offering up of Isaac, both among the ancients and moderns, has been a theme over which the mind and the imagination have delighted to expatiate and dwell. As a *type*, the correspondencies between Isaac and the “only Begotten” to come, full of grace and truth,—our theological literature abounds with sermons, comments, and reflections, on its multiform symmetry, when applied to various circumstances associated with the dying scene of its great Anti-type. In this place, therefore, we need not venture to intrude on the domain of the pulpit, or reiterate what has been eloquently and frequently said elsewhere. Let it be sufficient to remark, that with the exception of HIM, whose whole human career was faith in unbroken action, finding its “meat and drink in doing the Father’s will,”—never was the principle of unwavering obedience to a divine command, on the absolute ground alone of its being *such*, so nobly illustrated as when the hoary patriarch, “stretched forth his hand, and took the knife to slay his son!” God and man, and Heaven and earth, and affection and faith,—all encircled that mount with commingled awe, and have enshrined it amid the halo of an everlasting commemoration.

There are, however, two remarks which we may venture to make, even in this brief aspect of a most heart-moving passage in the life of the Father of the Faithful. The one will refer to the type, and the other to the doctrine which it may be intended to prefigure. In regard to the first, then, it will be observed that in John viii. 56, our Lord says that “ Abraham rejoiced to see my day, and was glad ;” and the inference appears to be soberly drawn, which connects, at least a portion of this joyful anticipation with the very scene around which our feelings are now gathered. But by comparing a passage in Matt. xxvii. 32, with what is related in Gen. xxii. 6, we may be still more assured, that the Spirit of Christ must have wondrously overruled the entire moral scenery of the patriarch’s conduct in this hour, when he was called and commanded to immolate not only the son of his love, but (if mere carnal reason had been consulted) the character of his God also : for if Isaac was sacrificed, how COULD that word of the Almighty be verified, “ In ISAAC shall thy seed be called ” ? But let us revert to the passage in St. Matthew.

“ And as they came out, they found a man of Cyrene, Simon by name : *him they compelled to bear his cross.*” Now the transfer of the burden of the cross from the fainting Christ to Simon of Cyrene, is referable—of

course, considered as a mere act on the part of human agency—to any of those varied impulses, or motives, which may be supposed to have operated on the hearts of an excited soldiery. But, while this must be accorded, we further maintain, that in this *apparently* minute and unimportant incident, the prophetic omniscience of the Almighty is exquisitely illustrated ; and that, while the soldiers freely obeyed the promptings of their own nature by this transference of the cross, they were, in the same act, standing within the circle of an everlasting purpose, and filling up, with consummate accuracy, the application of an antitype to a type, in the patriarchal transaction to which we now refer. For, in the next place, let us compare with a passage in the Evangelist, the following in the narrative by Moses :—

“ And Abraham TOOK THE WOOD OF THE BURNT-OFFERING, AND LAID IT UPON ISAAC HIS SON ; and he took the fire in his hand, and a knife ; and they went both of them together.”

Is not this, we ask, a marvellous testimony to the exact corespondence between the type and antitype ? It is not only with the *general* similitude of the scene and its accompaniments to the sublime and awful drama hereafter to be enacted, that we are struck ; but, if possible, we are still more amazed, that even in the simple fact of

Isaac's carrying the wood with whose flame his body (so far as he saw) was to be consumed, there is a significant prelude to the particular incident, that when on the way to Calvary, the "Beloved" of the Almighty also bore the cross on which his august Humanity was about sacrificed !

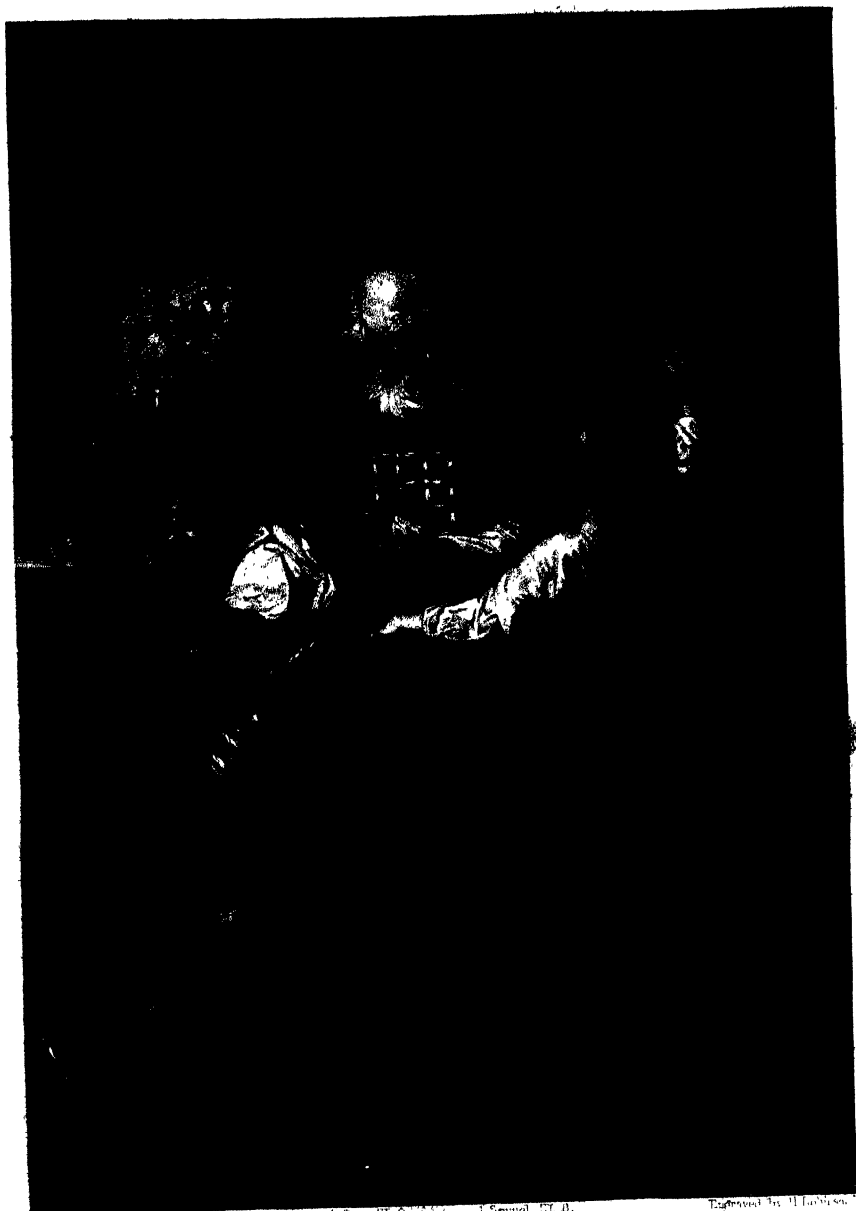
How far Abraham was actually informed of the mysterious significance of what he was now doing, we have not the precise letter of Scripture to tell. But the more we ponder on the fact, that the father "took the wood of the burnt-offering and laid it upon Isaac his son," the more must we believe, that he was, (consciously or unconsciously,) under the particular guidance of the Divine Spirit ; not only as receiving from Him the grace of obedience for the sacrifice of his son, but also as being overruled so to arrange the very letter of the type, that the son himself should bear the wood on which he was to be offered. For, if left to the guidance of paternal instinct, a contrary division of the burden might well have been anticipated ; and inasmuch as the knowledge of Isaac's speedy death, would rather have prompted the sire to have borne the heavy wood himself ; or at least, to have divided the burden with his devoted boy. But, God was in the whole transaction ; and carried out, through the free movements of man's agency, His own

decree touching the GREAT ANTITYPE of Isaac, with infallible accuracy and effect.

The second reflection we shall venture, relates briefly to the doctrine which the offering of Isaac involves. Hear then the comment of the Everlasting himself on the magnificent devotion of the patriarch's faith,—
“By myself have I sworn, saith the Lord, for because thou hast done this thing, and HAST NOT WITHHELD THY SON,—THINE ONLY SON,”—mark the stress here! “Thy son! thine only son!” And who can doubt that the costly nature of Abraham's sacrifice, is recorded by Inspiration in order to assist our ideas in climbing up to the celestial altitudes of God's mercy, in giving HIS SON, HIS ONLY SON, for the sins of a guilty and undone creation? And here, assuredly, we seem to approximate to one of the greatest mysteries in theology, and also to one of the saddest corruptions in humanity. For, as to the first, it probably surpasses all the finite intelligence in the universe to state what is the precise connection (i.e. is it relative, or absolute?) between the pardon given by the FATHER and the blood shed by the SON: so with reference to the second point, we cannot too prayerfully watch the movements of our haughty intellects, and the instigations of our sensual hearts, as to the *facility* of forgiveness, considered as an act of sovereign compassion

on the part of God. We are persuaded that if thousands who consider and call themselves orthodox, would speak out the hidden theology of their souls, we should find them often putting the Atonement itself into the crucible of a dangerous rationalism ; and that the logic of their speculation concerning mercy exhibited to fallen man, sometimes approaches to this conclusion—"God had but to WILL to forgive man ; and with Omnipotence there could be no difficulty in exercising that volition." We will not here reply to this most perilous view of our pardon, in relation to the nature of Deity, but content ourselves with remarking, that in thus reasoning on the mercies of the Supreme, we are, with unholy rashness, transferring our own mental temperament to the constitution of the Infinite Mind itself ; and that, while it is true that neither *effort* nor *difficulty*, in their literal meaning, can ever be associated with the character of God ; yet is it equally true, that the entire structure of the Bible appears to be arranged as a doctrinal protection against man's ever presuming to whisper to his heart, that it cost Jehovah nothing to pardon the guilty ! And the approval which He utters from the skies on the *costliness* of the patriarch's obedience, in offering his son, is not the least among those influences which He brings to bear upon the human spirit, when He would teach it some-

what of the majesty, and mercy, and mystery of the fact, that—"God SO loved the world as to give His only-begotten Son" for the redemption of it! "SO," loved it!--Eternity will study the meaning of that monosyllable; and angels, and the spirits of just men made perfect, will heighten their praise, and deepen their anthems, as more and more they are initiated into the glories of its significance!



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THE CALL OF SAMUEL.

SOMETHING divine about an infant glows
To them who watch it in that holy light
Of meaning, caught from those celestial words
Of Christ,—“ *Forbid them not, but let them come !*”—
Fresh buds of Being ! beautiful as frail,
Types of that Kingdom which our souls profess
To enter ! symbols of that docile love
And meek compliancy of creed and mind
Which Heaven hath canoniz’d, and for its own
Acknowledg’d,—well may thoughtful hearts perceive
A mystery, beyond mere nature’s law,
Around them girdled like a moral zone.

And who can wonder, if we love to trace
The faint beginning of whatever lives,
That o’er an infant, innocently deck’d
With charms more delicate than drops of dew,
Which, as they brighten, almost seem to melt

Of feeling, that a single touch, a tone
From those ye fondle, some responsive thrill
Awakens,—when at night, a last long look
That almost clings around the form it eyes,
Ye take of slumb'ring infancy, whose cheeks
Lie softly pillow'd on the rounded arm,
Rosy, and radiant with their dimpling sleep ;—
Well may ye waft upon some winged prayer
A grateful anthem to your Lord enthron'd,
Who, once an Infant on his mother's knee,
Not in His glory, childhood's life forgets :
For He, while systems, suns, and worlds
Hang on His will, and by His arm perform
Their functions, in all matter, space, and time,—
Can hear the patter of an infant's foot,
List to the beating of a mother's heart,
And seals the eyelid of a babe at rest.

But, like the lustre of a broken dream,
How soon the fairy grace of morning life
Melts from the growing child ! Corruptive airs
Breath'd from an atmosphere where sin is bred,
Around them their contaminating spell
Exhale ; and custom with its hateful load
Of mean observances, and petty rites,

Bend into dust, these instincts of the skies
In the pure heart of genuine childhood seen,
And so enchanting!—Then comes artful trick,
With forc'd appearance, and a feeling veil'd
When fashion's creed, or folly's plea forbids
A free expression. These with blinding force
The sweet integrities of youth assail
For ever; mar the delicacy of mind,
And from the power intact of conscience take
Its holy edge; and soon the child impress
With the coarse features of corrupted man.
And, add to this, how omnipresent sin,
That from the womb of being, to our grave
Infects our nature with a fiendish blight,—
Will act on passion earthly, and desires
Malignant, base, or mutinously warpt
From virtue,—and, alas! how quick we find
The vestal bloom of innocence depart!
Then, what remains of all that blessed prime,
That blooming promise, which the fair-brow'd child
Of beauty nurs'd in home's domestic bowers—
Lisping God's love beside parental knees,
And, seeming oft, as if the Saviour's arms
Had compass'd them, and left a circling spell
Round his soft being!—Where, ah! where is gone
The unworn freshness of that fairy child?

But, yet on earth from genial heaven there come
Children, who, e'en though infancy enwrap
Its weakness round them,—thoughts beyond their years,
And feelings that in depth surpass the soul
Of elder age to fathom,—oft possess :
Mournful they are, and soft in shape and mien ;
Reserved and shy, as those retreating brooks,
Which love to vanish from th' observer's gaze
And find green shelter in the shading grass,
Or, waving sedges.—Such, who has not seen ?
And round them felt a fascination float,
A nameless spell, subduingly empowered
To make stern manhood be a child again ?
A beaming mildness like the vesper star's
Their glance reveals ; or in some pensive gaze,
Soft as blue skies, but far more exquisite,
A depth of sanctity there seems to dwell
Beyond corruption. Strangers lightly pass ;
And by the semblance of a tiny form
Misguided,—rarely on the mind immense
Within it tabernacled, can pause to think.—
Yet, underneath yon little frame of flesh,
Something that shall outsoar the seraphim
Hereafter, as the price of Blood divine,—
May be enshrin'd ! And o'er that placid brow
Shades of high meaning, from the Spirit sent,

E'en as they rise, may well from age mature,
Challenge respect, and bid us wisely know,
Childhood has depth of inner life unseen,
Feelings profound, of purest birth unknown,
And sympathies of most unfathom'd sway,—
Though stern philosophy, or reason's pride
Can mock, or misbelieve them—Souls they have
So visited with visionary gleams
Of God and truth ; and by such love sublime
Sent from the glory of a purer world,
Are oft illumin'd ; fancy might suspect,
Such children were the exiles of the skies,
Prison'd in breathing flesh, awhile ordain'd
This earth to hallow ; but at times, the sense
Of home immortal on their being rose,
And bade them, with divine emotion thrill,
Though falt'ring tongue and feeble accent fail'd
What pass'd within, to body forth, or tell :
Then nature, only with a shaded brow
And eye that glow'd with melancholy gleams,
Betoken'd,—what a heaven-born spirit bears
When half rememb'ring its ethereal home !

Then, look not lightly on a pensive child,
Lest God be on it, gloriously at work !

And our irrev'rence touch on truths and power,
And principles, which round the Throne are dear
As holy.—Never may our hearts forget
That Heaven with infancy redeem'd is full,—
Crowded with babes beyond the sunbeams bright
And countless! Forms of life that scarcely breath'd
Earth's blighting air, and things of lovely mould
Which, ere they prattled, or with flowers could play,
Or, to the lullaby of watching love
Could hearken,—back to God's own breast were call'd ;
And myriads, too, who learnt to lisp a prayer,
Bend the soft knee, and heave devotion's sigh,
Or, caroll'd with a birdlike chant, the psalms
Of David,—with the church in Heaven are found :
For He who loved them, and on earth enwreath'd
His arms around them, now in Glory, wills
To hear their voices, and their souls array
With beauty, bright as elder spirits wear.

But, oh ! Thou Architect of heaven in man,
The Bible's Light, and inspiration's Lord,
Whose secret pulse of vitalizing power
The fitful breathings of the sov'reign wind
Denote ; Thou Finisher of works divine !
Under whose plastic wing creation took

Each form of grandeur, each affecting grace
That art can copy, or religion greet ;
Thou in Thy might and mystery of love
A temple in the soul of infancy
Hast deign'd to build ; and there in blessed calm
And sanctity, Thy viewless glory shrin'd.

CALL'D OF THE LORD !—'tis here a child begins
Beyond all manhood, when corrupt, to make
Associations bright with more than mortal beam !
For, if religion be imparted God,
And purchas'd grace, the Trinity applied,
Then, HE whose palace fills Infinity,
(That great metropolis of glories all !)
Dwells in the spirit of a child renew'd,
Nor scorns the mansion love erecteth there.—
Here is the paradox which puzzles sense,
Confounds cold reason, and from sceptics draws
A sneer derisive. Children in their forms
Minute, their broken words, their lisp'd assent,
And little ways of inexperience'd life,
Are unto them but what the senses grasp,
And nothing more !—beyond, 'tis mystic void
Whence fancy only can at times report
The wonders an ideal faith enacts.—

They hear them prattle, they behold them play,
And see them, measur'd by the scale of man's
Attainment,—but like shapes of helpless dust
By sparks of faint intelligence inspir'd.
Alas! poor infidel! thy pride exceeds
Canute's itself, which bade th' imperial sea
Take law and motion from his tyrant lip;
For thou, The EVERLASTING in His ways
Wouldst limit! and to boundless grace prescribe
Modes of appeal, and methods of display;
As if the mighty God were only man
Made infinite, and out of reason form'd!—
With tongue all reason, and with brow all brass,
They, while the scoffers of the Spirit's work
In childhood realiz'd,—may smile, or sneer;
Devout adorers of the wonder-work
Celestial, from a sainted child can learn
Lessons of light; and from infantile lips
Meanings from heaven, mysteriously profound,
Delight to welcome:—for their meeken'd souls
Remember, CHRIST himself a cradled babe
On earth was found; and through that tender prime
Pass'd his own life, whose consecrating track
Hath left a blessing wheresoe'er it came,
And made frail childhood holy. Thus the heart

In this exults, that in these budding minds
Where twice three summers scarce experience bring,
Tokens of God, and teachings most sublime
Are witness'd ; while full oft some hoary saint
Whose pilgrimage hath been through pangs and tears
And windings dark through many a devious way—
Hangs mute with wonder, as some dying child
Warbles its young hosanna ; or by faith sublim'd
Beyond experience,—tells, with falt'ring tongue,
And eye that glistens with seraphic ray
Of truths momentous ; such as Rabbis heard
Astonish'd, when the VIRGIN-BORN reveal'd
Gleams of THE GOD, beneath his veiling flesh'!

And therefore let maternal bosoms take
Home to bright welcome, what the Bible tells,—
How, in the Temple, ere the mystic Lamp
Went out, that Hannah's God-devoted child
Woke from his slumber, by a call from Heaven.
Oh ! mother blest, who from the womb didst vow
The promis'd child, believing prayer obtain'd,
For ever to the Lord !—when Eli saw
How the deep spirit of devotion rock'd
Thy nature, till thy moving lip betray'd
How work'd the heart with more than spoken prayer
Could utter,—little did that old man dream

How near The Throne thy spirit had advanc'd !
And what a lesson are the proud ones taught
When, not for earthly wise, or worldly great,
For prophets, priests, or philosophic minds
The silence of Eternity was broke ;
But, to a little child, in slumber bound
The high revealings of the Heavens were made !—
Voiceless the Word, and shut the Vision was
Through years of darkness ; when, at last, behold !
Thrice in his ear, the consecrated boy
Felt a deep Voice, his pregnant name pronounce,
Solemn, but yet with mortal accent tun'd ;
And thrice to Eli, in sublime alarm,
Ran the woke child, as if himself had call'd.—
But soon The God, that dim-eyed Priest discern'd,
JEHOVAH in his glowing face he read !
Then, on his lifted brow with rev'rence gaz'd ;
And while the finger of the child was turn'd
Upward, from whence the Voice unearthly roll'd
Its summons,—in that call THE LORD, he hail'd,
Truly, as if in Thunder, Fire, or Blast,
Down to the earth an Inspiration came !

Here may we pause to wonder, muse, and pray
Or cry, with feeling admiration fir'd,—
Ye mothers ! do as noble Hannah did,

And to The Giver, consecrate the child.—
Here in live action, doth the Bible show
Embodied, what the after word of Christ,
With soft rebuke to his apostles spoke,—
How children, in simplicity of soul,
Are types incarnate of the heirs of light ;
And thus the sensual are profoundly taught
That purity, beyond proud wisdom soars,
And out of nature lifts a little child
To rank majestic in the scale of Heaven.

HAGAR IN THE WILDERNESS.

GOODNESS to all may infinitely come,
But grace to sinners only, can extend ;
And thus o'er evil triumphs endless good
Beyond all words, save what in Heaven they speak,
Rightly to equal with o'ertaking praise,
Or rapture. Yet in this a Will Supreme
Itself must glorify, by calling whom
The counsel of the Holy One decreed
To make a monument of grace divine,—
Ere Time began to count his awful hours.
Yes! though in justice no election acts,
But each award to character applies
With truth unerring ; yet, when mercy smiles,
Prerogative alone the Godhead shows
Unquestioned, such as men, nor angels, scan,
Nor measure.—Motive God hath none ;
For *that*, from his completeness plucks a ray,



And on the orb of his perfection casts
A dimming shadow : motive, end, and aim,
All in HIMSELF eternally abide.—
His reasons are his Attributes alone ;
And each vast grace The Trinity unfolds
In mercy's fulness, infinitely free.

And as in Isaac was the patriarch's seed,
By sov'reignty, beyond our asking soul
To explicate,—by God of old preferred :
And He whose will the Seraph's glory forms,
Or to the insect points a destined path,—
And in locality, or scene, or time,
From lowest matter up to loftiest mind
Supremacy of choice divinely free
Exhibits,—did reject sad Hagar's son,
And bend his countenance on Sarah's child.

But in thy heart what mingled yearnings rose,
Blent with emotions passionately keen,—
Beloved of God ! and from the vocal Heav'ns,
Aloud proclaimed Jehovah's chosen friend,—
When doomed thy first-born from thine eyes
To exile !—and by what a faith sublimed
Thou wert, when all thy feelings nobly sank

And on the orb of his perfection casts
A dimming shadow : motive, end, and aim,
All in HIMSELF eternally abide.—
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Aloud proclaimed Jehovah's chosen friend,—
When doomed thy first-born from thine eyes
To exile !—and by what a faith sublimed
Thou wert, when all thy feelings nobly sank

On the pure altar of obedient love
A willing sacrifice, at God's command.

For scarce had morning from the couch of night
Woke in fresh beauty ; or the purpling east, .
Gladdened the mountain-tops, and forest trees,
With the bright cheer of beauteous day,—when rose
The patriarch, pale with his unutter'd grief ;
While the big purpose which his bosom held,
Bowed his tried spirit : but, to God obey,—
For this, by prayer, high resolution nerved
Itself devoutly !—Thus the bread he took
And water ; then with faint and falt'ring tone,
And visage, half averted by intense
Emotion,—bade th' Egyptian and her child
Farewell ! and sent them forth, (so Heaven decreed)
A rival mother, with her outcast boy,
As homeless wand'rers, through the world to stray
As Heaven might lead them !—But, methinks, he took
One deep, and long, and melancholy gaze,
As slow he watched the solitary two
Move their meek steps ; and listened till the last
And ling'ring fall of their retiring feet
Died on his ear ;—like some imagined knell
By mem'ry waken'd in a mourner's heart :

But when on Sarah's countenance he look'd,
The tear-drop gathered in his aged eye,
Trembled his frame, and o'er his drooping face
A shadow passed ;—but on his guarded lips
The half reproach in supplication died !

But ye, fond angels ! from your thrones of bliss
The gloom and trial of our perill'd hearts
Gently beholding,—were ye not with love
Commoved ; and did ye not your wings unfold,
Unseen around them ; and, with flight unheard,
Hover beside the wand'ers, as they took
(Hand link'd in hand) from cherished hearts and home
Familiar, and the roof where Abram dwelt,—
Their way, along Beersheba's sandy wild ?

But sad and silent do they both proceed ;
And many a look, unutterably deep
By pensive Hagar on her boy is thrown
In anguish, as the widening desert opes
Pathless and herbless on her wearied eyes !—
For, now entangled in the wild'ring maze,
They long have wandered ; and are lost in wilds
Untrodden, where no mortal foot is heard ;
The haunt of hurricanes !—the home of storms,

Where the hot blast of suffocating winds
Whirls with red sand-clouds ; or the lion-roar
Rebellow ; or the hissing serpent hides.—
Such was the scene around the exiles spread ;
And rarely, from a mother's riven heart
Rang a deep cry, beyond what Hagar's sent,—
When the last crust her moist'ning tear
Besprinkled, ere the foodless child she fed ;
And on his lip, then parch'd with thirsting fire,
Pour'd the last drop of living water left ;
Then, wrung her hands, and like a maniac wept,
Scanning the heavens—to view if God was there,
To mark her anguish and her soul receive !

To die,—what is it ? but with swift embrace
To clasp eternity, and cling to God
With powers renewed and faculties refined
And with the Essences of Truths and Things
To hold acquaintance infinite, and full ?—
To die !—what is it ? but from time and flesh
Escaping, with our manumitted soul,
On shadows, Secrets and Sublimities
Behind the palpable of sense retired,—
At length to gaze ; and where no clouding sin
Perplexes reason, find all myst'ries dark

Which sadden earth with their o'ershading gloom,—
In the vast light of vindicated Heaven
Resolv'd for ever?—Yes! the body's death
Is but the breaking down of prison-walls.
To let the spirit into boundless life!

Say, who has felt this fever'd anxious life,
Its fretting heart-aches, falsehood, sin, and tears,
Ambition's waste of unrewarded toils,
Reluctant kindness, changing friends, and foes,
Together with the chill, increasing tombs
Cast o'er declining years; and then, are taught,
By truths from Heaven, a brighter world to seek,—
And have not, when like Hagar, reft and drear
Felt death a freedom, and a grave their home?
For, oh! how many does the Clime of Souls
Hold of the dearest whom our hearts embrac'd,
Esteem hath lov'd, or admiration known!
Eternity is richer far than time;
Thus faith and feeling can alike perceive,
Meetings how warm, and welcomings how bright,
From each high Master-piece of human worth,
Genius, or grace, or glory's finest Heirs,—
Await us, in the spirit-peopled land!
There be the Patriarchs, Prophets, Priests and Kings

Of olden time ; and Saints august, who liv'd
Like Angels, in their purity unstain'd ;
Apostles, Martyrs, and th' anointed Host
Of Heaven belov'd, but unremember'd minds
Whose paths were lowly, but not less sublime,—
There are they gather'd to that glowing rest
Where CHRIST, as Centre, over all presides
In crown'd perfection ; and to each imparts
Himself for ever, with augmenting bliss.

What then is death, but nobler life begun,
Release from bondage,—an existence rais'd
High o'er this being which we darkly bear
Clogg'd with base fetters, by our fallen clay
Fasten'd around the spirit they enthrall ?
But, oh ! forget not, that a light hath flash'd
Forth from the tomb where buried Jesus lay,
Immortal, and o'er all the graves of earth
Pour'd the clear lustre of a Life to come
Celestial, and unchanged !—For when the pulse
Of life returning, in HIS breast began
To quicken ; and HIS awful Form arose,
Oh ! then it was, as though creation's tombs
Flew open, and the vast unreckon'd dead
Who were, or shall be,—in HIMSELF arose !

For in His Person, human Nature stands ;
His life, salvation, and His death, the same ;—
So, from the grave to God reducing back
That Nature ransom'd, and by merit rais'd.

But thou ! forsaken, friendless, in the gloom
Perchance of error, but with partial light
From Heaven reliev'd ; amid the arid waste
Famish'd and faint, without one soothing voice
To shed sweet comfort o'er thee,—thus to die,
(Plunging thy spirit in the vast Unknown
Beyond the grave that waits us) this was death
Above the martyr's, in his direst flame !

Upon the savage, silent wilderness,
The burning languor of the breezeless noon
Like suffocation fell ; and when her upturn'd gaze
Beheld the sky, a canopy of glare
And glowing blue, unshaded by a cloud,
Was met ; while, so intense the quiet reign'd,
All leaves hung moveless ; and the insect hum
Seem'd loud intrusion.—Save the wearied step
Of Hagar and her boy,—no living sound
Was audible, but when some fitful sob
Broke from the mother ; or the wailing child

Moan'd in the fever of his parching thirst
That rag'd within him, like a deathful fire.
But now, both heart and hope together sink
Within the wand'ers ; child and parent, each
To each, a fainting sad appeal return'd,
But spake not !—Yet, when Hagar thought
How soon her outcast one his eye would close
In the pale horrors of approaching death,—
The blood-tide shiver'd in her sunken veins ;
But when she laid him on the herbless ground,
And with the agony of one last gaze
Bent o'er his form, and breath'd a prayer,—she felt
A thousand deaths within that dying child !
And then, averting her distracted eyes
From that dread sight,—she passionately sobb'd,
“ Let me not see him, in this torment, die ! ”

And there, beneath the shelter of a shrub
Whose partial shadow overhung the seat
With coolness, did she couch the sinking boy,
Gasping for water ; then, afar retir'd ;
For, the dark scene of his departing soul,
O'ermaster'd all, and more than motherhood
Could dare to meet !—But, is there no relief?
Deaf are the heavens ? is earth as hard as brass ?

Will God, nor angel, nor some roving step,
In this dread solitude of burning death
Appear?—Alas! 'tis soundless all;
As if creation were itself entranc'd
In apathy, and pitiless repose;
For, through the distance, not the plaining moan
Of young Ishmael, can her ear detect,
To break the stillness of this blasted heath,
Streamless and airless!—Oh! this crushing hour,
How heavily with tort'ring might it weighs
Down on her soul, that e'en to madness reels,
And rocks beneath it!—Inch by inch, must child
And parent, here in this remorseless wild
Droop, faint, and perish, in the flames of thirst,
Unslak'd and unreliev'd. Is mercy dead?
Or, has the WATCHER of the world His throne
Resign'd? Is Providence itself no more?—
Such were the questions, dreams, or doubts,
Most horribly, o'er Hagar's wasted heart
At this rack'd moment hurried.—Still, no aid
Of hand, or voice is coming; nor can eye
Discover, nor the list'ning ear perceive
One blessed drop of merciful relief
From brook, or fountain!—Overhead, she mark,
The burning atmosphere, like molten brass

Without the promise of one rainy cloud
Apparent ; and around her when she darts
The dismal glances of despairing woe,
What but the terrors of the wild confront
Her supplicating eyes !—And now she weeps ;
And, with the outburst of a heart that breaks
With pangs too heavy for such heart to hold,
Plaintively loud th' impassion'd grief comes forth,
Startling the air with that unwonted sound,
A mother's wail !—

But not unheard that cry !

Though nothing human to its sad appeal
Responded, Nature all around gave signs
And tokens, that the tender God was mov'd
By prayer and pity : for some desert boughs
With tremulous emotion seem'd to thrill
And vibrate ; while the tranced leaves awoke,
As stir the eyelids when a vision starts
An awe-struck sleeper ; while the torrid air,
Under the coolness of a coming breeze
Freshens, as if angelic wings began
To wanton round it.—Hagar ! thou art heard,
And answer'd ; o'er the harps of Heaven,
And through hosannas of seraphic throngs
In glory shining,—thine ascending voice

Hath reach'd the mercy of the HOLY ONE!—
The orphan's Father, and the widow's Friend,
Hath hearken'd to thee; and thy pleading looks
Have darted through immensity to God
And His compassion!—Lo! a golden Pomp,
(Cloud upon cloud, magnificently piled,)
Floats down the sky,—as if on cars of light
Angels were coming, for some message wing'd
From courts ethereal; and from out that sheen
Mysterious, hark! a voice, like thunder, deep,
But, mild as music when it wakens tears,
Is rolling; and to Hagar thus it means;
“Tremble thou not!—behold, thy prayer is heard;
Lift thy pale boy; his sinking frame uphold,
For out of him a Nation shall arise
Whose doom is glorious!”

Back the Pomp retired,
And with that equipage of soaring Light
The speaking Angel, into Heaven withdrew,
Tinging the air like sunset, with a track
Of splendours brilliant; while on earth there seemed
A dewy balm insensibly to fall;
As if ambrosia from the skies exhal'd
Ethereal fragrance.—But thine eyes are op'd,
Pale, outcast Mother! and a gushing fount,

Glitteringly fresh, as if from God just sprung,
Springs from the desert with a sudden rise
Before her!—streaming with melodious play,
Crystal, and cooling.—Now, that water drink!
Slake thy hot thirst, the swooning boy revive;
But while the magic of this great relief
Gladdens thy soul; while earth and air grow fresh,
As if by sympathy for thee inspir'd,—
Wake the young winds, and choral leaves rejoice,
And wild birds into warbling anthems break
Among the trees embosom'd,—let our thoughts
In this thy tragedy of trial new
Outlines of much that to ourselves extend
A meaning:—in thy grief, as in a glass
Heaven has reflected much for man to see;
And so by wisdom to himself apply
Lessons of lore profound, which help to make
The heart become a preacher to the head.

For! in the page of this instructive past
There lurks a parable of beauteous power:—
The world's a wilderness; our life, a thirst
For that to-morrow which can never come
Of happiness, or joy; and Hagar-like,
Far from that God, who is our spirit's home,

Wasted and worn, the self-deceiving heart
Roams for relief through many an arid scene ;
Nor, even when the bread and water fail,
And each supply inventive Nature dares
Itself to offer—fails and fades to nought,
Till all grows cheerless, as the blasted wild ;
No ! not e'en then the pilgrim heart returns
To Heaven forsaken !—Blind with sensual mist,
It cannot, save by God's illuming beam,
Behold THE FOUNTAIN, whence true comfort flows ,
But needs a miracle, as Hagar did,—
An act sublime, by Deity performed
Upon the soul's thick blindness : then, at once,
Lo ! in the wilderness the fountain springs
Freshly, and fully !—Then, THE TRUTH we want,
To slake the fire of intellectual thirst,
In God attracts us ; while THE GOOD supreme
For which we hunger with a famish'd heart,
In his perfections, by the Cross reveal'd,—
Brings to the soul a satisfying rest,
That fills man's being, to the very brim,
With light, with immortality, and love !

Nor in the mock wherewith th' Egyptian boy
Taunted the seed, by Heaven's electing grace

Inferior chosen,—wants there truth that strikes
With deep significance on man and mind,
On Church, or world :—for oracles divine,
In these two children, Flesh and Grace declare,
As well depicted ; since when ireful scorn
Flash'd from the eye, and from the lip was breath'd
Of Hagar's offspring, upon Sarah's child,—
Then was a type of that perpetual hate
A Christless nature for the Christian feels,
Striking at God, through His best glory here.

Yet, what but inspiration this could press
Home on the heart, and for belief require,—
That when two boys, some thousand years ago
Wrangled and strove,—their altercation prov'd
A moral image that might well portray
Feelings and facts, and doctrines and disputes
Which cast their shadow o'er the Churches now !

How wonderful is this electric world !
How sensitive, to ev'ry move of soul,
Public, or private, from the child, or man !
While to mere sense, the man a bubble seems,
The flashing gleam of whose tempestuous life
Shines like a speck of evanescent foam

Toss'd on the billows of eternity,—
With God connected, how sublime he grows !
And, in a moment, what a source may be,
Of influence, when the head that thought, is dust,
Or, hand that labour'd, in the tomb lies cold !
Our moral centre is a point minute,
But our circumference, oh, who can grasp,
In action, suff'ring, or involv'd result ?
A, smile, a glance, a single breath, a tone,
A look of meaning, or a laugh of scorn,—
The mere expression of the hectic mind
Clothing our features,—each may haply thrill
Some chord that touches by effectual ties
Events unborn, and make th' eternity
We dread, to vibrate with the deed we do.

Oh ! for a sense of duty more sublim'd
In all our ways, our wishes, and our words ;
A sense that we are links in that vast chain
Of consequence, which e'en from Adam's sin
To our last error,—its unbroken length
So reaches, that we cannot act alone !
But rather each to each, is so enlink'd
By past connexion, or by future power,
That conduct grows immortal ; and the act

From soul to soul, with multiplying power
Itself repeateth, when the agent sleeps
In cold oblivion, by the world forgot.—
The blemish'd morals, and the blotted mind,
How often thus our rev'rence would escape!
And, stead of reckless pride,— religious care
The paths would purify where virtue walks,
And solemnize existence. Action then,
Inward, or bodied forth in social form,
Of sacredness in ev'ry sphere would breathe,
Till the whole earth a mystic temple grew,
Hallow'd by God, by angels overwatch'd,
And by humanity in all its moods
Devoutly trodden :—then, would Duty spread
Its canopy above our ways and walks,
E'en as the heaven o'ervaults the varied earth
For ever : faith would be our Law supreme,
And guarded Life one long religion prove.

THE PRODIGAL SON.

OH, mad impatience of impetuous youth,
How hast thou havock'd with a dismal force
The heart of mothers, or the home of friends,
With all the charities that sweeten life,
Or, temper it for virtue! Who can tell
What tears have rain'd from parents' eyes, by hot
Self-will, and youth's unfeeling rashness drawn,—
Which, but for this, above the duteous child,
Or, round a daughter's fairy grace had smil'd
With holy joy, to see how Heav'n had rear'd
A pious offspring in parental shades.

But whence the fascinating spell, that cheats
The present of proportion; and, o'er scenes
Of unreality, by restless youth admir'd,
A glare seductive, shining with deceit,—
Contrives to scatter? 'Tis the heart's disease,

Raging as ever !—Hence the fiery youth
From love and order, and domestic powers
Of mild dominion, and parental roof
Yearns to escape, and, like a planet loose
Broke from the centre where attraction rules,
To wander reckless in the wilds of space,
Flaming disaster wheresoe'er it sweeps,—
The young man from his central hearth departs,—
Fool'd with ambition, that his lawless will
May riot freely ; and, alas ! becomes
Pollution's martyr, such as passion makes
When the blood fevers, till the heart, on fire,
Burns into madness, sin, or sensual crime.

Yet, must experience, bitter, black, and long,
Teach the wild spirit of ungrateful youth,
How early home, the seat of childhood's joy,
Beneath whose shade th' affections dwell embower'd
In maiden freshness, and in morning bloom,
Mid kind restraints of reason, order, law,—
A blessing hath, beyond that wider sphere
Where the loud world, with all its painted scenes,
Enacts the drama keen excitement loves.—
But time must teach, and sorrow darkly learn
This lesson of the soul ; and not till years,

Perchance, their course have channell'd on the brow,
Or pleasure's cheat, ambition's empty dreams,
Or passion's fell satiety, hath taught,
Each, in sad turn, the prodigal a truth, —
Can early happiness be duly priz'd.
Oh! then, how often does that inward eye
Retentive, (in whose gaze the Past exists
Immortally the mind's perpetual Now,)
The sunshine of a quiet home revive,
Till yearns the bosom for a scene no more!—
Then, will our conscience, by instinctive love
Pay the dear Past a debt of gratitude
Mournful, as mighty!—Then, in truth, we learn
That never music like a mother's voice,
And never sweetness like a father's smile,
And never pleasure like that home-born throng
Circling calm boyhood,—has the world supplied;
Though much it promis'd, when our fev'rish mind
Lur'd by its syren tones, a rover turn'd,
And, grasping shadows,—lost substantial bliss.
Our simpler tastes, our tones of purer thought,
Our love for that which healthful life demands
In rounds of daily care, and duteous forms
Of self-denial,—these exist no more.
But foul desires, the satans of the soul,

And morbid want, and mutinous unrest,
In place have come ; and haply too, remorse,
And jaded passion, jealousy, and scorn,
With a fierce sense of wrong that rots the soul
In secret,—in our canker'd being dwell.
And then, like paradise to exil'd Eve,
The home deserted through our mem'ry smiles !
Murmur the brooks, and wave the garden-boughs,
And greenly shines the meadow where we play'd
In sporting boyhood,—till a tearful dew
Melts from the heart, and in the eye dissolves ;
And, like the spendthrift, soon the soul decides
Back to lost purity and peace to wend,
Each step, repentance—and each sigh, a prayer !

A child there was, the younger, and how blest !
Dear as the light that in paternal eyes
Was beaming, to his father's loving heart ;
But lawless will, and blind impatience lur'd
The youth, from all that sacredness of love
Which binds affection to a parent's side :
And thus self-exil'd, in a reckless hour
He turn'd his back upon his native hills,
Gather'd his store, and in a foreign clime
Lavish'd in vice, what virtuous age had reap'd

From many a field, by sad exertion sown
Through years of labour, such as fathers spend
When love for children, masters time and toil.
But soon the spendthrift drank that bitter cup
Which retribution for the ingrate fills,
And justly. For when fortune ceased to gild
His vices, soon the sharers of the sin
Of gay debauch, or low carousal—shrank
Far from his blasted lot ; and left him lone
And aidless ; in the flush of manhood made
A double bankrupt by disastrous crime,
In purse and principle a beggar'd thing
Blighted and woe-gone !—while the gnawing worm
Of conscience fed upon his wasted mind
And bow'd him to the lowest dust of shame
Dishonour'd, and with deep compunction torn.

Oh ! what a change from him, that blithe and brave
Free-hearted one, whose limbs were like the oaks
In graceful vigour ; on whose cheeks the hue
Of health, like morning's radiant blush appear'd,
Ere sin had shaded, or demeaning vice
His bloom destroy'd.—E'en like a gallant bark
Leaving the port in beautiful array,
With all her symmetry of canvass spread,

While sunbeams dance her painted sides around,
The soft winds carol, and the leaping waves
Laugh in bright tumult, as her beauty floats
Through flashing waters,—but at night returns
The wreck of whirlwinds, or of storms the prey,
A batter'd, trembling, melancholy shape,
Of sails dismantled, and with masts no more:—
Or, like a tree by sudden winter struck
And blasted, till its ripen'd blossoms fall
Beneath it, while the languid boughs depend
Touching the soil, as if with conscious droop
Of melancholy,—that blighted youth became!—
A mean, emaciated, sunken thing,
Scorn'd by himself, by hollow friends forgot,
Hopeless and aimless, far from God, and Truth,
And home parental!—who was once as gay,
As seems the bark whose beauty decks the wave,
Or looks the tree, whose vernal promise wears
The richest vesture of redundant spring.

But who can know him in such bleak disguise?—
Shrunk with remorse, and so by feeling bent
As if his form, by famine overtask'd
Not to the ground, but to the grave would fall,
At each weak motion!—Trembling thus in rags,

Of wretchedness, and leaning on his staff, he turns
Homeward his way : but, who will greet him there ?
And where be they, those priests of song and soul,
The banquet-friends whose fellowship seem'd all
The visions bright of bacchanalian hours
Dreamt, or desir'd ?—Alas ! poor Prodigal,
He seeks for sympathy, and gets a stone !
Picture how true of what mere semblance does
In ev'ry age, to them who build their hope on smiles
Which flatter only, while the flatter'd pays
A sweet return, in favours, feasts, and gold.

'Tis in reverse the hollowness of man
Unveils its depth, and darkens into view
Bleak, cold, and barren as the very tomb.
Then, the same door that once by magic oped
E'en at the shadow of the rich man's form,
Creaks on a sullen hinge, or, rudely shuts
When knocks the pauper, and for entrance pleads :
The hand that grasp'd you with a glowing force
When fortune's summer round about you blaz'd,
Frigid as death, when poor disaster frowns
Or need assails you,—is at once become !
Averted eyes, and alienated looks,
With cold apologies in ceaseless flow,

And bows as courtly as refusal gives,—
Lo ! the sad harvest reap'd from venal ties ;
Proving the world to be a painted husk
How huge in promise,—but how hollow too !

In this dread climax, when his pangs had reach'd
That summit, where despair alone is seen,
Did mercy to remembrance softly bring
Pictures of home, and portraits of the past ;
Scenes of the heart, and those associate charms
By fancy cherish'd. But above whate'er
The melting pathos of remember'd life
Affected,—was a vision'd Form of love,
That rev'rend, hoary, broken-hearted sire,
Upon whose fondness his rebellious pride
Rudely had dash'd, as doth the headlong wave
On the high bank that bounds it ;—*that* he saw !
And so intently seem'd the old man's eye
To glisten on him with affecting ray
Of unrepublishing love : and with such power
The silver tones of his forgiving lip
Trembled within imagination's ear,—
That, lo ! at length, his indurated breast
Sank into woman's softness ; and his eye
Was moisten'd with such tears as angels love !

And now, behold him, wither'd, tatter'd, bow'd ;
Pale with long famine, wearily he drags
His homeward track ; but so by suff'ring wore,
That through the village, where his boyhood dwelt,
Unknown he steals, disguis'd in haggard woe.—
But what a tide of mem'ry there rolls,
And what a gush of agony and grief
Runs through his being, when that hill he gains,
Climb'd in calm hours of vanish'd innocence !
And, underneath him, in the sunset pale
Looks on the landmarks of his father's home !—
Mute with remorse, amid the tranquil scene
Awhile he ponders ; till the silent forms
Of things grow eloquent with meek reproach :
Meadow and tree, and each familiar nook
Instinct with meaning, to his mind appeal
With more than language from rebuke's harsh lip !
For nature yet her old expressions wore,
And each lov'd haunt remain'd familiar still ;
There, was the olive he had lov'd to watch,
There, was the vine his infant hand had plucked,
And there, the field-path, where he often pac'd
As bright in spirit as the joyous beam
Beside him, and with step as gaily swift
As the wild breeze that hurried o'er his head :

Nothing look'd alter'd.—For the fig-tree stood,
And caught the day-gleam in its dying glow
As oft the boy had watch'd it, when he sat
Under the twilight of its laden boughs
And fondly wove his fancies!—And how sweet
The lulling cadence of that well-lov'd stream!
E'en as of old, so wound its waters still
In stainless beauty down their pebbled way:
Nothing hath chang'd, but, oh! how chang'd is He!

But will that Penitent by none be hail'd?
Have all forgot him, who in fiery youth
Brake from the bonds a wise affection threw
Around him, and to lawless pleasure gave
The fatal sacrifice which youth alone
Can offer,—the unblemish'd mind of man!
No! there was one, whose eye, by love made keen,
Instinctively that wan and wasted form,
And woe-gone countenance,—will read,
And through the cloud of his concealing garb
Worn by pale suff'ring,—will directly flash!
For he, who when the rose of infant life
Flush'd in his fairy cheek, each dawning trait
Had welcom'd; and beside his cradle, breath'd
Full many a murm'ring solitary prayer,

That God might shield him with his shelt'ring love
From sin and sorrow, and to manhood rear
Those tiny faculties, that now began
To bud and blossom,— *he* that bleak disguise
Would penetrate, and welcome home his child !

And there, (as often in some yearning hour
When with the past his being overflow'd)
The old man takes his meditative stand
On yon green eminence, beside the porch ;
Casting his look along the downward path,
Where his mad boy to face the world went forth,
With deep emotion, dim with unshed tears :—
Still on his ear a parting footstep rings,
Still to his eye, a less'ning form appears,
E'en as it did, when first the reckless youth
Fled from his shelter.—Oh ! that by some thought
Compunctious, soft'n'd and subdued at last
That wand'rer might return !—or if by want
Compell'd, or by chastising sickness forc'd,
Yet to a heart which beat with prayer for him
The penitent would come !—Such meant the sigh,
In words translated, from yon father's soul
Breath'd in dejection.

But, behold ! a form

Feeble and bent, with scarce a robe to shield
His frame that shivers, and with famine worn,
Comes in the distance :—can it be *his* child
From strength and symmetry, to such a wreck
As *that* transform'd ? Is that the fair-brow'd boy,
Bright as the morning, but more beautiful
In life's young freshness ?—Oh ! what strivings deep,
What perturbation through the bosom rise
Of that hoar'd parent ! E'en as work the waves
Under a ground-swell, heaves the o'erwrought frame
With strong emotion, terribly intense !
But near and nearer yet, that haggard shape
Advances,—till a shriek of rapt surprise
Burst from his lips ; and forward springs the sire
Nerv'd with new life, as if to youth restor'd ;
And while the big tears from his sable orbs
Are gushing, round about the shudd'ring lad
He spreads the mantle of protecting love ;
And folds him in it, with such fond embrace
That their hearts seem like touching flames to melt
Each into each, ecstatically fired.
But when the current of emotion sank
Awhile, then upward on the aged face
Of his wrong'd parent, turns the prodigal
The deep repentance of his pleading eye,

And *look'd* his father into more than love,
And to his features all the parent brought
At once responsive to that mute appeal!

And is the past of crime and wasteful sin
Unmentioned? Are ungrateful deeds and words,
Baseness and beggary, and wild debauch,
Savage neglect, and spirit-crushing wrongs—
Are all forgotten? Sounds there no reproach,
And comes there not from those paternal lips
A chiding tone of well-deserv'd rebuke?
No! not a word, or frown, or accent falls,
To mar the softness of forgiving love.
But, bending o'er him with his white-lock'd head,
And face by feeling shaded, while the eyes
Half shut, by melting pathos overpower'd,
Drop a slow tear,—'tis thus, beside his boy
In this rapt moment stands the grateful sire!
True, there was outrage, bitter, base, and long,
And many daggers through his riven soul
A son's ingratitude has fiercely plung'd,
But yet,—that Prodigal was still his child!
And in the depths of that relation, all
The shrouded past was silently entomb'd

At once ; when pardon and compassion threw
Oblivion's pall, o'er ev'ry thing but love.

And, reader ! art thou by such tale commov'd ?
Or, do these annals through thy spirit melt,
Like balmy dews on summer's heated soil
At twilight ?—Then, a teaching shadow view
In the pure image of yon greeting sire
Whose mercy hail'd the home-returning boy,—
Of love Almighty, by redemption preach'd ;
Where God in Christ our blotted past forgives,
And on the bosom of Paternal grace
Welcomes to Heaven this Prodigal of worlds.

JOHN THE BAPTIST.

SLAUGHTER, or Silence!—take thy choice, oh, Truth,
Glory of earth, and champion for thy God !
And yet, afflictions, famine, curses, chains,
With all that coward vice, or cruel wrong
Around thee in thy peerless work can throw,—
Thy lot have been, since first a Lie began .
O'er fallen mind infernally to reign !
No, not a secret from the stars brought down
By genius ; or, a fact by science based
On the broad platform of inductive law ;
Or, attribute of sea, or soil, or air,
Light, sound, or colour,—hath by man been placed
Under the ray of philosophic eyes,
But either Bigotry her pagan yell
Hath lifted ; or the gibe of heartless men
Hath mock'd ; or else, the tyrant with his frown
Vindictive,—aided by some damning force ;
By prison's gloom, or persecution's fire,—

•
Came with his blast along discov'ry's track,
And tried to daunt the speculator down
To silence ; and his winged mind arrest
In the full strength of its majestic soar.

But, if in science, where a Truth acts least
Offensive, binding with no moral sway
Passion, or pride, or mean indulgence,
Martyrs are found, who bled, or burnt, or droop'd
In cells, or chains ;—beyond them all, are those,
The laurell'd heroes of our language now,
The almost worshipp'd by revering thought
In the hush'd temple of the hallow'd mind !—
These are the prophets of our regal souls,
Who, unto nearness God and man have drawn
By principle sublime ; or else, by words
Of purity, have so the conscience thrill'd,
That Guilt grew mad with miserable rage
To hear them ;—but their guerdon what hath been
But, block and gibbet, dungeon, sword, or stake !
As though the Truth were man's derisive fiend,
And Falsehood found an angel in disguise.

Thus, He, that Eremite, whose dreadless voice
Peal'd like a tocsin to the godless earth,

“ Repent ye ! for the promised kingdom comes,”
Herald of grace, and harbinger of Heaven
Right gloriously among the army ranked
Of truth’s high martyrs.—How severely great
Towers his free soul, to all who love to see,
What specimens of MAN God’s volume puts
As models, for divine ambition fit !

Girt with his hairy garment, from the plains
Of Judah, where alone the honey wild
Made his chief banquet,—boldly to his work,
Behold ! the lion-hearted prophet hies,
And, by the terror of his tones alarm’d,
Shakes the smooth Pharisee ; and from the roll
Of his rebuking thunder, lo ! the brood
Of hypocrites, and Sadducéan minds,
Shrink in dismay, like serpents from the sun !

Nor could the pride of rank, nor awe of power,
Nor courtly simpers, nor tyrannic scowls,
Daunt, for an instant, that all-daring mind
From voicing forth a message from the Skies,
To sin and sinner !—Firm, and free, and brave,
With cheek unblanch’d, with forehead unabash’d,
Lifted the Baptist his indignant words,

Whether a monarch at their smiting force
Must tremble ; or, a publican confess
Their power majestic,—Truth and He were one,
Their challenge fearless, as their cause divine.—
For what are station, sceptres, crowns, and courts,
The tyrant's purple, or the victor's plume,
With whatsoe'er this pomp-admiring world
Produces,—with the blazonry compar'd
Of Truth, when stern, and simple, and sublimely free ?

And when this hero of th' Almighty dar'd
Full on the vices of a pamper'd King
The crushing bolt of his rebuke to cast ;
Say, was he not, by that intrepid deed
Rais'd to nobility, beyond mere blood
To rival ?—mid the peerage of pure souls
Exalted, where the patent is by worth
Drawn out, and by divinity confirmed
And seal'd ?—Elijah was in him reviv'd :
For on him fell the mantle of his mind
In prowess, zeal, and purity august.
The Eagle, in his sunward flight
Cleaving the storm-cloud with resistless wing
The billow's dash, the torrent's daring plunge,
A Thunder's challenge, or some rock erect

Spurning the ocean in its loud assault
Foaming below it,—each may type impart,
Or dim resemblance of that dreadless saint
May to our fancy yield,—who fear'd his God
And therefore, all created things defied
To awe his purpose ; or his soul restrain
From teaching monarchs, and from telling courts
What heaven and law and sanctity require.
And when before him, front to front, he saw
Death, or stern Duty, in their contrast stand,
Then He, who master'd circumstance and time
Fetters and frowns, and fascinating smiles,
Like empty, base, and abrogated things,
Follow'd the *last* !—and let the other come,
Or not,—as might the God of Martyrs choose.

Thy brave resolve, oh ! Eremite inspir'd,
Yet doth it warm our spirit into zeal ;
E'en from the depth of ages does it sound
A summons through the heart ; and bid the bold,
Who preach repentance, and with stern rebuke
Before the Great Ones of the earth appear,—
To learn defiance from thy dauntless mien,
And send their message to the heart, right home,
Though all the answer be,—our slaughter'd clay !

Forward ! thou man of God ! no dread be thine ;
Truth, like her Master, must a martyr be
In flesh, or spirit, till the Devil's chain
Clank in the darkness of his thousand years
Around him, and enthron'd MESSIAH reigns
In pomp millennial o'er this peaceful world.

Courage, methinks, that gory charger breathes
Where lay in death, thy consecrated head,
Heroic Baptist !—Though thy lips were mute,
And thy shut eyeballs sealed in bloody close
No longer on polluted Herod shot,
The lustre of their indignation bright,—
The messenger, but not thy message ceas'd
For God to plead : and when thy form return'd
Back to the speechless dust, where whelming Death
To humble silence all this talking world
Reduces,—truth thy pure avenger was.
Revel, nor banquet, harp, nor heathen song,
Nor the gay pastimes of his paramour
That beautiful Destruction !—could protect
The soul of Herod from thy haunting shape
Oh, murder'd Seer ! whose blood to Heaven up-cried.
Not day, with all its brilliancy of joys,
Or, night with all its quietude of shade,

Music, nor pomp, nor revelries of state
The STILL SMALL VOICE could ever drown, or daunt.
Sleeping, or waking,—still his guilt remain'd
A sightless fury, that with secret lash
Scourg'd his pale conscience to the brink of Hell
For ever!—On his dreams the Baptist rose,
There on the charger lay the murder'd head
Bleeding and ghastly!—still the curse of crime
Fever'd the water, ere his lip it cool'd,
Poison'd with bitterness the bread He ate,
Took from the skies their glory, from the grass
Its verdure, from the flowers their precious bloom,
In music made all melody to cease,
And often into ghastliness and guilt
Chang'd the young beauty of Herodias' cheek
Before him!—Life was one long agony,
Felt in the soul, self-crucified by sin.—
Thus did Remorse God's truth defend and guard,
When the brave Herald could no longer lift
His voice for virtue; *that* no death could reach,
Or stifle; but in hours of horrid gloom,
Held by a hair above the burning Pit
Of vengeance, did the blood-stain'd monarch seem
To shudder; and in dreams, as if to drop
Down through its depths, unutterably dark

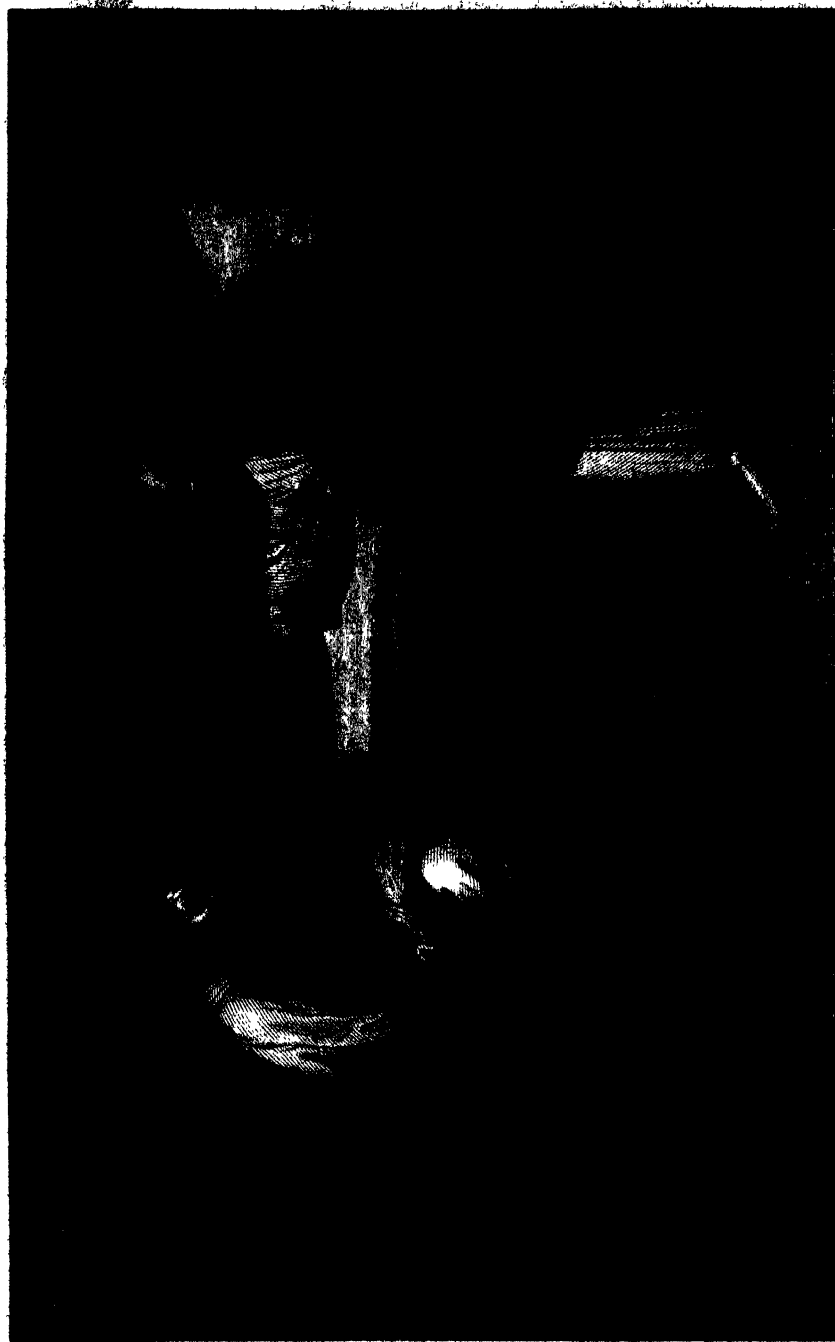
And deep'ning ! Thus when Christ Himself reveal'd
By miracles which made creation bow,
In motion, matter, and eternal mind,—
This cow'ring Herod for the Baptist took
The great MESSIAH :—such the power of guilt,
And such the homage which a heart must pay
To truth,—though death and murder intervene.

In conscience, no man makes a Sadducee ;
For mem'ry hath a resurrection there
Solemn, as fearful !—There the deed long done,
The word once spoken, or the friend once wrong'd,—
Yea, the whole past of dead experience starts
To life incessant by the soul renew'd !—
Thus conduct is immortal ; and the truth
Hath no chronology, as God no change
Can suffer ; therefore may our peril'd lives
In guilt no echoes of stain'd Herod's be ;
But, like the Baptist, let us fear our God alone,
And march to duty through the gates of death !—
Assur'd that time is justice to the true,
And no man preaches like a martyr's grave :
Though mute to sense, magnificent to soul,
The best of orators,—a tomb becomes,

When Faith and Suff'ring this inscription bear,—
“ Here sleeps the dust by Deity inspir'd
To fight for noble truth ; and scorn to fear
The frown of tyrants, or the face of clay !”

NATHAN AND DAVID.

“THOU ART THE MAN!” What thunder in that truth
By Nathan to the soul of David sent,
In dread appliance, with resistless power
Internal!—Never by the bolt of Heaven
In the green summer of his waving strength
Blasted and smitten, fell the kingly oak
Down to the earth, as sank the tow’ring state
Of Israel’s monarch, at these mighty words,
Charg’d with the lightning of divine reproof!—
Back flew the colour from his faded cheek
Pallid with guilt; and wildly throb’d his heart,
As one deep groan his craven spirit heav’d
Half-stifled; tremor all his limbs convuls’d,
And then, before his sunken eyes appall’d,
His hand he rais’d,—as if the prophet were
Some apparition out of Hades sent,



Rather than man in living flesh array'd
Mission'd by God to strike a sinner dumb.

But who on fallen David can reflect
Without a shudder? Who that calls to mind,
How in his golden prime of purity
Angels had listen'd, while on earth he sang
Creation's glory, providence, and Christ,
With harp melodious as the mind was pure,—
Stain'd with pollution, sin, and murd'rous guile,
In the black horrors of detected crime
Arrested,—who can thus a prostrate King
Behold, and feel not, till the heart grows faint
And sickens, o'er the sinfulness of man!

Oh! if the spirit of romance can sigh
Oft as it meditates where crumbled arch
And stooping column ivy-tress'd with age
Or sunken pillars,—yet to thought suggest
How vast in beauty, pomp, and perfect grace
The once high Temple to the skies uprear'd
Its walls of worship,—will the ruin'd soul
Prostrate in vice, by brutal passion sunk,
And overrun, no solemn anguish wake
In the deep bosom of God-fearing man?

For, what though in the waste of sin appear
Relics of beauty, wrecks of moral grace,
And remnants exquisite of feeling left
Unwither'd, 'mid the havoc,—*this* but adds
To pain that is, association past,
Making it keener ! E'en as pilgrims gaze
On the worn Parthenon, or Pæstum's walls ;
For, yet that miracle of stone retains
Sublimity, which bids the gazer pause
Entranc'd with wonder ; while his resting eye
On the far beauty of Amalfi's hills
Feeds a rapt gaze ; or, on the purple sea
Expatiates ; and in thought delights to dream
What mute expression of the mighty whole,
Yon temples in their pristine glory breath'd,
Whose very ruin a religion makes
In hearts that ponder ; and whose beauty proves
Time dreads a sacrilege, and loves to spare
Some trace to tell us where the God hath been !

But whence the fall so infinitely sad
Down to the brink of everlasting woe
This friend of God, this favourite of Heaven
Experienc'd ?—Reader ! in that monarch's sin
Corruption may its inmost semblance view.

The root of vice from reasonless self-love
Itself derives ; and since the first man fell,
Between the heart and mind a gap was made
Beyond philosophy to arch, or fill :
And thus, while one the light of duty holds,
The other, unaffected and apart
Often remains ; not light, but love we need
Supremely : so when passions rise, or rage,
Darken reflection, and the mind disease
Through all its powers,—self-knowledge rules no more ;
Then, chaste humility, and calm mistrust
To lawless appetite indulgence yield
Their wisdom ; and judicial blindness dims
The eye of judgment, sophistries the truth
Assail, and sap the moral life away ;
Till principle is undermin'd at last,
Satan hath enter'd the surrender'd heart,
Conscience goes out,—and all is night within !

'Twas thus with David ; in some evil hour,
When through the eye pollution seiz'd the soul,
And beauty, pour'd like poison through his veins
A fatal magic, did a fiendish lust
Peace, purity, and conscience overcome
In one fell moment !—In the morning rose

That king, with innocence unstain'd ;
By night,—oh ! horrible beyond *his* harp
In strains that trembled with his groan, to tell,
The brand of murder, and adult'ry's blot
Ting'd his white spirit with the stain of Hell

But did he, by that crime of lust and blood
So blotted, soon to penitence and prayer,
And the full agonies of felt remorse
At once betake him ! Did the murdered face
Of dead Uriah, never round the feast
Glide like a spectre, and his soul alarm ?
Alas ! not so ; for ten long months unmov'd,
Dead'n'd and drugg'd the torpid conscience slept ;
As if that witnesser for Heaven were slain,
Or silenc'd ;—but for waking grace, perchance,
It ne'er had waken'd, till the clanging trump
Of the last judgment, sounded through the sleep
Of men and ages ! But when Nathan plied
The parable, with thrilling force inspir'd,—
Then, like a giant from his sleep arous'd,
A sense of justice, with severest ire
Rose from false slumber ; then, the poor man's lamb
Was pitied ; vengeance for his outrag'd heart
Fierce restitution e'en to fourfold law

At once decreed :—but, oh ! how blind the heart
Becomes ; and how reluctant to invert
Back on itself one reprimanding gaze !
While all awake, with microscopic eye
The faintest shadow of another's sin
Clearly we mark, and promptly we condemn !
For faults, in others wear a hue abhorr'd,
Though in ourselves half lovely they appear !—
Or else, like parasites our souls applaud
That which in others they can hiss and hate,
And outlaw, as high treason to the truths
By heaven recorded, and by earth rever'd.

Thus did the monarch ; when the rich man's crime
Drew from his justice an indignant burst
Of horror ; yet himself awhile remain'd
Lull'd by the opiate of a self-deceit !—
A mere injustice, by a stranger done
Rais'd into majesty his sense of right ;
While in himself—rank murder no remorse
Awoke, and fell adult'ry drew no tear !

O what a comment on the creature's guilt
Is here embodied ! and a proof how vast
That mortal nature at the zenith needs

A grace perpetual, to prevent its fall.
No state or scene, or privilege o'erawes
Defection ; angels from their glory fell,
Though in the light and splendour of the Throne
Celestial ; man in Paradise rebell'd
While Earth lay beaming with her Maker's smile,
And yet the jubilee of choral stars
Hung on the breeze, and hallow'd all the winds
Around him ; and in Israel's blood-stain'd king
A warning read, more eloquently preach'd,—
How much of grace to keep their gifts unsoil'd
The wisest in their nature's weakness want !
For, lo ! a Prophet,—he whose full-wing'd strains
Of song and spirit, to the heaven of heavens
Bore him, as if the soul a seraph grew,
From the vile fetters of enslaving flesh
By faith deliver'd,—sink, at once, to sin
And darkness, by a tempting gaze seduc'd
From all allegiance to the God he lov'd !

But turn we from the criminal and crime ;
And in the record see how Heaven has warn'd
From those antipodes to which they tend,
Our hearts for ever : David, though a saint
High as the graces that his God conferr'd,

Fell into murder,—let not soul presume !
But yet, by prayer and penitence, he rose
A pardon'd sinner, though a punish'd man,
Again to favour,—let no guilt despair !
But when the hell of accusation burns
Like madness in our bosom ; or the Law
Thunders around it with a damning peal
Resistless, let us think what David was !
And bathe our spirit in that mystic blood
That makes the crimson of transgression white.

But who can laurel with befitting wreath
That Volume wondrous, whose unerring page
To sinful nature an instruction yields
Which meets all want, all weakness, and all woe
However varied, and however vast !—
Ye Oracles ! your praises who can sing ?
Your glories, who, save God can understand,
Who is at once their Subject, and their Spring ?
Nothing that Minds, Imaginations, Hearts,
Conscience, or Creed, or Character require,—
But ye supply them, with exhaustless store :
Time and eternity your teachings move,
Sinner and saint your living voice instructs,
While Nature, Providence, and Grace derive

Their true significance from you alone.—
Instinct with poetry creation grows
To song and sentiment, we oft perceive ;
And strains of intellectual music seem
Heard by the mind, intelligibly deep,
From order, beauty, and arrangement born ;—
But, in THE BIBLE, reason's self is taught
How all Creation was a forfeit once,
And on the road to everlasting gloom !—
When HE, the Second Head of our soil'd race,
By purchase grasp'd it, took the bond away,
And kept it standing, like a mute discourse,
Or mystic parable Himself to preach.
Typing the truths his written word reveals.—
Such is our earth : by Scripturè's key unlock'd,
Creation then a mighty sermon proves ;
And all its beauties, into Christ baptiz'd,
Symbols of more than Science dreams, or dares,—
Become ; and back upon His Throne reflect
The lustre His presiding grace supplies.
But higher still, by Scripture led, we mount
And learn, how matter prophecies, through all its forms,
Of scenes beyond our poetry to praise
Or utter,—when the clock of time shall strike
The hour predestin'd, for the KING to reign.—

Thus may we feel, amid the scenes and sounds
Our spar'd creation, though in sin, retains,—
Nature is one presentiment of Powers
Yet to evolve, in that millennial day
When Earth, as perfect as her Lord is pure,
Shall bloom and brighten in her Maker's smile !

But far beyond this inorganic world
Of matter, doth the light of Scripture throw
Its guiding beam :—there, Providence becomes
From fate and blind confusion, chance and woe
Nobly discharg'd ; and on our falling tears
The iris of The Covenant reflects
Its beauty ; hope beyond the present soars,
The cross of nature, with the crown of grace
Connects ; and into fellowship with Christ
As suffering, Faith her own affliction brings.

And oh ! when agonies of guilt
Heave through the bosom horrible despair ;
Or, when by heated passion, tempting blood,
Or blind self-trust, or base desire, seduc'd,
Like fallen David into crime we sink
Down the black precipice of sin and death,
Where reason, pride, nor sage philosophy

Reach the gone soul, nor remedy despair!—
Then, is the Bible, like the balm of Heaven
In dews of mercy on the soul distill'd ;
Where God, through pardon'd guilt of old, declares
That HE is willing *thus* to pardon now :
So are we taught by others' sins,—our own
To guard ; and ponder with a trembling breast
How weak the mighty on their mountains stand,
When most they seem immortally secure,
And cry to God, as if by HIM inspir'd,
My Patron, and my only Portion,—THOU !



THE PROFANERS EXPELLED FROM THE TEMPLE.

THE character and conduct of the Man Christ Jesus form a theme of moral glory, over which the devout admiration of the believer delights to bend ; and if the mysterious grandeurs wherewith our faith encrowns Him, as pre-existing in the bosom of The Father, before the ages and the worlds,—awake the intellect to its most transcendent exercise ; surely the features of His embodied life as man, on earth, are, in proportion, also calculated to melt the heart into adoring strains of wonder and praise. For in Christ we are invited to behold not only human nature taken into The Divine ; but God's archetypal IDEA of our class of being (*see St. Augustin, passim*) acted out in consummate majesty, beauty, and might. In HIM the perfection of manhood was realized ; and when the smiles of The Infinite reposed upon Him, they brightened with approval, while there came forth

from the mystic cloud, that applauding witness—"THIS is my beloved Son—hear ye Him!" In truth, so symmetrically finished, so rounded off into exquisite proportion—so harmoniously are all the human graces of the Redeemer arranged and exemplified, that our fallen minds, disorganized as they are by sin, and clouded in their perception of the good and fair,—can hardly endure the brilliancy of Messiah's example. The heights of His wisdom, the depths of His condescension, the breadths of His purpose, and the length of His love,—why, there are no mathematics in our morals whereby we can adequately appreciate them. And if the Angels uncrown themselves, and bow in veiled ecstasy before His Throne, so, analogically, does the contemplative mind, when gazing on the glories of His incarnate state below, often sink dazzled into silence, before the overawing loveliness of the attributes it admires.

“ Expressive silence, muse His praise !”

But while this, in the general, is true, it cannot be denied, that there is a strong tendency in a certain class of mankind to select for especial love, and to isolate for their individual taste,—what may be termed the milder scenes in the mortal career of the Redeemer: and so to gratify the bent of their peculiar moral bias, as finally to

admit the operation of Christ's example into their nature, under the felt reality of its being little more than the Personification of a superhuman tenderness. The religion of such people is nothing more than romance etherealized ; or a kind of sentimental spirituality, which tempts them to believe that pathetic softness of soul was the prime attribute in the character of Jesus Christ.

Now we presume little argument is required to prove, that every imperfect and inconsistent view of the Saviour, will produce a corresponding effect on the character of the disciple ; and it may be asserted, almost as an infallible consequence,—that he who is accustomed to separate the pity of Christ, from his purity, will also, practically, be tempted to look to the happiness he has promised, *apart* from that holiness he has enjoined. The action therefore of Jesus in expelling the Profaners from the Temple, is one (among many others,) illustrative of the fact—that though all the tenderness of unlimited compassion glowed in the heart of the Redeemer—yet, there were moments, when the sternness of rebuke was required, and then, through the veiling cloud of his flesh, a faint, but a profitable, view is given of that ineffable holiness, which is as—“ CONSUMING FIRE ! ”

For theological treatment, in detail, this incident in the life of Christ, might be contemplated in the light of a

threefold treatment. 1. PROPHEITICAL.—*i. e.* for this act of Zeal was the expressive subject of prophetic announcement. 2. MORAL.—*i. e.* the positive degradation to which the money-changers &c. &c. subjected the Temple of the Almighty demanded an instant and energetic correction. 3. TYPICAL.—*i. e.* this miraculous expulsion by means of “small cords”—is a symbol of that Spiritual Reformation, which our Lord was destined to effect, both visibly in the world in general, and spiritually in the hearts and lives of His people in particular. Yet true it is, that few are the sermons, and very superficial the comments, which have been made on this marked portion of Messiah’s conduct. Nay, in many instances, the Infidel has selected it, as a proof that our Lord was not always the master of his own feelings!—But, we will not conclude, without (in opposition to all this,) one parting reflection—namely, that the wicked shrink from the mere perusal of His exhibition of holy anger now,—what shall be said of that unutterable display yet to come; when He, who wept gracious tears over a doomed city, shall thunder and lighten amid the falling stars, the fainting heavens, and the disappearing ocean; and when rejected mercy, transmuted into righteous judgment, will flame in the dreading eye of conscience, as the irresistible — “WRATH OF THE LAMB!” “For the great day of His wrath is come; and who

shall be able to stand ?”—Who, but those, who “have washed their souls, and made them white in **THE BLOOD**,” and who are therefore not afraid to look upon the countenance, of “**The Lamb**,” albeit the heavens depart as a scroll, and “every mountain and island be moved out of their places !”—*Rev. vi.*

THE FINDING OF MOSES.

IF classic pilgrims in a far-off clime,
Bend with devotion o'er the tiny brook
From whence some river-infant takes his rise
In solitude, amongst the hills unseen,—
To sweep its course through continents and isles
With navies wafted on its surging tide,
And storm-heav'd waters ;—or, if Hist'ry muse
O'er the rude hut a Roman king first rais'd,
Where ages after rose that City-Queen
Who shook the kingdoms with a single word,
Making the world her battle-field for fame !
How can the Christian, on the reedy bank
Where Moses once a weeping infant lay,
Bend his regard,—and no delightful awe
Catch from a scene beyond all praise sublime ?

In wailing innocence, behold ! that babe,
The helpless outcast of some Hebrew born,



And yet, a master-piece of man lies there
Predestin'd! In that quivering form is veil'd
A soul transcendent, meek, majestic, wise,
By whom came Oracles, and Laws, and Rites
With Signs and Sacraments, and solemn Truths,
And Miracles, by words predictive work'd,
Which have for more than twice two thousand years
Instructed empires ; and a people kept
Singly and sternly from mankind apart,—
With the long passion of eternal love
For Temple, Law, and Thy lamented soil,
Home of our faith,—thou queenly Palestine !

Oh ! little could the trembling mother dream
When in her smile the perill'd child repos'd,
How much of destiny her lap contain'd,
Soon to evolve, and still evolving ! There,
The Guardian and the Guide of Israel slept,
But on his cheek her moist'ning tear-drop fell
When, frequently that frightened mother thought,
How soon the lord of Egypt's barb'rous throne
Might slay him ; and the bloody sword be bath'd
In the warm current of his precious veins,
Under her eyes !—and scarce a wail was heard,
But it appall'd her ; lest a spy should list,

And bring the warrant for a male child's life ;
And not a step of hurried motion caught
Her ear maternal, but her heart was rock'd
With tremors, and a swooning paleness clad
Her countenance,—as if some fiend advanc'd,
To strike the infant from her nursing breast,
And lay him mangled at her very feet !

But, cheer thee, mother ! God is full awake,
And slumberless The Eye that watches thee
With Moses ; monarchs well might envy him,
Could they foreshadow,—what a fate sublime,
(Bound with his life, and to his being link'd,) Jehovah hath from everlasting will'd
Now to commence, and into action bring ;
And not a pulse within thy baby's heart
Is beating,—but is audible in Heaven,
And throbs connected with the church to come.
But, oh, fond nature ! yearnings deep are thine
Passing the poet's song, the painter's hue,
Yea, all description into words to bring,
When bends a mother o'er a new-born child
In hush'd and holy musing !—But to part
With his bright presence, and his aidless form
Leave to the mercy of unfeeling winds

And foodless waters !— like a weed to cast
 A portion of herself away from care
 And nourishment ;—and thus to let him die
 Unwept, unwatch'd, uncoffin'd and unknown,
 The prey of monsters by the Nile produc'd !
 Here was a pang, beneath whose crushing force
 Her soul unbent, and nature's feeling chords
 Were riven, till the heart grew all untuned
 With mad emotion !—But at length, when sleep
 Had bound his beauty with its blessed trance,
 She wrapt him gently in his little robe,
 And, on the ark of bulrush laid him down
 Mute, pale, and lovely—like a sacrifice
 To destiny, and cruel Pharaoh's law.
 But, ah ! forgive her, if again she fell
 In kneeling agony beside that ark,
 Lifted awhile, her eyes and hands in prayer
 Convulsive, then one parting kiss impress'd
 And dropt a tear upon its placid cheek,
 Dimpled with dreams, as if no danger frown'd,
 Then,—shudd'ring backward, from the scene retired.

* * * * * * * *
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And now, behold yon Hebrew mother wends
 Sadly and silently, to where the Nile

Winds among flags its fertile waters by.—
Ark'd in a bulrush, there th' unconcious babe
Her trembling hand deposits, on the brink :
But, to a daughter, as a watch unseen
Plac'd at a distance,—the forsaken child
Her fainting heart entrusts ; and then returns
The mourning Rachel from that river-scene.

And now, a syncopé to human sense
This hour appears, in all of God's high plans
The clouded eye of carnal reason views.
Helpless, beyond deserted life to know
In man or woman, 'mid the wildest haunts
And forest-homes by loneliness begirt,—
That infant lies, beside the churlish wave.
The elements its only nurses make,
While the cold river rocks the tiny ark,
And roving airs sing lullaby
Over its quiet slumber.—Yet That POWER
Who counts the sparrows, and the raven feeds,
And guides the wild bee to the summer flowers,
And feeds the insect,—yon mysterious babe
Is watching ; and its shelter'd life is safe
As when, hereafter, pitch'd the guarding hosts
Of camping Israel round about his tent

At midnight, while the pilot Cloud of Heaven
Paused in pale fire, above the wilderness.—
But little could sad Jochebed have dream'd
There in yon reedy couch, reposed a child
Sublimely destin'd for a fearless work
Beyond all wonder :—lo ! the man
Who dar'd with Deity talk face to face,
And was not blasted by the dreadful beam !
Whose wand the secret thrones of Nature shook
By its almighty shadow ; and whose life
One miracle of constant virtue made ;
Whose death was myst'ry, and whose mountain-tomb
Is yet a secret, by Jehovah veil'd
With darkness most inscrutably profound.

But chance exists not ; 'tis a libel dread
On Providence, which those unblest of mind ;
Poets of hell, and laureates of despair,
Often pronounce,—who into merest fate,
The motions of our moral world resolve.
For God o'er ALL eternally presides ;
And,—from the quiver of the bladed grass,
To wheeling systems hung in starry space,
Enormous as unnumber'd,—all occurs
How, when, and where, HIS guiding will decrees ;

And we, who now with backward gaze revolve
The hoary annals of Mosaic time,
Behind the curtain of that outer scene
Where man was acting,—view His PROMPTING HAND
At work for ever: Hist'ry's moving form
Points like an index to that secret God;
E'en as the timepiece which the hour reveals,
The hidden motion of a main-spring shows

Thus when the Princess, from her silken bower
To bathe her beauties in the sacred Nile
Comes at *this* moment; and along the brink
Of that tree-shaded river, while the noon
Burns in hot trance, beneath the cooling palms
Walks with her maidens,—who can disbelieve
That, in the counsels of decretal Heaven,
Hour scene and circumstance were all arrang'd
Marshall'd and muster'd?—though each agent felt
Freedom of will untouch'd, and unrestrain'd.
But, lo! at length the baby's ark is seen
Floating in flags, along the river's edge;
And when, obedient to the royal word,
Attending maidens have the lid remov'd,—
A sobbing infant greets her gentle eyes!
Celestial beauty on his forehead sat;

But the low wail, so helplessly that comes
From its frail bosom, touches all to tears,
Beyond the language of a pleading lip
To rival!—instinct made a mother then :
And Pharaoh's daughter while her feelings gush'd
Pure, young, and warm from Nature's hallow'd fount
High o'er all prudence, into pity's course,—
Shook from her soul that edict of her sire,
That Slaughter should all Hebrew males destroy!—
And to the mother, by unconscious love,
And Heaven, attracted ;—took the rescued babe
For life and nurture ; and thus home return'd
The infant Moses to maternal arms ;
And, like an angel of compassion, said,—
“Take the sweet child, and nurse it for my own!”

Oh! Providence, how gloriously profound
In this and all things, are thy works and ways!—
The Princess wander'd, at the wonted hour,
Beside the rivers, in the Nile to bathe,
But, nothing more :—yet, on her step there hinged
And hung, what destinies and deeds of time
Immortal! Then a spring she touch'd,
And set in motion Principles and Powers,
While change, and consequence, she then involv'd,—

That round the Churches, at this living hour,
Act the full might of their commingled sway !
But, doth not Life, in its perpetual round,
Often to some familiar scene, or spot,
Link the vast crisis of experience now ?
And who that shuts his door, at primal morn
The world to visit,—can presume to say,
On the first street he turns, or friend beholds,
How much of man's unutterable weal
Or woe dependeth !—Ever on the brink
Of consequence, our perill'd nature hangs
And borders, well may thoughtful bosoms feel :
But if, like Enoch, with our God we walk,
Each step we take but unto glory moves ;
And all our changes, sudden, stern, or sad,
Not accidents of blank confusion born,
To us will come ; but rather faith will find
That life's experience is the Form decreed
Before all ages, where our tested mind
Must mould itself for happiness, and Heaven.

But ere we part, from this affecting page
Of God's deep book of providence, to man
Op'd in the Bible,—most unwise it were
Not to remember, how the rescued child

Snatch'd from a grave of waters,—soon became
Profound in science, learning, art and skill,
In kingly halls, around great Pharaoh's throne,
Adopted like a son.—But Heaven preserv'd,
True to itself his genuine soul, and kept
The fountains of kind nature pure and fresh
Within him welling : so, that blazing rank,
Nor pomp, nor riches could his heart withdraw
From fond alliances, by Feeling bound
Close to his bosom. Here the Hebrew reigned !
For on the breastplate of his love he plac'd
His Country and her cause ; and thus defied
The thawing sunshine of a sensual court
The high-soul'd virtue of his peerless mind
E'er to dissolve.—His People and their pangs
Had charms for him, beyond an Empire's dower
Or throne to rival : the reproach of Christ,—
O, there was grandeur in the grief it brought !
And o'er the glooms of drear affliction's night
Rose the rich day-star of that promis'd Heaven,
Where Godhead welcomes with rewarding bliss
All saints and martyrs ; who like Mary, choose
That part sublime, beyond all worlds secure.

CHRIST APPEARS TO MARY.

Down came The Angel, at the dead of night,
Blazing with glory ! From his blasting Form
Of fearful brightness back the keepers fell
Shudd'ring ; and speechless as a thought they lay,
And whiter than the moonlight's pallid beam,—
Blanch'd unto death, by that blood-chilling sight
That shook them, as if God himself were come
Close to their senses, to survey their souls !
For, oh ! the Apparition like a power
Resistless, with a radiant outburst came :—
His face was light'ning : and his eyes a fire,
And dazzlingly his heaven-wove garments shin'd
Over his Form, and like a sunrise gilding snow ;
While underneath him, reel'd the ground
By earthquake palsied, as the pond'rous stone
Roll'd from the grave of JESUS,—with a crash
Like thunder, heard in supernatural dreams :



While in this dread magnificence,—unseen,
Unheard, inpalpably our buried CHRIST
Into the GOD-MAN gather'd back again
His Being, and by innate power sustain'd,—
Rose from the tomb, and with him rose the World !

Then Earth and Heaven, and Hell, and Space, and
Time,
Angels and Fiends, with Systems, Suns, and Worlds,
When from His cerements our EMANUEL burst
Lustrous with life, and clad with deathless bloom,—
Around them all a thrilling influence ran !
For thus the triumph of that Great Decree,
The noontide glory of a plan arrang'd
In the deep centre of th' Eternal Mind,
Was witness'd : Death and Sin were overcome
And round about the risen Saviour beam'd
A halo of all Attributes divine
In full consent, magnificently crown'd !—
For as in Adam, man's primeval Head,
Our blasted Nature to the tomb went down,
Struck to the root by treason's horrid blight,
Our Second Adam, who is LORD from heaven,
That root hath quicken'd into life again ;
Sending the Sap of HIS immortal strength

Through all its branches ! O, the grace immense !
Big with eternity beyond our mind
Fully to grasp,—that God's Paternal Word
No single Person, but a Nature whole
Assum'd ; and thus, through tears, and pangs, and toils
Uncounted ; and through all that hellish craft
Could summon, or this atheistic Earth
Invent, to force Him from perfection's way,—
That Nature did He, with untiring power
And triumph carry, sinless, and unstain'd !
That when through crucifixion's gory death
Down to the chamber of the penal grave
Our nature in its buried surety went,
Corruption from it back recoil'd !—For Death
Was master'd, by a Hand, whose kingly might
Shiver'd to air those adamantine bonds
Which else had bound it with almighty grasp
For ever ; and amid the shout and song
Of bright Adorers, watching from on high
This miracle of wonders,—from the tomb
That Nature into life immortal brought !
There, plac'd it far above all Heavens and Hosts
Celestial, side by side with God enthron'd
Our Prince below, our Paragon above,
And to infinity our ALL IN ALL.

Thus by a fibre of our flesh is bound
To Christ, the family entire of man :
Faithful or faithless,—ALL shall rise
To glory endless, or to penal shame untold.—
Yes ! when the tenant'ry of tombs conceal'd,
When vale, or mountain, land, or lonely sea
Where stranded Navies in the storm went down,
Or shrieking mariners at midnight sank,—
When famous battle-fields, and vaulted graves
In vast cathedrals ; or, when rustic mounds
In meek retirement far from crowds untrod ;
When these shall answer to the trumpet-blast
The four winds carry through creation's round,
Till death turn life, and clay to flesh resolve,
Bone comes to bone, and not one atom fails
To make identity and form complete
In each and all, o'er whom remorseless Death
Shook his pale sceptre,—what will man behold
In the dread scen'ry of this dooming hour,
Save one vast comment, on the word of Him
Who bade the mourner in HIMSELF believe
The Resurrection and the Life to stand !

Not Life alone, but Resurrection too,
The God Incarnate did for man achieve ;
And thus pour'd light on that,—which unexplain'd,

Convuls'd philosophy, the classic mind
Perturb'd, and all surmising reason hoped
Disorganiz'd, or made mere brilliant guess,—
E'en on this mighty and momentous truth,
That soul and body, into living man
Recall'd, replac'd, and sensibly perceived,
On the dread platform of the last Assize
Shall stand hereafter!—For, though conscience told
To the deep soul of universal man,
That in him something of immortal growth
Was planted ; and upon this genial stock
Those dreaming rulers of the olden time,
The Poets,—grafted much of fancy vile ;
Yet, did the grave, between them and their creed
A gulf of darkness, not to be o'ercome,
Produce ; and on this barren instinct grew
Whatever Priest, or Poet in his dreams,
Chose to engraft from superstition's world ;—
For truths when halv'd, are worse than lies entire,
And may be wielded by a master-soul
For priests or monarchs, magistrates or slaves,
As time may need, or tyranny demand !

And what though Giants in the realm of thought
Rose o'er the dwarfs around them ; and approach'd
Truths which project beyond the bounds of time,

Casting their shadows o'er the world to come ;
Though sages spake oracularly wise
Tones of deep wisdom, which do yet entrance
Our wonder ; and some mental heroes dar'd
Dive into darkness with a noble plunge,
And drew forth sparks of immortality !—
Unmaster'd lay the myst'ries of the tomb
Before them. O, 'twas here they stood amaz'd,
And in the dream of their unbodied state
Shudder'd, as on th' eternal brink they stood,
Casting afar their melancholy gaze
O'er the dread possible of doom to come !

Reason was mighty, but was reason still,
Though rais'd, refin'd, and unto strength advanc'd :
It suffer'd darkness, when the Will declin'd
From God, and deified itself for law.
Then blind confusion o'er our being crept
In all beyond the palpable, and plain :
Nature's religion was to nature's state
By heaven adjusted, with harmonious skill,
And hopes and fears consistently could wield
Their blending forces :—but, when sin began,
Death was a gap in man's first glory made ;
And while in *principle*, firm conscience grasp'd

A life immortal, death caus'd blinding doubts
Which stagger'd argument, when call'd to prove
How Mind, denuded of its fleshly robe
In which it acted, *could* for judgment stand,
To hear the verdict of awarding heaven.—
Here was a doubt beyond Cimmerian night,
In darkness ; not a ray the cloud dispers'd !
The taking down this Temple of the flesh,
(That fabric where each wall by God is grav'd)
Confounded reason with chaotic gloom :
For, not the body, nor the soul, alone
Humanity a moral agent makes ;
But, mind incarnate, an embodied soul :
And when *one* half was into dust dissolv'd,
The other, though by hope immortal dreamt,
Was left in mere conjecture's airy realm
To ply its guess-work,—and to ply in vain !
Then, how the brand of base ingratitude
Cleaves to the heart which can unmindful beat,
Of what the Gospel for the Soul hath done,
By flooding man's eternity with streams
Of splendour, from the tomb of Jesus drawn,—
Which, but for that, seems mercilessly hung
With daunting shadows of enormous sway.
For when untaught, the panting mind presumes

Th' unwaning glories of a better state
Oft to predict, the grave eclipses all,
Unless the body out of death arise !—
And, thought may image some heroic sage,
Some brave inquirer, who profoundly mus'd
In classic grove, or academic shades,
On matter, God, and man's unsleeping mind,
When, at the best, Hereafter was to him
The poetry of some persuasive dream
By conscience aided, with authentic light,
And little more !—But now, the lisping child
Who cons his Bible at the Sunday-school,
Beyond the soarings of Athenian sage
Mounts in the hope of his immortal doom !

Yet, 'twas a noble, but perturbing mood,
When haply, rais'd by some ethereal hope
Beyond the level of life's vulgar joy,—
Some priest of mind, ere yet the Gospel woke,
Wander'd to muse beneath a midnight heaven.
There as he ponder'd with perusing eye
On star and planet, while his being drank
The silence and the splendour of the scene
Like inspiration, to its inner depths.—
A dream prophetic oft his spirit warm'd

Of high existence, in some holier form
Than now appear'd ; and wingéd thoughts began
To flutter in him, and with strange uprise
Out of the body bore his heart away
To Homes elysian, Orbs of perfect bliss !
He *felt* the infinite he could not *prove* ;
And when, perchance, with all his soul on fire,
And by the vastness of the vision swell'd,
Home he return'd, and found the face of death
In stern reality before him plac'd,—
How would the chill of this mysterious change
Come o'er his spirit like a cloud of awe
Terror and gloom, beyond all whisper'd truths
Within to scatter, or the speaking word
Without him, to command, or cheer away !

But immortality for MAN is made
Certain and clear as God's existence, now ;
Both for the Flesh, and for the Mind secur'd
By HIM, who soul and body hath redeem'd ;
And to HIS own eternally enlink'd,
(By bleeding merit of unbounded love,)
That same Humanity His grace assum'd.—
He WAS the Resurrection which He preach'd :
And thine the privilege, (and how august !)

Thou weeping Mary, first in zeal to come,
And lost in love beside the tomb to stay,---
On HIM to fix and feed thy raptur'd gaze,
Fresh from the conquer'd grave.—Majestic thought!—
And ampler far than archangelic mind
Can master,—Christ our Resurrection rose!
For, oh! He did not back the heavens unfold,
Nor give Eternity a tongue to speak,
Nor from the shrine of Deity attract
Down to our sense, the secrets of the sky;
But, to the chamber where tyrannic Death
Prisons his pale tenants, with relentless chain,
Went like a victor, grappled with the Power
Of darkness, burst in twain his direful bands,
And thence ascended, taintless, bright, and free,
Master of life, and monarch of the grave,—
Rolling for ever from the tombs of men
The mist and doubt and midnight of despair!
Here is the Truth for which blind reason grop'd,
The Truth philosophy in vain desir'd,
Th' intense Reality by conscience sought,
Yet unobtain'd,—that our sepulchral dust
Should from the grave arise, the soul conjoin,
And both together in one manhood blent,—
Stand before God, for Hell or Heaven prepar'd,—

This was the secret ; Earth's arisen LORD
Beyond all types did gloriously declare !

Yet when our mighty and mysterious King
Blooming with immortality, arose ;
And left His sepulchre a place of light
Behind Him, as the sun illumes the sea
When brightly coming from his couch of waves,—
The first unveiling of His risen form
Not to apostles, though belov'd and blest,
Was made ; but unto that much-loving one
Because forgiven most, the Magdalene !
Others had fled ; yet there amid the hush
And dreamy silence of the cold grey dawn,
Mary stood weeping ; till at length, adown
The vaulted sepulchre her gaze she bent
With timid awe ; when, lo ! two beaming Shapes,
White as the fleecy clouds which throng the Morn
When paleness most ethereal decks her brow,
Were seated,—where the buried Christ repos'd !
And each one, with a melody whose might
Sank o'er the soul like dew o'er parched flowers,
Question'd her grief : but ere the tongue could
frame
An answer, back she turn'd her stooping form

And—there ! the living Saviour ! But unknown
Amid her cloud of grief awhile He stood,
Mistaken for another ; till with tones
Where all the music of compassion breath'd
Reviving magic over mem'ry's soul,
He call'd her,—Mary ! and *that* word awoke
Feeling and Faith to instantaneous act,
And laid her trembling at her Master's feet !
Amaz'd, o'ermaster'd, half delight, and dread,
Eager to prove with living touch, and clasp
The sacred Person of her risen Lord.

He stood before her,—but she could not see
That Holy One : and, oh, how often thus,
The sad experience of our stricken mind
Like Mary,—cannot view the Lord it loves ,
Though in the mercy of our ev'ry breath,
And in the promise of His perfect Word,
In prayer, and praise, and sacramental life,—
Together with that unbreath'd thought which tells
Home to the heart acceptance in the skies,
When the free spirit of assuring grace
Glows in our bosom ; though in each and all
Christ to the conscience doth Himself present ;
Yet, Mary-like, the soul mistakes Him still !—

Some carnal shade, or clouding sin prevents,
And the high faculty of seeing Faith
Grows undiscerning ; or, in nature's eye
The tear of sorrow doth so thickly stand
That through it, God himself grows unbeheld
A moment ;—nothing but dark woe is seen !

Yet, never from His Own, the Spirit-born,
Will Christ an over-watching care withdraw ;
And often, while defenceless reason quails,
Chariots of fire, and steeds of flame surround
The trembler ; round his head a shielding hand
Is circled ; and the EYE that slumbers not
Bends o'er his being with a Brother's gaze.
He call'd her, Mary !—that melodious name ;
And by the charm of His celestial tone
Clear'd from the eye of her dejected faith
The hiding gloom, and let the Saviour in,
By one bright flash of recognition hail'd,—
“ Rabboni !” And, how touchingly sublime,
That He, the woman's Seed, to woman's soul
Deign'd to descend, thus marvellously bland,
Whose Equipage Eternity supplies,
Whose Throne the Attributes divine uphold, --
Yes, even HE, was human to the voice !

And touch'd the weeper by a tone that ran
Like music o'er the chords of memory.

And thus, entranc'd amid the dreaming night,—
How oft the pilgrim in some far-off clime
The touching echo of some household word,
(In Feeling's ear, immortally alive)
Delights to welcome! So, the rude ship-boy
High on the mast amid the howling storm;
Or, gasping soldier on the battle-plain
When drop by drop slow bleeding into clay,—
Frequent can hear within the heart's clear depths
The haunting murmur of maternal lips
His name pronouncing; till the bosom fills
With aching fondness e'en to overflow;
And the dead feelings, by a single tone
Wake from the tomb, and melt the mind to tears!

'Twas by her *name*, the pardon'd mourner knew,
(With pressure of endearing truth applied)
Her cherish'd Master, from the grave arriv'd:
And how can we, except THE SPIRIT shine
Bright on His work, and show His image there,
By love's experience, that Redeemer know?
And what is that, but Heaven's mysterious book

By Faith unroll'd, in full assurance read,
Where the GREAT SHEPHERD hath his sheep enroll'd
And register'd them, each and all by name?
Come then, O Christ, and to our souls accede ;
Murmur our name, and bid the heart respond
Rabboni!—Life and Light, and Lord and Sire,
And Saviour of a lost eternity,
On earth our Merit, and in Heaven the same !



THE INCREDULITY

By unbelief our primal nature fell
From light to darkness ; and by faith it mounts
Back to the glory whence its pureness sank :
But still, that fatal tyranny of sense
Which Adam first around the virgin-soul
Allowed to cast its paralyzing chain,
Abides ; and needs a disenchanting spell
Beyond our reason, in its brightest noon,
To shame, or silence.—Yes, the felt, the seen,
And tangible,—alone appears the true !
The touch must regulate the law of truth,
And to the body must our high-born soul
Stoop like a slave, before the mind admits
Motives divine, and miracles of grace,
And myst'ries where the Infinite Unknown
Inshrines His nature, and his love reveals !—
Why, 'tis the madness of outrageous pride,

The dismal lunacy of self-esteem ;
And reason here a suicide becomes,
When god o'er God it thus presumes to be,
And dwarfs the Everlasting down to man !

Why wonder then, that, as from God we fell
By sense indulg'd, e'en so by sense denied
Our ransom'd nature up to Him returns,
Chasten'd, and humbled at each rising step :
That thus, when self, absorb'd and crucified,
Yields to the law of holiness and heaven,—
Our Being may at length, in loving awe,
Look to its Centre, and celestial Source
And draw from Deity the bliss it wants.

Strangely severe our doom to haughty minds
May seem ; and myriads, like to Thomas, crave
A verity which sense alone can grasp.
And endless miracle to man supply,—
Christ in the ~~Flesh~~, to be by hand and eye perus'd !
But yet, whate'er the comment reason make,
Between the past and present, life is plac'd
For test and trial ; and, as wisdom meek
This high probation for hereafter bears,—
So is the character experience-built,

And creed the conscience for its own adopts.—
Faith eyes the past, and hope the future seeks,
Yet either must with sacrificing zeal
Something deny, which vulgar sense enjoys.—
For do we not, as from th' Almighty, take
The Gospel in its glory?—Then must mind
Learn on the altar of uncreas'ning faith
Itself to lay with immolating zeal :
Systems, and science, and our self-esteem,
And each atonement which our tears would pay,
Must vanish ; while adown the haunted gloom
Of twice nine hundred years we walk,
To learn the creed which Calvary inspires.—
Denial thus must be our spirit's law,
If with pure angels we aspire to dwell ;
And far above what bribing sense can bring
Through tact or taste, or eye, or ear, to man,—
Faith on her wings must lift our being up.

Yet, faith is reason in its noblest form ;
And boasts an evidence most heavenly bright,—
Sublimely equal to our spirit's need,
In whatsoever submissive Love believes
As sent from Deity, our world to save.—
For, breathe we not the Church's sainted air,

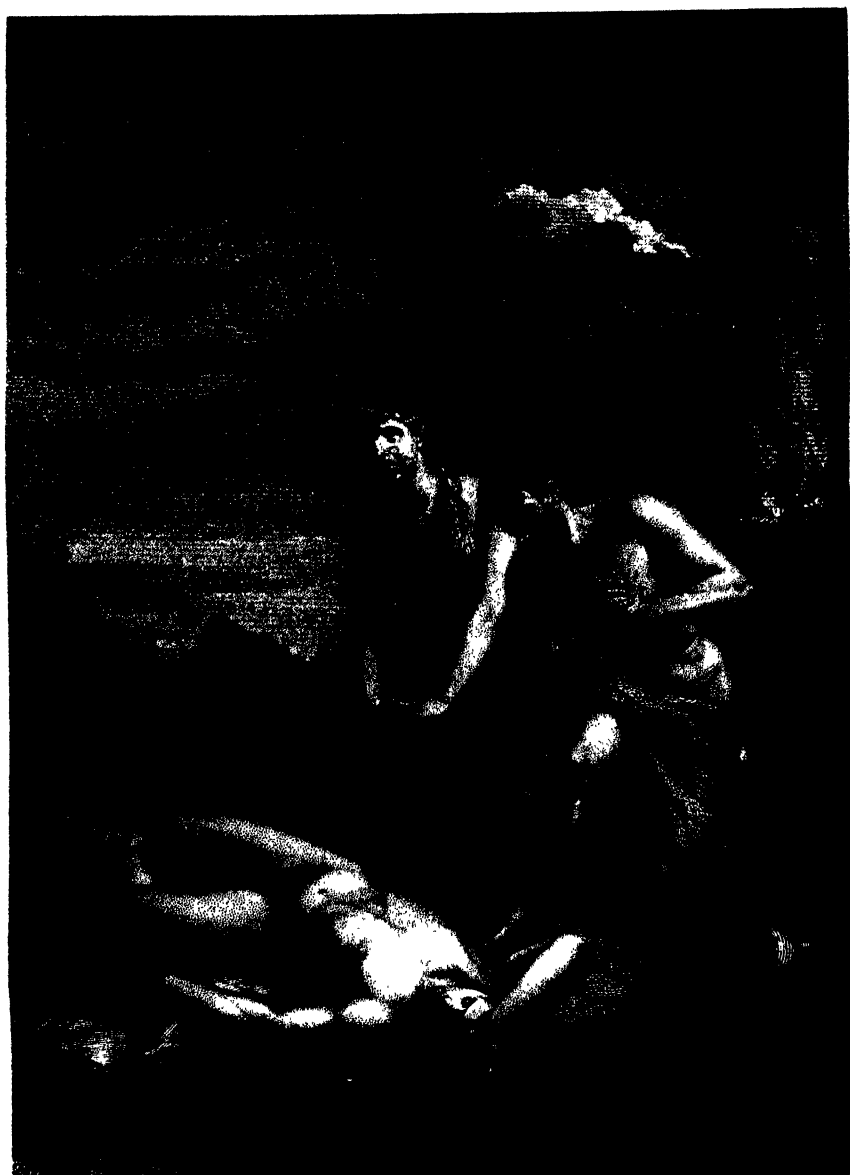
Where all is fragrant of the truths of old ?
And ritual Forms, and ceremonial Types,
With all high records of auxiliar sway,
Historic Truths, traditionary lore,
And monuments of sacramental grace,
These have we not ?—and though rejecting pride
Back on the blaze of this commingled orb
Of evidence, a sneer presumes to cast,—
Yet have the wise and wondrous to such light
Their hearts submitted, and repose enjoy'd.
And, more than this, a clear-eyed wisdom finds ;—
For, if unrisen were our spirit's KING,
Then, long ere this the Galiléan lie
Had vanish'd !—for the creed its claim enacts
Binds on the world offensive purity
That flesh endures not : and if CHRIST were dead
Tomb'd in the darkness of sepulchral clay,
How could His promise, with our souls to be
Present for ever,—still on earth be prov'd
Infallible, through faith's unbounded world ?
A living Christian *proves* a living Christ
As firmly to the soul, as if the Heavens
Were now uncurtain'd, and our eyes entranc'd
Look'd through The Veil, and saw Him shining there
In glory, bright as what the martyr view'd,—

When Stephen mounted from his mangled clay
In bleeding triumph to his Master's breast !

Deistic Thomas, with his doubting mind,
I envy not that most exacting man,
Though eye to eye, and face to face he stood
Before MESSIAH ; and with hand outstretch'd
And daring finger to his wounds applied,—
Answer'd his doubt, and silenc'd unbelief
By evidence, that drew his adoration forth
With over-awed amazement !—He to sight
And sense appeal'd ; and well were both assur'd
When the mild Saviour to his eye appear'd,
Thrilling that doubter with resistless proof,
E'en by the print and pressure of those wounds
Whence gush'd salvation o'er a guilty world !—
But rather let me, with a glance of faith
Pierce the past ages, to my LORD behold ;
And in the glass of his describing Word
His life and lineaments of beauty trace.
Child of the church, and by her creed sustain'd
By prayer, and praise, and her memorial rites
Doctrines and duties, and the hallow'd round
Of fasts and festivals,—oh ! let me learn
The sense to crucify ; and walk by faith

As prophets, patriarchs, and priests have done ;
By grace empower'd beyond mere sight to live,
And earth-born feelings, in their finest mood.—
For not to Thomas did that blessing come,
Which round the weakest, who can now adore
And clasp Emmanuel with the mind's embrace,
Hovers like music,—from the lenient mouth
Of Christ descending on the souls of all
Who, though they see not, yet the Lord believe
In risen glory.—Thus doth faith exalt
Man out of self, and unto God reduce
His errant nature, as its proper Home.

Sense but the shadow, Faith the substance holds ;
And while the pageantries of Earth and Time
Like golden clouds which line the glowing west
To airy nothingness have died away ;
That glorious INFINITE of truth will beam
Brighter and brighter, which pure faith pursues :
Till, what in weakness now we dimly scan,
By open vision future heaven shall prove,
And God unveil'd our spirit's glory be !



Painted by Jandurant

Genesis IV. - 4

I Mose IV. 8

Engraved by R. Schmitt

THE FIRST DEATH.

DID the Earth shudder, and the conscience reel
In the frail breast of new-created man
When God, that dooming malediction said
“ Back to thy dust, for dust thou art, return ! ”
We know not ; nor can shaping words express
All which Creation’s guilty convict felt
At the pale glory of departing day,
Nearer and nearer, as the formless God
Approach’d him !—while the foul transgressor flew
To hide himself behind the shelt’ring tree ;
As if our conscience were a human eye
Baffled by distance, as by darkness bound !
But, *next* to this, must primal Death have been
In horror ; cov’ring with a hideous pall
Reason and conscience, and the shrinking mind ;
When first the nameless apparition frown’d,—
Reeking with blood !—and that in envy shed

By the fell club of patriarchal Cain.
For if between us and the power of death,
Not all th' experience which our grave-fill'd earth
Has suffer'd, e'er can reconciliation plant ;
Whether in battle, mid the deadly shock
Of grappling forces, foot to foot, and hand
To hand contending,—till the life-grasp end ;
Or, in the blackness of some midnight sea
When wave and whirlwind lift their yelling cry
Together, where the plunging ship goes down
Like a dark monster diving through the deep ;—
Or, if death come amid the household group
Around us ; and with lenient slow decay,
While truths celestial, from religion drawn,
Beam on our spirit like the beck'ning smiles
From souls in glory,—calmly we decline :
Come when he may, and howsoe'er by faith
Subdued and soften'd,—yet the flesh recoils
From his chill presence ; and our nature shrinks
From the bare shadow of his ghostly form,
And owns him to be King of terrors still !

Philosophy in vain her charm applies ;
Reason may laugh, and science coldly sneer ;
And all the bravery of words may try

Off from the soul this incubus of dread
To shake : but still the clay-cold touch of death
Thrills through our bones, like supernat'ral ice ;
And in the chamber, where his power we find,
How the foot presses on the very floor
As if with rev'rence !—and our breath is held
In aw'd suspension ; scarcely can our words
Venture abroad ; and as we sadly bend
Our speculation o'er the marble face,
In the stern paleness of its dread repose
Beneath us lying,—something not of earth
Comes strangely creeping o'er the harrow'd mind ;
A hush'd sensation, an unspoken chill,
A choking weight that on our bosom sinks
Dismal as if the horrid grave immur'd
Our being, while 'tis yet with life inspir'd.
Eternity doth time and scene and soul
Into itself absorb ; and what was once,
A fact believ'd, grows awful feeling now.

But if to us, in this meridian age,
Death be a myst'ry, hung with deepest shade,
What did the exiles of lost Paradise
Endure and suffer,—when young Abel sank
Into mere clay, beneath a murd'rer's blow !

Then, the vast meaning of Jehovah's curse
Was bodied forth ; and—" *Dust thou art !* " awoke
A fearful echo in their martyr'd child !
The mother, with her shriek to Heaven up sent,
Clasping her hands with agonizing hold ;
While o'er the body her disshevell'd locks
Float in confusion ; and the world's first sire
Beside her kneeling, while his manly chest
Heaves with emotion too appall'd for lips
To utter,—this imagination sees,
When darkly pond'ring o'er that early sin
Which pall'd creation with portentous gloom
By one dark act, irrevocably done !

Yes, tis a tragedy of early crime
That makes us tremble into tears and sighs
For man's corruption,—that a brother's hands
Deep in the life-stream of fraternal blood
Should bathe themselves ; and smite his victim down,
At once transfigur'd into breathless clay
Before him !——

And from whence, the murd'rous wrong ?
Why, from the fury of an envious heart
Tameless as terrible ; that loath'd to see
Heaven's blazing welcome from the clouds descend

On the slain firstling, which the younger born
Offer'd JEHOVAH ; while the ripen'd fruits
Glowing with life, and green with nature's bloom,
Lay on the altar of uprising turf
By God unwelcom'd with saluting fire :—
And, therefore, did the harsh and haughty Cain
Forego all promptings, which fraternal thoughts
Might kindle ; and the cry of conscience drown
Within him, pleading like persuasive God ;
And then, beguile him by familiar talk
Far from his home ; and in some trackless field
Where none were seen to syllable a crime,
E'en in a moment,—as the lightning bolt
Hurl'd from the darkness of the sky descends,—
So did his hand, with fratricidal blow
Dash into death the unresisting form
Of Abel, Eve's belov'd and second born !—
Gentle and good, a shepherd of the hills,
Walking with God, as future Enoch did,
Content to live, and yet prepar'd to die.

The first of martyrs was the friend of truth ;
And there, in gory slumber, stark and pale
Behold him prostrate !—Not a step is nigh ;

Nature herself, as if with horror tranc'd,
Deepens her silentness : and who can tell
How Cain the grassy earth hath made to drink
The blood of Abel ?—Yet, the murd'rer shrinks
Into himself, with shudd'ring guilt o'erpower'd !
And scarcely from his victim dares avert
His eye-glance ; lest on some avenging fiend
'Twould fall ; or else the cursed ground would cleave
And gulf him in the darkness of the damn'd !—
“ Where is thy brother ?” Hark ! the mouth of God
Hath spoken ; for the cry of blood hath peal'd
High o'er the Heavens, and reach'd the Throne Eterne,
And rung around it a prevailing voice
For vengeance ;—DEITY Himself replies !
And on his brow, behold yon felon bears
A brand which dies not ;—'tis the blasting curse
By retribution on his forehead grav'd,
As forth, a vagabond in murd'rous crime
The wretch is driven ; from whose dismal eye
The beauty of the flowers will seem to fade,
The fruit turn ashes, and the hard-till'd earth
Return no produce to his toiling hand !
But, like a living curse his life shall be :
Yet, none shall SLAY him ; for the brand is set
By Heaven upon him, and the curse is—live !

But underneath this veil of fact there lies
Much for the mind, beyond mere time to change.
For in those brothers, lo! enduring types,
Who thus impersonate two mental powers,
And two varieties of man,—are found.
In Cain we view, how fallen man abhors
Divine similitude in human form,
Or function; and what fav'ring Heaven bestows
In answer to the soul of simple faith,
Lightens the flame of lurid envy up
Till quench'd by blood, or cool'd by black revenge.

Or, may we rather, in remorseless Cain
A pattern of the primal Deist trace?
For he, from reason's oracle deriv'd
His worship, and the fruits and flowers preferr'd
Proudly to offer the rejecting Heavens, —
Who claim'd a sacrifice, where vital blood
In the slain creature mystically shed,
Preach'd a mute sermon on THE LAMB to come
In after ages :—while, in Abel's mind,
(To faith subjecting all that reasoning pride
Presumes to dictate for the Will Supreme,)
There seems a model, how the soul must act
In matters, where alone th'Almighty rules,

Alpha of love, and Omega of law,
Himself His reason,—though by us unscann'd.

But, in the contrast of that crying blood
Which mov'd all Heaven, and brought th' ETERNAL down
To curse the fratricide,—how faith exults !
For, when the Antitype of Abel died
On the dread altar of His Deity,
His blood far better than slain Abel's spoke :
For *that* drew vengeance from the wrath of Heaven,
But *this*, draws mercy from the heart of God,
Perfect, and pure, as was THE LAMB, who died !



MEETING OF JOSEPH WITH HIS FATHER.

God in creation is a glorious thought,
Making the matter that we touch, or see,
Like mute religion on our senses act ;
And to all forms and faculties of things
A power imparting, more than mere delight.
'Tis thus in nature, God alone we hail
The ground of being, and the grace of all
That in this temple of creation stands.
No dead abstraction, no almighty Law
To faith suffices ;—Life itself is God
In will and wisdom actively employ'd :
It spurns the idol, Second Cause, and springs
On to the Infinite and only First !
Creation a Theocracy becomes
When thus perceiv'd, intelligibly ruled
By The GREAT KING,—whose sceptre sways
From the brief dew-drop, to the blazing world.
And blest is he, who thus through nature walks
Companion'd by its Master ! Scenes and sounds
Are unto him as tokens of His power,

Perpetual teachers of His present love.—
Feeling the work, but Faith the Worker, loves
Devoutly : and the pomp of heaven's display,
The floor of ocean, the green face of earth,
And each variety that objects wear,—
With more than language to his mind appeal,
Proclaiming HIM,—whose Power no Sabbath keeps,
But quickens nature with incessant Laws.
And how this acts where'er we walk, or muse !
Freshens the grass, and beautifies the flower,
Gives to the canopy of heaven a grace
Beyond the symmetry of clouds to hang ;
And so with reverence the soul attunes,
The very air-song seems to warble truths
Celestial ; syllables of spirit-tone
Haunt the pure breathings of the balmy wind
Around us wing'd : and when along the shore
Haply we roam in some reflective dream,
When life hangs heavy on the grief-worn heart,—
The billows make a litany of sound,
Which half interpret what sad thought suggests.—

God in creation !—'tis a creed sublime
Which lends to matter, memory,—and the mind
With such desire for veneration fills,—

The universe one vast Shechinah grows
Whence Piety, Creation's priestess, draws
Prophetic glimpses, as the tribes of old
Drew from the breastplate where the Urim shin'd
Responsive guidance, and unerring law.

And who to Chance, that melancholy power !
Lawless and blind, unnatural as wild,
The scenic changes of eventful life
Surrenders ?—to be shifted, stopp'd or mov'd
As Fate decides, or Future may decree ?
No ! rather will the heaven-taught soul refer
Life which to others looks entangled maze
Wove by mere accident,—to HIM alone,
The First and Last, the great ordaining MIND,
Whose Providence alike o'er all presides,
And yet, in each with His elective love
Works what He wills.—For as the speaking face
However shadow'd by expression's tinge,
When thought's ethereal hues along it rise
And vanish,—doth from *one* inspiring heart
Borrow its meaning ; or, as beams of light
When o'er the chequer'd ground they fall, assume
A myriad tinges from the scene they touch,
Yet from *one* point, all colourless proceed ;—
So is experience to the trustful mind

By faith ennobled ; God in purpose, ONE
Through all variety of weal or woe
It loves to recognize ; minute, or great,
Soft or severe, whate'er the event be found,—
Th' Almighty's in it ! and it owns Him there.
Else would a Manichéan darkness shade
The brightest summer which our souls enjoy,
With bedding gloom ; and life itself become
A wave of feeling, on a sea of chance,
That billows ever with emotion blind.
Thus, as the child, by graceful instinct taught,
Flies to the parent, with unreas'ning trust
In young simplicity,—and hides its heart
Under the shelter of o'ershadowing love
In pain, or peril ; so the heaven-referring mind
Back from event to God Himself rebounds
At once, by faith and feeling. Though it comes
Pall'd in dark myst'ry, stern as unexplain'd,—
'Tis peace to know a FATHER's hand o'erguides
The movement ; and His heart behind it smiles
With love unbounded on our spirit's lot.

Thus should we learn by faith to concentrate
Full on our souls the Godhead we adore.
And not,—as pours the sun-bright day abroad
With floods of glory, flashing over all alike

Evil and good,—should we alone our God
Delight to rev'rence: but with love select
For ever acting His intended plan
Out on ourselves, as individual souls,
May we revere Him. Then, with feeling grasp
The truth amazing but divinely sweet
We hold,—that as in Heaven above He dwells
So on the earth around us wind His arms
Eternal, though no shade, or shadow marks
Their motion!—Not when Sinai with Him shook,
By the dread thunder of His heard descent
Appall'd, and reeling; nor when Glory fill'd
The Temple, bright with His indwelling blaze,
In *fact* was God more present, though to sense
The *feeling* of Th' Eternal ONE approach'd,—
Than now in all things; from the Thrones which fall
With Empires for their mourners, to the tears
That tremble in a sainted infant's eye!

•

And there be moments, when mysterious life
Is so attended with a train of facts
Sudden, and strange, through which a mercy glares
With such intensity of sacred light
Full on the conscience,—that Paternal care
To us revealing God's elective will,

Runs through the heart with overwhelming proof!
 And bids it, like ecstatic Hagar cry,
 By Heaven when mercy-struck to more than prayer :—
 And He, the INFINITE, by form array'd,
 Who took our nature in all sinless truth
 Into His Own, as man embodied lov'd
 In modes and shapes of individual cast.
 For while in providence, the unblemish'd LORD
 Mov'd on the lines of Justice and of Truth,
 Boundless beyond respect of single homes,
 Or spirit ; HE, in walks of social life
 Lov'd like a Man, and chose the friend He lik'd.—
 And here the winning might Emmanuel wields,
 By his example ! for, on Person, Place,
 And Time, His pure affections deign'd to shed
 Concentred brightness.—He who wept a city's doom,
 As if the crashing of its crumbled walls
 Rang in his ear, while Roman butchers bath'd
 Their swords in slaughter,—also by a grave
 Wept o'er the dead, or if a brother He !
 And to his bosom took the mild St. John.

Praise to the Holy One ! for this display,
 In the bright records of that Book Divine
 Where, from the mercy-seat the veiling cloud

Is half withdrawn ; and through it flashing beams
Upon the paths of Providence descend,
To light the pilgrim of pure faith to Heaven.
There do we learn that *none* are overlook'd,
And not the least, who in the lowest range
Of our vex'd world, his way of trial, treads,—
Who may not, if on wing of faith he rise,
Behold a FATHER and a FRIEND above !
And what, though heedless of such holy thoughts
Our practis'd worldlings, or the Christless throng
Bound by the visible, and content to live,
Eat, drink and die, beneath no higher sense
Of Deity, than what their daily good
Or evil, will at times on feeling force ;
Pursuing bubbles, which the gay baptize
Pleasures ! though oft in pains, they burst ;—
What, though to such, sensation proves a God
In all but name, yet men of keener minds
Would sink to shadows, effortless and sad,
And loathe existence as a breathing curse,—
If nought they trusted but a naked LAW
Above them, for no special guidance prais'd ;
But fix'd as Fate, for ever and the same.

And how would those, who, cast in finer mould
Than meets observance in its common walk :

Begirt by circumstance, they cannot climb,
And that peculiar ;—even they, apart
From others, guarded by a mental zone
From feeling contact with the social Forms
Around them ; and who bear a burden'd life,—
If unto Heaven they could not dare reveal
The voiceless secret of that inner frame
They love to cherish ?—Such are in this world
By form, but in their feeling far above
Its low delights aspiringly remain.—
Men of prophetic heart, and kingly mind,
Whose natures are responsively alive
To each pulsation of this breathing world ;
Who have the power of beauty on their souls
Like endless magic ; sensitive, but sad
Withal, and visited by gleams of truth
That come like flashes from a state unknown
Oh ! such to minds of more robust employ
Are but the mock, and paradox of men !—
Themselves, by no profound emotion stirr'd,
Chain'd to dry custom, by opinion rul'd,
And all contented with the dull routine
Of whatsoe'er the tasking hour demands
From speech or action ; these, for mournful hearts
Who feel mortality with myst'ry rife
Beyond solution ; and with backward gaze

(Like exil'd Adam when the fenced bowers
Of forfeit paradise his mem'ry viewed)
Revert, in dreams, to man's unfallen prime,—
For such *they* have no echo!—yet in Heaven
These lone and lofty Natures, who to earth
Can neither bind their aspirations down,
Or, when they speak, but half interpret truths,
Which yet o'erarch their being, as the sky
Their heads o'ercanopies,—in Heaven, at least,
A loving PARENT their religion clasps!
Who reads them well, and cannot misconceive
A single letter in their book of life,
The heart's deep volume!—E'en as Joseph clung
Close to His Creator, both in cell and court,
Firmly to God's discriminating eye
They cling, and hear HIM call their souls by name.

And right are they, with rev'rence thus to hold
Assurance in selecting mercy, strong.
For here the gospel with a fond supply
Of truth and tenderness, our asking mind
Meets like an answer, and confirms the creed,
That whom God loves,—o'er him unslumb'ring care
Doth individual watch for ever keep.—

Thou of the mood so often darkly strange !
 Or bent with incommunicable woe ;
 Weary and worn, whose untranslated mind
 Leaves thee in crowds, a solitary man :
 Ah ! think not that the pitying Lord of love
 Observes thee not ; or, with disdainful eye
 Turns from a pang the world's cold mock condemns.—
 For ere the wings of Time their flight began,
 Thee in idea Christ himself embrac'd,
 Perceiv'd and ponder'd, and, as His Own secured
 By dateless covenant ; His closing prayer
 Did for thy soul undying grace secure,
 And on the Cross confirm'd it, with a Blood
 Divinely precious.—So, in all thy paths
 Of trial, howsoe'er thy tested heart
 Faint, droop, or sadden, let this balmy truth
 Drop like a dew from Hermon on thy soul,
 In healing freshness,—Thou art *known*, and *dear* to
 Christ,
 Though oft on earth by friends misunderstood,
 Or else by foes, with falsehood over-veil'd
 And so transfigur'd from thy native mien,
 That thou art mock'd, where most respect is due,—
 Fly to a Sympathy that never fails,
 And on the bosom of Emmanuel's love

Pillow thy grief in meditative prayer !—
Here is the Architect, who built thy Soul
And knows the fabric which his wisdom plann'd,
Unerringly ; thy thoughts, however deep,
Thy feelings dark, thine aspirations dim,
Thy hopes, and dreams, thy failings and thy fears,—
All unto Him in clear discernment stand
For light, for guidance, or corrective love.
HE hears thy heart-throb ; counts thy fev'rish pulse,
Marks the faint motion of each falt'ring nerve
By feeling quicken'd ; views the mental shade
Excitement summons o'er thy pallid face,
Numbers the sigh, and notes the quiet tear,
Dropt where no human gaze can see it fall :
And therefore, unto CHRIST, beyond all form,
That friendship in this fallen world assumes,
E'en at the finest,—wearied one ! resort ;
For HE alone man's true sensorium is,
And to our spirit with responsive thrill
Moves at each prayer, adoring trust applies.

Such be the thoughts, associations, truths,
That grace a narrative, where manners rise
On the high platform of the hoary past
E'en as they were, in nature and in name,

Awakened ; when we view how Heaven o'erwatch'd
 (From the sad moment when the Midian band
 For twenty pieces bought him, to the hour
 When Joseph side by side with Pharaoh sat
 On the proud throne of Egypt)—Jacob's boy.
 For though the artist, with creative hues
 Portrays them, when the grey-hair'd sire enclasp'd
 His long-lost child, and each aloud, for joy
 Wept at the meeting, while their hearts o'erflowed,
 Fill'd like a wine-cup with exub'rant bliss !
 What *was* their meeting, but a conflux bright
 Where secret providences met at last,
 In mingled lines of mercy and of truth
 By Heav'n *so* order'd ? Yes, the shroud is rent
 In that sweet story, and behind the means
 Apparent, which like drap'ry, serve to hide
 The viewless mainspring which inspires the scene
 For action,—man is taught the MASTER HAND,
 The secret Ruler, the resistless Will,
 To trace and welcome,—e'en the Patriarch's God,
 Father and Fountain of our spirits all.

And ye, affections ! sacred, pure, profound,
 Then was your coronation—when the son

Leapt from his chariot, and with duteous love
Welcom'd his sire ; and was not there asham'd
Amid the gaze of Egypt's haughty lords,
To hail his shepherd-father ! No, the Power
Almighty, who from prison, chains, and death
Releas'd him ; and among princes rank'd
That once low exile,—kept his filial mind
Simple amid the sunshine of a court,
And uncorrupt amid the halls of kings
And palaces of pleasure. And, methinks,
Far nobler was he, when before the throne
He brought the patriarch, and proclaimed him sire,
Though but a shepherd out of Canaan come,—
Than blaz'd his rank, amid the circling pomp
Of chariots, steeds, with all the courtly group
Of lords and ladies ; and the large bright tear
That started from the fount of home-born love,
And glitter'd on his eyelash, like a gem,
When Jacob bow'd, all reverently hoar'd,
Before him, till his heart was like to burst
With nature's yearning,—was a richer star
Than ever from his gay tiara flash'd,
Or all the jewels Pharaoh's hand bestow'd
To grace high merit, and his zeal reward.

But let us with this deep assurance part,—
That who by faith, and not by feeling walks,
Or sense, or vision, may on God depend
And leave his fortunes to paternal Love,
As all o'erruling ; and, if shading griefs
Cloud the clear summer which young hope forecasts
As coming ; or, if midnight woes distract,
And baffle what the calculating mind
Proclaims our wisdom,—let us wait awhile,
And God Himself will explanation be
In yon high world, where back the soul will gaze,
And see through all things what connexion ran,
Though secret, strange, and often unbeliev'd !
Nothing was little,—for a link it form'd,
And nothing useless,—for a part it made,
And nothing planless,—for a point it touch'd
In that great SCHEME, before the ages cast,
Whereby a creature fallen, guilty, weak,
From dust to Deity by grace arrives ;
And learns with rapture, how each cross on earth
Was close related to a crown in Heaven.



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DAVID PLAYING HIS HARP BEFORE SAUL.

“IT came to pass, when the evil Spirit from God was upon Saul, that David took an harp, and played with his hand ; so Saul was refreshed and was well, and the evil Spirit departed from him.” Theological discussion and doctrinal criticism are out of place, here, or it would be an interesting, and not an unprofitable inquiry—what we are to understand by the mysterious words “evil Spirit.” It is presumed that only two views can be taken of them. Either they mean, that Satan himself, as the Evil one, was personally allowed by God to harass the mind, haunt the conscience, and darken the imagination of the rebellious Saul, and that too, in the light of a judicial visitation for his iniquities ; or else, that an abstract *influence* of an infernal character, which diseased the brain with moody sullenness, affected the spirits with morbid and envious, or cruel motion,—from time to time assailed the soul of this persecuting monarch. In either case, however, the part to which we shall direct our attention

for a few paragraphs is this—the exorcising magic of sacred music, when brought to bear from David’s harp upon the “evil Spirit” of the king.

Now that the Almighty, on whose fiat hang the capacities of the universe, should condescend to illustrate His mastery over the creatures He has formed,—is what reason itself would anticipate; and that moreover, He should so vary His mode of self-manifestation, as to convince us that He is limited by no matter, space, form or time, in selecting His channels for communicating notices of His nature to ourselves,—is, also a rational conclusion. In choosing therefore that the melodies of David’s lyre, should so act upon the moral frame of Saul, as to expel the “evil Spirit,” out of it, He has only afforded a specimen of His uncontrolled and uncontrollable sway over all means and methods, and instrumentalities, for governing the mind, and guiding the heart of man. Wonderful then as the entire transaction is, and utterly incompetent as we assuredly are to discover the connexion between the sound of the played harp, and the expulsion of the disenchanted “evil Spirit,”—still this mysteriousness but only heightens the effect of the scene upon a reverential nature; and when we behold the Son of Jesse, in all the pastoral simplicity of his youth, with the freshness of green fields upon him, seated

before the gloomy Saul, and as his anointed hand sweeps the strings of his lyre into melodious excitement,—mark how the scowl of the king's face relaxes, and then by degrees the shadowings of the “evil Spirit,” melt away from his discoloured soul;—what do we witness but a beautiful exemplification of the fact,—that “the Spirit of the Lord came upon David” (1 Sam. xvi. 13,) and that both matter and mind, and sound and spirit, are all at the instantaneous command of the Deity?

Again: when we remember that the sweet psalmist was not only a progenitor, but also an illustrious and eloquent type of Christ,—in the musical conquest of his harp over the “evil Spirit” which tenanted the diseased mind of Saul,—may we not perceive something of a dim, remote, but yet not unreal allusion to the effects of gospel music hereafter, when the “glad tidings” from the lyre of Revelation should indeed expel “the devil and all his works,” not only from the breast of royalty for a season, but from the bosom of sanctified humanity for ever? At any rate, if this view be condemned as a mere theological fancy, we cannot deny, that in thus exorcising the “evil Spirit” from Saul, David gave, as it were, a prelude and prophecy of what the harp of his psalmody is effecting up to the present hour. For, oh! what myriads, since the times of Saul, whose dark spirits have been

distressed by “evil” temptations, and perturbed by unruly desires, or overshadowed by infernal glooms and spectres from the pit of darkness and despair—have proved the music and the might of David’s harp! And when they have listened with the ear of a loving faith to the tones of inspiration which the Psalms give forth, have in spirit perpetuated the scene which was enacted nearly three thousand years ago,—when “it came to pass, when the evil spirit from God was upon Saul, that David took a harp, and played with his hand: so Saul was refreshed, and was well, and the evil spirit departed from him.”

But we must not terminate this essay without an observation, by way of caution, against the supposed influence of sacred music upon the mind and feeling of mankind. In the case of David and Saul there was obviously an interfering miracle at work; and the especial will of the Almighty operated through the whole. But, we fear that what is called “sacred music” in our day, is not only vastly overrated in its influence, but calculated to produce much delusion also; and this by means of a subtle charm wielded over the emotional springs of our excitable nature.—Can we then deny that the commanding part which our emotions enact on the arena of the heart, deserves a deep and searching analysis from

all who cultivate profound self-acquaintance? And pre-eminently in this age of excitement, when a sateless appetite for indulging the sensibilities, rather than for exercising moralities,—meets with incessant gratification from one quarter or another. Now, without attempting a metaphysical accuracy and definition,—we understand by the emotions, certain keen vibrations by which the mind is thrilled or shaken, under any exciting appeal; and which originate midway between the mental and material departments of our nature; participating alike in the delicacy of the one, and the coarser texture of the other. And where, it may be asked, is the danger of bringing any apparatus to play upon the emotions? Why, it consists in this; that when such emotions happen to be related to any object of sacredness,—he who is the subject of them, is often cheated into a complacency, which tends to supplant the exercise of sterling principle. The truth is, that although these emotions are capable of being enlisted under the banner of conscience, and thence actively guided towards the duty and discipline of life,—*in themselves* they are not to be catalogued among the moral feelings at all: it depends upon the decision of the *will* to advance them into the higher and nobler region of genuine principle, and active conduct. Hence, too, the peril of the heart being emasculated by perpetual

contact with the soft imagery of romance, sentiment, and fiction. It is through a recurrence of such ideal attraction that the passive sensibilities are exquisitely moved ; but, alas ! the active principles are often proportionately stagnant. The heart *may* be regaled with sentimental fascination, while the conscience sleeps in cold torpor, unalarmed and unrenewed as ever.—And we more than suspect that those who have studied the emotional imposture, to which we are so inclined to be subject, will concur with us in thinking, that thousands who, under the bowed roof of some hallowed cathedral, and amid the magnificence of many-sounding instruments and choral voices,—are enraptured, by an *imitation* of the “LAST TRUMPET !”—may well take heed unto themselves, lest they haply be found among that despairing host, who will shriek, at the clang of that REAL Trumpet, which shall one day open the coffins of creation by its blast, and summons the startled dead, to stand before the “Great White Throne.”



CHRIST RECEIVING LITTLE CHILDREN.

A DEW-DROP trembling on the stem of life,
A rosebud peeping into fairy bloom,
A billow on the sea's maternal breast
Leaping, amid the jubilee of airs
By glad winds caroll'd ; or a dancing beam
Of sunlight, laughing in its brightest joy ;
In truth, whatever is most exquisitely soft,
Minute and fragile, innocent or gay,—
Oft to the poetry of mind presents
Types of that beauty, which a tender babe
To feeling manhood's fascinated eye
Affordeth ;—touch'd at times with solemn hues,
Which hearts prophetic cannot fail to cast
Round a frail heritor of life unknown !

But when o'er Revelation's book we bend,
There do we find, with more than love confirm'd
Whatever Nature, by her mute appeals
Hath prompted ; for the Bible e'en to babes
Lends the sweet mercy of its soft regard

And bland protection : other creeds may scorn
Such aidless being, and the gibing laugh
Of Science o'er their frailness may uplift
Its godless pean, but in this we boast,—
That Christianity the cradle seeks,
Stoops to a babe with condescending brow ;
And, while the Hindoo, by her creed transform'd
From woman's softness into heartless stone,
Commits her infant to broad Ganga's stream
Foodless to perish,—Christ in Spirit comes,
Commands the priesthood on its forehead plant
The sealing water, and the loving sign,
And bids it welcome to His ark of love !

But here is comfort, consolation deep
As an eternity, and high as Heaven.—
One half of human beings on the brink
Of life new-born, mysteriously depart ;
Like visitors from some far world, they come
Our atmosphere of sin and woe to face,
A moment look upon this blasted earth,
And then, (as if appall'd by what they saw,)
Melt into viewless being back again !
But, oh ! we dream not how a mother's heart
Is chorded, if we think the transient babe

Home to her spirit hath not sent a look
That clings for years ! nor with its feeble hand
And touch of instinct, to her frame convey'd
A thrill that memory can deathless make ;
While the faint cry its falt'ring lips first breath'd
Will haunt her, like a tone that never dies !—
Fathers to ripen'd feeling most incline
Their fondness ; and upon their willing knees
When romping little ones can laugh and lisp,
Or prattle forth the fragment of some truth
Or passion,—they begin their God to bless
For children, hailing each unfolded smile.—
But mothers love, before young life was seen,
The babe expected ; and though brief its stay
In this cold world, one passing breath becomes
To them a charm, that like a ripple moves
The secret ocean of maternal love.

Thus will a mother to the trackless world
Pursue the spirit of her parted child ;
And round the presence of that imaged one
Hover in thought ; while oft at times her soul
Puts the fond question,—“ Is the babe at peace ?
And gaze those eyes which hardly looked on mine,
On Glory endless ? Does that wailing voice

Which, but for anguish, scarcely on mine ear
Had sounded,—now, a full-ton'd anthem ring?"
Are sparrows counted, and a child despis'd?
The ravens fed, but innocents forgot?

Behold ! the answer ;—'mid a circling group
Of mothers, there the bland MESSIAH waits ;
And while His followers, with frowning zeal
Back from His presence would each parent awe,
Who brings the little one, (by instinct taught
The Christ to rev'rence,) He with gracious brow
Welcomes each babe, and with enclasping arms
Holds its young innocence ; and on its head
Lays a soft hand, and then, the blessing speaks
Beyond all music to maternal ears !—
“ Suffer the children, and forbid them not
Me to approach ; of such My Kingdom is”—
How deep the beauty of this act divine !
Touch'd by a spirit which subdues all speech
To silence, that essays its power to tell.
Here to the heart, in its profoundest reach
Of feeling, does the Lord of nature bend :
And by the majesty of meekness shines
To thought more glorious, than His Power appears
With the bright halo of mirac'lous deeds

Encircled ;—or when Cherubim surround
His throne and equipage of Light above
Harping loud praise to their anointed King.

Of such, the kingdom in the skies prepar'd,—
Alas ! how rarely do such words impress
An awe most vital, on the minds that read
The letter only, but the life forego.
For here Philosophy and Reason stand
Rebuk'd and silent : learning, language, art,
The palms of mind, the laurels of renown,
The shout of senates, and the world's applause,
How weak, and worthless,—absolutely nought
When rank'd beside the destiny of babes !
And yet, to souls of earth, who measure truth
By sight,—organic flesh alone they seem
Scarce by a spark of intellect inspir'd !
A mother's plaything, or a father's toy,
Incarnate trifles, fit for woman's smile
To gild and welcome, or her lulling voice
To sooth and soften, when the temper cries,—
Such may they look, to undiscerning mind.
But since Emanuel hath the skies unveil'd
And taught Religion to behold them *there*,
As true inheritors of conscious bliss

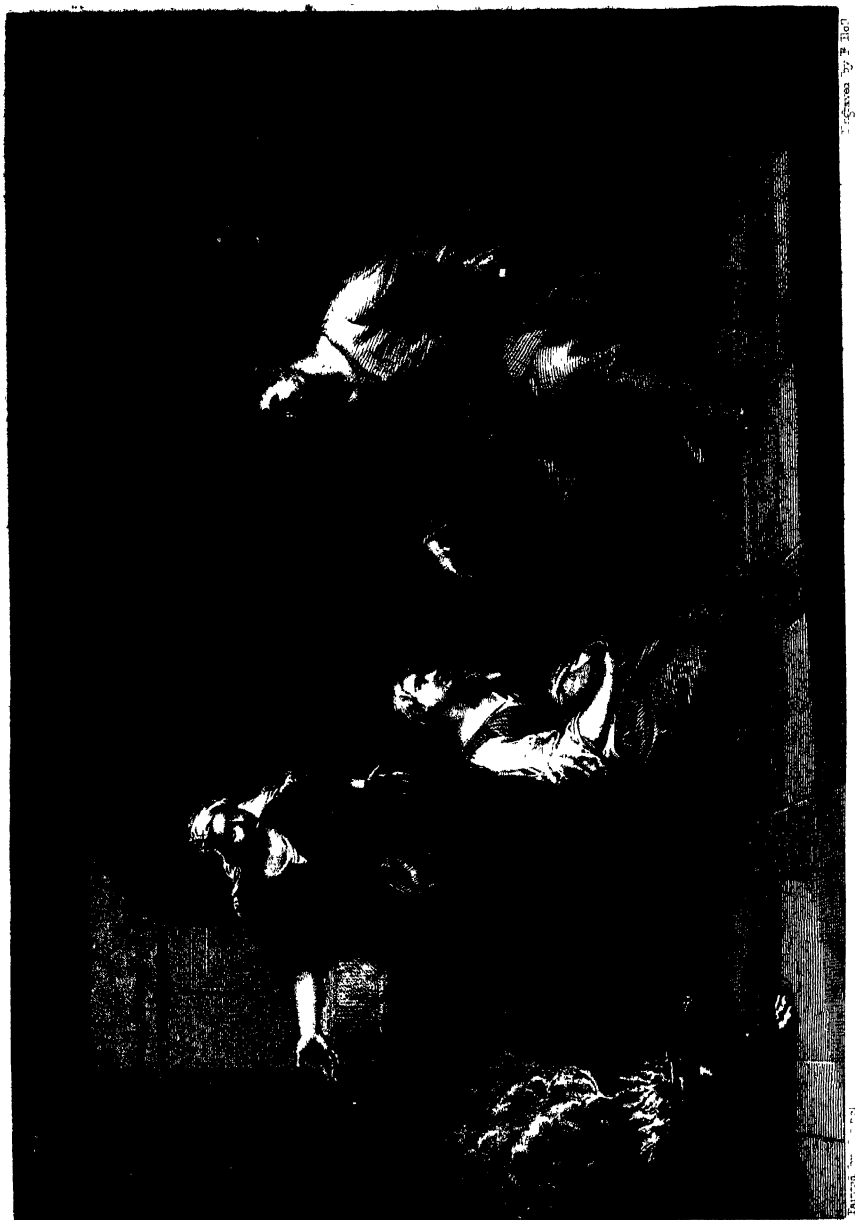
In yon bright kingdom,—let our faith revere
A child ; and look upon its pleading form
With love, by venerating awe subdued ;
As well we ponder, how beneath that frame,
Though fragile as the web of dew,—there lies
A spirit, to eternity allied !—
Nor doubt, that He whose hallow'd unction gave
Prophets their light, and brave apostles zeal,
Through all its faculties can so diffuse
Enlarging grace, that what on earth appear'd
Little beyond a mindless form of clay,—
At the first bound which into light it makes
When disembodied, may at once eclipse
Archangels in their knowledge !—and from God
A coronet beyond the Cherubim to match
In splendour, on its infant brow receive !

But dare we, by some earth-born pride betray'd,
Presume to question, why at all the babe
In this bleak world of woe and crime, should live ?
If but a moment on this earth it breathe,
Untaught, untried, untempted, and unskill'd,
Neither by reason proved, nor faith informed,—
What is it, but a blank of being lost,
In life all myst'ry, and in death no more ?

Yet what are *we*, but stamm'ring babes of dust
When upward, as to God's untold designs
Fancy attempts to soar on fearless wing?
But thou, fond mother, o'er thy pallid child
In coffin'd beauty for the tomb array'd,
Cold as the flowers that on it calmly lie,—
Hush the wild language of thy heart's despair!
For in the twilight of our doom there flash
Gleams of instruction, through the cloud of death
By wisdom darted on believing souls:—
See, how the Fall when infants die, is prov'd,
Stung by a fatal sting, that stingeth all!
Mute sermons preach they upon primal sin
Beyond all pulpits, in their palmiest hour
Of eloquence and truth!—who that feels
The wear and waste of this soul-trying world
Where life is one long martyrdom to most,
However gilded,—back would e'er recall
The child of mercy, unto Heaven resum'd?
It wears the crown, but has not fought the fight,
Reaches the goal, but has not won the race;
Balm to bereavement let this thought inspire!
But with it, may this added comfort blend;
That as eternity the dead absorbs
Youthful, or aged,—our affections seek

That mystic Home with more familiar sway.—
'Tis not a solitude which aw'd amaze
Dreads to encounter ; but a peopled clime
Fill'd with the lov'd and lost, we long to meet
And once more welcome !—And beyond this bright
Assurance, may consol'd reflection press
Inquiry ; for when our shudd'ring reason starts
To think what millions of unpitied babes
Mangled, and massacred in heathen climes,
How do those words, so tenderly profound
Of Jesus, light the path of Providence,—
Which tell us, Heaven the murder'd child receives !
And its last pang but lifts the soul to heaven,
Through early martyrdom to glory wrapt !

And hence, true mothers ! *ye* at least are bound
To Jesus ; in His words an echo dwells
To each inquiry, that beyond the grave
Longs to pursue an infant's parted soul.
Love to IMMANUEL !—let your motto be ;
And so on childhood's brow of beauty gaze,
As that whereon the Sacrament shall print
A sealing import ; then your child devote
Like Anna, early to the LORD of love,
And from the cradle guide it to the Cross !



MARTHA AND MARY.

THE COTTAGE AT BETHANY.

If heaven be gratitude, for ever felt
By souls forgiven, who the most have sinn'd,
Then will the Marys, more than seraphs love
The MASTER at whose feet on earth they sat;
For how can angels, like the pardon'd, know
How much it cost to buy a sinner's crown
Of glory!—e'en THY pangs and bloody sweat,
And that last sigh which shook the universe
With dread emotion, as it died away,
Thou SHIELD of Earth, and SUN of all our souls!

'Tis thus, that o'er that quiet home of love
Which oft in Bethany MESSIAH grac'd,
Religion bends her meditative gaze
Delightedly: for there, may household faith
Divinely human see the social CHRIST
In ways of meekness, while his words of love

Steal o'er the conscience with a lulling glide
Beyond resistance.—Lo ! the very scene,
Beneath the painter's past-recalling hues
Rises at once, with fascinating spell,
Before thee !—Seated with her flowing hair
Down the white shoulders exquisitely dropp'd,
Behold the pensive Mary : on the lip of Christ
Her soul is hanging with a hush of awe ;
And, as she listens to the tones of truth
Or mercy, like stray music from the skies,
Descending,—as the parched summer plant
Opes its faint leaves to quaff the fresh'ning dews
Of twilight,—so her tender spirit drinks
Into its essence, those reviving words
By Jesus utter'd ; while her lifted gaze
Deepens before him, as those radiant truths
His doctrine beams upon her asking mind,—
Brighter and brighter to her soul descend !
But Martha, like the restless billow, works
Hither and thither with excited mind.
She to the household hath her heart bestow'd
By zeal mistaken ; and with chiding mood
Would fain her sister from the feet of Christ
At once withdraw,—so with herself to share
The duteous labours of their kindred home.

Then, solemnly, and with a brow severe,
And eye that pierc'd her with omniscient ray,
The Christ rebuk'd her, for the sad unrest
That task'd her being with an over-toil
Unwise, as needless ; but on Mary's head
The coronet of sweet approval plac'd,
As one who wisely chose that better part
Needful, as holy ! Thus unmov'd she sat,
That gentle list'ner ;—like a spell-bound Mind
By JESUS magnetiz'd, to him her face
She turns, and feels the strong attraction work
E'en as the loadstone of almighty love,
That now has touch'd her with ethereal sway !

And has Earth done with this domestic scene ?—
To serve with Martha, or, like Mary sit
In loving quiet ; teachably resign'd
Down at the footstool of our guiding Lord,—
Here is the question ! and as long as Time
And Care round home and spirit cast
Their dimming shadows,—will a scene like this
Speak to the heart with purity, or power.

“ Careful and cumber'd about many things : ”
Alas ! poor Martha, and, alas, poor World

With thy worn victims,—what description here !
For in those syllables our souls appear
Imag'd precisely ; there *we* seem to live,
Drawn to the life by Inspiration's pen !
Around, within, and often over man
This fretting World a vile distraction brings
With such a conquest, that the soul becomes
A wingless nature, which can never soar
Out of base earth, and unto God return,
Its native centre.—Fortune, fame, or gold
(That great Diana of the world's desire !)
Or, friends to gain, or foes to overmatch,
These, with sad appliances, which come
From envy's blight, or disappointment's frost—
How do they canker to its healthful core
The heart within ! And hence, uneasy, sad,
Or much perplex'd, with all the vernal light
Of hope departed,—myriads plod their way
To sorrow, death, or disappointment's tomb,
Because, too careful of to-morrow's cost !
This vexing dream, this unsubstantial life,
This heartless pageant of a hollow world,
With gnawing earnestness they keenly prize,
Pursue and flatter ;—but the end is foil'd.

O, that like Mary, we did often bend
Low at the feet of that unerring Lord
Who loves us ; and the burden'd Future leave
Calmly to HIM, who counts and knows our wants,
Who feeds the ravens, and the fowls of air,
And clothes the lilies which nor toil, nor spin,
With peerless beauty. Let us *not* to man,
But to JEHOVAH, our to-morrows trust,
For HIS they are ; and what for them He wills,
Apportions, wrangle howsoe'er we may ;
Mistrusting HIM, whom seraphim adore,
And in the hollow of WHOSE Hand revolves
The living universe, with all its worlds !

But, how anxiety the heart corrodes,
Wasting the moral health of man away
We seldom ponder, till too late perceiv'd !
When, under burdens which ourselves inflict,
The intellect of half its glorious life
Is sapp'd, while conscience turns a crippled thing ;
The heart gets aged ere the head grows old,
And those bright virtues, which might nobly shine
In that clear firmament of thought, and power
Where lofty manhood would exult to act,—

Rarely, if ever, into influence dawn.
For else, the grandeurs, graces, charms,
The smiles of matin, and the shades of night,
Sun, moon and star, wild mountains and glad seas,
Meadows and woods, and winds, and lulling streams,
With fruits, and flowers like hues of paradise
Amid us scatter'd,—would so well impress
The moral being, that responsive mind
Upon the Beautiful would back reflect
And answer, most intelligibly pure,
To each appeal of beauty. But the world
Can so infect the myriads of mankind,—
That all those latent harmonies that link
Nature to man, by loveliness and might,
Lie undiscern'd : and though a spirit deep,
A sentiment of fine significance and truth
In all Creation, cultur'd soul may find,
How few perceive it ! but on objects gaze
With eye unmov'd ;—as if by God unmade
Their beauties, and by HIM unform'd their powers.
Nature to them in all her shrines is mute ;
Nor to her mystic oracles that yield
Such music to Imagination's ear,—
Can the cold worldling condescend to list.

Reader ! be thine, at least, the better Part,
 Whate'er thy walk, thy weakness, or thy woes.
That good, eternity will not destroy ;
 But rather, through all ages will expand
 By new accessions of ennobling power.—
 Yet while the turmoil of this troubled world
 Tries the worn heart, or tempts the wearied mind
 To false dependence on the things of sight,
 Though perishing,—to Providence alone
 Thyself and thine, learn more and more to trust ;
 For He will keep thee, as His OWN belov'd,
 In perfect shelter and in blessed peace
 Now, and for ever ! And, when thus becalm'd,
 Feelings of far diviner growth than Earth
 Can nourish, from thy spirit soon will rise,
 And hopes exalt the bosom they inspire :
 Till, like the prophets, patriarchs, saints,
 And all the Chivalry for CHRIST, who fought
 Faith's battle unto blood !—above this world
 With all its pleasures, principles, and powers,
 Rais'd by THE SPIRIT, thou wilt learn to live ;
 And call, whate'er opposing Flesh may dream,
 A God thy portion, and a Heaven thy home.

DIDST THOU NOT AGREE WITH ME FOR A PENNY?

THE moral perfections of Jehovah, and the consequent responsibilities of man, are enthroned above all themes in the height of their grandeur, and extend beyond all in the breadth of their importance: and in pondering on them, the mind either vibrates with a trembling awe, while it adores the one, or thrills with ineffable intensity, while it acknowledges the other. And why is this the case?—Because the history of *our* conscious eternity will be the history of this endless relation, i. e. the attributes of Godhead will be for ever acting out their might and majesty on the human spirit, and that human spirit will be for ever reflecting back their display, either in hosannas of glory, or in groans of unmitigated remorse.

The DIVINE CHARACTER being, then, the very summit of all that is momentously sublime, the question is,



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where can we study it best, and most feelingly realize its bearing on our own present and final destiny? Now, in answer to this, it must not be denied that as God has never left Himself “without a witness,” so, hath this discovery of Himself been various in the extent of disclosure. There is a legal sense in which we may assert that conscience is a correlative to the feared character of God: and amid all the mysterious ways of Providential government, an enlightened mind and reverential heart may detect some lineaments of HIM, whose glory the Heaven of Heavens containeth not. But without denying such accessory evidence, we must resort to Jesus Christ, as Incarnated Deity, in order to know, love, and intelligibly adore the Personal God and Father of all mercies. In Christ, and in Him alone, are summed up into magnificent concentration all the scattered representations of the paternal Jehovah, which are hinted in creation, shadowed forth in providence, or doctrinally and otherwise revealed in the Old Testament. He is thus the condensed manifestation of the Almighty in all the full-orbed purity and perfection of His Being. His words and ways and works, His tears and sighs,—in fact, the entire life of Jesus in the Flesh, is to be studied and revered, as the outward and visible index to an inward and invisible ARCHETYPE,—which is in the Father.

Thus should we peruse the biography of Christ, under the sublime and soothing conviction, that all the expressions of His incarnate experience form a kind of celestial alphabet, whereby the inquiring spirit of man may spell out the otherwise secret and undisclosed Name of The Eternal: and moreover, we may be assured, that if the Father Himself in His unutterable Personality were to emerge from the Hidings of Infinity, and become apparent,—He would be the Almighty reduplication of what the Son of God hath actually been. For, He who hath seen *Him*, “hath seen the Father also!”

But though in the Saviour, the infinite abstraction of Godhead, becomes a palpable, embodied, and realized conception—yet must it be allowed, that there is a proneness in the hearts of even the sanctified, to select some points in the moral exhibitions of Christ, for our supreme, and almost exclusive reverence and regard: and inasmuch as mercy and benignity are the attributes most popular and welcome to our habitual instincts,—we are not erroneous in asserting that it is unto these, the yearnings of our hearts, and the devotions of our intellect, are chiefly directed when we contemplate The Christ, as the Manifestor of the Father.

But without the remotest denial that love and compassion are the predominant traits that stand out with

exquisite perseverance in the humanity of the Redeemer—still let us remember, that the character of Deity is to be received as an Almighty WHOLE; and that sovereignty as well as mercy, is to be believed, as essentially related to the perfections of Jehovah: and that never is the energy of grace more celestially triumphant, than when the native haughtiness of our intellect, and the restless movements of our heart, are subdued into a passive and prayerful recognition of the truth—that it is “lawful for God to do what he will with his own!” Yet, strange as it may seem,—man by nature will cheerfully accord to man, and unblushingly arrogate to himself,—a privilege, which nothing but The Omnipotent Spirit can persuade him to grant with complacency to the Eternal!—even the right, of electing preference as to the objects of His regard, and the measure and methods of exhibiting the same. But for the exhibition of this, (among other purposes) the parable of the householder, is spoken by our blessed Lord; and in consonance with its profound doctrine, His whole life was a sacrificial offering to the supremacy of God’s sovereign Will; and all WHOSE allegiance, if translated into syllables seems to utter—“not MY will (as distinct humanity) but thy will (as Paternal Head of the Covenant) be done!”

Here indeed is perfected sanctification; when the creatural will, which was perverted into discord with the Supreme Will, by the sin of the first man, is so touched by the attuning hand of grace, and so converted into blissful harmony with all the enactments and decrees of God, as to echo the heart of the compliant and holy Jesus—when, under the contemplated sovereignty of The Father, in the mercy of an especial revelation,—He cried—“ Even so, Father : for so it seemed good in THY Sight.”

T H E E N D.

