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THE
ANTEDILUVIANS,



OR

THE WORLD DESTROYED;

A NARRATIVE POEM,

In Ten Books.

BY JAMES M. HENRY, M.D.

AUTHOR OF "THE PLEASURES OF FRIENDSHIP,"
ETC., ETC.

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PREFACE.

It is many years since I first entertained the design of writing a narrative poem on some great event in the history of man; but the selection of that event was a matter of no slight difficulty. A good subject, I knew, was the first step towards success in any literary undertaking; and I resolved to adopt none which I did not feel persuaded would form a recommendation to my work.

The annals of mankind furnish many great and stirring events well adapted to poetic narration; but I wanted one not only great in its character, but *universal* in its effects, that all men might feel an interest in its details. Neither the founding of a state, the achievement of a victory, nor the overthrow of an empire, was therefore adequate to my wishes. The discovery of the New World was an event of great and general interest; but it was already poetically occupied, and therefore

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forbidden to me by both courtesy and policy. I was, in truth, desirous of a subject more universally interesting than even this. I considered that the poet who had made the strongest impression on the world, had been enabled to do so by his fortunate choice of the most exalted and most universal subject which space in all its extent, and time in all its duration, could afford—the History of Creation and the Fall of Man. On that theme did the chief of poets not only find full scope for the whole power of his genius, but his genius found excitement for unequalled elevation, and became invigorated by the grandeur and vastness of the topics presented to its contemplation: for it is observable that on subjects less elevated, although his powers are always great, they seem more on a level with those of other men.

Let not this allusion to Milton be misinterpreted. It proceeds from no hope of approaching to any degree of comparison with him, whose poetic fame has justly attained a resplendence which sets emulation at defiance. If I were, indeed, so vain as to imagine that I possessed talents like his, where could I find a subject on which to exert them like *Paradise Lost*? There never can be another poetic theme, connected with human affairs, of equal grandeur and sublimity. Nor will there probably ever be one so felicitously treated as this has been in that

wonderful poem, the mighty topics of which carried the daring author, rapt in heavenly musings, beyond the bounds of material existence, and enabled him not only to range the empyrean regions where angels and archangels dwell, but to enter even into the awful presence of God!

Still in the annals of mankind there remained one subject unappropriated by any successful creation of the epic Muse, which, although to sustain it suitably required less daring flights than that which was chosen by Milton, was yet amply magnificent and universally interesting—namely, **THE FORTUNES AND CATASTROPHE OF THE ANTEDILUVIAN WORLD.** This was the subject which appeared to me the best calculated of any, not yet adequately sung, to impart dignity and interest to a narrative poem. After due deliberation I had the boldness to adopt it, although I was fully sensible of the difficulty of doing justice to a theme of such magnitude. It was certainly one exalted and extensive enough for the exercise of poetic talents of the highest order, and poetic ambition of the most fervid character. It presented a field in which the most active imagination could freely range, limited only by the dictates of reason and the laws of probability. It required, it is true, but few of those “celestial colloquies sublime,” which render *Paradise Lost* the most exalted of poems, yet it afforded scope for the introduction of superior beings and

angelic discourse, and furnished many excitements to lofty thought and fervid expression. Nay, it had one advantage which Milton did not find in his mighty theme; it supplied abundant occasions for the display of human nature in its fallen state. In drawing the characters and relating the transactions of the important era which preceded the deluge, the heart of man, under the various modifications caused by the same passions which agitate it to this day, could be exhibited; while the awful event which terminated the first series of the human race, could not fail strongly to affect the minds and awaken the sympathies of their descendants of every tribe and in every clime, as well as to teach them a warning lesson of the most impressive character they could possibly learn.

This much I have ventured to say in relation to the advantages which I perceived in this subject, and which, extensive and formidable as it was, encouraged me to its adoption. It was, indeed, no slight task to bring before the public, the affairs and fortunes of a world concerning which so few records remain. These very records, from the sacred nature of their character, increased the difficulty by obliging the details to be in strict conformity to their testimony; and, consequently, limiting the creations of fancy to a rigid consistency with the particulars of scriptural history. The analogy of

human feelings, polity, and pursuits, with what we find they now are, and what we are authentically informed, and can readily believe that, since their first lapse from purity, they have ever been, had also to be maintained at the expense of no small exertion of care, and of vigilant restraint over the inventive faculty, which, in a field so trackless, boundless, and varied, was ever ready to run wild and elude the guidance of sober judgment.

Whether the title of epic, according to the scholastic meaning of the word, will be conceded to this poem, is a matter of no importance, provided its readers derive enjoyment from its perusal. My great aim having been to produce an interesting poem on an interesting subject, I feel but little concern as to what class of poetical productions the work shall be assigned. I may state, however, that I was desirous throughout the narrative to introduce no incidents, thoughts, or expressions that would not comport with the dignity of an epic subject. Wherever, therefore, any thing of frivolity or affectation is discovered, it must be viewed as an offence against my own ideas of propriety, to be forgiven only in consideration of those passages in which I may have been more successful.

In regard to the versification of this poem I may be permitted to make a few remarks. I have written it in blank verse, because I conceive that spe-

cies of verse to be more suitable than rhyme, for a long and narrative work. The frequent recurrence of similar sounds which constitutes rhyme, however ornamental and agreeable in short productions, becomes from its monotony, fatiguing in works of much length. Rhyme has besides an artificial air which does not suit well with the freedom and ease required in an extended narrative performance. It also causes the work, in reading, to move more slowly, as if it were in fetters, than comports with the usual impatience of a reader who is interested in the events narrated. I attach no weight to the rhyme operating as a restraint on the poet, because that difficulty is fully balanced by the necessity which blank verse imposes, of being more uniformly dignified and forcible in the thoughts and language; it being well known that rhyme covers, or renders less observable, ideas and expressions which would appear trivial or common-place in blank verse. But the main objection to rhyme in a long narrative work, is its admitted tendency to pall upon the ear and fatigue the reader.

I consider English blank verse to be one of the noblest forms into which poetry has ever been moulded. In no language can the muse find a more beautiful or dignified vehicle for communicating her inspirations. It is at once susceptible of

the sweetest harmony, the greatest strength, and the easiest flexibility of expression; and is so rich in the variety of its tones and modulations, that each of the great authors who have written in it, has produced a style entirely different from the others, and easily distinguishable as his own. Prose affords not greater facility for characteristic diction, nor adapts itself more readily to peculiarities of thought and taste in the writer. It is these qualities which render blank verse so well suited not only to the dignified drama, but to the narrative, the contemplative, and the descriptive poem.

The versification of the following work, it will be easily perceived, is not particularly modelled after that of any preceding author. As I permitted my thoughts to arise spontaneously from my subject, so I permitted my language to flow spontaneously from my thoughts. By this means I was enabled to avoid singularity on the one hand, as I hope I have avoided all appearance of imitation on the other. I do not mention this as entitling me to credit, for I feel that, in literary composition, it would be more difficult for me to imitate others, than to follow the direction of my own views and impulses. Indeed, sensible as I am of the excellence of the versification of each of our great English writers of blank verse, there is not one of them whose style I conceive would have been ex-

actly suitable for this work. This alone would have prevented me from, intentionally at least, imitating either of them. The verse of Milton is magnificently epic, but so sanctified by the halo of veneration which surrounds it, that I dared not approach it. Besides, I believed that it would be that verse, which, on account of my subject, I should, if I adopted any of its peculiarities, be accused by thoughtless critics of imitating. The style of none of our other poets, however well suited to their respective subjects, seemed to me in any degree suitable for mine. That of Thomson I considered too diffuse and florid—that of Young too antithetical and sententious—that of Akenside too excursive and full of amplification—and that of Cowper too sedate and didactic.

A description of blank verse, of a more loose structure and languid movement than that of either of those writers, has been introduced into our language, by the poets of a well known modern school, who, ever since the commencement of the present century, have been labouring to revolutionize our poetical literature, and to infuse into our minds a poetical taste different from that which we inherited from our fathers, and to which every poet who has become the permanent favourite of mankind, has conformed his productions. If to the slow moving and spiritless style of this new school

there be any resemblance in the versification of the following poem, I am as unconscious of it as I am incredulous of the power of any innovators to infuse a new poetical taste into the mind of man.

Enriched and embellished diction is indeed avowedly repudiated by the followers of this school, whose leading tenet, as laid down by one of its most influential writers, is, that "the real language of poetry does not differ from that of ordinary life, except in metrical arrangement."—In opposition to this doctrine, although it has emanated from a man whose talents I revere; one who yet is, and I hope will long be, a living ornament to his country; and one who has written much that could have been written only by a true poet; I will venture to make some remarks.

There is in the English, and I believe in every other language, a diction which can with propriety be employed in poetry alone, as well as a diction which, although quite suitable for ordinary discourse, dignified poetry must utterly reject. The latter is that kind of phraseology which, in a prose composition, will be neither reprehensible nor very observable, but would be insipid or mean in a poem. The former, or the poetic diction, is, on the contrary, such as, while it appears natural and proper in poetry, has the air of pomposity and extra-

vagance, and is not unfrequently ridiculous in prose. There is, it is true, a medium style, dignified, easy, fluent and natural, which is equally suitable for prose or proetry, and which perhaps forms the greater portion of the most valuable writing in both. But the poet who, in a grave production, should never rise above this style, would never acquire the credit of excelling in his art, while the prose writer who should never descend from it, would soon tire his reader by a too equable and unvaried elevation. The following quotation from Goldsmith is a prose example of this medium style.

“When I reflect on the unambitious retirement in which I passed the early part of my life in the country, I cannot avoid feeling some pain in thinking that those happy days are never to return.”

Although this sentence is unpretending prose, yet it contains neither a phrase nor a word which might not with propriety be employed in the most finished poetry. From the same author I adduce the following couplets as a poetical example of this style.

“Such are the charms to barren states assigned;
Their wants but few, their wishes are confined.
Yet let them only share the praises due;
Though few their wants, their pleasures are but few;
For every want that stimulates the breast,
Becomes a source of pleasure when redressed.”

Here there is no expression unsuitable for a good poem, yet there is none that can claim the character of being exclusively poetical—none entitled to the rank of poetic diction—that diction which is, in fact, such a decoration as poetry alone can becomingly wear. Milton's poems, particularly *Comus* and *Paradise Lost*, are more richly endowed with this diction, than perhaps any others in our language. From the last mentioned poem, I select the following example.

..... "To the nuptial bower
 I led her blushing like the morn: all Heaven,
 And *happy constellations* in that hour
 Shed their *selectest influence*; the earth
 Gave sign of *gratulation*, and each hill;
 Joyous the birds; fresh gales and gentle airs,
Whispered it to the woods, and from their wings
 Flung rose, flung odours from the spicy shrub,
Disporting, till the amorous bird of night
 Sung *spousal*, and bade haste the evening star
On his hill top, to light the bridal lamp."

Every reader of taste will admit the uncommon beauty of the foregoing passage, placed as it is in a position where grandeur is natural and decoration appropriate. Yet, who does not perceive that the splendid expressions which render it so remarkable, would, if employed in prose, be as offensive as in poetry they are pleasing?

The distinguished author whose disbelief of an exclusive poetical diction, has elicited these observations, does not indeed deny that poets use an ornamental diction which would not be allowed to prose writers. But he censures them for so doing; and in particular denounces the poetry of Gray for being so highly coloured with this diction, which he calls *distorted language*, and stigmatizes as extravagant and absurd. On this point I entirely disagree with him. When employed judiciously, as it always will be by a good poet, this diction imparts to poetry a charm which prose can never possess; constituting a universally attractive quality which forms one of the most marked distinctions between the genuine and the spurious productions of the muse, endows them with much of their power of affording pleasure, and contributes greatly to secure to them the undying favour of mankind.

It is true that this decorative diction may, by unskilful poets, be used to the disadvantage of their works, as the richest garments may be worn so as to disfigure the wearer. Poetical literature furnishes abundant examples of flowers of diction, beautiful in themselves, rendered unseemly by being misplaced, or occasioning satiety and even disgust by being brought forward with ostentatious obtru-

siveness or in wearisome excess. Perhaps it was from having experienced the disagreeable effect of this abuse of poetic ornament, so extravagantly exhibited in the works of the famous *Della Cruscan* writers, who happened to be in full vogue when the gentleman whose doctrine I am endeavouring to refute, began his literary career, that he has so entirely condemned it, and so strenuously recommended and practised a mode of writing so much the reverse as to be characterised by a meagre dryness of expression and a diffuse langour of modulation, which have procured for it the epithet of "prose poetry."

The true style of good poetry is certainly in neither of these extremes; and a writer of judgment and good taste will as carefully avoid offending by the lean sterility as by the meretricious gaudiness of his diction. The great art is to know when and in what degree to decorate. Some topics require language altogether plain and perspicuous, while others will appear flat and barren unless enriched by the flowers of speech. Description and sentiment seem to be peculiarly susceptible of ornament, and will bear it to an extent that would encumber dialogue and impede the progress of narrative. Throughout the following work I trust it will be found that while, on every admissible occasion, I have indulged in the decorative style, I

have been sufficiently sparing of it wherever employing it freely would have savoured of affectation, produced obscurity, or occasioned an unnecessary and unseemly glare.

But the diction of a poem is of much less consequence than the ideas, as the adornments of beauty are of less value than beauty itself. It is the conceptions of an author that infuse vitality and power into his works. The dress in which he arrays them may add to their attractions, but their genuine worth and true beauty will ever be intrinsic and independent. In estimating the merit of a long narrative poem in particular, its general plan and scope, comprising the incidents, characters sentiments and scenery, ought never to be overlooked.

In regard to the plan of this work, the events are related in their natural order as they succeed each other in point of time. I preferred this method to that of the hackneyed and easy artifice prescribed by the schools, for preserving what is technically called "the unity of the action" by beginning in the middle of the story, and causing some of the personages to occupy a large portion of the work by relating anterior events. The plan pursued in this work was not adopted from any desire for singularity, but simply from an opinion that the best mode of constructing an edifice of any description, is to commence at the foundation. Scholars may

censure this deviation from epic rule; but they must decide that the work is an epic, before they can subject it to the compass and square by which they have been taught to measure the merit of such a performance. This, however, is a topic too trivial for lengthened discussion. I write not merely to please the adepts in syntax and the initiated in the precepts of Aristotle. Such I have often found to be but poor judges of poetry. Give me for readers those, who, without regard to artificial rules and systems, will estimate my work by its influence on their feelings and fancies; and if they approve, I shall be safe in spite of philologists.

With respect to the incidents, characters, sentiments and scenery of this poem, I will only say, that I have endeavoured to preserve them in due consistency, not only with themselves, but with the ideas generally entertained in Christendom, of the rich regions and the momentous period to which they relate. The machinery, or the good and evil angels introduced, I hope, will be found, in every respect, conformable to the doctrines of Christian revelation, and that the great moral inculcated by the work—**FIDELITY TO THE GOD OF THE UNIVERSE**—will be sufficiently manifest to the most cursory reader.

DEC. 10TH, 1838.

THE ANTEDILUVIANS.

INTRODUCTION.

toward promptings.—Invocation of Divine aid.

THERE is a feeling which to energy
Can wake the humblest of the sons of song,
And rouse to daring ardor all his powers
Of dormant fancy, spite of indolence,
Spite ev'n of fear that hostile tongues may rail
Against his anxious labours, or neglect,
Cold withering at his heart, be the sad doom
Assigned him by a supercilious world.
'Tis that fond wish for an enduring name,
Which urges every warm aspiring mind
To works of excellence and deeds of praise.
Oh! blame me not, ye censors of the age,
If I confess that wish inspires me now!
I feel it now o'ercome the lethargy
In which my slothful muse has long been bound:
Now, with unwonted courage, it defies
The terrors of derision's bitter taunt,
And that most dreaded doom, the public scorn,
Which grasps and mangles daring vanity.
Bold and determined, now my spirit spreads

Adventurous pinions for an arduous flight,
More arduous than has oft been tried by man,
And with due strength successfully sustained.
Oh! to sustain it till the height be gained
To which so earnestly my soul aspires,
No hope have I but in His mighty aid,
Who bore the bard of Paradise to Heaven,
And there disclosed to him such scenes sublime
And glorious wonders, secrets fit for gods,
As human thought had ne'er before conceived.
Assist me, THOU, whom in his matchless song,
With such acceptance, that great Bard invoked!
Fain would I hope that 'tis from THEE proceeds
The keen desire that animates my soul,
A task so high and venturous to attempt.
My song, which to thy glory I devote,
Would to the unthinking sons of men unfold
The awful terrors of thy mighty arm,
When raised to vengeance on obdurate guilt,
Shown in the story of that world perverse,
Which, rioting in insolence and crime,
Drew down, at length, the fatal penalty
Of which thy saints had warned it oft in vain.
In pride, and lust, and impious hardihood,
It wallowed long, contemning all thy threats,
Till in full power thy awful justice rose,
And bade the torrent doom of waters pour
Ingulphing ruin on the guilty race;
Saving of all the human kind alone,
Him and his household, who alone had been,

In faith and in obedience, true to **THEE**.
Such is the theme which I aspire to sing;
Vast as it is and feeble though I be,
If **THOU** assist I shall not sing in vain.

THE ANTEDILUVIANS.

BOOK I.

THE ARGUMENT.

Sketch of the happy condition of the descendants of Seth, under the righteous government of Enoch, with an account of the country they inhabited.—Translation of Enoch.—His son Methuselah succeeds him in the patriarchal government.—State of society during the reign of Methuselah.—Affluence and luxury abound, and the arts flourish.—Methuselah is succeeded by his grandson Noah, during whose reign, notwithstanding his most pious efforts, a relaxation takes place in the religious feelings and moral habits of the people.—Condition and character of the descendants of Cain.—Licentious intercourse between their females and the infernal Spirits, which produces a race of giants remarkable for their wickedness.—Shalmazar, one of those giants, reigns over the Cainites, contemporaneously with Noah.—He is the offspring of a connexion between Belial, the demon of lewdness, and Astoreth, a princess of the house of Cain.—He abolishes the worship of the true God, and establishes that of his father, Belial, or Baal, whose images he orders to be worshipped on pain of death.—He also erects a magnificent image of himself, to which he orders divine honours to be paid by all his subjects.—They generally obey.—Those who refuse, either take refuge in the dominions of Noah or are treated as malefactors.—Among the latter, Jethuran, a faithful servant of the true God, is brought before the tyrant, who condemns him to the flames.—Just as he is ordered for execution, his daughter, Hadallah, appears as a supplicant for her father's life.—Struck with her beauty, Shalmazar becomes violently enamoured of her.—He in consequence defers the execution.—Jethuran is remanded to prison, where Hadallah attending him, receives his commands not to yield to the wishes of the tyrant, who soon orders her to be conducted to his harem, and she is separated from her father.

THE ANTEDILUVIANS.

BOOK I.

In Orient regions, where the happy vales
That, spreading eastward from Euphrates' stream,
Display their beauty to the rising sun,
The race of Seth, beneath the patriarch sway
Of holy Enoch, the beloved of Heaven,
Deemed worthy to enjoy, even while on earth,
The glory of companionship with God,
Had made their residence. 'That pleasant land,
Called Armon, whence the name Armenia still
Descends to countries on its nothern bounds,
Then bloomed in pristine charms, not yet defaced
By the rude billows of the upturning flood
That of her youthful beauty robbed the earth.
Here Enoch and his people, far removed
From the descendants of the outcast Cain,
Shunned as unholy by the pious race,
Long flourished in primeval happiness.
True worshippers of God, him they obeyed
In purity of heart, beneath the rule
Of righteous Enoch, heaven-instructed sire,

Who taught their duty to the Power Divine,
Prescribing for their guidance, sacred laws
Of Heaven's own framing, and revealed to him
In gracious conference, like that vouchsafed
Long after to the seer on Sinai's mount.

Oh happy race! the happiest far that since
The loss of Paradise, until this hour
Earth ever knew; yours was a clime for bliss
Scarce ev'n by Paradise itself excelled.
There bounteous nature, with a lavish hand,
Bestowed her fairest gifts of fruits and flowers,
And warbling groves, and fertilizing streams,
And recompensed the easy labour given
To the rich soil, with annual stores increased
More than a hundred fold. There flocks and herds,
Amidst the genial valleys, multiplied
In joyous numbers; for no winter frost
Nor summer scorching there was feared to cause
Sickness, or pain, or premature decay;
But every gale that fanned the fragrant air,
Bore health and gladness on its balmy wings,
Giving duration to the life of man,
Ten-fold the period of its present date.

At length the patriarch of this happy race,
By the command of his approving God,
Bade earth and all the sons of men adieu.
As congregated on a spacious plain
Near Jared, their chief city, sacred seat
Of patriarch rule, from Enoch's father named,
The tribes assembled by the godlike man,

Joined in an annual sacrifice, ordained
In mem'ry of the pard'ning covenant made
With our repentant parents at the fall,
The holy patriarch called upon his God
For permanence of blessings on his race:
When lo! a glorious sight burst from the skies!
A radiant chariot of celestial mould,
By winged spirits drawn, and in its seat
A form of beauteous and majestic mien,
Descended in the midst where Enoch stood.
Awe-struck the crowd at reverent distance gazed,
As thus the bright angelic vision spake.

“ Enoch, thy service in this world is o'er:
Thou hast performed it well; therefore ascend
This chariot, and with me arise to heaven,
There the reward adjudged thee to receive,
A crown eternal of unmingled bliss!”

That instant Enoch's mortal frame was changed
Unrivalled symmetry his limbs adorned,
His features brightened with a glow divine,
And round his brows a heavenly halo shone.
Soon in the seraph's car he took his seat,
And looking fondly on the wondering throng,
“ Farewell!” he said; “ my children! serve your
God

With unremitting zeal, as I have done,
And ye shall gain as bright a recompense!”

The harnessed spirits, spreading forth their
wings
That waved in golden radiance, like the clouds
In autumn evening burnished by the sun;

And hovering, for a moment, o'er the earth,
With swift ascent towards the ethereal realms,
Took their glad way, and mingled with the skies.
The astonished multitude fell to the ground
In humble posture, and adored the Power
Omnipotent, their father's God, whose hand
'This glorious miracle of love had wrought.

Now Enoch's son, Methuselah, assumed
The guidance of the realm, and ruled it long
With patriarch wisdom worthy of his sires.
His people fast increased in power and fame,
Invented arts, and numerous cities built:
'Temples for worship, palaces for state,
And monuments in memory of worth,
Showed an industrious and a thriving race,
In wealth abounding, and not free from pride.
Still they seemed pious; and obedience still
To all the laws of Enoch was preserved
Through the long period of Methuselah's reign.
That reign, the longest on the rolls of time,
At length expired: that venerable man
Whom earth beheld almost a thousand years,
Worn with the cares and toils of empire, found
Repose at last, where it is ever found
By weary mortals, in the peaceful grave,
In which, his heir, that moralizing youth,
The melancholy Lamech, had before
Laid down the o'erpowering burthen of his woes.
And thus to Lamech's son and comforter,

The pious Noah, favourite of heaven,
'The sceptre of Methuselah's empire fell.

Illustrious Noah! thou who wert ordained
To be the second father of mankind,
How did it grieve thy spirit when thou found'st
'The progress pride and wantonness had made,
By secret growth, ev'n in Methuselah's days!
Ah! now, when veneration for the years
Of one whose power they had so long obeyed,
No more restrained them in their vain desires,
The proud and daring openly gave way
To vile propensities; and wickedness
Began to lose the shame which had before
Kept her decorous from the public view.
But all were not yet tainted. Piety
Had still possession of unnumbered hearts;
And righteous laws enforced, caused numbers more,
Who feared the temporal penalty of crime,
To wear a virtuous guise. Profanity
Was yet no system; and immoral deeds
Were still discouraged by the more discreet,
If not for conscience' for convenience' sake.
Hence had the race of Enoch still maintained
The highest station in religion's scale,
Of all the tribes from Adam sprung, and were
Still called emphatically, "Sons of God."
Glorious distinction! which their pride long tried,
In spite of all their lewdness, to preserve.

But growing guilt soon on the nation brought
Its natural consequence, distress and grief;—

Grief, not repentance; for man's restless foe,
The infernal spirit who had caused the fall,
Was, with dire influence, working at their hearts.
Much had he grudged the blessings to behold,
Of righteousness and favour from on high,
Which crowned the happy sons of Armon's land,
For centuries, beneath the pious rule
Of their blest patriarchs, who had, with the aid
Of guardian angels missioned from above,
Preserved them in the unerring path which leads
To earthly welfare and celestial joy.
He and his fellow fiends had still possessed
Access to earth, and to the hearts of men,
Since sin first entered there, and formed a path
For their admission, fatal and accursed.
Oh! direful was the unhallowed intercourse,
With more than half mankind, they had maintained,
Since the fell deed by bloody Cain was done,
Which first inflicted death, the doom of sin
Pronounced upon our nature at the fall!

Subservient to the foul malignant fiends,
The abandoned race of Cain their God forsook,
And to the infernal agents gave their hearts.
Oh! preference worse than foolish, choice insane!
Which drove celestial spirits from their charge
Of guardianship o'er human feebleness,
And left the hapless Cainites in the power
Of hellish tyrants, whom they blindly served,
Lured by the sensual pleasures amply given
In transient, poisonous recompense for guilt!

Ev'n many of the holier line of Seth,
Did their affections to the infernals yield,
And purchased with their foul apostasy,
Immediate pleasure and eternal pain.

But God was gracious; all had not given way,
Of ev'n the unhappy progeny of Cain,
To the fell torrent of seducing joys.
A remnant was preserved; and many fled
The dire pollution, and a refuge found
Amidst the sons of God in Noah's realm.
Inflamed with wrath towards the fugitives,
For censures and forewarnings oft pronounced
Against the ungodly practices that grieved
All pious hearts to witness, and their flight
Compelled from the polluted land, long had
The Cainites threatened to pursue with war
And vengeance, those who 'scaped to spread the tale
Of their abominations o'er the earth.

Armonia's patriarch, virtuous Noah, oft
Had heard their threatenings on himself denounced
For refuge granted to the exiled train:
But in his God he trusted for defence
Against the unrighteous foe; and homes bestowed,
And hospitable aid, on all who fled
From persecution to his happier realm.

Oh! truly happy, had that realm been still
The uncorrupted seat of piety,
The blest Armonia of good Enoch's days!
But times were changed; and God permitted soon
A potent people terrible in arms,

Of cruel bosoms and blood-thirsty souls,
Descended from the first dread murderer,
To be the scourge of wickedness which had,
Partly with open and unblushing front,
But mostly in hypocrisy's disguise,
Made gradual inroad and the land defiled.

Divided from Armonia's eastern bounds,
By many a valley wide, and mountain high
Whose rugged summits bore aloft the clouds
That midway floated between earth and heaven,
The distant empire of the sons of Cain,
Was stretched o'er Indus to the rising sun,
And named Gal-Cainah,—hence Golconda yet
Tells in what gorgeous region of the earth,
Flourished its proud and populous capital.
Here reigned the fierce Shalmazar, giant king,
Sprung from a mixture of infernal strain;
His sire, the Power of lewdness, Belial named,
Who, amorous of an earth-born beauty, won
Astoreth, princess of Gal-Cainah's realm,
To his unhallowed love. The foul embrace
Produced a monster of gigantic frame,
And hellish passions from his sire derived,
Who slew his mother's kin, and with their blood
Succession earned to their imperial throne.
Such horrid intercourse was frequent then,
Between the infernals and the beauteous dames
Of Cain's cursed progeny, who feared not God,
But filled with hellish wantonness, produced
A monstrous brood, half devils and half men.

To empire thus Shalmazar hewed his way
With murderous hands, and reigned in pomp and
pride,

And every carnal joy wealth could procure
Or tyranny command, in that rich clime,
Where Nature with spontaneous plenty teemed,
And poured profuse her treasures into hands
Who toiled not for them, nor with thanks received.
Such was the beauteous realm where Kisna flows,
Before the wasteful flood, for human crimes,
Was sent from heaven to wash away its soil
Of luxury, of gems, of gold, of wine,
Of fruits, of flowers, and every spicy shrub
And plant nutritious, human hearts could wish.

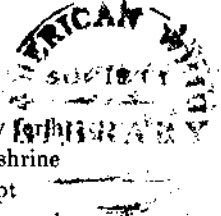
Ah! how unworthy of a clime so fair,
The thankless race that filled its verdant vales
With falsehood, fraud, debauchery and blood,
Congenial to the infernals, who from hell
In myriads came to riot there, and mix
The wickedness of fiends with that of men,
And fill the measure of terrestrial guilt!

Oh fair Hadallah! daughter of a sire
Who with a remnant of true worshippers,
Amidst the wide defection, still preserved
His firm allegiance to the King of Heaven,
Nor would desert his father's God; what woes
'Twas thine, thou pure and pious maid, to bear
From the fierce passions of the tyrant king,
Deeply enamoured of thy virgin charms!
And to the fallen impious race of men

Who plunged in guilt themselves, upheld its cause,
And lent submission to Shalmazar's power,
Supporting him in blood and wickedness;
What wide and dire destruction was decreed
By righteous Heaven, to flow from the foul wrongs
Their hell-descended king's enamoured rage
On thee inflicted and thy godly sire!

In wantonness of foul impiety,
Like him who, in succeeding times, bore sway
In Babylon, the proud Shalmazar raised
A golden statue, all enriched with gems
Of chrysolite, and glittering adamant,
Emerald and topaz, amethyst and pearl,
And on it lavished all the splendid art
Of orient workmanship. 'Twas in a vale
Whose verdure decked the aromatic clime,
Where Kisna rolls his fertilizing flood,
The gorgeous image raised its towering head
More loftily toward the vault of heaven,
Than loftiest pyramid that ever cast
Its lengthened shadow o'er Egyptian plain.—
The trumpets sounded and o'er all the East,
Forth went the proclamation, far and wide,
That all the tribes and families of men,
Which owned Shalmazar's sovereignty, should
 come
To worship at the statue's foot, and there
Confess a godhead in the impious king.

How grieved the heavenly angels were to see
The human multitudes, from hills and vales,
And villages and cities numberless,



Who, with unholy steps, came wildly forth
To kneel in impious worship at that shrine
Of wicked pageantry, in foul contempt
Of the true worship of the God of Heaven!
Yet all came not; for ev'n in that dark time,
God still preserved a light, however faint,
To show that truth had yet a place on earth.
But from the vengeance of the tyrant king,
Compelled to fly to solitudes and wilds,
Or seek asylum midst the sons of Seth,
The righteous disappeared from the cursed land
Now rank with crime and foul impiety.
But one there was who fled not, yet maintained
His faith, and boldly testified against
The dire pollution that defiled mankind;—
A righteous man, whose noble spirit scorned
To court the favour of an earthly king,
By offering insult to the King of Heaven.
It was thy sire, Hadallah! virtuous sage,
Who midst degenerate nations, stood the firm,
Unwavering servant of Creation's God;
And full of holy and undaunted zeal,
Braved all the rage of wicked men in power.
Glorious Jethuran! thine the happy choice
To stand alone midst a blaspheming world,
The friend and champion of th' Eternal One,
Who saw thy sufferings, and thy martyrdom
Rewarded with the joys of Paradise!

And now before the tyrant's judgment seat,
A captive bound, the good Jethuran stands,

While thus the infuriate monarch vents his rage.

“ Oh! factious man, vain and contemptible,
What daring spirit of rebellion caused
Thy disobedience of our high command
To worship, as all other men have done,
The radiant image, gloriously devised
To represent the grandeur, state and power
Inherent in us as earth's sovereign lord?
Dost thou suppose that **HE** who rules in heaven,
Can share with me authority on earth,
When I forbid; or equal me in power
To wield at will the destinies of men?
Is not this empire mine? and thinkest thou
'That any potentate of earth or hell,
Or ev'n of heaven, though with its thunder armed,
Will dare contest prerogative with me,
To make what laws my judgment may suggest,
Or frame what worship may my fancy suit,
Within the limits of this far-spread realm
O'er which my all-resistless sway extends?
Where is the God whom thou preferr'st to me?
Far off in distant space: wilt thou send there
To ask his aid from my offended power,
Which now condemns thee to the fiery death
Of the fierce furnace heated seven-fold,
Unless, as is permitted thee of grace,
Thou yet show reverence, and submissive kneel
Before the golden shrine, and worship me?”

“Proud man,” the undaunted captive thus replied,
“Or rather impious fiend, for such thou art,

Since merely human sinner ne'er could reach
One half the guilt of thy imaginings,
Which would usurp the adoration due
To **HIM** alone whose power created all;
Strengthened by Him thy threatenings I despise.
What! think'st thou I will dare insult my God
By worshipping a creature like myself—
Nay, worse, a fiend, my God's imbittered foe!
'Thou know'st me not or thou wouldst spare thy
threats,

For threats of thine my soul can never fear,
Which only fears to offend the King of Heaven.
Thou may'st destroy my weak and mortal frame:
So far Jehovah may permit thy power
To swell the measure of thy wickedness.
But o'er the immortal portion of my being,
That which indeed is truly worth my care,
Thou hast no power—thou canst not injure me
Where I alone am anxious to be safe.
Then do thy utmost: I defy thy rage.
I know that I must die ere I can gain
The heavenly life for which my spirit longs.
Then let thy furnace blaze, thou foe of God!
Hot as thy wrath can make it or desire.
I'll mount the flames, rejoicing that from them,
Refined and pure, my soul shall wing its flight
To the bright regions of eternal bliss."

"Seize the foul railer! bear him to his fate!"
The hell-sired monarch cried, when, like a beam
Of sudden light from heaven, that bursts the gloom

Of an o'erclouded sky, a female form,
Of symmetry divine and beauteous looks,
Rushed through the crowd, and charmed the gaze
of all,

But most the admiring gaze of the lowd king,
As at his feet she threw her slender form.

“ Oh spare him! spare my venerable sire—
Great king, have mercy on his reverend age!
My heart shall bless thee, and Heaven will reward.”

The beauty of the suppliant, through the frame
Of the fell tyrant shot resistless fire
Of amorous longing, that o'erpowered his rage,
And changed the fury of his soul to love:
When fondly thus the maiden he addressed.

“ Fair one, thou'rt charming; ne'er hath earthly
form

Appeared so pleasing to my ravished sight,
Or fired my bosom with so keen a flame.
Since that unhappy rebel is thy sire,
For sake of thee, his doom shall be deferred
Till further thought our final purpose fix.
Meantime it is our wish that thou shalt come
To aid our counsels in thy sire's behalf,
By the all-potent pleading of thy charms,
Whose winning arguments, I promise thee,
Shall be more powerful than an armed host,
To save him from the fiery penalty
Of disobedience to our royal will.”

He waited not reply, but amorous smil'd
As on her charms luxuriously he gazed.

Then rose, and, followed by his courtly train
Of flattering lords and servile officers
Glittering in costly robes and armour bright,
To his pavilion of high festal pomp,
Departed, marching to the inspiring strains
Of harmony from many an instrument
Sweet-toned, and wakened by the skilful hands
Of minstrel excellence, to notes of praise
That hailed the tyrant as a god on earth.

Meanwhile, pursuant to the king's command,
The captive back to prison is conveyed:
And fair Hadallah, warm with filial love,
Her sire attends, anxious with tender care
To cheer the gloom of his imprisonment.

“Oh! father, Heaven hath saved thee,” thus she
said,

As on his bosom she her head reclined
And shed the tears of mingled grief and joy.
“Oh! blest be Heaven! the tyrant's heart is changed
From wrath to mercy, from revenge to peace.
Oh! father, God hath seen thy holy life,
And on the tyrant's hard unyielding heart,
Hath poured the softening warmth of pity's balm,
And wrought this miracle in thy behalf.
Thou shalt not die; since Heaven is thus thy friend.”

“My daughter, thou speak'st truth; I shall not
die,

For o'er my soul the tyrant hath no power.
But this frail flesh shall melt at his command,
Within the flaming furnace, and no more

Shall serve my spirit as a dwelling place.
My soul impatient longs to mount to heaven,
And soon the tyrant's wrath those chains shall break,
Which bind her now in bondage to the earth.
Yet, daughter, there's a feeling in my heart—
Heaven will forgive it; 'tis a father's love
That fears and trembles for his daughter's fate
When she remains upon the world he leaves,
Exposed to the fell passions of a fierce,
Unholy tyrant, whose licentious eye
Already marks her as his fated prey.
Yet in the Sire of All I place my trust.
Daughter, he is the friend of innocence:
Then through all trials be thou innocent,
And he will shield thee in the extremest hour.
Or shouldst thou suffer for fair virtue's sake,
Endure with perseverance to the end;
Thy sufferings here will yield thee joy in heaven."

Now came the tyrant's mandate, that the maid
Should to his presence haste and humbly there
Make stipulation for her father's life.
"Be firm, my daughter," said the pious sire;
"Let neither threats nor lures thy virtue shake
From the firm pedestal of innocence.
I charge thee not to yield thy purity
To the pollution of the tyrant's love,
Though with thee he should offer to divide
The imperial throne on which he rules mankind.
Fear not his rage: he will pronounce my doom;
But he can only send me from this world

To live with saints in the bright Paradise
For sufferers on earth reserved in heaven.
Something informs me that we never more
On earth shall meet; but we shall meet in heaven.
Oh! be that hope the anchor of thy faith:
'Twill hold thee firm to virtue, and defy
The storms against thee men or fiends may raise.
Heaven shield thee, and its choicest blessings pour,
Like evening dews, abundant on thy head!"

She spoke not, but in reverence knelt and wept,
As she received her father's last embrace:
Then rose—for the impatient king's command
Permission gave but for a short farewell—
Took one last parting look of filial love,
Which melted even the stern and stony hearts
Of the rude guardsmen who beheld the scene.
Then to high Heaven she raised her pious thoughts
And all submissive to its sacred will,
Went forth obedient to her destiny.

THE ANTEDILUVIANS.

BOOK II.

THE ARGUMENT.

SHALMAZAR seated on his throne receives the adulation of his courtiers.—He addresses them in a boastful and impious speech, in which he takes credit for having released them from the obligations of religion and morality; and concludes by stating his intention to pardon Jethuran on condition of his daughter yielding to his desires.—Situation and description of the harem of Shalmazar, particularly that portion of it in which Hadallah is confined.—She sees a vision at evening in the western clouds, which makes a great impression on her mind.—Shalmazar visits her.—She firmly rejects his suit.—He leaves her in great wrath, threatening the destruction of her father in case of her continued resistance.—He sends Jazeda, mistress of the harem, to persuade her to comply.—Story of Adda.—Jazeda makes to the tyrant an erroneous report respecting Hadallah's disposition.—He again visits her in expectation of finding her more pliant.—He is extremely enraged on discovering the truth.—Departs threatening violence to her person, as well as the destruction of her father.—She is carried to the top of a high tower, from which she sees her father surrounded by guards and an immense multitude of people, and about to be sacrificed upon a huge pile of combustibles blazing beside him.—Shalmazar here gives her the last opportunity of accepting the conditions on which he is willing to spare her father's life.—She decisively rejects them.—He gives the signal, and the victim is thrown into the flames.—A miracle takes place; and Jethuran is carried by angels to heaven.—An awful thunderstorm, accompanied by a tremendous fall of rain, terrifies the multitude, and drives the tyrant himself in dismay to his palace.—In consequence of this divine interposition, Hadallah is conveyed back uninjured to the harem.

THE ANTEDILUVIANS.

BOOK II.

In royal robes magnificently bright,
On his imperial throne of burnished gold
And polished ivory, which sparkling shone
With gems innumerable of various hues,
That shed a blaze of streaming radiance round
The gorgeous hall, the haughty monarch sat
Amidst the assembled princes of the realm,
Slaves of his will and creatures of his power.
With voices ever ready to his wish,
Pageants of state, they met in high divan,
Not freely to confer on righteous laws,
With patriot legislation, but to frame
Enactments wantonly to gratify
The pride and passion of their tyrant king.
Meanly obsequious to his wild desires,
And trembling with servility, they bent
Attentive to his words as oracles.
Presiding there, he with deep blasphemy,
Claimed and received the homage of a God.
Now courtly Zaim, Shalmazar's favourite,

The trusted counsellor of his secrecy,
His minister of pleasure, and chief lord
Of all his revelries, arose, and with
Gross, fulsome speech, addressed the demi-fiend,
Praising the virtues, power, and glorious state
With which he reigned, and in despite of Heaven
And heavenly laws, gave liberty to crime,
And evil passions, and licentiousness,
Throughout a lewd, impure and selfish world.
“Thou art our head,” thus ran the servile speech,
“By thee we see, and hear, and move, and breathe.
Thou art our strength, by thee we firmly stand
Fearless, and unsubdued by enemies,
Whether of heaven above or earth beneath.
Thou art our wisdom; we by thee are taught
How to enjoy the pleasures of this life
In all the sweetness of corporeal sense,
A wisdom which our fathers never knew.
Thou art our glory; for thy hand hath raised
Us from the tame and unalluring state
Of worshippers of one far off in heaven,
Whom we have never seen, and of whose power
We nothing know and nothing can conceive.
Thee we behold, thy majesty and power,
And tremble in thy presence as thou speak’st.
Whate’er thy will, all humbly we obey,
Like true devoted slaves and question not
The tendency or justice of thy laws.—
Hail great Shalmazar! sovereign of the earth,
For ever live our homage to receive!”

With long applause the spacious chamber rang,
Each servile courtier anxious to display
With vehemence, his impious loyalty.
Then followed music, with triumphant sound,
From numerous instruments of martial tone
And amorous note combined. With potent hands
The skilful masters woke the harmonious strains
Which filled luxuriously the joyous air,
Till all things listened, and till all things felt
The thrill that through surrounding nature passed,
And warmed with rapture every bounding heart,
Borne on the tide of flowing melody.

The joyance ceased; when the vain-glorious king,
Intoxicated with the flattering sounds
Which to the extreme his vanity had swelled,
But yet affecting graciousness, looked round,
And smiling on the assembled peers, thus spake:

“My faithful nobles, chiefs and counsellors,
That ye rejoice in the full stream of joy
Which, since we have renounced the rigid laws
And chilling worship of our formal sires,
Hath given true relish to the life of man,
Is just and natural. Our passions now,
Loose and unchecked, confess no vile restraint;
But roving freely, as the chainless winds
Rejoicing in their native liberty,
They seek the indulgences they deem most sweet,
And under contribution lay all earth
And every pleasure-giving element,
To yield the treasures of life's happiness.

Hence to the eye what architecture proud,
And triumphs of resplendent works of art,
Surround us, and in brilliancy surpass
The flowery fields or star-bespangled skies,
So much the objects of our fathers' praise!
Hence to the ear, sweet music's ravishment
By songs accompanied, to arouse desire
For all the enjoyments of the various sweets
With which our far-spread provinces abound.
Hence is the ruby nectar, foe to care,
Quaffed in delicious gladness, till the heart
Swells into rapture, and the frame dilates
With joyous energy and glorious pride!
And hence is woman's fascinating smile
Supplied, to wake the pulse to ecstasy
And yield the soul's most exquisite delight!
These gifts and blessings of the teeming world,
Diffused so amply for our happiness,
Our timid fathers were afraid to use;
Or used but sparingly, by Him forbid,
Who rules in heaven their worshipped deity,
The excess of joy in any appetite.
Why so forbid, reason cannot explain,
Unless from feelings envious or austere,
He grudges to behold mankind partake
The luscious fulness of ecstatic bliss,
Which their sensations fit them to enjoy,
And which the exhaustless ever bounteous earth
Profusely, and with tempting kindness, spreads
For their acceptance.—That on better times

Our lot hath fallen; that more liberal thoughts
Inform our bosoms, and inspire our acts,
Is my achievement; and your praise is mine,
Deserved for what my fervent zeal hath done
To break the superstitious chains which bound
Your souls in slavery to a Power unknown,
And made you fear to enjoy what nature gave!
Past are those days of darkness. Ye are now
Emancipated from their gloomy yoke.
True; there are spirits of perversity
That still resist the light we have diffused.
Knit to their fathers' creed, they disobey
Our edicts, and reject our glorious boon
Of freedom and enjoyment.—For a test
Of that allegiance which our station claims,
And to discover who are friends or foes,
We have, through all our provinces, prescribed
The worship of the golden image, framed
In our own likeness. Foes we find but few;
And they have all to Sethite regions fled,
Or in the penal furnace of our wrath,
Deplored their disobedience, or remain
Immured in prisons till we fix their doom.
To one of these—the unhappy man on whom
We last past sentence for his stubbornness,
I would show mercy—not from lenity,
That were a weakness I would not display—
But for his daughter's beauty, which hath waked
A flame within my breast of keen desire,
Stronger than e'er my bosom yet hath felt

For woman's charms, and woman's charms have still
Been the chief source of all my dearest joy.
Should this young maid consent to crown my love
With answering love, her recompense shall be
Her father's pardon. This my purpose here,
And the delicious source from which it springs,
I publish in the hearing of you all,
That from the example none may dare to hope
The like indulgence for the like offence;
Lest boldness to rebellion should be given,
And calculation, wrongful and unjust,
Upon my will to pardon, lead to crime.
Withdraw then to your homes, my faithful chiefs,
And information give the public ear,
That my forbearance from no pity flows,
But from sweet passion's all-persuasive voice.
Now to love's chamber, framed for pleasant hours,
I haste to meet the bliss-inspiring maid."

He rose, and while fresh streams of music flowed,
To amorous softness melting all the heart,
Withdrew to feast his wanton eyes on charms
Which 'twas enchanting luxury to view.
His courtiers to their several homes repaired,
Each eager now, for love inspired their souls,
To woo the endearments of his favourite fair.

Within the precincts of the far-spread walls
That formed the enclosure of the palace grounds,
Amidst a wilderness of fruits and flowers,
And aromatic breath of balmy shrubs
And ever-verdant trees, where statues framed

Of porphyry and gold, like river gods,
Poured from their urns cool fertilizing showers,
That wandered o'er the scene in many a rill
Of sweetly scented waters, sparkling bright,
The royal harem stood. Art there had formed,
In many a radiant hue, by genius wrought,
Each gay embellishment that could delight
The glowing fancy, or allure the soul
To sensual softness. On the western side
Of this bright edifice, one brighter still,
O'ershaded by a blooming grove of palms,
Was placed to catch the breezes of the eve,
As from the bosom of the setting sun
They issued, and the twilight woods awoke
To strains of amorous melody, that flowed
From the sweet warbling of ten thousand throats
Of various-plumaged songsters, keeping time
To soft Eolian airs by zephyrs played.

This was the imperial bower of Love's Delight,
Where passed the monarch's secret hours of joy,
When he some favourite of the harem dames
Selected for his dalliance. Here the maid,
For whose unsullied charms he panted now,
Was by his slaves conveyed, a victim bright,
In this gay temple to be offered up
At Love's impassioned shrine. In vain to thee,
Jethuran's daughter! bloomed that pleasant bower
In all its gay variety of charms,
So fascinating to the youthful gaze.
In vain its mirrored walls festooned with flowers

That never faded; roses blushing deep,
And stately lilies towering in their pride,
And gay carnations, and sweet amaranths,
And those, innumerable, whose names and hues
Are lost, or only found in Fairy-land,
With silken texture wrought, and leafy gold,
And all resplendent with the mingling dyes
Of azure, purple, ruby, green and pearl,
And each bright tint that Iris shows the sun;—
Vainly they shone—they had no charms for thee.
In vain the velvet seats and downy couch
Invited to repose thy wearied frame:
In vain did gentle gales, with perfumes fraught,
Waft fragrant odours on their viewless wings,
To wrap thy spirit in refreshing joy.
In vain the mellow strains of music rose,
With magic potency to relieve thy soul
Of every care, and charm each yielding sense
Into the languor of voluptuousness,
With rapture-giving thrill. Thou heard'st it not,
Or hearing, felt no pleasure in its charms.
In vain were luscious fruits, nectarean wines,
And viands of seducing flavour, spread
In crystal vases, or o'erflowed in cups
Of amethyst or jasper, to allay
The cravings of thy hunger or thy thirst,
By abstinence or sorrow now produced.
The witcheries of that luxurious bower,
Possessed no spell to soothe thy bosom's wo.
Thy heart preferred to all this radiant scene,

The darkness of thy father's prison-cell,
Where now he lay in iron fetters bound,
For virtue, truth and holiness were there,
Parental love for thee, and faith in God.

Upon a rose-embroidered couch, the maid
Sat thoughtfully, her bosom charged with grief:
But silent all the sorrows of her heart,
Were kept restrained within her labouring breast;
For two young damsels waited on her there,
To whom she dared not make her feelings known,
Since, trained in guilty ways, they would but mock
That shuddering dread of sin which seized her now
Amidst the wicked, and alarmed her soul.
From them she turned and the gay scene within,
To gaze on one more splendid far without,
A moving mass of gold-enamelled clouds
That, like a sea on flame, bore on their breast,
The blazing chariot of the evening sun,
As swiftly, on his downward race, he sought
The verdant valleys of the distant west.

“Oh! Sire of nature!”—thus her silent prayer
Rose from her heart and found its way to Heaven;—
“Shall I be dazzled with the meaner works
Of ostentatious art, when of thy power
Such glorious evidence salutes my gaze,
And warms my admiration? Shall I fear
The power of men or demons, when I know
That thou art Lord of ALL, and that thine eye
Is present every where, and thy strong arm
Still near to shield the humble and oppressed,
Whose hearts are pure, and fixed in faith on thee?”

In thee I trust; oh! do thou aid me now,
In my distress, and shield my soul from sin!"

Scarce had she prayed, when on the green hill
top

On which she gazed, a form amidst the clouds
Appeared in youthful manliness, who seemed
To bear upon his back a lyre of light,
And in his hand a shield of adamant,
On which she read in golden characters,
"BE FIRM AND THOU SHALT CONQUER."—For a space
The angelic form, for she believed it such,
Upon her smiled, then mingled with the clouds.

"Blest counsellor, I will be firm," she said,
"And trust thy promise, for thou art from God."
As she resolved, throughout her frame a glow
Of cheerfulness transfused: upright she sat;
A brightening lustre sparkled in her eyes,
A gentle smile soft settled on her lips,
While resignation smoothed her snowy brow
And bade the ruddy stream of youth and health,
Replace the living roses of her cheeks,
That late had faded in the chills of grief.

But soon the trial came. Her fortitude
Soon needed all the energy of faith
Which the bright vision in her soul inspired.
The enamoured king, by furious passion driven,
Intrudes his dreaded presence on her sight.
He beckons, and the attendant dames withdraw,
And fair Hadallah finds herself alone
With the fell tyrant whose unhallowed deeds
'To think upon, sends horror through her soul.

“Fair maiden!”—thus he spake,—“to my charmed eyes,

Thy beauty is more pleasing than the glow
Of all the gems within my empire's bounds,
Though they were moulded into one bright mass
Of matchless symmetry. Thou look'st divine,
And I adore thee, sole divinity
My heart shall ever worship. Thou shalt share,
If so thou wilt consent to share, my throne,
My sceptre, all my high command and power,
And be the envied empress of the East.
Smile on me, fair one, and accept the boon
I freely offer at the shrine of love,
Love, by thy charms deep planted in my breast.”

“Oh! king,” she said, “my duty and my faith,
My earnest heart and my affections all
Forbid acceptance of the power and state
Thou wouldst confer, or even in aught to form
With thee alliance—thee who art the foe
Avowed, and oft by sinful acts proclaimed,
Of Him I worship as the God of All!”

“Forbear!” he said, “thus rashly to offend
With language so unfit for me to hear,
Unwise for thee to speak to one who sues,
But one who, should his inclination prompt,
Can, without suing, take what he desires.
My passion for thy charms hath mastered me,
And I do bear for thee such earnest love,
That I would win thee by persuasive means.
But I can woo thee in another mood.—

Remember, maid, 'tis in my power to change
'The turtle's softness for the lion's rage,
And without asking make thy charms my own.
Thou know'st thy father's doom is in my hand:
'Think of the fate that hangs o'er him, and pause
Ere thou the sealing of that fate provok'st.
Weigh well—on thee his life or death depends!"

“ Oh king! have mercy on his helpless age!
He has no power nor wish to injure thee,
But dares not disavow the God of Heaven.—
Oh! punish not his conscience as a crime,
And I will bless thee—pray to Heaven for thee!
But ah! I cannot yield to thee my heart,
For who the emotions of the heart can bend
In passive subjugation to the will!
Ask not a sacrifice beyond my power,
Or I shall think thy love barbarity,
And founded but on brutal selfishness.”

“ Think what thou wilt, thy beauties must be
mine:

'Too ardently my bosom pants for them,
For scrupulous qualms my purpose to restrain,
Ev'n if of qualms I were susceptible,
Which, thanks to fate, I never yet have been.
I would prefer the joy of being blest
In thy embraces, with thy free consent;
For mutual transport to endearment lends
Exalted throbs, and renders bliss supreme.
But force, fair maid, if force shall be required
To gain my wishes, I full soon shall use.—

But hold! have I not other means in store
To make thee pliant!—I have sued enough.—
Yes; haughty beauty! I will sue no more.—
Thou hast a father—thou shalt sue to me.—
To-morrow thou shalt tremble at my power!”

While thus he spake, the lover's gentleness,
Which had to softness his fierce features smoothed,
Changed to demoniac wrath; and all the fiend
Flashed hellish anger from his flaming eyes,
As he impetuous hurried from her sight.

Relieved, yet terrified, Hadallah bent
In supplication to her father's God,
To beg deliverance from the tyrant's power,
Or firmness to endure his utmost wrath.

Now with proud gait and high affected air,
Jazeda, mistress of the harem, came,
Commanded by the king, to try each art
Of strong persuasion on Hadallah's mind.
Advanced into the autumnal stage of life,
Her beauty faded, but not quite decayed,
She its defects assiduously repaired
By ornaments profuse, glaring and strong
With glowing colours and with rich perfumes
Spread with such deep solicitude to please,
It was unnatural all, and gave offence
Instead of pleasure, to the eye of taste.
Gay, smiling, to Hadallah thus she spake.

“ Young maiden, yes, and fair, I must confess,
Let me congratulate thy happy lot
In warming great Shalmazar's heart to love
By his solicitude to win from thee

Unforced compliance with his royal will,
Using entreaty where he might command,
I see that thou wilt be his favourite long.—
Thou'lt govern him who governs half mankind,
And have no rival in authority,
If thou but, heark'ning to discretion's voice,
Consult his wishes and his will obey,
Smile when he smiles, grieve when he grieves, and
seem

Ne'er to be happy but when he is so,
Living alone for his delight and love."

The maid scarce heard these words of flattering
guile,

But sat absorbed in thought, nor answer made:
When haughtily the stately dame resumed.

"Truly thou seem'st perverse: perhaps thou'rt
proud,

And may'st presume too far upon the power
Of thy young beauty o'er the enamoured king.
But, maid, I would advise more humble thoughts,
'Twould more become thee, in compliant mood,
To show some reverence of thy sovereign's will.

If thy design is to inflame his love

To higher ardour than inspires it now,

Beware!—thou may'st deceive thyself; for he

Has other passions that can be aroused,

And he can hate as fervently as love.—

Hear me while I relate young Adda's fate.

She was as fair a maid as ever woke

Impassioned feelings in the breast of man:

But she was of a stubborn chastity;

And at her feet when the world's master sued,
She spurned his wishes and refused his love.
At length, his passions pushed beyond control,
He forced her first, then glutted his revenge.—
See'st thou yon citadel, whose frowning towers
O'erhang the shadowy breadth of Kisna's flood—
Lo! now they gleam in evening's setting ray!—
'There by Shalmazar's mandate she was borne,
And in a room of state, decked splendidly
For his design, he revelled in her charms,
Spite of her imprecations, prayers, and cries.
'Then nothing but revenge for her disdain
And fruitless opposition, moved his soul.
'In love,' he cried, 'I now have rioted,
And vengeance, long provoked, shall have its due!'
He caught her, trembling, in his furious grasp,
And from the topmost turret's airy height
He hurled her headlong to the gulph below.
'The flood enclosed her in its deepening wave,
And Kisna's waters were her dying bed!—
'Take warning, maiden, nor presume too far
Upon thy beauty: think of Adda's fate!"

“ Oh! shield me, Heaven! from such a monster's
wrath!"

She mentally exclaimed; and then addressed
The garrulous narrator of the tale,
Which through her frame a thrill of horror sent,
And filled her soul with chillness and dismay.
“ Wearing,” she said, “ by strong contending fears
And restless thoughts that have oppressed my soul,

I fain would seek repose. Indulge me now
With solitude and rest. To-morrow may
Find my exhausted spirit so restored,
That to thy counsels and alarming tales,
I shall be fit to listen, and receive
With due attention, what thou may'st advise
My feeble resolution to direct
In this most perilous and trying hour."

The gay-attired and stately harem queen
Smiled complaisantly, and withdrew, rejoiced
To find such meekness in the fair, who had
Opposed no words against her arguments.
"This augurs well; I'll bring her to consent.
Shalmazar's hand will shower its royal gifts
For such a service; princely honours shall
Increase the lustre of my envied state."
She said, and happy in her self-conceit,
To the lewd tyrant hastened to relate
The triumph of her management and zeal.

Meantime, resigning all her cares to Heaven,
Hadallah sought her couch, and spite of grief,
The balmy power that visits innocence
With the refreshing cordial of repose,
His softest influence kindly o'er her shed,
And in the folds of slumber wrapt her griefs;
While missioned from on high her guardian spirit
Stood near, and banished sorrow from her dreams.

The morning rose bright blushing in the east,
And o'er the awakened landscape shed profuse,
The sparkling richness of those liquid gems

That caught and mirrored all her radiant smiles.
Hadallah woke saluted by the strains
Of thousand woodland warblers, that rejoiced
In day's return, amidst the leafy boughs
Of palms and myrtles blooming round her bower.
In unison with theirs her soul poured forth
Grateful effusions to great Nature's Sire,
Whose hand had clothed creation in such charms
As woke all animation into joy,
Save where the fiend of evil had estranged
The human heart from innocence and Heaven.

But fair Hadallah! this bright morn to thee,
Was harbinger of a tempestuous day
Of terrible distress, which, to the verge
Of utmost suffering nature could endure,
Pushed the keen pangs that pierced thee to the soul.
The tyrant came with expectations raised
By vain Jazedah, of thy softened mood.

"My fair," he said, "my bosom bounds with joy
To think that yielding love, which so becomes
The bright possessor of such charms as thine,
Moves thee complyingly to crown with bliss
The longing of my deep impassioned soul."

"Thou art deceived," she said, "if such thy
thoughts.

But why thou think'st so I cannot divine.
What I have said, I know not, or what done,
To cause thee such delusion: but I know
My resolution rather is to die
Than yield to thee, and join my fate with guilt."

“ Ah! say’st thou!” he exclaimed; “ thou shalt be tried.

Remember, maiden, what is in my power.
 Thou hast a father!—wouldst thou have him die?
 Rouse not my indignation, or this day,
 Ev’n in thy presence, he shall meet his fate:
 The flames shall feed upon his quivering flesh,
 And dying, he shall curse his barbarous child
 Who could, but would not, save him from his
 doom!”

His fearful words pierced deeply to her soul,
 Like points of burning daggers. For her sire
 Her bosom bled; upon his awful fate
 ’Twas agonizing horror to reflect.
 But could she save him? Without sin, alas!
 She could not; for nought else could move the stern
 Determination of the tyrant king.

“ I would entreat,” she said, “ were it not vain
 To ask compassion from a heart like thine.—
 Father, forgive thy much afflicted child,
 If she is made the awful instrument
 To work thy doom! She will thy voice obey,
 And link not with pollution, be her fate,
 Or thine, whate’er the rage or savageness of men,
 Or demons, may devise or may inflict!”

“ Reviler, cease!” the tyrant cried. “ No more
 I’ll parley with thy wayward insolence,
 That dares to brave me to my very face!
 But I will put thy firmness to the proof.
 Yes; I will give my vengeance its full scope.

And triumph in thy terror and distress.
Yet, mark me, I will not thy charms forego;
They shall be mine; and in one glorious hour,
I'll gratify my love and my revenge!"

He left her, all the fire of hellish rage
And wickedness strong flaming in his eyes.—
But short the breathing-time of absence now,
She from the tyrant's presence, is allowed.
Soon seized by guards, to the dread citadel,
Shown by Jazeda as the horrid scene
Of rape and murder on that martyred maid
Who had before, as now Hadallah hath,
Refused compliance with the tyrant's lust,
She is conveyed; and the same fatal tower
Received her then which had before received
To ruin and to death, that hapless one.

She thought upon the beauteous martyr's fate,
And prayed to Heaven for firmness such as hers,
To aid her in the direful exigence
Of terror and despair she now approached.

Shalmazar came. "Withdraw, ye guards!" he
said;
"But thou, young maiden, thou must come with
me!"

The guards withdrew; th' unhappy maid he caught,
And up the ascent of gently winding stairs
He led her, trembling, to the Northern front
Of the huge edifice. A casement there
He then uncurtained to her tortured view.

“Look there!” he said.—She screamed with sudden fright,

And chilling faintness seized her shuddering frame.
She had beheld a mighty furnace blaze
With pitch and resinous fagots piled immense.
The flaming columns reddened all the sky,
Diffusing heat intolerable round.
And numerous troops with glittering arms were
there,

And executioners of horrid mien;
And the bound victim—ha! that was her sire!
Exposed upon a lofty stage he stood;
Naked his reverend head, and hoary hair
That, floating, mingled with the rolling smoke.
The plain, the hills and all the branching trees,
Swarmed with a dense and eager multitude
Convened to witness the sad spectacle—
A good man suffering in the cause of Heaven!
Sad to behold, but glorious to the victim.

“What see'st thou there?” the tyrant sternly cried.
At first the maid replied not; for her heart
Had borne too rude a shock for utterance.
But a short prayer to Heaven in silence breathed,
She soon recovered strength to bear her woes;
And as the angry tyrant once again
Demanded what she saw—“I see,” she said,
“The extent of all thy cruelty—the verge,
The utmost verge, to which thy power can go.
This scene is worthy of a fiend like thee!”

“Pause, maid!” he interrupted.—“But one word,

And as thou speak'st it, he shall live or die!
Thy father!—lo! his fate is in thy hand.
The executioners but wait the sign
Which from this spot to them I shall display,
To cast him on yon fiercely blazing pile,
Or to unbind him, and in triumph lead
To embrace thee here as his deliverer.
Thou know'st the terms; wilt thou accept or not?
As thou dost answer shall the sign be given!”

She could not speak; she looked upon her sire—
She fain would save him, but she dared not sin.
She caught his eye:—he seemed to know her thoughts,

And with a glance directed her to Heaven.
She knew his wish, and all her soul grew strong.
“Tyrant!” she said, “I will not yield to thee;
My God forbids, and Him I will obey:
In Him I trust, and all thy power defy.”

All that was human fled the tyrant's breast,
And the full demon filled his fiery soul.
Her God he cursed, and gnashed his hellish teeth
And stamped with rage that shook the embattled tower,

Then launched the signal of Jethuran's fate.
The executioners at once obey;
And midst the shouting of the multitude,
That with dread exclamations rent the air,
They cast the victim in the roaring flames!

But suddenly the shouting crowd is mute;
Awe-struck, they gaze—for lo! a miracle!
Three midst the flames appear instead of one!
'Two with spread wings and fair angelic shapes,
By either hand the good Jethuran caught.
Swift at their touch, the holy man is changed
From age to youth, from feebleness to strength:
His bonds fall off; his earthly robes are turned
'To radiant garments of celestial frame,
And on his head a crown of glory shines.
Short space the three survey the wondering throng,
With looks of pity mingled with rebuke:
'Then to Hadallah, with approving smiles,
'They turn their eyes, and take their flight to
heaven:

Jethuran, in the midst, seemed in a car,
By cherubs borne up to the seats of bliss.

Scarce had the heavenly vision disappeared,
When all the firmament turned black as night,
And the thick clouds, by bolted thunder burst,
Shot awful lightning; and poured down in floods
'That swept with torrent surge the fiery heap,
And all its mass of piled combustibles,
Into the swelling Kisna's heaving flood.
'The astonished crowds, chiefs, princes, nobles,
guards,

And all the multitude of every rank,
Assembled on that memorable day,
Fled terror-struck from the appalling scene,

Almost repentant of their numerous crimes,
And sad defection from their fathers' God.
Ev'n their fiend-tyrant, from the awful scene,
In terror to his palace swiftly fled:
And unmolested to the harem-bower,
The attendant slaves conveyed the beauteous maid,
Whose virtue had so gloriously withstood
The utmost terrors of that trying day.

THE ANTEDILUVIANS.

BOOK III.

7

THE ARGUMENT.

SHALMAZAR recovering from his alarm, consults his Vizier, and the high priest of Baal, in relation to the effects which the preternatural appearances that attended the execution of Jethuran might produce on the public mind.—At the suggestion of the high priest, it is agreed to persuade the people that they were the result of magic.—Shalmazar then confers with his demon-slave, Asmodeus, on the means most likely to seduce the affections of Hadallah.—They try various modes of temptation, in which Asmodeus is the chief agent, but without success.—Asmodeus, at length, advises that an accomplished and beautiful youth shall be allowed access to her, in expectation that he will become enamoured of her, and excite in her a reciprocity of carnal passion, which would occasion the heavenly influences that protected her while uncontaminated by such passion, to leave her to struggle against temptation with only her own strength.—A young warrior, named Ellam, is selected for this purpose.—He becomes enamoured of her, but it is with a virtuous passion, which, although she does not return, she successfully uses as the instrument of his conversion to the worship of the true God.—The insidious designs of the tempters are consequently, in this instance also, frustrated.

THE ANTEDILUVIANS.

BOOK III.

THE alarmed Shalmazar in his palace sat
Perplexed, and brooding on the strange event
That filled his haughty spirit with amaze;
And, foiling all his potency and pride,
Dashed from his lips the unhallowed cup of joy
Which, on the wreck of maiden innocence,
And in defiance of the will of Heaven,
He thought to quaff in reckless luxury.
But transient as a cloud that veils the sun
Amidst the ardors of a summer noon,
Was the alarm that shook his stubborn pride,
And made him feel unwilling awe of Heaven:
For nothing long could awe so stern a soul,
Whose pride it was audacious war to wage
Against Heaven's mandates and defiance hurl,
With wild presumption and malignant hate,
Against the greatness of Omnipotence!
Soon as amazement's agitating throb
Subsided into calmness, and the scene
Which taught his stubborn bosom how to fear,

Became less vivid to his troubled sight,
The wicked passions of the demi-fiend,
Returned, and his unhallowed spirit felt
Once more, the promptings of impiety.

“She must be conquered!” to himself he said.
“Shall I endure the shame of such defeat
From HIM who reigns in heaven; inflicted too,
Even in the public eye! Why should HE thus
Disturb me in the government of earth?
Do I molest him in his rule on high?
But *here* (such his ambition!) doth he claim
A sovereignty extensive as in heaven;
And an obedience perfect as that given
By servile seraphs kneeling round his throne.
And must I yield? Am I become so weak
As to be frightened when HE frowns? Shall those
Who long have lent obedience to my sway,
By mystical appearances be taught
To own a power whose worship interferes
With all my wishes and propensities?
He is irreconcilably my foe,
Since I on earth have raised myself to be
His rival; nay, have boasted to possess
A firmer claim, and more legitimate
Authority to rule the sons of men.
His altars I have overthrown and doomed
His worshippers to deadly punishment.
No peace can be between us. Courage, then,
My soul! and throw this dastard tremor off!

I must be bold, indeed, to war with HIM
Whose nod commands the innumerable hosts
Of mighty spirits that inhabit heaven!
But bold I will be; and shall wield a force
Which his adherents, on this earth at least,
Dare not oppose, or if they dare, my wrath
Shall teach them to repent their hardihood.—
What if this miracle hath shook the faith
Of my own subjects in the power I boast?
Ah! that would make them rebels to my throne.
With chosen counsellors I must confer,
And check such treason ere it gather strength.”

Straight the chief pillars of his government,
Are summoned to a private conference.
His confidential vizier, Asaphell,
A hoary statesman, versed in all the arts
That flatter monarchs and oppress mankind;
And Horzan, priest of Belial, since called Baal,
Voluptuous demon, fierce Shalmazar's sire,
Spirit of lewdness worshipped as a god,
By the polluted progeny of men
That owned allegiance to Shalmazar's power.—
These are the counsellors he has summoned now.

Horzan, the wily pontiff, was the first
Who, for the love of priestly eminence,
Devised the worship of new gods, and raised
On earth, foul rivals to the King of heaven!
To these he bound the passions of mankind,
By laws to gratify their wild desires:
And prompted by the Stygian fiends, prescribed

The unholy practice of those carnal rites,
And revelries impure and dissolute,
And Bacchanalian orgies, which seduced
From righteousness and truth, and God's pure laws,
That hapless generation of mankind,
Who made a god of that licentious fiend,
To worship whom, men since have still been prone,
Though his dire worship once destroyed the world,
Confederate with this pontiff, Asaphell,—
(Studious of that deep policy of state
Which keeps mankind submissive by the dread
Which superstition generates in the mind,
When led astray from natural reverence
Of the true God, to worship fiends and idols,—)
Framed codes against instruction, knowing well
That superstition, tyranny's best prop,
Can be preserved alone amidst the gloom
And wilderness of human ignorance.
Hence were the schools of sages and of seers,
And the divine instruction of sweet bards,
And all the precepts which the oracles
Of God, propounded for the use of man,
Denounced, forbidden, and made treasonable;
And to expound from nature's mystic book,
Was lawful for Shalmazar's priests alone.—
The exulting vizier saw his wiles succeed
Against the virtue, knowledge, piety
Of human kind, and slavery confirmed
Through all the Cainite realms; for freedom there
Was sadly bartered for licentious joy.

Thus did these vile and crafty ministers,
Ambitious flatterers of imperial power,
Secure the favour of their tyrant lord,
By laying on the people's necks the yoke
Of servitude, idolatry, and crime.
To them, his counsellors in every strait,
The tyrant thus discloses his alarm.

“ Friends, in whose wisdom I have ever found
The proper policy by which to rule,
And make mankind obedient, there is now
Full matter to employ your deepest thoughts.
This miracle so awful will restore
The people's fear and reverence for our foe,
Unless by wisdom, fitting means be found
To erase the impression from their changeful
minds.”

“ Thy thoughts are just,” thus Asaphell re-
plied,

“ Sagacious sovereign! Doubtings even now,
Rebellious to great Baal's divinity,
In whispered murmurs float among the crowd,
To silence which demands our gravest care.
What artifice were best, I know not yet;
'Twould please me well to hear your several
thoughts:
The mischief must be crushed while in the bud.
Time strengthens danger; therefore, while 'tis
young,
To grapple it and pluck it by the roots,
Is wisdom; to delay is foolishness:

Irresolution sinks beneath the blow
Vigor would baffle, courage would repel."

"Would not our prompt decree," Shalmazar said,
"Commanding strict adherence to our creed,
With duteous worship of our father Baal,
And all the images which we have raised,
Similitudes of him or of ourselves,
Obedience find, and check this heresy?"

"My gracious liege!" the courteous Horzan
said,

"Thy mandate with due energy enforced,
And aided by the rolling stream of time,
Which to oblivion this event will sweep,
Might all things to their proper state restore.
But wisdom bids us to oppose at once
The dangerous working of this miracle.—
And let the task be mine. Methinks I can
Persuade the credulous people to believe
'That old Jethuran had a wizard's skill,
And that the wonders they beheld were wrought
By the dark power of necromantic charms."

"Thy counsel is true wisdom," said the king:
"Horzan thou'rt fertile in expedients still.

I thank thy genius for its readiness.
Direct thy priests and orators that they
Forthwith instruct all men in this affair.
The great discovery's thine: be it thy task
To have it published over all our realms.
And, Asaphell, lend thou him all the aid
Of thy high station and authority."

The two retired, obedient to his will,
To execute the fraudulent design.
And easily a loose, luxurious race,
Long wedded to their crimes and lawless lusts,
Believed a falsehood which secured the reign
Of gross delights, and conscience lulled to sleep.
Thus pleasing imposition ever finds
The human bosom willingly deceived.
As oft the feathered kind stoop from the sky,
By eager-craving appetite allured,
To seize the luscious bait that snares their sense,
And drags them fondly credulous to ruin;
So men abandon duty's heaven-ward path,
To rush insanely on forbidden joy,
Whose treacherous smiles conceal the dire abyss
Of deep perdition into which they lead
The unhappy victims of their fatal spell.

From this alarm Shalmazar's mind relieved,
Now fondly turns to more attractive cares.
Once more he muses on Hadallah's charms;
And pride with love combines to urge him on
Imperiously, to gain her; for he pants
To wipe away the shame of his defeat,
Inglorious and vexatious, in the hour
When certainty of triumph seemed his own.
What means to use to overpower her will,
And conquer her aversion to unite
Her destiny with his, he now revolves.
Compulsion he would shun as ruinous
To the high visions which his fancy forms

Of bliss, resulting from the yielding love
Of so much beauty trembling in his arms,
With mutual fondness and with mutual joy.

Threats and persuasions he has found are vain:
Some unseen art it yet remains to try.

What shall it be? The exciting power of herbs,
Or chymic philters to inflame the heart
With amorous longing? Small his faith in these;
Inactive oft, and transient when they act.

But magic—"Oh! 'tis an auspicious word—

Horzan has made it welcome to my ear!"

The exulting tyrant to himself exclaimed.

"Let him employ the name to cheat mankind,

The art I'll practise to seduce the fair.

The demon-servant given me by my sire,

To obey my mandates and achieve my will,

Subtle Asmodeus, stealthy and alert,

And skilled in all the arts that kindle love

In female bosoms;—for no spirit known

In Stygian realms, has with more fond pursuit,

Sought and enjoyed the charms and blandishments

Of the fair daughters of this upper world—

Him I will summon to my service now:

He'll work the spell I wish, and make me blest."

Then muttering sounds of mystical import,

Unfit for earthly tongue or earthly ear,

The potent conjuration he performs,

Which smooth Asmodeus from the infernal deep,

Brings sudden as the flash that bursts the clouds,

When, hanging from the mountain's darkened sides,

They launch the thunder o'er the trembling vales.
Gay and obsequious, as a courtier stands
Before a monarch's presence, stands the fiend
Ready to execute his master's will,
Who hails him, and his purpose thus unfolds.

“Asmodeus, in thy duty ever prompt,
I welcome thee, and give thee ample praise
For thy fidelity to my commands.
I have a task for thy performance now,
Will suit thy zeal and dexterous management;
And should success be thine, oh! thou wilt gain
For me the bliss most precious to my heart,
And for thyself more gratitude and praise,
And higher fame, than e'er thou yet hast earned.
Thou know'st already how I love a maid,
The fairest of those beauteous earth-born forms
Created to enchant both men and spirits.
Thou in the ways of earthly love art versed,
And know'st the nature of the female heart;
For thou, of late, hast wooed and won the love
Of many a blushing slow-consenting fair.
Aid me the young Hadallah's love to gain;
Make her heart mine by any winning spell
Of art or magic that thou canst command.
I know sufficient necromantic skill
Is thine, to change her hate for me to love,
And bring her, fondly wishing, to my arms.”

“My skill shall all be thine, oh! mighty king:
As readily as doth the pliant vane
Obey the motions of the varying wind,

Do I obey thy mandates. In this task,
From artifice alone I hope success.
By works of magic vain would be the attempt,
Since her protecting Spirit from above
Would make resistance, and defeat the force
Of conjuration on a mind so pure.
But if seductive arts can taint her soul
With any impulse of a carnal strain,—
We triumph then; for as a thing impure
Left by her guardian, we shall unopposed,
With passion's glowing frenzy fire her heart,
And thou shalt in her yielding charms be blest."

"My own Asmodeus, thou dost lend my soul
A blissful thrill of triumph and of joy.
If thou dost win that maiden to my arms,
To thee my gratitude no bounds shall know.
For all my heart towards her is impelled
By every motive love or pride can lend
To awaken glowing passions such as mine.
Haste to the achievement then; nor let thy arts,
By lingering process, try my patience long.

Obsequiously the fiendish slave withdrew.
Fond of adventures with young earthly maids,
He joyously upon an errand goes
So genial to his nature. Soon his scheme
Of treach'ry and seduction is devised.
His shape he forms into a blooming youth
Of perfect symmetry and aspect bright;
And round his countenance and carriage throws
Each winning air of virtue and of joy.

A chorister he seems of graceful mien,
Whose office is in pious songs to praise
The loveliness of nature, the delights
Of virtue, and the holiness of truth.
Beneath a spreading palm that stately grew
Before the casement of Hadallah's bower,
Which fronted westward, where she loved to sit
And view the glories of those evening skies,
Which gave her vision that inspiring form
On which her fancy loved so well to muse,
He stood as if enraptured, to admire
What chance had there presented to his sight,
Her beauty worthy of his boundless praise.
And much he praised it, ev'n in pious strains,
As the best proof of workmanship divine
That yet had flourished to delight the heart,
To be the boast of all-creating Heaven,
And fascinate the hearts of gods and men.

She heard; attentive to the pleasing strain,
For soft it rose and fell melodiously,
As if indeed an angel from above
Had come to soothe her with his minstrelsy.
Her soul was softened and her heart was charmed;
The luscious poison gently wound its way
Along each thrilling nerve, and moved her all
Into a mood of melting tenderness.
But transient was the insidious warmth; for soon
Reflection came, and she conceived it strange
How, mingling with that heavenly melody,

Such adulation of an earth-born form,
Expressed in flattering and voluptuous phrase,
Accompanied with looks too warm to come
From purity, could thus salute her ear.—
And that strange youth, though he was beautiful,
Yet from the glances of his ardent eye,
There flashed a gleam she could not understand,
It verged so closely on unholiness,
And seemed so much like passion. From high
heaven

Well might such tones of melody proceed,
And such a form an angel might become;
But there were thoughts and sentiments conveyed
By the warm gestures of that minstrel youth,
Too like the offspring of the fiery pulse
Which wakes the passions of corrupted men,
Or reckless demons that pollute the earth.

She felt alarm and tried to shun his looks;
But there was fascination in his eye
That held her gaze. The demon saw his power:
He ceased to sing, and courteously approached,
With graceful smiles and gestures formed to please.
She would have fled but could not; for the spell
Of magic influence, gleaming from his eyes,
Was on her. Now so near the zephyrs might
Be felt, that sported round him as he moved,
Fanning with fragrance his voluptuous way.
And, strange to say, the casement of itself
Wide opens to permit his entering steps.—

One lightning flash that moment gilt the sky,
Released her eyes, and raised her thoughts to
Heaven.

“Protect me, God! in whom I trust!” she prayed;
And instantly the infernal charm dissolved,
Like a foul mist before the solar beam:
The casement closed against the intrusive fiend,
And fair Hadallah’s mind again is free.
Her strength returns, and fervently to Heaven
She pours her thanks for this deliverance
From some dread evil she scarce comprehends,
But which she feels her ruin would have wrought.

Mean time the baffled fiend retired, dismayed,
Though not of final triumph hopeless yet:
For his dire art has other wiles devised
Wherewith to practise on the virtuous maid,
But the great Father of the Universe,
From midst the eternal centre of all space,
Where he hath fixed immutably his throne,
Beholds her danger; for all things he sees
Throughout his vast creation, at all times,
And governs as best suits his purposes.
From Him the spirit Zoriel gains in charge
To frustrate all the wiles and hellish snares
Set for the maiden by the fraudulent fiend,
And shield her virtue from infernal guile.
Swift to the earth the cherub takes his way,
Pleased with the mission to protect the fair.

Mean while the agitated maiden seeks,
In the soft arms of tranquillizing sleep,

Relief from care, a respite from alarm.—
Oh! soothing spirit, friend to innocence,
Thou kind attendant on the poor man's couch,
Health-giving sleep! thou cordial balm of life,
Thee do I hail, and bless thy genial power,
That still renew'st to me the springs of thought
So oft exhausted by the anxieties
Which have beset my devious course below;
Or in the flowing stream of poesy
Expended, when this earth and all its cares
Are lost in fancy's ever-varying maze
Of new-created images of bliss
That, even in waking hours, a radiance yield
To cheer the gloom which marks my pilgrimage!
Now thou hast steeped in sweet oblivious rest,
The agitations of Hadallah's mind;
And kindly torpor spreads o'er all her frame.
But soon this state of blest forgetfulness
Becomes disturbed; and airy fantasies,
Seductive to the soul, now off its guard,
Before her vision pass bewitchingly.
The fiend Asmodeus, hovering o'er her couch,
Insidiously his incantations works
To charm her thoughts to love. He forms a dream;
The semblance of an angel from on high,
Beauteous in youthful smiles, with outstretched
wings,
Just come from Heaven, a radiant messenger:
And gently thus the flattering phantom speaks.
“Why is Hadallah sad?—the loveliest far

Of all the lovely daughters of mankind;
She whose unequalled charms have won the heart
Of great Shalmazar, monarch of the East,
Whose mighty rule the thousand realms obey,
Where dwell the potent progeny of Cain!
Why does she tremble? wherefore does she grieve?
For what can harm the maid Shalmazar loves,
If she but yield her willing heart for his,
And reign, a sovereign in imperial state,
His wedded queen and mistress of his soul?
And, happy maiden, 'tis the will of fate,
In whose eternal book 'tis registered,
That thou shalt be exalted to his throne,
His heart's desire, his blessing, and his pride,
A star of glory to the eastern world!
Such, fair one, is thy glorious destiny.
Love calls thee to it; steadfast fate commands;
Then yield thee, maid; refusal would be sin."

With false insinuations, thus the fiend
Into her mind ambitious thoughts infused,
Urging compliance with the tyrant's wish
As springing from an ordinance of fate,
Which 'twould be criminal to disobey.
Her resting hour was thus unquiet made
With swelling thoughts, engendered in her sleep
By hellish incantations, and untruths
Alleging obligations due to fate,
Designed to bring even piety in aid
Of purposes unhallowed and unblest.

She knew not wherefore, but in that dark dream

She felt distressed, as if pollution's breath
Had through her frame diffused some taints of sin,
Making her heart less linked to purity,
And her vexed spirit less allied to Heaven.
Unhappy in her sleep, she sighed, she wept;
And oft she tried, but tried in vain, to pray
For heavenly aid to save her soul from guilt.
Zoriel, the cherub messenger from Heaven,
Thus found her restless in temptation's grasp;
And instantly to his celestial glance,
The fiend's design and treacherous arts appeared.
His coming was so sudden that the foe,
Upon his task intent, perceived him not
Till he himself, detected, stood exposed.

“Ignoble spirit, from Tartarean gulph,
On an exploit so cowardly and base,
How hast thou ventured here,” the cherub said,
“By fraud and falsehood to assail the strength
Of a defenceless maid, and in her sleep,
When all unguarded thou believ'st she lies
The unresisting prey of thy dark wiles?
Abject Asmodeus, mean, inglorious fiend!
Thou art deceived; defenceless she is not,
Ev'n when asleep: for, know, the Power Supreme
Hath o'er the just, when lock'd in slumber's arms,
Espécial care to shield their thoughts from sin
And all the arts of subtle fiends like thee.
Begone, I charge thee, to thy Stygian vault,
Whence thou hast dared, on such a foul design,
To visit this illuminated earth,

Nor venture more, against this maiden's soul,
'To try the force of thy infernal wiles,
Lest I, to whom she now is given in charge,
Bind thee in chains, and in thy dungeon cast
Thy fettered frame, thence to escape no more."

Abashed but not afraid, the fiend replied,
"Zoriel, thy words are boastful but unwise.
Methinks, thou should'st know better who I am,
Than to imagine speech of thine can fright,
Or arm of thine enchain me. In fair field
I would not dread a spirit twice thy strength;
Nor here, although I deem from thy bold words,
Thou com'st not singly from the hosts of Heaven,
But hast assistance near, will I refuse
'To give thee combat for this beauteous maid,
With whose protection I am also charged."
While thus the demon spoke, the cherub waxed,
At every word, more stern and fiercely bright,
Until his look o'erwhelmingly severe,
Shed withering influence on the awe-struck fiend.

"Thou tremblest, boaster!" the bright cherub
said;

"And well thou may'st, before my single arm,
Which, as thou see'st, the Author of all power
Hath nerved with strength to execute my threats,
And send thee headlong to thy sulphurous den."

He said, and raised a radiant wand endued
With power more mighty than famed talisman
Of genie or magician e'er possessed,
In Persian legend or Arabian tale,

To move the elements and overcome
The boldest spirits of infernal power.
The sight alone of that celestial rod,
Changed into Stygian blackness all the fiend,
And shrunk his frame to feeble dwarfishness.
Instinctively to 'scape the appalling doom
He knew would, on his longer stay, descend,
He trembling spread his dusky wings and fled,
Disgraced and groaning, to his place in hell.
The fair, thus rescued from the demon's power,
Reposed in quiet till the eastern gates
Of light were opened and let forth the dawn.

Once more Shalmazar's mystic mandate goes
To where in rayless gloom Asmodeus lies.
The fiend obeys, for 'twas his destiny,
Then by superior Power still unreversed,
To be the tyrant king's submissive slave,
And pliant pander of his rioting.
The awe of Zoriel's wand restrains him not;
For 'tis the hardened nature of the fiends,
With wicked daring, to throw off the fear
Of the most potent spirits from above,
Soon as the uplifted arm no longer threatens.
And the immediate terror has gone by;
And for the earth once more the summoned fiend
Leaves his deep dungeon, and not free from shame
For his defeat, before the monarch stands,
And there recounts his efforts and the event.

Fierce and impatient now the tyrant's ire
Breaks loose, and with a torrent of foul words,

Blasphemes high Heaven, and threatens hell beneath,

With useless, wild, ungovernable rage,
To which the demon listens undisturbed.
At length the transport of his wrath abates,
And in the sullen gloom of frenzied thoughts,
Engendering deep revenge, he brooding sits;
When thus the fiend consoles him, and once more
Awakens hope within his fiery breast.

“’Tis plain no fiendish power or magic art,
Howe’er it be devised, will be allowed
By HIM who rules the skies, to overcome
The mind of this young maid, or melt her heart
To the admission of unchaste desire,
While of her own free will, no stain of vice
Receives a place in her unsullied breast.
But, mighty king, despair not: thou shalt yet
Become the happy master of her charms.—
Hear!—’tis experience speaks.—The surest means
By which to win her stubborn heart from Heaven,
Is to inflame it with an earthly love.
Let search be made through all thy subject realms,
For the most beauteous and accomplished youth
Of amorous disposition, and unstained
By known dishonour or by flagrant vice.
Appoint him to the honourable trust
Of guardian and attendant of the fair,
With strict injunction that for her no throb
Of love shall ever dare to warm his heart,
On pain of death for such temerity.

Commanded thus, he will the sooner love,
Since 'tis the nature of all human hearts
To swell against restraint, and break commands
That with their fond emotions interfere.
He, when her charms his soul shall have enslaved,
With timid earnestness, will tell his love,
Which danger only shall the more inflame.
She'll listen first, then pity, and then love.
Pure as she is, she's but of woman's mould,
And must have woman's weakness in her frame;
And never yet was woman strong enough,
The impassioned sighs of honourable love
And all its ardent pleadings to withstand,
When youthful grace and modest comeliness
Unite to recommend them to her eye.
Soon as he wins her heart, and passion's power
Has tainted all her purity of thought,
The heavenly favour which protects her now,
Will leave her but her own poor maiden strength
To struggle with seduction. In thy cause,
The snares I'll spread in which she then must fall;
And in full recompense for late defeat,
The vict'ry I shall gain, and thou the bliss."

"Sagacious spirit," the pleased monarch said,
"Thy words delight me with reviving hope.
She is a woman and must yield to love:
And youth and modest grace, and the soft sigh
Of reverential awe, and the hot glow
Of burning passion, must beget a throb
Of kindred heat resistless in her breast,

Attempering all her frame to amorous warmth.
Oh! then it shall be so!—I'll find the youth,
Appoint him to his charge, and leave the rest,
Asmodeus, to thy faithful management."

There was a youth named Ellam, a brave chief,
Who held command o'er those selected troops,
The fairest and the bravest of the realm,
Whose duty was the palace gates to guard;
And of this band of noble-looking men,
Young Ellam was the noblest. He was free
And winning in address, of fluent speech,
Of manner bland, and heart and fancy warm,
With ardent feelings and romantic thoughts.

Rightly the demon judged that this young chief
Would soon be captive to Hadallah's charms.
He in the lewd and mirthful revellings
Of those licentious and ungodly times,
Had often mixed, a bold and gallant youth.
But he preserved a cloak of decency,
O'er his excesses, with such polished care,
That oft the libertines with whom he lived,
Thought him too strict for their companionship.
Yet such decorum, not from principle,
But from refinement, sprung, and purer taste
For elegant enjoyment, than inspired
The rioters of that polluted age.
But virtuous love had never yet awaked
The generous ardour of devotedness
To one dear object in his roving heart.
He hitherto had roamed amidst the flowers

Which bloomed around him, flaunting all their charms,

And yielding all their sweets, where'er he chose
To sip and gather, free and unconstrained.

Nay, oft the graces of his aspect had
Brought beauteous dames of highest rank and pride,
As humble suitors to implore his love.

But none amidst that splendid galaxy
Of high-bred beauties, whose resistless charms
With passion oft had warmed angelic breasts,
Had yet implanted in his careless heart,
The enduring sovereignty of genuine love,
Whose blissful impulse scorns the throb impure,
And free from low desires, all nature sways
By sweet affection, generous and divine.

But now a lovelier object meets his eyes
Than midst the world of gay and dazzling dames
They e'er had met. Virtue and beauty joined,
And innocence, and unaffected youth
In all its freshness, purity and grace;
And something more than all, a nameless charm
Shone from the effulgence of her pious soul,
And gave her beauty that exalting power,
To look on which, not only warms the heart
To ecstasy of fondly cherished love,
But purifies it from each sordid taint
Of selfish passion and of gross desire.

And deep and fervent was young Ellam's love;
But yet respectful, for it was sincere,
And elevated by the excelling charms

Of its unblemished object, from the gross
Excitements of his former vicious joys.
Yet well he knew his monarch sought those charms
Which he adored and loved too daringly:
He knew the throb forbidden.—What of that?
Danger can make our dearest joys more dear.—
But where the danger while it glows concealed?
Can stern Shalmazar dive into his thoughts,
And read the untold workings of his soul?
But love untold, and the bright object near,
To torture turns, then to despair is driven,
To madness next, and oft, at length, to death.
And these shall be his own unhappy doom,
If longer he that impulse disobeys,
Whose voice is stronger than the king's command.
Shall he with fervent, maddening passion, gaze
On beauties which inflame each thrilling nerve
That vibrates through his frame, and yet not dare,
By word, or sign, or sigh, to speak his pain!
'Twere dastard patience unendurable;
'Twere tame submission to the torturing wheel
Of agonizing passion unrevealed.—
But why reveal it? 'tis already told;—
Yes, much enamoured youth, thy love is known:
Hadallah sees it in each look, and hears
It in each tone. Doth that suffice thee not?
Ah! no.—Though looks a lover's pain may tell,
They cannot tell the full variety
Of deep emotions that distract his heart.
To random strokes the harp may loudly sound,

But to the touch of skill alone it yields
The notes of melody that charm the ear.

But Ellam's love, though known, has not received

That recognition which his soul desires,
And which from words alone can be obtained.

Despite of hazard, therefore, he resolves
'To form its revelation into speech.

With all the tremor of a bursting heart,
At length the burning secret is disclosed.

Hadallah hears, not with surprise, but fear
For the dread hazard which the youth has dared,
And instantly all ray of hope dispels,
'That might have shone on his enamoured dreams.

She cannot love.—'The unhappy truth he hears:
And deeply doth it sink into his soul,

Producing feelings of despondency,
Whose secret anguish is alone relieved

By the delight of gazing on her charms,
And listening to the music of her voice,

Which he enjoys with rapture, as full oft
On nature's loveliness she would descant,

And by her pious converse, raise his soul,
Long unaccustomed to such holy themes,

To adoration of the Power Supreme,

Who made all things so beauteous, and so full,
If used aright, of bliss to human kind.

Oft in such pious converse would he join,
Enamoured of the truth from lips he loved,
Until his spirit caught a holiness

It never would have known amidst the haunts
Of that gay world of giddy wantonness,
Mad dissipation, and profanity,
In which so long he wooed and won delight.

Thus found the wicked ones their baleful arts
Once more defeated. But the tyrant king,
Not yet despairing of the insidious scheme,
Ev'n when he found her heart immoveable
By all the pleadings of impassioned youth,
Permitted Ellam still to woo the fair.

THE ANTEDILUVIANS.

BOOK IV.

9*

THE ARGUMENT.

THE Almighty hears the prayers of Hadallah in her affliction, and sends the angel Adarecal to Japhet, the eldest son of Noah, with a message commanding him to repair to the court of Shalmazar to effect her deliverance.—Japhet informs his father of the heavenly injunction, and obtains his consent to the enterprise.—He selects Irad, a young and faithful friend, as the companion of his journey, on which they proceed in the disguise of travelling minstrels.—On reaching the eastern confines of Armonia, they are surprised and delighted with the appearance of a beautiful valley, containing a lake, in the midst of which is a magnificent island called the “Isle of Love.”—They soon discover who are the inhabitants of that island, to which they are conveyed, and where they are treated with great kindness.

THE ANTEDILUVIANS.

BOOK IV.

Victorious thus amidst temptation's wiles,
And all the unholy arts of men and fiends
In busy league combined to work her fall,
The captive maid preserves her innocence,
By aid of grace divine, which never yet
Had left her in the trial's fiercest hour;
For thoughts impure had o'er her virgin heart
No influence gained to drive that grace away.
Yet she is in the enamoured tyrant's power,
Who finding every artifice in vain
To lure from virtue's path her purity,
May yield, how soon she knows not, to the voice
Of lawless passion, and, with reckless rage,
Resort to violence. 'Tis this she fears;
And for deliv'rance from the dreaded peril,
She pours her spirit ceaselessly to Heaven.
Her supplications reach the eternal throne,
Whose Lord beholds and pities her distress.
He wills her rescue, and an angel sends,
Swift Adareal, to announce his will
To princely Japhet, heir to Noah's throne,
A gallant youth, religious, brave, and wise.

“Arouse thee, Japhet,” thus the angel spake;
“I bring to thee the mandate of high Heaven,
To wake the noble ardour of thy mind,
For bold achievement in a righteous cause.
The errand now assigned is one which suits
Full well the aspirings of a generous youth
Whose spirit glows with honour, and whose heart
Kindles at female charms, and strongly feels
The glory of delivering from distress
And tyrant power, a persecuted maid.
Now, gird thee up, and strain thee to adventure:
Haste on thy way to far Shalmazar’s court;
For in the harem of that wicked king,
Designed the victim of his lewd desires,
A maiden, bright in every maiden charm,
Pines a sad captive, while her virtuous heart,
Pure, faithful, pious, clings to the true God,
For whom her sire a glorious martyr died,
And from the flaming furnace rose to heaven.
Her soul abhors the Heaven-defying king,
Whose foul devices overspread the land
With horrid crimes of deep and desperate dye,
•And rank offences never known before.
She hath as yet resisted every art
Of wicked men and demons to pollute
Her sinless youth. Like an unspotted pearl
Cast midst the sands upon the sea-beat shore,
Each storm’s assault but renders her more bright.
But o’er her threats of brutal force impend;
And virtuous fears alarm her maiden heart

And make her wretched.—Let the task be thine,
The glorious task, to free her from her woes,
And snatch her from the rude defiling grasp
Of an unsparing tyrant; and receive,
As recompense, the heart enrapturing meed
Of her unsullied charms. Go forth, shrink not
From toil or hazard of the enterprise.

He who commands thee will afford thee strength,
And guide thee on the way thou art to go,
If, with unwavering faith, thou trust in Him.—
Hear and obey; the mandate is from Heaven!"

The angel ceased; and through young Japhet's
mind

Poured the high spirit of adventurous warmth
For gallant deeds, noble and hazardous,
In the bright cause of virtue in distress.
His bosom throbs, and his dilated breast
Becomes the home of bold and generous thoughts
That scorn all dangers, toils and obstacles
Which may the path to virtuous fame beset.

"Thanks, heavenly messenger!" he thus replied;
"Thy words have given enjoyment to my heart,
More precious than the thrilling voice of praise
Wrought and enwoven by poetic skill
Into the choicest strains of harmony.

The glorious mandate thou to me hast brought,
Rejoiced I hear, and shall rejoiced obey."

The angel on the enthusiastic youth
Benignly smiled, pleased with his gen'rous warmth;
Then spread his golden wings and rose to heaven

Now Japhet, duteous, to his sire reveals
The heavenly message, and describes elate
The inspiring fervor that informs his breast
With energy unusual, and desire
Unbounded to achieve the glorious work
Of rescuing beauty from a tyrant's power.

"My son," the righteous Noah said, "the way
To the proud capital on Kisna's banks,
Is long and dangerous: many a province wide,
Inhabited by Cain's ungodly race,
Our natural enemies, now ruled by one
Born our imbittered foe, must be traversed.
Yet, I dissuade thee not: in such a cause
'Tis right to peril much. Yes, thou must go:
Thy mission is from Him whom to obey
Is the great end and duty of our being.
But as companions of thy enterprise,
And for protection on the toilsome way,
Select a band of bold and valiant hearts,
From midst the hardiest youths of all our realm—
Not to wage war offensive and unwise,
Against the fierce Shalmazar's mighty power;
Nor in such number as may cause alarm,
But such as may be deemed a peaceful train
In honour of thy station and thy worth."

"No train, oh father!" said the ardent youth,
"On this heart-warming mission will I take:
My scrip, and staff, and lyre of heavenly sound,
And one young friend of tried fidelity,

Shall be the sole companions of my way.
With these alone, relying on the aid
Of Providence in every adverse scene,
I'll issue on my pilgrimage unknown
And unsuspected by the tribes of men.
As roaming thus the various nations through,
A wandering minstrel's privilege I'll claim,
And pass uninterrupted on my path."

A youth named Irad, skilful on the lyre,
And master of the poet's noble art
To wake each latent impulse of the soul,
By the full energy of flowing verse,
He chose as partner of his pilgrimage.
Their dress bespoke them of the minstrel race:
The robe of green and vest of azure hue,
The yellow sandals, and the jet-black hood
Encircled with the laurel coronet,
Unfading emblem of the fame which forms
The special guerdon of the sons of song.
Thus habited, with buoyant hearts and bold,
Their harps upon their graceful shoulders slung,
They forward on their perilous journey set.

O'er many a fair and fertile realm they go,
Blooming with all the gay embellishments
Which cultivation lends to nature's charms:—
The well trimmed gardens, ornamented lawns,
The shady walks, the irrigated meads,
The sylvan uplands, in their verdant pride,
Branching to heaven, and holding in their arms,
The homes of thronging warblers of bright plume.

Whose songs give joy to all the landscape round:
And in the midst of all the hamlets fair,
Where temples, and the schools of prophets rose;
While rural arts and pastoral cares engaged
The busy population; yielding proof
That mankind yet were not degenerate all,
But that sufficient seasoning remained,
Of virtue, wisdom, and the fear of God,
To bid fair Nature with her sweetest smiles
Reward man's labours, and the earth adorn.

Such scenes were dear to that benevolence
Which glowed in Japhet's breast. For much he
loved

To see the happiness of human kind.
And he had feared to find prevailing crime,
And its dire consequence, prevailing wo,
Diffused throughout the land in dread excess.
For well he knew that much corruption had,
Despite of all his pious father's care,
Through the whole realm insidious inroads made.

He visits too, within Armonia's bounds,
Full many a city large and flourishing,
Where science, arts, and wealth and elegance,
Speak men employing all their faculties
In the pursuits of luxury and fame.
But here, indeed, more frequent met his eye
The wretched garb, the famine-pictured face
And care-distracted mien, which strongly told
That profligate and conscience-touching guilt
Lurked, and produced discomfort in the soul.

At length, beyond the rugged Median hills,
And the broad streams that water Persian vales,
With unrelaxing progress, he hath gained
The orient boundaries of the sons of Seth.
There as he journeyed on through realms unknown,
A silver lake shone calmly in the sun,
And caught his admiration, as he reached
The rock-built summit of a lofty hill,
On the east border of a sandy waste,
O'er which he had, for twelve long weary days,
In thirst and toil, held on his cheerless way.
Rejoiced he now surveys the shelving side
Of the luxuriant sylvan-covered hill,
Which led him downward to the flowery plain
Blooming along the shore of that bright lake,
Upon whose charms he gazed with such delight,
And while he gazed, to joyful Irad, thus
Expressed his admiration of the scene.

“Behold what mingled beauties! Glittering
streams,

Green pastures, lawns and lakes, and fruitful groves
In brightest verdure spread and palmy pride;
And the gay tribes of odoriferous plants,
And blossoms that adorn the waving boughs
Of the rich draperied trees, whose breathing sweets
Rise to this hill-top so deliciously
As to infuse a fascinating sense
Of pleasure through the frame, unknown before!
And yet, methinks, the land which spreads beyond

That shining lake, seems still more bright with charms,

Than that which blooms so fair beneath our feet.—
Canst thou conjecture, Irad, by what race,
Whether the progeny of Seth or Cain,
This beauteous region is inhabited?"

“With equal admiration of this scene
Which bursts so glowingly upon our sight,
My heart is warmed,” Irad replied; “but who
The favoured people of the happy clime,
I know not. Cain’s posterity is sunk
In wickedness, and of a Paradise
Like this, must be unworthy. I should deem,
If they be human who inhabit here,
They must be of the family of Seth,
Therefore, our kindred, and, perhaps, unstained
(Since so remote their intercourse with us
As hitherto our knowledge to escape)
With those foul vices which, of late so rank,
Work, like contagious poison, through our land.—
But lo!—behold a wonder! Seest thou not
Something upon the surface of the stream,
Move like a chariot? Also in the air,
Above the water, lo! a winged car
Comes, like a floating rainbow, hitherward,
From yonder distant shore beyond the lake.”

“I see them,” said the prince; “’tis wonderful!
That air-borne chariot is a glorious sight.—
And lo! methinks in that which skims the wave,
I now discern some human shapes. They seem

Like youthful nymphs adorned most gorgeously.
Now to the beach beneath us they approach;
They land—five of the softer sex—they walk,
Graceful and easy as if angels had
Taught them the gestures used in Paradise.—
Now too the air-borne car descends to earth.
Its door is opened, and lo! issue forth
Five radiant forms who lightly tread the ground,
Stately and buoyant with angelic wings.
These bend before the nymphs in humble mood
And attitude, as if they were their slaves
Or their imploring lovers. They embrace:—
Now they retire amidst the embowering woods:
And from our eager and admiring view,
Those bright and happy beings are concealed.
Irad, we will approach; for though I feel
Such awe as tells me that those brilliant ones
Are more than mortal, yet what need we fear,
Protected as we are by HIM whose will
Both mortals and immortals must obey?"

Down the green sloping of the sylvan hill,
They boldly, but with inward reverence, move
To where the glittering vision disappeared;
And soon within an arbour wreathed around
With blossomed woodbines, roses in full bloom;
And variegated lilies in their pride,
Again the radiant strangers they behold.
The beauteous females sat on verdant banks,
With thyme all fragrant, and with asmadine
Whose odorous sweetness angels once admired.
This was a native flower of Paradise,

The favourite long of Eve in innocence,
And deemed the brightest in that gay parterre,
Whose tendance was her pure and blissful task,
Ere hellish fraud seduced her into sin.
Ev'n when expelled that happy residence,
By Heaven's indulgence it was spared to her
And her fair daughters, through all Eden's clime,
Until, with many a sweetly-kindred plant
That blest the vales and charmed the sons of men,
The avenging deluge swept it from the earth,
No more to solace a degenerate world.

Embowered in fragrance here, these radiant
nymphs,
Named Zaries, from the effulgence of those charms
By which, in this love-breathing clime, they held
Graceful dominion o'er the sons of Heaven,
Received attendance from angelic forms.
Nectar was here poured forth in cups of gold,
And fruits of rich delicious flavour, were,
In plates of shining crystal, spread by hands
That once had ministered in heaven, but now
Were fain to bend in amorous servitude,
To the caprices of those earthly dames
Whose charms had lured them from their seats on
high,
Causing their fall from angel purity,
And dooming them to banishment from heaven.

Soon as the pilgrim youths this scene beheld,
They paused, alarmed, for suddenly arose
The angelic five, as if disturbed, and thus
Their brightest to the wondering Zaries spake.

“ There is intrusion into our retreats,
The breathing of some mortals we perceive
Within these precincts. Fair ones, shall we haste
Back to our mansions in the Isle of Love,
And shun their sight? Or would ye that we bring
Into your presence the adventurers?”

Surprised, the Zaries started from their seats:
“ Men! mortal men here venturing,” they ex-
claimed,

“ To penetrate to our secluded haunts!
Haste! let us to our island, to avoid
Discov’ry by such bold and daring spies,
Who doubtless are some wandering sons of Seth,
Envious or curious of the life we lead.”

They would have fled, like timid deer whose fold
Is rudely threatened by some ravening wolves;
But one less fearful than the rest withstood.
She, sweetly scornful, smiled, and thus she said.

“ What fear ye, Zaries? Sons of Seth are men,
Not ruffians; and to us no violence
Will offer, nor intrude if we forbid.
Why from the approach of men should we with-
draw?

Men made by nature to adore our sex!
Ye should have more reliance on those charms
Which captivated angels, and which o’er
The hearts of men are still omnipotent.
For me, I ’ll see these strangers.—Orpheal, go,
And with due courtesy conduct them here.”

The rest consented; for the fair who spoke,
Ulsannah, was, of all the Zaries, queen.
Of spirit bold as ev'n her charms were bright,
She, o'er the valley, lake, and Isle of Love,
And all that region of enchantment, ruled
With sovereign power, acknowledged and obeyed.
Her father was the chief of Benashaar,
A Cainite province, where true piety
Was found to linger, after it had fled
From all the rest of fierce Shalmazar's realms.
There as one vernal morn the maiden strayed,
In solitary musing, midst a grove
Of spicy shrubs and intermingling flowers,
That joined the palace garden, Orpheal saw
Her loveliness, and felt an instant flame
Of passion that unfitted him for heaven.
The duty of his mission to the earth
Was just performed, and mindful of his trust,
He should have hastened to his place on high.
But here were charms that kept him still below;
And as he gazed, such rapturous draughts he drew
Of love's delight, that heaven was all forgot,
And he resigned him to the fatal spell.
He wooed the maid in that impassioned hour.—
Could she resist an angel's eloquence?
She could not—she was moved; and then it was
That woman's love first made an angel blest,
But wrought his banishment from realms on high.
And many a seraph's breast was fated soon
To feel the fatal power of woman's charms.

Seduced by love to leave the seats of bliss,
'These frail yet pious spirits forfeited
Celestial mansions for those earthly bowers,
Where woman was their torment and delight.

Yet gentle was the doom they underwent,
Compared with theirs who fell through pride of
power,

And with their Maker waged rebellious war,
Which soon was punished by his outstretched arm
Whose thunders struck them with resistless wo,
And drove them to remediless perdition.

But they who fell for beauteous woman's love;
Were only sentenced to be woman's slaves,
'To her caprice subjected, and to dwell
With her on earth, partaking all her cares,
And tortured by her fickleness of mood.

Permission was vouchsafed them to endow
'The fairest spot of this sublunar world,
With qualities fit for their residence,

In splendor, plenty, and each sumptuous joy
Which could produce felicity on earth.

Hence that fair lake, and beauteous Isle of Love,
Their chosen seat, remote from human haunts,
By them was made in each bright attribute,
Almost to rival the lost Paradise.

Here tarnished of their glory did they dwell
In rigid servitude to woman's will.

Oh, happy slaves! whose welcome chains were
forged

By woman's love and gilded by her charms!

No sooner was Ulsannah's mandate given
Than Orpheal, as her fated slave, obeyed.
With but one gentle motion of his wings,
In presence of the pilgrim pair he stood.

“Strangers,” he said, “whoe'er you are, 'tis
mine

To lead you to the queen of this fair vale,
Where uninvited human step before
Ne'er dared intrude to interrupt its joys.”

He said, and waved a wand whose mystic power
Impelled them, with involuntary steps
And mute surprise, to follow where he led;
And soon he brought them to the festal bower.
Upon the prince the fair Ulsannah gazed,
Struck with his manly grace, and heaved a sigh;
For strange commotion seized upon her breast,
And suddenly she felt that love was there,
Warmer and dearer than her angel mate
Had e'er inspired; and, faltering, thus she spake:

“Say, minstrels, come ye by design or chance,
Into the sacred limits of our realm,
Where of your sex nought human is allowed,
Except by special license from ourselves,
Which license never has been granted yet.
For your intrusion, know, that we have power
To visit you with deadly punishment.
For HE who made the earth hath here assigned
Our residence from human kind apart,
And given us ample power for its defence.
But if unwittingly you here have strayed,

We cheerfully to you our grace extend,
With earnest welcome, that ye may remain
And share the pleasures of our happy life,
So long as to our customs ye conform,
Nor act unworthy of our confidence.—
Speak, minstrels, for ye seemingly are such;
Whence came ye hither, and with what design?"

The soul of Japhet, dazzled with the charms
Of the bright queen of this sweet fairy land,
Caught courage from the kindness of her words,
And warmth from more than kindness of her looks,
And thus he answered bold, but modestly:—

“Fair being, whether sprung from heaven or
earth,

I know not; but from what thou seem'st, would
deem

Thee more of heavenly than of earthly strain;
Receive my thanks for thy indulgent speech,
And hear my answer to thy just demand.—
We are of Seth's descendants, and are come
From fair Armonia: but no foul design
To spy thy territories led us here.
'Twas accident that hither shaped our course,
And showed to our admiring eyes to-day,
The loveliest scene they ever yet beheld.
To far Gal-Cainah east our journey lies,
Which with thy kind permission we'll pursue;
And for thy favour warmed with gratitude,
We'll ever think of thee where'er we go,
Thy beauty, wisdom, and thy courtesy.”

“Though sprung from Cain,” the smiling queen
replied,
“We cherish for the progeny of Seth
A true regard, and fear from you no evil.
For violence, as yet, to our weak sex,
Is not the character of Seth’s brave sons,
As ’tis of our rude brethren, who from Cain
Inherit fiery passions. Son of song,
Ingenuous is the answer thou hast given,
And worthy of belief. It wins for thee,
And the young partner of thy pilgrimage,
My confidence. In proof of which, ye shall
Receive admission to our sacred Isle,
Which foot of man hath never trodden yet.
’Tis peopled but by daughters of the earth,
And angels whom their love hath drawn from
heaven.

Thine eyes its various splendors shall behold,
And thou shalt share the exalted joys it yields
To raise the spirit to the highest bliss,
Which since the loss of Eden’s purity,
Hath been on earth permitted or enjoyed.—
Zaries and angels, think ye not we should
The laws of hospitality infringe,
Did we not for these strangers spread the feast
Of choicest viands in our brightest bowers?
The first we’ve had of human visiters,
Must not with churlishness be driven away.
Say, shall we to our island now return,
And bear with us these minstrels as our guests?”

Assent was yielded, for the queen's desire
But echoed that of her attendant nymphs,
Against whose will the angels had no voice;
Slaves to the fair, submission was their doom.
Soon in the air the winged car arose,
And on the lake the bounding boat was launched,
And half reluctantly the minstrel pair,
Seated amidst the gay alluring train,
Were borne triumphant to the Isle of Love.

Young heir of Noah! didst thou in that hour
Of fascination, from thy memory
Permit to vanish that thou hadst been chosen,
By Heaven's own voice, as the deliverer
Of innocence and beauty from distress?
Didst thou forget the dangers and the toils
Which yet thy duty called thee to endure?
Thou didst not.—True; thy youthful heart betimes,
With throbs of joy and admiration swelled,
Amidst a scene so beautiful and blest.
But still remembrance of thy duty dwelt,
With faithful firmness, in thy steady breast,
And broke through all allurements, as the sun
Breaks through the bright and variegated clouds
That dazzle and delight a summer morn.

Now as they reach the bright Isle's blooming
shore,
How splendid is the scene that charms their view,
Magnificent with palaces, and bowers,
And groves, and lawns enriched with each sweet
herb

And fruit refreshing, fit to gratify
Each wanton change of varying appetite,
Which never in that happy region, could,
For want of meet attraction and supply,
Be cloyed, or sicken with satiety.

And those bright beings with their pinions spread
That dazzle in the air, or midst the boughs
Of ever verdant trees, sit with their harps
Of golden strings, that yield such melody
As only harps of heavenly frame could yield,
What are they? Seraphs once enthroned in
heaven;

'The lovers and the bridegroom-captives now,
Of those seducing daughters of mankind,
Who o'er the flowery turf in groups are spread,
Enjoying in full gaiety, and pride
Of conscious beauty and exalted state,
'The homage of their faithful angel slaves.

Soon in the royal hall of festal pomp,
The hospitable queen commands to spread
The sumptuous banquet. There the odours rise
Of grateful viands fitted to create,
At once, and gratify the appetite
With rich enjoyment, and supply the frame
With choice nutrition: there the pilgrim guests
Quaff the bright nectar sparkling in gay cups
Of polished jacinth, angel workmanship,
And by attendant angels served around.
'Then song and music lend their joyous aid,
'To exalt the pleasures of the festive scene;

And Israëll, sweet angel of the lyre,
Sweeps the gold strings and pours the enraptured
song.

SONG OF THE ANGEL ISRAËLL.

What is there in the heavens so high,
That can delight the admiring eye;
Or what is on the earth so fair,
To fix our admiration there;
What in the verdant lawns and flowers;
What in the ethereal starry bowers;
So precious as the charms divine,
O lovely woman, that are thine!

All glorious in the heavenly land,
We were a bright angelic band,
Ere passion raised by woman's charms,
Inspired our breasts with soft alarms.
At length the hour of passion came;
We saw her looks and felt the flame
That ever flows from woman's eyes,
And for her love we left the skies!

Yet though we lost our seats above
By cherishing an earthly love,
Still to that love such bliss is given,
That we enjoy on earth a heaven!
For HE whose will we disobeyed,
Had woman's charms resistless made,
And would not rigidly condemn,
Our sole offence, adoring them!

The angel ceased, and instantly the hall
Swelled with a stream of rapturous harmony,
Symphonious flowing from ethereal harps
Swept by the glowing hands of seraphim,
Whose hearts, inspired by woman's loveliness,
Poured their rapt feelings in impassioned strains.

The joyous dance upon the flowery sward,
In evening's luscious hour, succeeded next.
Then were elastic motions, easy, light,
And gladsome, like the linnet's fairy print
Upon the violet, by woman shown,
In every graceful attitude of form,
And every figure of inventive mirth,
Where gaiety and elegance combine.—
The square, the cross, and the swift-winding wheel,
And angle ever-changing, yet preserved,
In gay eccentric regularity.—
Japhet and Irad joined the mirthful band
Hilariously, for spirits, buoyant with
Ethereal lightness, all their frames endued,
And gave to jocund frolic all their souls.
The angels also mingled in the scene
Of joyance, with the inspirers of their love:
And heavenly natures from terrestrial sports,
Which woman's loveliness had dignified,
Drew pleasure; for in every gesture, they
Beheld new fascination, and adored.

THE ANTEDILUVIANS.

BOOK V.

THE ARGUMENT.

ULSANNAB, queen of the Isle of Love, having become enamoured of Japhet, wishes to detain him, while he is anxious to proceed on his journey.—He, at length, informs her that he is engaged on a mission commanded by God, and dares not longer delay its prosecution.—On hearing this, from motives of piety, she consents to his departure, although it occasions her great distress.—The angel Orpheal, by her order, attends the pilgrims until they arrive at the western boundary of the land of Eden, not far from the garden of Paradise.—While he is there conversing familiarly with them, relative to the nature of the angelic intercourse with the daughters of men, the angel Isradell arrives, with information that Ulsannah is dying, and desires Orpheal's presence in her last moments.—He, in consequence, returns with Isradell, leaving the pilgrims to their own resources.—Night approaching, they supplicate the protection of God, and resign themselves to repose.—Japhet is visited by an encouraging and pleasing dream which makes a strong and lasting impression upon his mind.

THE ANTEDILUVIANS.

BOOK V.

WHAT man e'er felt life's current in his veins,
And did not feel the power of woman's charms!
Ah! who, though virtue's ardent votary,
And resolute to keep in duty's path,
Hath not been tempted by the blandishments
Of smiling beauty into pleasure's arms,
Though conscience blamed and piety forbade!
Then, son of Noah! what must be thy praise,
That, in defiance of the luxury
And potent fascination round thee spread
By the bright mistress of that happy isle,
Who panted for thy love, thou didst resist
Allurements into bliss so exquisite
That angel natures yielded to its power,
And bartered joys celestial for its sake!

By every token fondness could devise,
The beauteous queen betrayed the new-born flame,
Whose glowing torch had warmed her with a pulse
More keenly sweet than even the throb she felt
When first her angel suitor gained her love.

Hers was the expressive look, the conscious blush,
The sigh soft and infectious, and the voice
Whose tone was tenderness and passion; hers
The blandness of demeanour, and the care,
Officious and incessant, for the weal
And satisfaction of her princely guest,
On whom she showered her gifts most royally
In rich profusion, boundless as her love.

And oft the grateful heart of Japhet felt
The softening danger of too much delight,
Midst the seductions of a scene so sweet,
So full of beauty, tenderness, and love!
But strong fidelity to duty's call,
Forsook him not, nor memory of the task
Heaven had prescribed e'er faded from his breast,
E'en when enamoured beauty's fondest smile
Beamed on him, and invited him to bliss,
In scenes where every breath seduced to joy!

True; oft amidst the enchantment of those scenes,
His youthful heart would feel a kindling throb,
Most dangerously sweet, glow o'er his frame;
And oft a momentary wish would rise,
That Heaven had willed such perfect loveliness,
As wooed him there with lavish witchery,
His happy portion to have been below.
But soon his native energy would drive
The dangerous excitement from his thoughts,
And give again to virtue all his soul.
For piety, habitual in his breast,
Preserved true reverence for the will of Heaven,

And made the consciousness of doing right
More dear to him than all the enrapturing charms
Of love and beauty in that blissful Isle.

Seven bright and happy days amidst those scenes
Of fascination, now had sped their flight,
And brought a feeling to young Japhet's breast,
Of self-rebuke for duty unperformed,
And sinful negligence of Heaven's command.
He seeks the Queen, with anxious heart to speak
His gratitude for her beneficence,
And ask permission to pursue his way,
Thus interrupted, to Shalmazar's court.

A sudden faintness o'er Ulsannah came:
It passed; but left her all confused and grieved
To find the man she loved, already tired
Of her endearments, and so little moved
By all her lavished favours, on him heaped
In the fond hope of gaining love for love.

“Young minstrel,” thus with trembling voice
she said,

“Hath my society so wearied thee?
Oh! hast thou met with such unkindness here,
That thou so soon wouldst leave these happy
bowers,

Again to mix with an untoward world
Of restless sinners, where the sons of men
Are doomed to strife, and toil and misery?
Methinks it were more suitable for thee,
Now in thy blooming time of vernal life,
To choose the happiness of this blest realm

Where all thy fancy, in most wanton mood,
Can ask of life's enjoyment, is thy own.
Stay, therefore, minstrel!—Oh let gratitude
For what I feel for thee induce thy stay!"

She said; and scarce could check the rising tear
And sigh of sadness, that bespoke her love
And touched the heart of Japhet; for what spell
Like beauty's tear and woman's tender sigh,
Has power to subjugate the heart of man!
But, in that moment, virtue stood his friend,
And chased the dangerous softness from his soul;
And, like a martyr steadfast to his faith,
Despite of tears, entreaties, promises,
And all the allurements of assailing love,
To Heaven allegiance firmly he maintained.

"Oh Queen," he said, "my soul confesses all
Thy generous kindness; and more sweetly feels
The grateful sense that springs from thy regard
Than any joy this earth hath yet bestowed.
I will remember thee while memory lasts,
With cherished gratitude and fond delight:
But there's a Power on high I must obey,
Who with a special mandate hath enjoined
The pilgrimage on which I am engaged.
And I, oh Queen! no longer dare delay
Its prosecution; nor wilt thou refuse,
For thou art pious as thou'rt beautiful,
And much dost reverence His high will Supreme,
Who on thee and thy happy nymphs, bestowed
Angelic spouses in these bowers of bliss!"

“A Heaven-commissioned messenger art thou?
Minstrel,” she said, “I knew not this before.
Indeed I dare not then detain thee here.
In parting with thee, though my heart should
break,

Oh! let it, rather than a wilful crime
I should commit against the King of Heaven,
‘The Author of my being and my bliss—
Bliss did I say!—bliss is no longer mine,
Parted from thee!—Oh hadst thou not come here
I should have still been happy in these bowers,
My soul contented with an angel’s love.
The pleasing form of man had never then,
Caused the tumultuous throb which fires me now
With disappointed passion’s torturing flame,
And wakes me from the sweetest dream of bliss
E’er woman knew, to plunge me in despair!—
But go: obey thy God. ‘The misery
Of losing thee, submissive, I must bear,
Since ’tis in furth’rance of His mighty will.
And HE who knows what sorrows shall be mine
From this sad separation, will forgive
If too reluctantly my heart consents
To yield itself to duty.—Orpheal shall
Conduct thee and the partner of thy way,
Beyond the confines of our realm. Farewell!
And Oh! remember, oft as thou shalt think
On woman’s weakness, that thou didst know one
Who, though she with imprudent passion loved,
Yet made that passion to her duty yield.”

Now led by Orpheal from the Zarian Isle,
The pilgrim minstrels pass the lucent lake,
The flowery vale, and sylvan-wreathed hill,
That formed the sunward bounds of those fair haunts
Of angels and their bright espoused loves—
A second Paradise, the sweetest home,
Which, since the fall, love e'er enjoyed on earth.
Then o'er a savage waste of sand and rocks,
Extending many a league, ne'er trod before
By human foot, they go, and soon arrive
At the steep margin of a boisterous lake,
Whose tides and currents flowed so rapidly,
With breakers and dread whirlpools intermixed,
That bark of human fabric ne'er achieved
Its dangerous passage. Here the angel wrenched
A towering cedar from its steadfast seat
Deep-rooted in the earth, and launched it forth
Upon the billows of the foaming flood.
When lo! the astonished minstrels see it change
Its structure, and become a noble ship
Complete, and lightly bounding o'er the wave!
The trunk expanded to a spacious hull
Compact and strong; the root became the stern
Where moved the guiding rudder; and the top,
The sharpened prow that cut its gallant way
Amidst the warring waters. Into masts
The firmer branches rose erect and tall;
While pliant twigs the ropes and cordage formed;
And the gay garniture of rustling leaves,
Like pinions, spread their breasts aloft in sails.

Now in the glittering barge the three embark.
The angel at the helm directs their course,
And boldly steers into the raging deep,
Which chafes, and threatens the audacity
That thus invades its billowy domain.
But soon the vessel triumphs: favouring gales
Blow gently and expand her snowy wings,
While the subjected wave, where'er she turns,
Smooths his rude front, forgets his turbulence,
And owns a spell that lulls him into peace.

Nor was the voyage long: no eagle's wing
Could cleave more swiftly the aerial way,
Than the bold ship clove through the yielding tide
Now tranquillized and glassy. Soon the shore,
For which the seraph navigator steered,
Is gained; and in a sheltering bay, the ship,
Majestically gliding, is received.

Upon a flowery bank beneath the shade
Of a fair-spreading tree, the pilgrims rest
And take refreshment, by the angel served
Choice and abundant. In familiar strain
The friendly spirit then discoursed at large,
On various topics to instruct their minds
And gratify their high desire expressed
For information on mysterious things.
On angel natures, and their state in heaven,
Their intercourse and ministry on earth,
But chiefly on that bosom-touching theme,
'The fate and frailty of those erring ones,
Who, for the love of woman, forfeited

Their seats of glory in the heavenly realm,
Ran the discourse. The attentive pilgrims heard,
Remark oft mingling with the awakening tale.

“If ye, the erring brethren of the sky,
Who lost your seats in heaven,” young Japhet said,
“For yielding to the power of woman’s charms,
And cherishing her love, have rashly sinned,
Methinks ye have not deeply, for what God
Made beautiful, he made to be admired.
But ye have idolized, that is your fault,
And worshipped charms ye should have only loved.
Yet ye have met with such mild punishment,
Your heaven on high seems but to be exchanged
For one on earth, where beauty’s radiant smiles,
And all the joys of love have made you blest.”

“Whate’er is sin, alas!” the seraph said,
“Is sin too deep for angels to commit.
Created pure and with high faculties,
Offence in them is aggravated guilt
And foul disgrace. Born heirs of heavenly joys,
To slight such joys, and those in preference choose
Which from an earthly origin proceed,
Could not be venial, nor in heaven be deemed
Of trivial nature. We became impure,
Enslaved to passion by a fallen race
Though beauteous; for our nature then was stained
With the impurity of those we loved,
And lost the grace that fitted us for heaven,
Where the least taint of passion cannot dwell.
’Tis true, when, weighed against our guiltiness,

Light is the punishment that we endure:
For He is merciful whose law we broke;
And woman's charms, before whose power we fell,
From His own hand their potency received.
Hence mercy mingled largely in the doom
Which justice on us was compelled to pass.
Yet loss of heaven is dreadful to the thoughts
Of those who once inherited its bliss.
To me 'twere sorrow not to be appeased,
But that I hope by penitence, and proof
Of virtue, to regain an entrance there.
Minstrel, to thee my thanks are greatly due;
Thy visit to our Isle hath served me much.
My virtue it hath tried, and proved it firm
Where I was fearful of its feebleness.
I knew Ulsannah loved thee, yet my breast
Repelled the approach of every jealous thought,
Nor aught but kindness for a rival felt,
Who had deprived me of espoused love.
Nor was Ulsannah's love for thee a crime:—
Although to me her nuptial faith was due,
And chastely, with unwavering firmness, kept,
For thee the emotions of her heart were more
Accordant with creation's law, and deemed
More genial than an angel could awake.
For male and female God had made your race
To charm each other with love's holy spell,—
Nature's sweet impulse irresistible,
The soul-subduing sympathy of sex,
Whose force divine inspired her love for thee.

This knowing, from my heart all self I tore,
And planted there my rival as my friend.
For this I am accredited in heaven.
Ulsannah too hath met with favour there
For the great conquest o'er her passion gained,
When she, at duty's call, resigned thy love,
Which o'er her heart such mastery possessed,
That death to her more welcome would have been
'Than parting with thee. Heaven beheld and blest
Her pious struggle to obey its will.

To me it was, in that same hour, revealed
That we were both accepted, and that death
Would soon release her from this earthly thrall,
When, with her spirit, I should re-ascend
And find admission to my native heaven.
Thou, too, young minstrel, on our Zarian isle,
Temptation didst victoriously withstand,
And art approved by HIM who loves to see
Virtue triumphant o'er the assaults of sin.
Go on; against temptation still be strong,
And fear no ill; thy Maker is thy friend."

"Thrice blessed seraph!" Japhet thus replied,
"Speak on—speak ever thus; for to my ear
Thy words more pleasant are than mystic sounds
Of aerial music, on a summer's eve,
That floating o'er the valleys, soothe the soul
To sweet tranquillity. A venturesome wish
Prompts me to make of thee inquiry, which
With kind reply thou wilt indulge, and thus
The charm of thy discourse to me prolong.

Say, what the cause, that on your blissful isle
Appears no issue of your angel race?
Not unprolific, sure, your beauteous wives,
Nor wanting in maternal tenderness
To nurse their offspring in those happy bowers?"

"Thy question I will answer," Orpheal said,
"All freely, for it is a theme I love.
Know that, except in loving that dear sex
Which God created for the bliss of man,
We erring spirits had no guilt incurred;
And that offence our exile from on high,
And servitude to woman's will on earth,
Atoned for in the sight of our great Judge.
And, for those fair ones, daughters of your race,
They sinned not, when with ours they joined
their fate;

For in such nuptials they experienced not
Debaseinent from a higher, purer sphere.
No stain to them their union with us gave,
To make their nature grosser than before:
Ours was the fall, the exaltation theirs.
Our offspring—for dear pledges of sweet love
Have been allowed us numerously—are pure
In sight of Heaven. The frailty of their sires
To them applies not, nor their mothers' stain
Of earthly issue. The great Sire of All,
Still at their birth, ere from their mothers' breast
They draw pollution, calls them to himself;
And in those glorious mansions built for saints
By angel architects, the guiltless ones

Receive the endowment of immortal bliss.—
But lo! approaching from the Isle of Love,
A messenger, the seraph Isradell.”

The pilgrims looked, and like a sun-beam bright,
They see the dazzling angel cross the lake;
And swift he stands beside them on the turf.

“Haste, Orpheal, to Ulsannah’s bower!” he said:
“The fair one lies upon her dying couch,
Torn by commingling griefs—repentance deep
For love involuntary, burning still
For this young stranger, yet resisted strong,
With all the firmness of a dying saint.
She feels death in the struggle; and she longs
For thy-loved presence to assuage her wo,
While her grieved soul continues chained to earth;
And when released it takes its flight to heaven,
To attend it there and usher it to bliss.”

A swift farewell was to the pilgrims given,
And, in few words, instruction for their way
Through sacred Eden, which they now had reached,
Not far from God’s own garden, Paradise,
Access to which was interdicted then,
And guarded by a flaming angel band,
From all intrusion of unholy men,
Or fallen spirits wandering on the earth.—
This information given, back to their isle,
On radiant wings, the hastening seraphs sped.
As stars swift-shooting through the dusky air,
They took their way, and with a meteor flash
Dissolving in the sky, they disappeared.

Now eve approached, descending with her train
Of gathering shades that fenced the pilgrims round,
And stars that decked their canopy on high
With thousand spangles brilliant and sublime,
As under shade of an embowering tree
They stretched them for repose. But first they
knelt

In adoration of the Power whose hand
Had spread the universal frame abroad
Of glorious stars and planets, that now shone
Resplendent round the advancing queen of night,
As up the ethereal way she moved serene.

“God of our worship!” thus they humbly prayed:
“Great Source of Being, dread, inscrutable,
And infinite, whose breath inspires the pulse
Of all creation, and the spirit gives
Of animation to all sentient things:
It is from thee we have the power to move,
To feel, to think, to reason and enjoy;
And by thy care our wants are all supplied.
It is thy goodness that hath led us here
In safety, through each dangerous path, and given,
When by temptation’s various lures beset,
Strength to resist the assailing spell, and hold
Firm to the allegiance which we owe to thee.
Hear, as we offer up to thy dread throne,
The fulness of our bosoms, that o’erflow
With gratitude for thy great kindness—hear,
While we entreat that thou wilt ever lend,
Amidst the dangers we have yet to try,

Or toils endure, the same protecting aid,
Until thy blest injunction be fulfilled;
And we thy approbation, and the meed
That waits our perseverance, have received."

Thus having poured their holy fervours forth,
In earnest strains of heart-consoling prayer,—
Prayer that still lends the truly pious mind
A confidence in God which makes it blest,—
They stretched them fearless on the velvet turf,
And soon the balmy power whose presence yields
Rest to the weary, to the troubled peace
Where harsh remorse forbids not, visits them;
And kind oblivion, for a season, wraps,
Within its Lethean fold, the slumbering pair.
Nor, son of Noah! did that night to thee
Yield only restoration from fatigue:
A higher luxury than mere repose,
Was thine, ere morning with her wakening glance
Looked on thee, and dispersed the fumes of sleep.
A vision, such as in beatitude
Enthroned saints might look upon with joy,
Enchained thy charmed fancy with a spell
Of loveliness unequalled. A young maid—
The beauteous queen that o'er the Isle of Love
Held sovereign sway, appeared not in thy eyes,
With all the graces that an angel prized,
So worthy to be loved as that young maid—
Her form was symmetry of heavenly mould
Brightened by gestures breathing purity;

Her faultless features all expressive shone
With nameless witchery, to warm the heart
Of every gazer into rapturous love.
Upon a bank where flowers diffused their sweets
In blooming pride around her, she reclined,
Herself the fairest, sweetest flower of all.
Contemplating the azure arch of heaven,
She looked as if, beyond its fair expanse,
She could behold the realms of purity
Where, centring all her hopes, she wished to dwell.

As Japhet on the beauteous virgin gazed
In silent admiration, he beheld
Rise from the opening ground, a giant form
With crowned head, and sceptre in his hand.
The sceptre at her feet he laid, and kneeled,
While his flushed looks betrayed the mighty flame
That burned within his bosom. "For thy love,"
He said, "thou bright and peerless one, my power,
My sovereignty, my state and eminence,
I will exchange, and think my fortune blest
In thy acceptance; for as slave to thee
I shall be happier than as lord of men!"

"Thy state and sovereignty I value not,"
The maid replied, "and I reject thy love,
Because with thee there is no love of Heaven,
And all thy acts declare a demon's heart.
Thou hast been long the accursed foe of God;
I must avoid thee, lest I share thy guilt.
Thou'lt rage and threat in vain; thy wrath I fear

As little as I love thy wickedness.
My trust is in that God whose foe thou art."

The frowning giant started to his feet
Enraged, and cried, "Beware, audacious maid!
'Thy charms may not thy stubbornness protect.
Vain thy defiance of my power; for mine,
I swear by deep perdition! thou shalt be,
In fitting time, spite of thy trusted God,
If there be force in men or art in fiends
To overcome thy proud perversity!
Meantime a captive here thou shalt remain
Until thy pride be broken, and thou yield,
From love or terror, thy submissive charms."

At his command a grisly train appeared,
Of human shape, but demon-pictured mien.
A glittering net they bore of magic frame,
Whose tangling meshes round the fair they threw.
Imprisoned in the inextricable folds,
Vain were her struggling efforts to be free:
Which sight not long young Japhet could endure,
But seized, with sudden energy, a spear
Which, hanging in the air, that instant seemed
To tempt his eager grasp, inviting him
To combat for the maid. His swift approach
The giant saw, and on him frowned with scorn,
As he of Gath on youthful David frowned.
But the fair captive looked encouragement
From her bright eyes, and with a voice more sweet
Than love-notes warbled by the woodland choirs,

To his enraptured ear, "Welcome!" she cried,
"Young messenger of Heaven, for thou art sent
For my deliverance from this tyrant's power.
I know thee, and my fears are all dispersed:
Approach and win me; thine I am ordained."

The spear that instant from young Japhet's hand
Flew forceful, and transpierced the giant's frame,
Who, tortured with the wound, groaned horribly,
And fled, despairing, to the infernal shades,
Attended by his train of grisly fiends.

Then, Japhet, with a rod his hand had grasped,
He knew not how, approached the enchanted net.
Swift at his touch the entangled texture broke
And disappeared; the fair one stood released
In all her charms, and music as from heaven,
Flowed joyful to extol the victory.

The pleasing sound so thrilled the victor's heart,
He startled with delight, and waking, found
The purple morn fresh ris'n: her orient blush,
From misty hills descending, on him shone,
And with warm ray dissolved the ecstatic dream,
Whose bright impression to his fancy clung
Less like a vision than reality.

THE ANTEDILUVIANS.

BOOK VI.

THE ARGUMENT.

Continuing their journey, the pilgrims come within view of the walls of Paradise, the splendor of which, and the flaming weapons of the angelic guards that encircle the sacred place, overpower their vision, and they are unable to proceed until relieved by an angel who conducts them in safety to the dominions of Shalmazar.—The angel there leaves them, after he bestows upon Japhet a phial containing some of the juice of the tree of Knowledge, and a wand plucked from the tree of Life, both of which are possessed of miraculous properties of great service to Japhet in his subsequent adventures, the juice enabling him to discern the presence of spiritual beings, and the wand to overcome them when they are hostile.—The pilgrims enter a pastoral country belonging to the Cainites.—Are hospitably entertained by Jotham, who, like all Shalmazar's subjects, is an idolater.—Isameil, Jotham's daughter, is persecuted by a demon who is enamoured of her.—Jotham renounces idolatry.—Irad becomes attached to Isameil.—The demon seizes and carries her off.—Japhet perceives him by virtue of the juice from the tree of Knowledge, and gives pursuit.—He follows him to Hades, the subterranean abode of those fiends who were permitted to haunt the earth, and who, falling in love with beautiful women, seduced them, and carried many of them, some by force, and others with their free consent, to their dismal abodes.—The fiends are terrified at the sight of the potent wand of Japhet, and agree to deliver up Isameil, with whom he victoriously returns to the upper earth; and restores her to her father.

THE ANTEDILUVIANS.

BOOK VI.

Nor yet the gems which morn, with hand profuse,
Strews o'er the fragrant bosom of the earth,
Were to the golden chambers of the sun
All gathered, but in sparkling myriads still
Smiled in the embraces of morn's gentle beams
That softly wooed them to their radiant home;
When Japhet and young Irad, rising fresh
As young day rises on the mountain tops,
Resumed their journey to the land of Cain.

A vale they entered, gradual in ascent,
And leading eastward, by a gentle stream,
Clear and unruffled as a mirror's face.
On either side the swelling lawn displayed
Flowers ever-blooming, ever fragrant shrubs
Rich with delicious gums, and stately trees
Whose leafy bosoms gave to numerous tribes
Of bright-winged warblers, unmolested homes,
Safe from destroying men, or ravenous birds,
Or beasts of prey, that dared not there intrude
With thirst of blood and foul voracity.

Amidst these shades of sweet seclusion, lay
The pilgrims' course. As they advanced, the vale
Grew wider, greener, brighter, and more sweet,
Till in a noble plain it stretched abroad
In fair expanse with every rural charm.
Here much they wondered, in so bright a clime,
So rich with fruits of various flavour, fit
For every appetite, and teeming grain
For ever ripening, to behold no trace
Of human habitation: and still more
They wondered to perceive the numerous flocks
Of animals, of every shape and hue
That roam the various regions of the earth,
All here assembled, and in friendly mood
Together sporting. Ignorant of guile
The serpent basked beside the browsing kid,
While with the lion's strength the feeble lamb
Held fearless pastime. So nutritious then,
The fruits and herbage of that blessed clime,
That by the wild-beasts, flesh was needed not
For food, nor blood for beverage: nor man,
Fallen and depraved, was there to generate strife;
For he, the general troubler of the earth,
Was from this happy vale driven in disgrace,
Condemned no more to make his dwelling there.

Still journeying on towards high noon—noon
there

No sultry heat, nor arid drought e'er knew—
The pilgrims saw a flame that meteor-like
Waved in the air, and struck them with such awe,

They trembled ever as it met their view;
But to their purpose firm, they held their way,
Till suddenly they, from an eminence,
Beheld a scene, radiant beyond whate'er
Human imagination can conceive,
Or human phrase describe. A mighty wall
Extended farther than their gaze could reach,
So richly bright in variegated dyes
And streaming radiance, that the gems of earth
And stars of heaven, if in one mass combined
To show admiring nature her full wealth
Of glorious lustre, at one wondrous view,
Would not surpass the grandeur of that scene.

The pilgrims paused. Astonishment and awe
Had, for a space, their firmness overpowered.
But from the radiance of that scene alone
Came not their terror. 'Twas a more sublime
And terrifying sight that shook their hearts,
And made them falter in their onward course.
Outside the wall a martial phalanx stood,
Of numerous spirits armed with swords of flame
Bright flashing on the day, too terrible
And fierce for mortal vision to endure.
Swift from the oppressive glare the pilgrims turned,
And prayed in silence for supply of strength,
That dread array, unshrinkingly, to pass,
Or guidance, by some other path, to shun
The fearful opposition it displayed.

While thus they prayed, into their presence came
A beauteous angel, not in terrors clad,

But bright with cheering smiles and kindly looks,
And in these soul-reviving words, he spake.

“Ye favoured of the Highest! let not thus
Your spirits droop; ye have no cause to fear.
He who commissioned you to take this way,
Will guard you past its dazzling awfulness,
And lead you, ever while in Him you trust,
Unwavering as ye hitherto have done,
Safe through the midst of all opposing perils,
Till your appointed mission be achieved.
By Him forewarned of your approach, I come,
Enjoined to aid you in your present need,
When the transcendent radiance of this scene
Your mortal strength o'erpowers. The soil ye
tread—

Fair Eden's ever bright and blooming soil—
Since Adam's banishment from Paradise,
Hath ne'er before had human visiter;
For that terrific sea o'er which ye passed,
On all sides guards, with dread circumference,
Its sacred shores. And yonder flaming walls,
And those flame-weaponed bands, the ramparts are
And garrison of holy Paradise
Which was the blissful residence of man
While free from sin and worthy happiness.
One of that angel garrison I am,
Commissioned now to meet and comfort you
Who have, by special privilege, been given
To visit Eden, and behold the walls
Of God's blest garden, but not enter there.

Within the precincts of those holy bounds,
Strict is our charge, intrusion to prevent,
Of Adam's banished race, or of the fiends
Who are, for trial of the hearts of men,
Allowed on earth to range, lest they attempt
To bring pollution on that sacred place."

The angel ceased; and from a fig-tree near,
He plucked two branches bright in leafy bloom,
And one to each presented. As they caught
The verdant boughs, the coalescing leaves
Spread forth, uniting into one, and formed
For each, a veil compact and large, which
screened

Their vision from the fervid light poured forth
By the bright guards and walls of Paradise.
"Shaded by these," the friendly spirit said,
"In safety ye shall pass that splendid scene
Whose brightness is too strong for mortal sight.
I lead you forward; follow without fear!"

Silent they followed their celestial guide,
Free from all doubt or terror, and soon passed
(Borne swiftly onward by the angel power)
The sacred limit of that glorious clime,
And at fair Eden's orient bounds arrived.
Here on a bank beneath o'ershading palms,
They found a table spread by heavenly hands
For their refreshment. Pure, ambrosial food
Nutritious for the frame, and nectar bright,
Fit drink for angels, from the luscious vines
Of Paradise prepared, rich treat for man!

'The banquet o'er, and to all-bounteous Heaven,
'The grateful feelings of the pilgrims' hearts,
In strains of fervent piety, addressed,
Their friendly guide familiarly renewed
His pleasing speech to their attentive ear.

“ 'Tis now my duty to convey you hence,
From consecrated ground to ground profaned,
O'er that wild channel's separating gulf,
Beyond whose rock-bound shores the regions
spread,

Consigned to that polluted race of men,
Cain's godless progeny, who there have given
Full scope to every vain and lewd desire.
That region worthy of a better race,
Is also cursed by an infernal host
Of fiends, who roam to insnare to sinful deeds,
The souls of men, and win their daughters' charms,
By artful lures, or reckless violence,
To the abomination of their lust.
Inveterate foes of God, should they surmise
Your pilgrimage to be by him enjoined,
Spiteful and bold, each art they will employ
To work you evil. Haters of all good,
Their envious nature prompts them to resist
All human acts that please the Power Supreme,
Against whose sovereignty they dared rebel
And wage, with impious arms, insensate war.
But soon that arm Omnipotent, which wields
The universe and all its varied powers,
Crushed their vain pride and drove them out of
heaven,

Down to the groaning pit of torments deep,
Ordained their place of endless punishment.
Hopeless of pardon, their malignity
Against whate'er is good, forms their chief joy,
Since goodness is beloved by Him they hate.—
Spirits they are, and to your mortal eyes
Must be invisible, save when they take
Material forms and meet you face to face.
But fear them not. On you shall be conferred
Miraculous power their presence to detect,
Ev'n when in phantom shapes intangible
To mortal sense, they deem themselves concealed.
Within this sacred phial is contained
A liquor from the tree of Knowledge drawn,
Forbidden once and fatal to your race;
But not forbidden now, but blest with power
To make ethereal substance visible.
Each morning as, with fresh awakening beams,
The sun first glances on the spangled vales,
From the bright windows of the glowing east,
Thine eyes with this illuminating juice,
Thou shalt anoint, and all that day to thee
The gift of seeing spirits shall belong.
But when thy present mission terminates,
This juice no more such virtue shall impart.—
A weapon also in this wand, receive,
From the fair tree of Life detached, and blest
By Heaven with power, victoriously, to bend
To fear and feebleness, the strongest fiends
That from perdition's dungeons e'er broke loose

To range and vex this sin-polluted earth.
With these, young prince, and confidence in God,
Thou may'st go forth to yonder guilty world,
While thou its guilt art careful not to share,
Fearless of harm from demons or from men."

"How shall I thank thee?" said the grateful
prince;

"Or rather HIM whose minister thou art,
For gifts so precious, and the guardian care
Which they betoken. 'Tis not in my power
To speak the fervent feelings of my soul:
But He, to whom each secret thought is known,
Well knows the ardour of my gratitude,
And for its revelation needs no words.
On him shall my confiding heart rely,
And thy instructions rigidly obey."

To the resounding beach they now repair,
And mark the troubled deep whose mounting
waves

Bear terrors on their crests, and dashing down,
With threatened ruin shake the trembling shore.
The angel for a moment viewed the strife
Of the tossed element, then grasped a rock
Enormous in dimension, which he tore
From its foundation in the firm-bound earth,
And raising it in air, he hurled the mass
Into the startled, far-recoiling flood.
The astonished pilgrims soon, admiring, see
The growing rock from shore to shore extend,
And form a causeway, midst the parted waves,

Of solid architecture, on each side
Defended by a lofty balustrade
More graceful and adorned than edifice
E'er built by Attic or Corinthian skill.

On this firm avenue the pilgrims passed,
Led by their heavenly guide; and the broad realm
O'er which Shalmázar's tyrantsway was stretched,
At length received them on its hostile coast.
Some powerful words the seraph-guide now spake,
And swift the obedient causeway disappeared,
The rock resumed its former place in earth,
To their deep cells the rushing waves returned,
And the dread gulf was boisterous as before.

The social seraph now, his mission done,
Waxed heavenly radiant, and his glowing wings
Prepared for flight. "Farewell," he said, "blest
youths;

Blest while ye in the paths of virtue keep.
Your way is now amidst a sinful race
Of men in league with fiends. But fear them not;
Your shield of safety is the God ye serve!"
He rose refulgent in the aerial way,
And to the bowers of Paradise returned.
The admiring pilgrims watched his course in
heaven,
Marked by the starry track he left behind,
Till distance wrapt him from their ardent gaze.
Then to the Power Supreme, beneath the shade
Of whose protecting wing they placed their trust,
In humble resignation, low they bent,
And with deep fervor worshipped and adored.

Endowed with vigorous frames, undaunted hearts,
And that best gift enjoyed by man below,
An unaccusing conscience, which preserved
Self-approbation in their tranquil breasts,
The pilgrims fearlessly their journey held,
Amidst a people hostile to their race
And alien to the God whom they adored.
Their path at first was o'er a rugged track
Of mountains bleak and barren: then a plain
Expanded to their view, where shepherds dwelt
And fed their flocks in pastoral peace and ease,
And rural plenty. Ignorant and uncouth,
Their minds and manners seemed all primitive
And unimproved by arts of cultured life,
Which genius then, among the courtly sons
Of luxury, had to perfection brought,
And, in effem'nate polish, caused to shine
Through the rich regions of the sons of Cain.
As yet these pastoral people had escaped
The enervating habits of that age;
Thrice blest had they escaped its vices too,
Nor, at Shalmazar's edict bowed the knee
To idols, and forsook their fathers' God!

Yet more of virtuous feeling here remained
Than elsewhere in Shalmazar's provinces.
These shepherds practised still the noble rites
Of hospitality, to strangers due
When visiting a region so remote.
No thirst of gain had indurated yet
Their hearts against the claims of fellow men,
Homeless and friendless in a foreign land.

Approaching eve was drawing o'er the earth.
Her dusky mantle, and through all the vale,
The tinkling of the closing folds was heard,
And barking of the watch-dogs as they drove
The fleecy stragglers to their nightly cells,
When to a shepherd's cot, whose aspect showed
Its master owner of a numerous flock,
The pilgrims came, and from the swain received
A friendly welcome to his genial board.

The hour of rest drew near, when Jotham (so
The host was named) and all his family
Before an image kneeled. Of brass 'twas formed,
And represented Baal, Shalmazar's sire,
Whom tyrant edicts forced them to adore
As patron-god of all the Cainite race.
Japhet in vain rebuked the impious act:
He was compelled to view, with heavy heart,
The misapplied devotion. But amidst
The unhallowed worship terror seized them all.
A fair young maiden, Jotham's only child,
Screamed suddenly with agonizing sound,
And with most frantic gestures seemed to fight
With some dread shadow, till her strength was gone;
Then, sinking on the floor, she swooned away.
At length the struggle ceased; and when restored,
With fervent voice, she eagerly exclaimed:

“Oh! father, pray no more to that false god,
Who from destruction can preserve you not.
A horrid spirit from the dismal shades,
Addressed me with seducing words, and tried

To force me to his loathsome arms. In vain
On Baal I called, and for assistance prayed.
The tempter strove with still increasing power,
Until my thoughts arose to HIM on high,
Whom once we worshipped, and these pilgrims still
Acknowledge as their God. I asked HIS aid:
'The demon shrunk and withered in his strength;
Then fled; but flying, threatened to return
And bear me, spite of HIM who saved me now,
To dismal Hades, home of vagrant fiends.
Oh! pray to HIM alone whose power can save,
That I may be protected from that fiend,
For gods like Baal can no protection yield."

"Thou know'st Shalmazar's law," her sire re-
plied,

"Ordaining worship to the name of Baal,
And dooming death to all who disobey."

"Fear not," cried Japhet, touched with holy
zeal,

"Fear not Shalmazar's impious ordinance:
That tyrant hath no power to harm thy soul.
Offend him rather than offend the God
Who can thy soul and body both destroy.
Blest is thy pious daughter, blest indeed,
For she hath found that pearl beyond all price,
The truth of God! Oh! let her cling to him,
And all the power of fiends she may defy."

With holy fervor Jotham's spirit glowed:
The images he cast into the flames,
And cleansed his house of all idolatry.

The pilgrims aided in the righteous work,
And tuneful Irad, with poetic zeal,
Awoke his lyre to strains of ardent praise,
In celebration of that pious deed.

Fair Isamell, the rescued maiden, joined
His grateful song, and with melodious voice,
Sweet as the airs of hymning saints in heaven,
Poured forth the holy anthem of her joy.

Irada from her new inspiration caught,
And as he gazed upon her youthful charms,
Within his heart a pulse of fondness beat,
Which sent a sweet sensation through his frame,
Dearer than aught he e'er had felt before:
'Twas that blest love, pure, holy, fervent, true,
To cherish which the feelings were designed;—
That love which had its home in Paradise
Before the fall corrupted human hearts.—
And soon the minstrel made his feelings known,
And soon the maid confessed an answering flame,
Equal in fervor, purity, and truth.

One eve—'twas that before the intended morn
Of parting from her sweet society—
The minstrel met the maiden of his heart
Upon the flowery margin of a brook
Whose murmurs gently soothed the woodland
shade;

Fit place for lovers to express their cares,
And pledge their mutual vows of constancy.
For there surrounding nature, like their hearts,
Was soft and glowing, and the impulse sweet

Of sacred love seemed to pervade all things.
How precious to young Irad's fervent soul
Was that sweet hour! He strayed with her he loved,
Where conscious nature witnessing his vows,
Appeared to sympathize in all he felt.
In that blest moment all their cares and fears,
The tumult, strife, and tyranny of man,
The toils and discontentments of this earth,
Nay, all the dear attractions and delights
Of kindred, friends, and kindly offices,
The lovers heeded not: from their fond hearts
All things were absent then save love and Heaven.

But into terror soon the scene was changed;
For Isamell screamed suddenly and loud,
And struggled wildly as again attacked
By some foul demon. Soon mysteriously
Torn from her lover's arms, with rapid force
She o'er the vale was borne by hands unseen.
In vain the minstrel followed; for to him
The assailing demon was invisible;
While with despairing cries the maiden filled
The echoing vales, as over them she flew.
These caught the ear of Japhet who, alone
For holy meditation, wandered then
Within the shelter of a neighbouring grove.
He darted forth, and saw a giant fiend
Drag by the waist the struggling fair along.
He had that morning with the blessed balm
Of Eden, touched his eyes, which quickened them
The subtlest forms of spirits to discern:

And with the potent wand, the angel's gift,
Plucked from the tree of Life, whose touch had
power

To render demons motionless, and through
Their frames send direful tortures, he was armed.

With swiftness equal to an arrow's speed,
To the fiend-ravisher he gave pursuit.
The fiend beheld the dreaded wand, and urged
His flight o'er hills and dales with force, fear-driven,
Firm bearing in his grasp his beauteous prize.
But aided by an impulse from above,
Japhet gained on him in the eager chase.
A few bounds more upon the sounding plain,
And the dread wand the demon would have fixed
A powerless statue on the spot. Just then
He reached a horrid precipice, and plunged
Into a gulph of awful depth, and dark
With pitchy vapours, rolling like a sea
Of clammy smoke, where sulphurous sparkles
gleamed

To show more horribly the dismal place.
The prince a moment paused on the dread brink,
Called on his God for aid, and fearless leaped
Into the asphaltic pit. The sacred wand
That instant spread out living leaves immense
And strong, resembling eagles' wings, which bore
Him gently buoyant, till he reached unharmed
The Stygian bottom, when the vaporious sea,
Changed, at the contact of the holy wand,

Into a solid sward of new-sprung grass;
And grayish light, like the half-risen morn,
Dispersed the pitchy shades. Again the prince
'The flying demon saw, and with fresh zeal,
Renewed the chase. At length a mountain's side,
Which like a solid wall, reached to the clouds,
Seemed for a moment to obstruct the fiend.
But soon he found a passage: a huge gate,
At his terrific mandate opening, moved
Its ponderous mass with rude and thundering
 sound,
That to its deep foundation shook the abyss.
But ere the fiend could close its jarring fold,
It felt the stroke of Japhet's wand, and stood
Immoveable. The trembling demon fled:
'The prince pursued into a cavern huge,
Whose limits spread within the central space,
Extensive as an empire. There he held,
For many a league, his unobstructed way
Amid a host of foul and frightened spirits
Inhabiting that subterranean realm,
Named Hades, where a dank and dismal gloom,
Like viscid mist, o'erhung the atmosphere,
That generated plagues and agues dire,
Racking with pain the wretched citizens:
Or mixing with the rank and slimy soil,
Produced from its corruption, poisonous weeds,
And loathsome reptiles, venomous and foul,
Toads, scorpions, alligators, vampires, snakes

Whose forked tongues sent forth incessant hiss
That made even demons shudder in their dens.

What then, ye guilty daughters of mankind,
Who leagued your fortunes with deluding fiends,
And for their sakes fled from the sun-bright earth
To that pestiferous region—what the pangs
Of mind and body, ye were doomed to bear
In those ill-chosen and unhallowed homes,
For which, with rash election, ye forsook
The cheerful haunts of this still beauteous world?
For, oh! ye fair apostates! Japhet found
That ye were numerous in that loathsome vault,
In which, even while mortality ye wore,
And madly wantoned with your husband-fiends,
Ye felt a foretaste of the heavier doom
Which waits the wicked in profounder hell.
How different that sad vault accursed and foul,
From the bright Eden for those fair ones made,
Who for their spouses chose celestial spirits,
And still maintained fidelity to Heaven!
True; some were here, by demon force compelled,
Like virtuous Isamell: but God on these
With pity looked; and blest their mortal hour
Which ever soon he sent for their release,
When angels bore their ransomed souls on high.

Once more the flying demon with his prize,
Escaped the prince's view, and disappeared
Amidst a labyrinth of tangled streets
In Tophet's fulsome city, the chief seat
Of demon rule, if rule could there exist,

Where he that was most vile was most esteemed,
And anarchy possessed the reins of power.

Through these foul streets where thick Tartar-
rean gloom

Increased the dire confusion, 'twas in vain
That Japhet tried to trace the skulking fiend,
Now hid and trembling in a den remote,
Dug deep beneath the city's Stygian floor,
And fast secured by an incumbent weight
Of mountain, that entombed it far from view.
Now as he ranged the dark and dismal streets,
The frightened demons fled before his path,
Shuddering and writhing in keen agony,
Whene'er the awful wand he waved aloft,
And shook the city, as an earthquake shakes
The solid regions of this upper world.

At length he reached a lofty citadel,
That from its rocky height frowned gloomily
Upon the mass of buildings spread beneath.
By characters of flame on its dark front,
Which shone like meteors in a vap'rous swamp
Haunted by reptiles vile and venomous,
He knew the fabric was the house of state,
Where Belial, sire of stern Shalmazar, ruled,
With riot anarchy, the dismal realm.
He hastened to ascend the rocky steps
Which led towards its adamant gate.
At his approach the towering fabric shook
Ev'n to its solid base, and fearful sounds
Of yelling voices issued from its walls.

But one loud voice o'er all the rest he heard,
When to the topmost dome he raised his eyes,
And there the alarmed vociferous fiend he saw,
Of size more huge, shape more majestic
Than proudest demon he had yet beheld.

“ Bold youth, who bear'st that wand of dreaded
power

Which spreads through all our city such dismay,
And threatens us with ruin,”—Belial thus
(For he it was who from that towering dome
Sent forth the o'erwhelming voice,) addressed the
prince,—

“ What brings thee to invade our hidden realm,
Where human being of thy sex, before
Dared never come? Declare thy wish. In words
Of peace I ask thee. If thy will be such
As, without ruin, we to thee may grant,
I promise strict compliance, so that thou
Withdraw from our domains, nor more disturb
The habits of our subterrene abode.”

“ From upper air,” the prince replied, “ a fiend
Fierce and licentious, hath by violence,
Borne off a virtuous maid. To rescue her
From the foul ravisher, I here pursued
His flying steps, and have within the maze
Of this entangled city lost his track.
Beneath your jurisdiction, somewhere here
He is secreted with his beauteous prize.
Compel him to restore unharm'd the maid;
And, if so fierce a spirit can be bound

By your control, then bind him never more
The peace of that young virgin to molest.
With her to earth's fair surface I'll return,
And leave uninjured your subternal realm."

Belial commanded, and a herald blew
The trump of proclamation. Loud and far
The sound went forth, and startled every ear
In that unhallowed clime. Obsequiously
Soon came the ravisher, by two strong fiends
Conducted like a culprit; and command
Received, immediately to yield the maid,
And never more to dare her peace molest,
On pain of bondage in eternal chains.

In sullen mood the demon growled assent.
Then chosen was a train of those lost dames
Who dwelt with spirits in that dismal world,
From the fiend's den fair Isamell to bring,
And, with the prince, attend her to the bounds
Of that ungracious region. Oh! what joy
And gratitude the fair one's heart inspired
As, leaning on her brave deliverer's arm,
She hastened from the land of fiends abhorred
And loathsome to her soul! But when she saw
So many lost ones of her own soft sex,
All beauteous too, once charmers of the earth,
In that accursed and detested clime,
The voluntary slaves of horrid bonds
And demon appetites, how did she grieve
At their sad degradation and distress!
Oft as to Heaven she poured her gratitude

For her own rescue, she would think of them,
And mingle heart-warm prayers in their behalf.

Emerging from the deep Tartarean vault,
'They through the black ravine of vapours go,
And reach its termination where it joined
The roaring waves of ocean, at that place
For ever chafed into such violence
As bade defiance to the boldest ship
Or ablest pilot, that e'er tried to stem
Its billowy rage and seek a landing there.
But at the touch of Japhet's sacred wand,
Its rage subsides, and with a sudden ebb,
It leaves the shore, on which a path is formed,
Broad, firm and dry, with pearls and coral paved,
And silver sand and shells innumerable,
Of many a glittering, gay, fantastic dye.
The attendant dames of Hades there withdrew:
This was their limit; on the beach-formed path
They dared not venture, for 'twas holy ground.

Their convoy of frail fair ones thus withdrawn,
And from a land of hideous scenes escaped,
The fearless victor and the rescued maid,
By Heaven directed, held their gladsome way
Along the pearly passage of the shore,
'Until they reached a fair and fertile vale
By a bright river watered. There their path
Lay northward from the ocean, whose full tide
Returning, seized on all its former bounds,
And overwhelmed the glittering beach again.

Before the sun of that eventful day,
Had driven his chariot o'er the western hills
And left the world to darkness, Isamell
Was to the heart of her rejoicing sire
Pressed with parental rapture; and the harp
Of Irad, woke to strains of ecstasy,
Poured forth a lover's gratitude and joy
For the sweet mistress of his heart, restored,
From such a depth of peril and distress,
So wondrously to happiness and home:
And thus the thrillings of his bosom flowed.

I.

When throbs of joy inspire the soul,
How warm the poet's numbers roll!
Wake, lyre of gladness! wake and tell
The joys that in my bosom swell,
Since Isamell the good and fair,
Is snatched from peril and despair.
Thou wert her shield, thou Power Divine!
The work of her deliverance thine!

II.

Young Japhet felt the heroic glow,
And sought the awful shades below,
Endued by THEE with wondrous might
To shake with fear the realms of night.
The fiends beheld, and trembling there,
At his command released the fair.—
Thou wert her shield, thou Power Divine!
The work of her deliverance thine!

III.

Her father's house shall then no more,
Ungrateful, other gods adore:
They've seen the wonders thou hast done;
They know thou art the Mighty One.
And she, with special favour graced,
Her faith in thee hath ever placed.
Thou wert her shield, thou Power Divine!
The work of her deliverance thine!

THE ANTEDILUVIANS.

BOOK VII.

15

THE ARGUMENT.

THE pilgrims take leave of Jotham, who determines with his family, to withdraw from the Cainite dominions, and make his residence among the descendants of Seth, for the purpose of enjoying unmolested, the worship of the true God.—They arrive at Gal-Cainah, the metropolis of Shalmazar's empire.—Description of that city.—The pilgrims, in the character of minstrels, are introduced to Shalmazar.—He is pleased with their performances, and places them at the head of the court musicians.—Shalmazar again consults Armodeus in relation to Hadallah.—The fiend advises an attempt to arouse her ambition, since she seems impenetrable to the influence of love.—For this purpose a grand festival is given, and in the midst of the nobles of the realm, she is placed beside the monarch on a splendid throne, and proclaimed, without her consent, empress of the Cainites.—At this festival, Japhet and she recognise each other.—By the aid of Ellam, he finds access to the place of her confinement.—He rescues her; and, accompanied by Ellam and Irad, flies with her towards his father's dominions.—They succeed in baffling pursuit.—But before they reach the frontiers, they come to a place where a wicked satrap, named Mohawb, has just put the good Jotham to death for having renounced idolatry and embraced the true religion.—Irad discovering that Isameh is in the satrap's hands, a captive designed for the harem of Shalmazar, resolves to attempt her rescue.—Ellam joins the enterprise.—They succeed, and she is carried with them to the dominions of Noah, where they at length arrive.—Joy of Japhet on re-entering the land of his nativity!—He reaches Sabbatah, the most eastern of the Sethite cities, and the capital of the frontier province over which his brother Shem is governor.—Here he is married to Hadallah, and Irad to Isameh.—Japhet, with his bride, at length arrives at the residence of his father.

THE ANTEDILUVIANS.

BOOK VII.

Now Japhet, mindful of the glorious task
Heaven had assigned him, hastens to pursue
His journey eastward, and departure takes
From Jotham's friendly roof, with kind farewell.
Irak attends him, faithful to his trust,
Though love, with fervid influence in his breast,
Pleaded for longer stay in that sweet vale
Which to his heart, the charms of Isamell
So much endeared, and made so beautiful.

Oh! mighty Love, that o'er the youthful heart
Maintain'st a sway so uncontrollable,
'That oft the calls of duty are forgot
In listening to thy too persuasive voice;
Alas! that e'er thy wishes should be found
In opposition to fair virtue's claims;
For then what trials must assail the heart,
Whose scrupulous feelings shudder to offend—
Trials oft greater than it can withstand
Though conscience plead aloud in virtue's cause!
But firm was Irak's virtue. Though his love

Was warm as e'er in youthful bosom glowed,
Short was its combat with his piety.
He heaved a sigh, and bade the maid farewell,
Hope sweetly whispering they should meet again.
For Jotham had resolved to leave that land,
Unsuited and unsafe for his abode,
Where tyranny bore sway, and wickedness
Each day increased, insulting to the God
Of Truth, sole object of his worship now.
From Japhet, ere they parted, he received
A token which, through Armon's provinces,
Where his desires were bent, would for him gain
Aid and protection as he journeyed on
To Noah's royal seat, there to profess
Adherence to the patriarchal laws,
And due allegiance to the King of Heaven.

Now soon the minstrel pilgrims reached a clime
By culture and improving arts made rich,
Luxurious, splendid and refined. For there
Philosophers with reason, bards with song,
And statesmen with authority of laws,
Moulded the public mind to artful gloss
And smooth hypocrisy, out-rooting all
The simple habits of primeval times,
When genuine honesty each heart inspired,
And social intercourse required no guile
To guard from breach the brotherhood of men.
And here were numerous cities, large and gay,
And full of artisans, who plied their skill
To yield the lords of earth embellishments

That pampered pride and fashion's fantasies;
While they, poor labourers for others' use,
Submitted tamely to their servile tasks:
And not alone their skill and labour gave
To their taskmasters for slight recompense,
But ev'n their consciences to them resigned,
Drawing from their example rules of life,
Not deeming crime what great men could commit.
Then first it was the rich gave fashion, law,
And fashion's law vice into virtue changed,
And made corruption outshine purity.
Thus the deluded people closed their eyes
Against the truth, dazzled by lordly glare,
And reckless wrought, with imitation foul,
The grossest crimes pollution could devise.

Shocked with such wickedness, the pilgrims'
hearts

Oft throbbed to vent remonstrance: but they saw
The multitude too earnest in their guilt
To hear with patience words of reprimand;
And reason told them that it would be vain
To speak of godliness to such a race:
It might be zeal, wisdom it could not be.
Full well they knew 'twould be but wantonly
'To wake the fury of a tyrant's laws
For their destruction, should they interfere,
By word or deed, against the idolatry
He had established, or rebuke the crimes
He practised, and with aid of hellish arts,
Made current through the rank polluted land.

Not for such purpose was their ministry:
Their mission was not to reform mankind,
But maiden beauty and young innocence
To rescue from a lustful tyrant's power.
At reason's voice they therefore checked their zeal,
Yielding to evils which they could not cure;
And, with forbearing silence, held their course.
As wandering minstrels of excelling skill,
They seemed ambitious to display their art
Before the polished rulers of the earth.
From town to town o'er many a lengthened realm,
Unquestioned in this guise, they freely roamed,
Cheered onward by the voice of gathering fame.

At length they at Gal-Cainah's gates arrived,
The mighty capital of half the world,
Whose walls of granite, raised by giant hands,
Reached the blue clouds in proud magnificence,
Frowning defiance on the plains around,
For the wide circuit of full twenty leagues,
Enclosing in that vast circumference,
A population which in numbers vied
With many a kingdom of illustrious name.
A thousand noble streets of marble built,
From east to west stretched their extended lines;
From north to south as many, graceful, held
Their long array, at regular distances,
And shaped the whole in sections uniform.
But intervals were left as health required
Or ornament, for gardens, promenades,
Circles and squares, crescents and terraces,

And sylvan alleys by the Kisna's side,
Luxuriously supplied with seats and bowers,
For indolence or pleasure to resort
And loll in ease, or mix in wanton mirth.

From bank to bank of Kisna's glittering stream,
Ten solid bridges stretched their gallant frames,
And nobly strode o'er the broad wandering wave
That held its slow, majestic course below,
And on its ample bosom proudly bore
Ten thousand sportive barks, whose busy oars
And streamers seemed instinct with joyous life.

As roamed the wondering minstrels midst such
scenes

Of liveliness and grandeur, how they grieved
To see the infatuated throngs of men
Crowding the gorgeous temples of false gods,
Whose golden roofs rivalled in brilliancy
The noontide beams of day's refulgent lord,
While greedy priests, with hypocritic tone,
Gave benedictions in exchange for gold
Of poor, deluded, ignorant devotees,
And made a traffic of the world to come!

Still wandering on, a bridge the minstrels passed,
Whose piers and arches were colossal work
More massive in their grandeur than the rest,
Which led to where the men of giant frames
Had reared their dwellings. Here they viewed,
amazed,

The huge inhabitants, and their abodes—
Mansions immense and gloomy, but sublime—

Those mountain-like abodes, whose doors appeared
The mouths of mighty caves, and windows large
As full-spread sails worn by a stately ship,
Heading her way against the foaming surge
On the Carnatic or Malayan sea,
Charged with rich freight of spices and of gold.
These giants sprung from the unhallowed loves
Of demons with the daughters of mankind,
Of all the population, deepest were
In gross debauch'ry sunk. With haughty sway
They ruled the others, using them as serfs
Have ever since by tyrant lords been used,
'To furnish them with means of luxury,
And in return contempt and stripes receive.

But pleased with the delicious strains that flowed
With unmatched sweetness from the pilgrims'
lyres,

'These Anakims, for so they then were named,
Showed favour to the wandering minstrel pair.
At ball and banquet, and at sacrifice,
Oft was their much-prized minstrelsy required,
Until their fame reached the luxurious court,
And by Shalmazar's order, they were brought
'To minister their heart-enlivening strains
For his enjoyment. He was pleased; and o'er
The choral band that soothed his harem hours,
Japhet as chief musician soon was placed,
And next in station Irad was installed.

From visiting his empire's northern bounds,
Where he had led his legions to suppress
Some discontented satrap's rash revolt,

Shalmazar had returned, with vict'ry flushed
And ample vengeance taken on his foes.
Such was the time the venturous minstrels reached
His capital, and by their tuneful skill,
Gained favor and reward. To celebrate
His vict'ries with due brilliancy and pomp,
A splendid festival was now proclaimed
To all Gal-Cainah's gay inhabitants
Ever amused with riotous parade.
And joyous was that day of revelling:
A blaze of glory through the city shone;
And proudly marched, in glittering long array,
The stately files of military pomp,
While war's loud music shook the sounding streets.
On his triumphal car Shalmazar rode,
Enriched with burnished gold and glowing gems,
Effulgent as the chariot Phaeton drove
Disastrous down the flaming cope of heaven.
Enrapturing to the conq'ror's greedy ears,
The plaudits of ten thousand voices rose.
Or in the hall of state, on golden throne
Embellished with the choicest workmanship
Of Tubal-Cain, surrounded by his chiefs,
He drank from flattery's soul-exciting cup,
Large draughts of adulation; and received
Homage and acclamation as a god
Whose own right hand resistless crushed his foes,
While vict'ry smiled obedient to his will.

Amidst the elating glories of that day,
One thing alone was wanting to complete

The satisfaction which inspired his breast.
It was Hadallah's love: of that deprived,
He felt the charms of every other joy,
Conquest and glory, mirth and flattery,
All insufficient for his soul's desires.

All-powerful Love! with what despotic sway,
Thou rul'st the stubborn empire of the heart!
Souls that no other power will stoop to own,
Stern and inflexible to God and men,
With ease thou mouldedst to thy sovereign will:
And pride itself yields homage to thy throne.
'Tis thou alone that canst supply the void
Of bliss deficient in the human breast;
And yield fruition amply to the soul,
When all the other joys of life combined,
Are insufficient for the craving there.
Without thee would existence be a boon?
Ah no! the heart, unloving and unloved,
Would writhe in desolation and despair,
Creation loathe, loathe pleasure, loathe itself,
And long for death to end its wretchedness!

That day of glory in the monarch's breast,
Awoke new ardour for the sweets of love.
His fancy dwelt on young Hadallah's charms,
And his fierce bosom owned their sovereignty.
"Alas," he sighed, "did but that matchless maid
Partake with me the triumph of this hour,
Then were its glories exquisite indeed,
And all the raptures of my soul complete.
Her beauty would the glorious scene adorn,

Her smiles the triumph of my heart would crown:
I would be happy then, I'm now but great!—
Great!—am I great when a weak maid contemns
My proffered love, and all my power defies?
Must I submit to be so much despised?
Must my desires be scorned and baffled thus
By one so feeble and within my power?
Forbid it shame, pride, royalty, revenge!
Nay, love—impatient love, forbid that she
Shall longer treat my passion with contempt,
And make a mock'ry of my sovereign will!”

The spell whose power constrains his demon-
slave,

He hastes to work. The pliant fiend appears,
And in attentive audience stands to learn
His proud and fiery-passioned master's will.

“ Ah! what avail my grandeur, state and power,”
The monarch said, “ my sceptre and my crown,
The people's homage, and my victories!—
Ah! what avail they all, since scorned by her
For whose young charms my heart so strongly
pants!

Fiend of seduction! hast thou not the power
To move her obstinate heart, and make her mine?
Are all thy arts exhausted? Am I doomed,
The master of the world, to pine in grief
Because a simple maiden on me frowns?”

“ I have resources yet,” replied the fiend.
“ 'Tis true, thus far my efforts have been vain:
No taint of earthly passion yet hath touched

The maiden's breast, and Ellam's love is scorned.
Her bosom's steeled against the thrilling dart.—
Another passion we must try to wake;
And I have ever found that woman's heart
To pride is open when 'tis closed to love.
Touch her ambition: in the public view
Clothe her with honour, dignity and power:
Let all the multitude shout in her praise,
And let melodious minstrels pour the strains
Of homage and devotion in her ear.
Then with the throb of exultation flushed,
Pride with unheavenly taint, her heart shall swell,
Her guardian angel will resign his charge,
And, unresisted, my seductive art
Shall work upon her mind and make her thine."

Pleased with the fiend's advice, Shalmazar gave
A royal entertainment to his chiefs
And nobles, and their favourite fair; their wives,
'Their daughters, and their concubines;—for then
Such public mingling of the chaste and lewd,
Deemed since unmeet society, was not
Unseemly deemed—so gross that sinful age!

'Twas in a gay saloon of spacious bounds,
Where courtly feasts, and masks, and balls, and
sports
Of many a varied character, were held
To amuse a lewd and dissipated race,
The wanton and luxurious revellers met.
The architecture of that radiant hall
In rich and bright embellishments, outshone

The gaudiest edifice that ever since
Witnessed the banquets of an Orient king.
The walls were burnished brass, o'er which a roof
Of mingling dyes, a metalline compound,
Formed by an art long lost to alchymists,
Stretched wide its shadowing wings, rich to behold
As Flora's vesture on the verdant lawn,
Or bird of Juno's radiating plume,
Or heaven-gemmed Iris. Round the windows
glowed

Clusters of turquoise, amethyst, and pearl,
With every gem that decorates the East,
Wrought into many a fanciful device,
In imitation of the starry hosts
That light on high the watch-towers of the night.
The doors were silver, cedar were the floors;
A hundred mirrors shone along the walls;
And on the lofty ceilings were embossed
The forms of trees and flowers; and beasts and
birds

Roaming amidst bright groves and gay parterres,
In hues and attitudes as if they lived.
Circling a triple row of tables, ranged
Soft, crimson-cushioned seats, luxuriously
Spread for a thousand guests; while galleries
Of carved and gilded workmanship, around
The lofty space, contained a thousand more,
Who sat partakers of the festive scene.
Beneath a canopy of golden cloth,
At the eastern end, a royal throne was raised.

The ascent was steps of polished ivory:
The seat was ivory inlaid with gold,
Cushioned with down of birds of paradise,
Within a covering of silken woof
Of rosy hue and gold embroidery.
Festoons of roses, tulips, amaranths,
Lilies and jessamines of various dye,
Bloomed gaily round, diffusing through the air
Perfumes that sweetened all the brilliant scene.

The feast was over, and the wine was pledged
To the long glory of Shalmazar's reign,
And to the happy fair whom he should choose
To share the grandeur of imperial power.
"That choice is made," returned the enamoured
king:

"A lovely maid my harem now adorns,
The brightest star of all her beauteous sex,
That ever shone to warm the heart of man.
Now in your presence shall the maid appear:
Her loveliness will beautify this scene,
And to our breasts a throb more joyful lend,
Than all the pleasures of the festal hour."

With loud applause, the pleased assembly hailed
The king's announcement. The reluctant fair,
Despite of her entreaties, forth was brought
By gay Jazeda, with a blooming band
Of harem beauties following in her train.
Soon as she entered, all the assembly rose
And made obeisance; and the enamoured king
Descending from his seat, received the fair,

Whom, gently leading to the gorgeous throne,
He fondly seated at his own right hand.

Then rose the appointed herald and proclaimed;—
“Behold the earth’s most fair and noble maid,
Endowed with every charm of woman’s race,
And by Shalmazar, sovereign of mankind,
Chosen as the partner of his boundless power!
Shout for your peerless queen, all loyal hearts
In this assembly, and, ye minstrels, wake
Your sweetest notes to rapture in her praise!”

The throng obeyed; and fair Hadallah’s name,
As beauteous queen of all the Orient world,
Ran echoing through that radiant edifice.
Then from a choir of numerous lyres, whose tones
Fell like enchanted sweetness on the ear,
The maiden’s praise flowed thrillingly and warm.
And when they ceased a bard prolonged the strain,
Who swept the chords with more than mortal
skill.

Enrapt he poured the enthusiastic song,
As if his bold and glowing soul was lost
In the ecstatic fervor of his theme,
Which through Hadallah’s frame emotions sent,
She ne’er had known before, and richly gave
Her virgin charms, a sweeter, brighter glow.—
On her Shalmazar gazed absorbed, entranced;
And so enrapt to see the fair one pleased,
He scarce was conscious of the minstrelsy,
As in ambiguous tenor thus it flowed.

I.

Oh maiden! blest with every charm
The coldest heart to wake and warm,
Now all thy thoughts are throned above;
Yet thou shalt own an earthly love,
And feel it is not sin to glow
With warm emotions here below,
Although a mortal form it be
That wakes thy sigh of fervency.

II.

Oh maiden! dare my ardent strain
The deep-impassioned throb explain,
Of one whose spirit longs to join
In everlasting bonds with thine?
When he his faithful love reveals,
Ah! let thy heart tell what it feels;
Although a mortal form it be
That breathes the fervid sigh for thee.

III.

Oh maiden! banish every fear;
Thy lover—thy protector's here!
"BE FIRM!" and on his love rely,
And every ill thou may'st defy;
For he is gifted with the power
To save thee in the perilous hour:
And soon the admiring world shall see
How strong the love he bears for thee!

Upon the minstrel's glowing countenance,
Hadallah looked, and all-amazed, beheld
Once more to her assured sight, restored
'The self-same form that from the evening cloud,
When, in distress, her prayers arose to Heaven,
Had lent her comfort and bade her "BE FIRM."
And Japhet—for 'twas he who had awaked
This joyous recognition in her breast—
Enraptured knew her as his promised bride.
She was the lovely image of his dream,
Whose charms had from his mem'ry ne'er de-
cayed,—

She whom he rescued from the giant's net
By wond'rous virtue of that phantom wand,
His vision had supplied.—He saw her now,
The bright reality of all those charms
On which, since that blest dream, his fancy had
With fondness brooded and ecstatic joy.
But in a tyrant's power, alas! he saw
Her matchless charms:—Oh! how his bosom
burned

His mission to accomplish, and achieve
The glorious work of her deliverance!

The music ceased, and all the songs were o'er,
When at the trumpet's sound, a wreathed crown
Glittering with gold and gems, by two young maids
Was placed upon the fair one's head, and all
The gay assembly cried with joyful voice,
"Long live Hadallah, great Shalmazar's bride,
The queen of beauty, sovereign of our hearts!"

The fair one trembled at those fearful words,
“*Shalmazar's bride!*”—Alas! was that her fate?
Had what her soul so dreaded come at last?—
No, no; her guardian spirit whispered then,
It was not so; consent she had not given,
And all her soul most fervently resolved
That to such fate, consent she ne'er would give.
At length released, the festal hall she left,
Attended by a splendid train of nymphs,
Who sang her praise, and strewed her way with
flowers.

After the burden of that dazzling scene
Of pomp and adulation she had borne,
How welcome to the maiden's harassed mind
Was the repose her silent chamber gave!
For there Jazeda with her wish complied
And left her to tranquillity and rest.
But did she rest? Ah! no; her busy thoughts
Ran on the noble minstrel whose blest song
Had told her to be firm in virtue's cause,
And told her in such strains of harmony
And tenderness, as thrilled her inmost soul,
Teaching her virgin bosom how to love.

Soon were the unusual workings of her heart
Discovered by Asmodeus, watchful fiend.
Deeply conversant with the female mind,
He saw some new emotion in her breast,
Of earthly nature; whether love or pride
He could not tell; but he believed it such

As for Shalmazar's purpose augured well:
And soon as from the feast the king withdrew,
To him the welcome tidings he conveyed.

“ At length Hadallah feels,” he said, “ some
stain

Of passion swelling in her breast. My arts
Seductively may now prevail, and fill
Her mind with woman's soft desires. Haste thou
With flattery's pleasing voice to charm her ear,
While I, unseen, endeavour to infuse
Infectious fondness through her yielding frame,
And turn her warm emotions all to thee.”

The enamoured monarch hastened to obey,
And fired with fond expectance, sought the maid,
“ Fair one!” he said, “ whose high excelling
worth

And all-subduing beauty, are pronounced,
By public acclamation, to deserve
The exalted station which my fervent love
On thee confers, thou art my bride beloved;
My beauteous queen acknowledged and proclaimed
By the admiring nobles of my realm.
No longer then, my fair, refuse my love,
But oh! consent to bless me with thy charms,
And in my palace reign as in my heart.”

His mien so mild, and speech and tone so kind,
Seemed to possess an influence strange to her,
That grieved her; for she scarcely could repel
His hateful suit, which then less hateful seemed
Than she desired; and over her had come

A something which alarmed her scrupulous mind.
It was as if she felt not so displeas'd
With flattery as it was her wish to feel.
She with the weakness struggled anxiously;
And fearing such sensations favour'd sin,
She trembled, and from Heaven besought relief.
That instant the same strains of music rose
To her delighted ear and grateful heart,
Which, in the festal hall, had warm'd her soul
To pious ecstasy and virtuous love,
And told her to be firm in righteousness.
The weakness fled, chased by the heavenly strains:
She thought of the young minstrel, and once more
Her feelings in their natural channel flow'd.
The insidious fiend, Asmodeus, baffled thus,—
(For he it was, to aid the tyrant's suit,
Had in her mind the dangerous weakness
wrought—)

Now fled the scene, driven by superior power
From his unhallowed office. Then the maid,
To all her former energy restored,
With wonted firmness to the tyrant spake.

“Thou man of pride! think not by flattering
words,
Or splendid offers of imperial power,
To bribe my heaven-devoted soul to sin.
Think'st thou that I would share a throne with one
Avowed the foe of Him who reigns o'er all?
Cease to torment me with thy hated love,
Nor seek a union which not all thy power

'Though kindred demons aid thee, can enforce;
For Heaven, my soul's assured, will save me from
The doom abhorred of joining fates with thee.'

“Rash maid!” the angry tyrant thus replied,
“Still dar'st thou make resistance to my power?
Think of thy feebleness, and of my strength.
If I subject thee to my passion's might,
Thou'rt but a twig grasped by a giant's hand,
And I will bend thee as may suit my will.
To-morrow noon prepare to be my bride,
Or to become—think of the alternative—
My passion's slave, perhaps its victim too!”

He said, and left her trembling, yet resolved
To cling to duty, and the worst defy.

Now o'er creation's face, her dusky robe,
The ebon night, concealing all things, threw.
Hadallah had not yet retired to rest:
She could not, for the emotions of her mind,
Roused by the threatening horrors of her fate,
Now in her lonely musings, took the hue
Of dark despondency. Yet still in Heaven,
Midst all her sorrows, she had confidence
That in the trying hour strength would be given
To baffle terror and endure her doom.
This was her hope, her comfort, and her prayer.
In thoughts, like these, her mind was all absorbed,
When, gently opening, moved her chamber door,
And in her presence stood the minstrel youth
Whose looks had given her heart the sweetest
throb

That ever warmed its stainless purity,
And these soul-cheering words to her he spake.

“ Oh! fear not, fairest of created forms
That my enraptured sight has ever blest,
This bold intrusion on thy solitude.
'Tis Heaven hath sent me. By His special will
And under His direction, I have come
From distant regions under Noah's rule,
Thee to deliver from thy tyrant's power.
Our means of flight from this polluted land,
Fleet steeds, and two unwavering, faithful friends,
Within a neighbouring grove await concealed.
Come then, my fair, repose thy trust in Heaven,
And haste to leave impending fate behind!”

“ I go,” she said; “ for firmly I believe
Thy mission is from God, whose gracious hand
Thus aids me in the extremity of peril.”

In safety and unseen they held their way
Until they reached the outer harem gate,
When, wakeful on his post, the giant form
That there stood sentinel, perceived their flight
And made resistance. Japhet was prepared
With ready arms to assail the obstructing foe,
When watchful Ellam rushing to his aid,
With sudden home-thrust of his forceful spear,
Laid the grim giant senseless in the dust.
This youth had won prince Japhet's confidence;
For soon discovering the bold design
To snatch Hadallah from the tyrant's power,
With eager zeal he joined the enterprise.

'Twas by his aid the prince had entrance found
To the fair captive's prison-bower: by him
Four noble steeds, for fleetness all unmatched
Ev'n by the fleetest in the royal stalls,
Had been procured, and all provision made
For speed and comfort of the fugitives,
Whom he accomp'nied, overjoyed to leave
The empire of oppression and of crime,
Where he in daily, hourly hazard stood
Of vengeance, from a ruthless tyrant's rage.

They soon arrived where in the o'ershading grove,
The ready coursers Irad had in charge.
Each mounted one, and Ellam led the way.
The country well he knew, and as their guide,
Led them on paths where solitude combined
With shortness and facility of course,
To bear them rapidly beyond pursuit.
O'er many a hill, and dale, and flowery plain,
And mountain high, and roaming river wide,
All unimpeded on they held their way,
For thrice seven days, with unrelaxing speed;
Till in the province nearest to the west
Of the broad realms o'er which Shalmazar ruled,
They reached the rocky summit of a mount
Which overlooked a region large and rich,
And gay with numerous populous villages.
But to their startled and abhorrent sight,
Not far remote a multitude appeared,
In midst of which a blazing pile effused
Its gray and crimson columns to the sky.

“ We must avoid yon throng,” young Ellam
said,—

“ Our foes they are, adorers of false gods
Decreed by vain Shalmazar to supplant
The God who made them, whom their sires adored,
And on yon flaming pile, alas! I fear,
Some victim of their rage is sacrificed
For his adherence to the God of Truth.”

An anxious wish now glowed in Irad’s breast,
By some sad boding sentiment inspired,
To ascertain the victim of the scene,
Who, as the flames moved with the unsteady
breeze,

By fits, was to their shuddering view revealed
Amidst the lurid blaze, consuming fast.
And soon on foot, the youth, with pensive heart,
Descends the mount and mingles with the throng;
While in a deep recess amidst the rocks,
Hadallah in security is placed,
With Japhet and young Ellam for her guard.

But oh! what horror seized on Irad’s heart
On learning that the sire of her he loved,
The virtuous Jotham, was the sacrifice
These cruel men to wicked laws had made,
Zealots in error, and the foes of Heaven.—
And where was Isamell! where was the maid
Whose virtues and whose charms held o’er his
heart

A sway resistless, rapturous and endeared?
He long inquired; and sad at length he found

She was a captive, ordered to be sent,
Without delay, to the proud capital,
With her surpassing beauty to adorn
The harem of Shalmazar, as a gift
From his obsequious satrap of the west.

“ Shall she so dread a destiny endure;
She who to me is dearer far than life!”

The youth exclaimed, “ Oh! mighty truth forbid!—
Forbid it every feeling of the heart,
Humanity and manhood, faith and love!—
Hear and record my vow, eternal Heaven!
By thee I swear to rescue her or die!”

He hastens, and the sad intelligence
Gives to his grief-struck friends. At once the aid
Of Ellam for the rescue, zealously
Is offered, and received. Japhet remains
To guard Hadallah’s safety midst the rocks.—
The ardent pair their armour buckled on,
Their chargers mounted, and at fall of eve,
Approach the tower where Isamell is lodged.
Her guards are few; of rescue none had dreamed;
And swift her dauntless friends have fought their
way

Into her presence; and bold Irad soon,
Who at that moment feared no human force,
Has caught her, trembling, in his joyful arms,
On the swift charger raised her with himself,
And at full speed the mountain refuge sought:
While Ellam, till they vanish far from sight,
With fierce death-dealing weapon awes the foe.

Then daringly amidst the crowd he mounts,
And leaves it in astonishment behind.

'The victors soon the mountain covert gained,
Where Japhet and Hadallah fervently
Had poured unceasing prayers for their success.
And now, with pious joy, they all unite
In hymns of gratitude to HIM whose power
Gave them to triumph in the daring deed:
And thus they prayed: "Oh may thy favor still,
Almighty One! be with the righteous cause,
As it so signally hath been to-day.

'Though few we were against a numerous host,
We feared not. In the cause of innocence,
Oh! who would fear to dare the path of peril,
Since even to fail in such a cause, is blest
By thy approval, highest of rewards
To which the soul of man can e'er aspire!"

A short repast and short repose they take,
And from that hostile and ungracious clime,
Ere morning opens they are on their flight:
For well they knew that many a hostile troop
Would soon o'errun the land in search of them,
To pour the satrap's vengeance on their heads.
But their good steeds seemed with fresh vigour
fired,

And bore them rapidly beyond the reach
Of danger from vindictive enemies.

Three days their journey, pointing to the west,
Continued, ere they passed the boundaries

Of the wide empire of the Cainite race.
They entered then a region desolate,
Where foe or friend of human kind was none.
It was a barren desert, bleak and wild,
Whose hardy tenants were the beasts of prey
That ne'er had owned the authority of man;
But free as winds that ranged their rugged hills,
Ne'er since the day, when at their Maker's call,
They revered Adam and received their names,
Had stooped to human form, nor favor sought
Nor fear experienced from the lords of earth.
This region formed a separating chain
Of rocks and mountains difficult to pass,
Which lay between the Cainite provinces
And the possessions of the sons of Seth.
Five days our travellers through this desert toiled
Unharm'd and unopposed by its fierce lords
The lions, bears, and tigers, who for them
Cherished no fear, and with them waged no war;
But careless of their presence, let them pass
As all unworthy of their enmity.

How glowed the patriot throb in Japhet's breast,
When he again his native land beheld,
And trod the soil that owned his father's laws,
And where the God he served was worshipp'd still,
With the same rites those pious patriarchs used,
Who drew their knowledge from the Sire of men,
Or from divine communion with the skies!
Oh! sacred Nature, if there is a heart
In human breast, which at the endearing name

Of native land, when heard in foreign climes,
Feels not a yearning wish again to tread
Its honoured scenes;—feels not a pleasing glow
Of veneration, and a holy spell
Of strong attachment winding round its core—
From thee that heart no impulse hath received,
Which men can ever trust or Heaven approve.
Oh! patriotism, true proof of noble mind,
How many virtues take their birth from thee;
Faith, honour, valour, and the glorious throb
That bids us feel a luxury in toil,
And pride in hazard for our country's good—
'That bids us feel a glory in the death
That's nobly borne to free a suffering land
From native tyrant or from foreign foe!

Our travellers' way, now in a cultured clime,
Soon brought them to a city fair and large,
The eastern bulwark of Armonia's realm.
Here, Shem, prince Japhet's brother, as the chief
Of the surrounding province, dwelt and ruled
In justice and obedience to his sire,
Maintaining reverence for the ancient laws
Which blessed the land in Enoch's happy days.
This was the asylum of those faithful ones
Who fled Shalmazar's realm for conscience sake.
Here in defiance of the tyrant's threats,
Shem gave them welcome, and supplied their
wants
With hospitable care. The city hence
Was named Sabbatah, as their place of rest.

How pleasing to the patriot Japhet's sight
The lofty towers that now before him rose,
Decked with the ensigns of his father's rule,
Then floating radiant in the passing breeze!
And ah! how still more pleasing to his view
The hallowed temples where the Living God
Was truly worshipped! Venerated fanes,
From whose blest courts he had been absent long,
How fondly did he welcome them again!
As he approached his ardent spirit glowed;
He felt as if he breathed a holier air,
And longed, once more in consecrated walls,
To worship his Creator, as in youth
He oft had done in manner of his sires.

Soon he receives his brother's glad embrace
And joyous welcome as from death restored;
While all Sabbatah's population join
In acclamations for his safe return,
And praises for his glorious triumph o'er
The power of demons and of wicked men.
And soon the pious prince a temple seeks,
Where he might pour the o'erflowings of his heart,
In fervent thanks, before the people all,
Confessing that to God alone he owed
The prosperous issue of his pilgrimage.
His loved Hadallah he that day espoused
With solemn rite; and in the public ear
Proclaimed her steadfast faith and piety.
That she was beautiful they all beheld;
That she had suffered in the cause of Heaven

And shrunk not in the trial, now they heard,
And every heart and tongue joined in her praise.

Thou too, young Irad, then obtained thy bride,
The lovely Isamell, and shared the joy
And glory of that virtue-crowning day.

And, Ellam, thou didst also reap the meed
Of joy, for duty done and Heaven revered.
Joyful thou didst behold thy loved one blest,
Nor envied that another made her so;
And gladly thou didst join the general voice
In praise of HIM whose grace conducted thee
To light from darkness, and thy soul redeemed
From bonds of guilt to joys of piety.

Japhet resumes his journey; but not now,
As late he wandered in a foreign land,
In guise obscure; but as the royal heir
Of Armon's empire, to her capital,
Seat of his father's government, he goes
Attended as a victor and a prince.
At every city his approach is hailed:
For the swift tidings of his high exploits
Outrun his progress, and all people flock
To honour him. Triumphal arches rise,
And flowery wreaths are scattered in his way,
And songs resound his virtues and his fame.

At length paternal Noah to his breast
Strains his long absent son, and blesses him
And his fair bride won so triumphantly,
And for them craves the eternal care of Heaven.

THE ANTEDILUVIANS.

BOOK VIII.

THE ARGUMENT.

ENGAGED at the loss of Hadallah, and instigated by the counsels of Ammodeus, Shalmazar resolves to be revenged upon the house of Noah.—He assembles, from the various quarters of his dominions, an immense army, which he places under the command of Halmaidin, the most heroic and celebrated of his generals.—He accompanies the army in person.—On receiving intelligence of Shalmazar's design, Noah makes preparation to repel the invasion.—Japhet is generalissimo of the Sethite forces.—They are composed of three divisions.—The eastern under the command of Shem, the central under that of Ellam, and the western under Ham, the youngest brother of Japhet. While Japhet is in the western regions, hastening the organization and march of Ham's division, the invasion takes place, and is met on the eastern frontiers by the forces of Shem, who hazards a battle, although his army is greatly inferior in number to that of the enemy.—After an obstinate resistance, he is obliged to abandon the field to the invaders, and retreat to Sabbatah, the fortified capital of his province.—Siege of Sabbatah.—The Cainites repulsed with great slaughter, in their attempt to take the place by storm.—They blockade the city, and in revenge for their losses, commit terrible ravages throughout the adjacent country.

THE ANTEDILUVIANS.

BOOK VIII.

OH! disappointment of long cherished hope,
By fortitude itself thou'rt hard to bear;
Thou teachest murmuring to the meekest heart,
And turn'st even patience into fretfulness.
What then must hot and sanguine spirits feel
From thy harsh visitation? What the proud,
Self-willed, and powerful in authority,
Accustomed in all things to be obeyed—
What must they feel when thy envenomed fang
Strikes, like a scorpion's, torture to their hearts,
And fires their souls to fury and revenge!

Then was it wonderful that boundless rage
So fierce a spirit as Shalmazar's seized,
Thus baffled in his fondest hopes of love?
And wild, indeed, his frenzy, when he heard
That from his power the maiden had escaped,
Whom his enamoured soul more highly prized
Than all his harem favourites besides;
And whose resisting virtue to o'ercome,

His pride as well as passion panted now.—
Wo now to those who were her sentinels!
Wo to Jazeda, and the female train
Who of the maiden's safety had the charge!
'Their doom is prompt—inexpiable death.
And wo to those who, with officious zeal,
Attempt to mollify the tyrant's wrath
By offering consolation for his loss!
Wo ev'n to those who try to make him just,
By asking mercy for the innocent!
In that wild moment of his frenzied rage,
From his most trusted friends, one troublous word
Meets for its fierce reply, immediate death!

Soon Ellam and the minstrel twain are known
To be the partners of Hadallah's flight;
And they by public edict are denounced,
The bold offenders who had stol'n the maid.
A swift pursuit is ordered o'er the land,
And rich rewards proclaimed to those who shall
Seize or destroy the daring fugitives.

But vain was all pursuit, although the way
On which they fled, Asmodeus soon perceived,
And followed cloud-wrapt, anxious to arrest
The speed with which they left their foes behind.
But fear of Japhet's sacred wand restrained
The hovering demon from approaching near
To offer violence or impediment:
While to pursuit of swiftest animals,
The vigour of their steeds defiance gave,

Whose fleetness, now increased by aid from Heaven,
The pious fugitives in safety bore
In triumph from their baffled enemies.

From vain pursuit the frustrate fiend, at length
Returned, and to the angry tyrant, thus,
In smooth apologizing phrase, he spake.
“Dread Sire, and potentate o’er half mankind!—
How am I grieved that I must say but half!
And yet ’tis so, for all the line of Seth
Are thy despiteful foes. Their constant aim
Is to perplex thy government; and when
Thou wouldst possess a favourite joy, to throw
Obstruction in thy way and baffle thee.
Ah! know’st thou not whence shines the evil star
That blights thy fairest views of happiness?
Whence but from Noah’s ever hostile sphere?
’Tis thence proceeds the event that grieves thee
now;

Thence came the robber of those cherished sweets
Of which, ere thou couldst taste, thou art de-
spoiled.

The man who dared invade thy harem bowers,
And snatch from thee thy best beloved fair,
Audacious theft! is heir to Noah’s throne.
Here came he, fraudulent, in a minstrel’s guise,
A fellow minstrel aiding in the deed.
The traitor Ellam joined the daring plot:
The maid consented gladly, and is now
The bride of Japhet in Armonia’s land.
Too rapid was their flight for man’s pursuit,

Though following fleetly on the swiftest steeds.
And I pursued them, zealous in thy cause,
And tried to check them with impediments,
Or snare them into dangers, but in vain:
Some spirit from on high was their defence.
To Japhet's presence I dared not approach,
But hovered round, at distance from his view;
For he possessed a wand of Paradise,
Gifted with virtue terrible to fiends:
'The same with which, as I have lately heard,
He shook all Hades to its lowest depths.
I then was absent; but the demons there,
Yet tremble to relate the strange event
Of one bold man invading their domains,
And spreading terror through their fiercest ranks.—
But, mighty king, thou know'st not all the extent
To which these robbers of thy harem, have
Contempt and enmity for thee displayed.
The warlike satrap, Mohawb, had obtained
A maiden for thy harem, whose rare charms
Might have consoled thee for Hadallah's loss.
Her they discovered, rushed upon her guard,
Bore her away, and she is now the espoused
Of Irad, and to thee for ever lost,
Unless by arms thou force her from their grasp.
By arms Hadallah too may yet be won.
Yes; son of Cain, if thou dost wield aright
'Thy empire's force against the sons of Seth,
Thou wilt avenge these insults, and regain
The enchantress of thy bosom to thy arms.

With thee, the fiends of Hades will enleague;
They too have injuries they would avenge."

"Faithful Asmodeus, thou dost counsel well,"
The demi-fiend replied. "War shall be waged.
I'll draw such strength from all my empire's
bounds,

As will chastise that insolent race of men
Who nourish in their breasts such rancorous hate
Against whatever bears the name of Cain.
Revenge and Love! these are worth fighting for:
And these—'tis these that call us now to war.
Soon shall our spiteful foes who scorn us now—
Who set at nought our gods—our laws—our
power—

Feel that in vengeance we are terrible,
When roused to wrath by wanton enmity.
Let them, when their devoted plains shall smoke
With conflagrating ruin, and their blood
Shall drench their streets, and their corrupting flesh
Manure their valleys, while they vainly cry
For undeserved mercy at our hands—
Let them entreat the unseen Power they trust,
'To save them from our fury. They shall find
That, if he hears them in the distant space
Which He inhabits, He will heed them not,
Nor for their sake, unwisely plunge in war
With us, and our confederated fiends
Who, if He interfere, will to our aid
Rush with their mighty power, and empty hell

Of all its forces, causing dire dismay
To blight the strength of which his angels boast!
Since he is wise, which even his foes admit,
Such terrible turmoil he will not risk,
Nor for mankind disturb the peace of heaven.
Therefore, be now our occupation war,
Till vengeance on the insulting enemy
Be amply taken, and the sons of Seth
Become as abject as they now are bold."

Now war's dread preparation rang its note,
From gay Gal-Cainah to the farthest bounds
Of all Shalmazar's subject provinces;
From Bactryalla north, to the south coast
Where bloom the spicy isles mid seas of pearl;
And from the Indus west, to the far streams
Which wash the Orient realms where since have
dwelt

The numerous followers of the ancient sage
Confucius, prophet of the brown Chinese.
Swift at the summons of the imperial voice,
A thousand tribes their warlike bands sent forth
Eager for scenes of slaughter and renown,
And fired with hopes of spoil and captive maids,
From cities sacked and desolated plains.

It was on Kondah's plain, near Kisna's source,
The swarming martial multitude convened,
In numbers countless as the mighty throng
With which, in after times, the Persian king
Assailed the patriot bands of classic Greece.
But far more warlike than the Persian host,

In spirit and demeanor, were the powers
That now beneath Shalmazar's banner ranged.
They, like the Punic chief, deep hatred felt,
And dread destruction swore against their foes.—
As he beheld that formidable host
In all its martial pomp, the monarch deemed
Already Noah's throne and realm his own,
And felt as sovereign of the human race,
That the whole earth his footstool had become.

In five divisions, martially arranged,
This multitude of warriors proudly marched;
And each division had its name assigned
From that especial quarter of the earth
That gave it origin. The first was called
The Central, from those central provinces
Around the capital, which sent it forth.
Halmadin was its chief, ordained supreme,
By royal rescript over all the war:
For he, in warlike arts, was deeply skilled,
And blooming laurels decked his high career,
For vict'ry gained in many a bloody field.
The second, from the North, confessed the sway
Of Ormadas, a satrap stern and bold,
Who ruled the hardy hunters of Bataar,
Famed for its elephants and noble steeds.
The third, fair Arva, from thy eastern plains
Renowned for rich productions of the loom.
Silken or woollen or of flaxen woof,
Was by thy favourite warrior, Asmar, led.
And o'er the fourth, which for its gorgeousness

And gay equipments far excelled the rest,
Halkasar, from the ocean-bounded south
Whose vales breathed odours of sweet cinnamon,
And honey-scented roses, had command.
And Mohawb, thou, fierce bigot of the west,
Wert ruler of the fifth, a furious band,
Surpassing all the rest in bitterness
Of enmity against the sons of Seth.
Of these bold leaders, were the first and last,
Giants, like him they served, and demi-fiends.
And many a cohort of the numerous host
Was formed of giants of the same dire strain,
Fell vot'ries of the foulest wickedness.
A thousand elephants well trained for fight,
Ten thousand armed chariots, and of steeds,
Gallant and bold, full fifty thousand, swelled
The mighty armament; while camels more
Than twice that number, bore the equipage
And warlike stores, for the vast multitude,
In rich abundance lavishly prepared.

As on exultingly the army moved,
What martial throbs the warriors' hearts inspired,
Proud of their numbers, and their radiant pomp,
And all impatient for the exploits, the fame,
And boundless spoil that dazzled in their hopes,
And formed the fascination of their dreams!
Shalmazar viewed them as invincible,
And felt his spirit swell so haughtily,
That he regarded human foes with scorn,
Deeming himself on earth a match for Heaven.

What grief intense and deep perplexity
Struck the sad heart of Noah when he heard
Of this immense array of rancorous foes,
Hastening, upon his people and himself,
To hurl dread havoc and unsparing death!
But for his people, not himself, he grieved;
For conscious of his own integrity,
His faith in Heavenly favour was too firm
To feel, in aught, for his own fate alarmed.
It was his country that engrossed his care
And waked the apprehensions of his breast:
For o'er the realm, alas! too well he knew
That, spite of his paternal government,
With sad and awful recklessness, prevailed
Ungodliness and crime—fraud, lust, and pride,
Pofanity and vengeful violence,
And constant breaches of those holy laws
The Heaven-instructed patriarchs had ordained.
Alas! he knew the offended Deity,
Had in the scale of justice weighed mankind,
And found the wicked pressed the balance down
Too heavily for the devoted race
Long to escape the impending punishment
Due to transgressors so perverse as they.
Ah! well he knew, in that degenerate time
Too few the righteous, even where righteousness
Had still professors, to preserve the earth
From the dread vengeance due to daring guilt.
Yet did the anxious patriarch hope to bring
His people, by repentance, to the path

Their fathers trod, that Mercy's hand divine,
Might interpose its bright celestial shield,
To stay the sword of justice ere it fell
On contrite sinners, convict but forgiven,
And from destruction save a guilty world!

To the assembled elders of the realm,
Called to confer in reverend Sanhedrim,
How best to meet the dread emergency,
His anxious thoughts the monarch-patriarch spake.

“Ye fathers of the people, on whose sage
And patriotic wisdom I rely
To point the measures we must now pursue
In this sad juncture of our country's need,
'Tis not enough we should prepare in arms
To meet the invaders with opposing force;
Twill not avail unless upon our cause
The God of battles smile propitiously,
And strengthen us in conflict with the foe.
But have we not, alas! offended Him,
By frequent and unhallowed practices
Against his laws and high authority:
For which it now behooves, with humbled hearts
And penitent, forgiveness to implore.
Let all the people be exhorted now
To turn from the polluted paths of sin,
From idol worship, fraud, and violence,
And vile debauchery, to the holy laws
Prescribed by oracles our fathers taught,
And which themselves so piously obeyed.
Let us proclaim a day of fast and prayer

And humbling of our hearts before our God.
He'll hear our supplications in distress;
Our crimes shall from Heaven's records be erased;
And haply HE on whom our fathers leaned
For safety in their need, will shield us now
From wicked foes who dare blaspheme his name.
Thus shall our warriors fearless march, restored
To confidence in God, and peace of mind
Which from such confidence alone can flow."

The patriarch's words the reverend sires approved,

Though some, in secret unbelief, despised,
Their suffrage yielding but from pliancy
To the prevailing voice. Throughout the realm
The day of penitence was set apart,
And many honoured it with reverence due,
Confessed their crimes to Heaven and pardon sought.

But many, slaves to unbelief and sin,
In wanton pleasures spent the sacred day,
Regardless of the warnings they received
From holy prophets, missioned through the land
To teach obedience to the laws of Heaven,
And turn offenders from their wickedness.

Yet though religious faith its power had lost
O'er many a carnal and corrupted heart,
There were but few who, in that perilous time,
Felt not the patriot impulse fire their breasts
To join their country's standard, and in arms
Expel the foul invaders from her soil.—

Three numerous armies were assembled soon,
The Eastern, Western, and the Central called:
Heroic Japhet o'er the whole was chief,
And under him, his brethren, Ham and Shem,
And his devoted friend, young Ellam, led,
Each, one division of the armament.
To Ham the western legions were assigned,
Who from the banks of Nile, and from the plains,
Of palmy Jordan, and the land of Ur
Rich in abundant kine, and fleecy wealth
Of many a pastoral vale, in thousands flocked,
Gallant and ardent, in their country's cause,
To rally round her standard of defence.
Ellam was leader of the central force
Drawn from the populous provinces which lay
Around the Tigris' and Euphrates' streams.
Glorious Euphrates! venerable stream!
Dear to the emotions of each pious heart
Imbued with sacred lore of patriarch times:
Haunt of great men, and seat of empire long,
From Nimrod to the Grecian conqueror
Who, midst his revels, from thy regal banks
Issued his edicts to the subject world:
How many sovereign masters of mankind
Have, proudly throned on thy illustrious brink,
Received the homage of their vassal kings!
From Persian regions, and from where the vine
Of Ecbatan bestowed its precious juice
Endued with power to cheer the human heart;
And from the vales of Susa, whose rich fields

With fruits and corn abundantly repaid
The easy culture of the fertile soil;
And from Sabbatah, refuge of the just
Who fled the realms of Cain for conscience sake;
The troops of Shem came forth; the first to march
Towards the borders of the frontier east,
There to resist the entrance of the foe,
And cause his wrathful arrogance to feel
The fearless strength of patriotic men,
When roused to combat in their country's cause.

And now in war's magnificent pomp arrayed,
The steel-clad hosts of grim invasion came,
A splendid but terrific spectacle.
They halted on a lawn of upland green
Extending north and south, far as the eye
From Shem's encampment could its vision stretch.
The thousand banners floating in the air,
The armed chariots, and the elephants
Bearing huge towers for battle and for state,
On their enormous shoulders, moving high
Amidst the countless legions, struck dismay
Into the hearts of many a son of Seth,
Who, on that awful day, the sight beheld.
Oh! then, what sighs from patriot bosoms rose
To view the clouds of misery thickening fast,
With threatening horrors, o'er their native land!
The valiant feared, but feared not for themselves;
Their country's fate alarmed them, not their own.
Yet none thought of submission: every heart,
Indignant at the invader's insolence,

Cherished the fervor of a patriot's zeal,
And with impatience burned, in that sad hour,
To meet, though in unequal strife, the foe.

The opposing hosts, each stationed on a hill
Within each other's wrath-arousing view,
But for one anxious day and watchful night,
Refrained from joining in the deadly fray.

The blushing morn looked radiant through the
mist

Which lightly floated, an aerial sea,
Around the skirts of either far-spread camp.
As rose that mist to mingle with the clouds,
It bore away the curtain of the night,
Leaving in view to each excited host,
The warlike flashing of its enemy.
Then loud the trumpet, signal of attack,
Resounded through the fiery Cainite van,
Whose eager lines in martial order moved,
Led by the giant Mohawb, fierce and stern.
Full soon the intermediate vale they passed
In swift career, and with air-rending shout
That drowned the clangour of the trumpet-tones,
With ranks compact and levelled spears, they
charged

The steady phalanx under Shem's command.
But vain the impulse of their forward march,
And the vast weight of numbers rolling on,
Like a swollen torrent, to the work of death,
The sons of Seth, with shields impacted firm,
And pikes projected to the assailing mass,

Stood like an iron wall, a rampart dread
Impenetrable to the enemy,
And fatal to his violent assaults.
Thrice came the charge and thrice it was repelled
With horrid slaughter, till the smoking blood
Of thousands slain, and their gashed carcasses,
Filled the red vale and choked the path of war.

'Twas then Halmadin, with experienced eye,
Beheld the deadly unavailing strife
Maintained by Mohawb's squadrons, and resolved
To achieve the conquest of the unyielding foe,
By art, in union with augmented force,
Since force alone had proved incompetent.
He swifly, Ormadas, the northern chief,
And Asmar, the bold leader of the east,
With formidable power of horse and foot,
Despatched to right and left of Shem's array,
By paths circuitous and out of view,
While with renewed attacks, in battle's front,
He kept his valiant enemy employed.—
'Twas past mid-day when Shem's long harassed
troops

Perceived, upon their southern wing, advance
The lines of Ormadas; and on the north
To their dismay, soon after, they beheld
The potent force by furious Asmar led
With purpose to surround them on the field.
Vainly to each a separate front they form:
Too few their numbers, in that awful hour,

To bear the torrent onset of the charge
Whose shock assails them both in front and rear.

Now Shem, with agony of soul, beholds
Death making direful inroads in his ranks,
By horror followed and wild disarray.
Longer resistance he perceives is vain,
A useless, cruel waste of brave men's lives;
And forced by adverse fate, reluctantly,
He makes the signal to commence retreat.
His troops draw off with slow and steady pace,
As if they grieved to leave the fatal field
Where, from their sides, death had so cruelly
Swept off such numbers of their dearest friends,
To die with whom, was now as much their wish
As to survive in sorrow for their loss,
Save for the hope which warmed their grief-struck
hearts,

That they may yet avenge them on the foe.—
Towards Sabbatah's walls they take their march;
And gathering shades of night befriend them
soon,

With respite from their fierce pursuers' rage.
But they delayed not, on that mournful night,
To urge their course with unabated speed,
So that ere morn, a distance they had gained
Which yielded safety from the enemy.

Three days and nights of toilsome march they
bore,
With gallant hearts, ere they the city reached,

Within whose walls, at length, they found repose

And welcome of fraternal fervency.

And with true patriot zeal each man prepared,
In that heroic city, to defend,
From the fierce fury of the advancing foe,
Her lofty walls and strong-built battlements,
The sole asylum now of all they loved,—
Their sacred temples, homes, and fathers' graves.
And happily the city was supplied
With all the requisites for long defence;
Food, fuel, water, arms and warlike men,
And resolute commanders, skilled to guide
The labours of resistance, and preserve
The order needed in such fearful times.

'Twas where two rivers joined their azure
streams,—

The Alkar moving southward in his course,
Slow to the sea and the more rapid Sald
That hurried westward, from Hivalla's mount,
With tributary wave to Alkar's bed,—
Sabbatah raised her bulwarks to protect
Her sons and daughters, with maternal care,
Against the fury of barbarian foes:
These friendly rivers on the North and West
Were guardians of the strengths erected there:
The East and South by nature guarded less,
Were more assisted by the power of art:
There fosses deep, and mounds and ramparts high,
And massive towers, the enemy defied.

And soon that potent enemy approached
In terrible array, with engines vast
Wrought by gigantic strength, whose dread assault
Upon the battered ramparts, came like bolts
Of loud exploding thunder in the vales,
That into fragments rive the solid rocks,
And to their deep foundations shake the hills.
Swift ruin thought the assailants then to bring
Upon the trembling walls; and for a time
Dismay prevailed o'er all Sabbatah's bounds.
But soon her brave defenders rose in strength;
For Shem, their dauntless leader, warmed their
souls

With patriot fire, as zealous thus he spake.

“ Why fear ye, sons of Seth, to face such foes
As the polluted progeny of Cain,
Scorners of virtue and outcasts from God?
Can it be death ye fear, when duty calls?
For shame!—if ye must die, 'tis better far
To die in arms, like men, in self-defence,
And in defence of all your hearts hold dear,
Your laws, religion, families and homes,
Than, like submissive slaves, be sacrificed,
To the fell fury of a hostile race
Who ne'er felt throb of mercy. Wake! resume
Your wonted courage, and once more be men!
Haste, man the walls! Be your ambition there
To die with glory or with glory live!
Your country calls, and righteous Heaven com-
mands!”

They heard; new spirit seized them, and they
flew,

Each to the post assigned him, eager now
To grapple danger in his wildest mood.
Nor unsupplied were they with warlike means
And engines of destruction. Bows and slings,
And missile spears, they were not slow to use
With true dexterity and steady aim
That laid full many a Cainite in the dust.
But deathful weapons more destructive still
Than these, they soon employed against the foe.
Directed by the skill of Hamer-dan,—
A Cainite now in exile for the truth,
Once pupil to the illustrious Tubal-Cain,
Who even his master's eminence excelled
In the dread science of war's engin'ry,—
Soon did their zealous artisans prepare
Supplies abundant of explosive tubes,
Whose fiery sleet, by bursting vapour driven,
And winged with lightning, carried streams of
death

Amidst the squadrons of the astonished foe,
However distant on the adjacent plain.

Soon too they poised upon the battlements,
Enormous beams, on winding pivots hung
Like balances, ingeniously contrived
To turn their arms, projecting in the air
High o'er the assailing enemies beneath:
Loaded with blocks of metal and huge stones,
They dropped the fearful masses on the heads

Of all who dared, giants or warriors mailed,
Approach the walls, and crushed them to the earth.
From powerful levers too they learned to cast
Amidst the hostile ranks, enormous hooks,
Pointed and barbed, and fixed to iron chains,
Which rapidly they swept among the groups
Who wrought the engines battering at the walls;
And seizing many a victim, raised him high
To writhe in air, an awful spectacle
For the companions whom he left beneath
'Trembling, in terror of the same sad fate.

Ten days Shalmazar urged his vain assault,
And every day saw thousands of his men
Become the victims of the stubborn strife;
And still the well-defended city stood,
Scorning his rage and daring all his power.
At length a council of his chiefs he held,
Whose earnest voice was given, no more to tempt
Those fiery missiles and those dread machines
That such dire havoc made throughout his ranks
And filled his boldest warriors with dismay.

“Better by far, my liege,” Halmadin said
At the conclusion of a soothing speech,
“To leave this stubborn city in its pride
Of temporary triumph, than expose
To profitless destruction thy best troops,
Whom when once lost in regions so remote
And midst a people hostile and perverse,
We can have no expectance to replace.
Yet I advise not to renounce the siege;

For there are means by which that city may,
Despite of walls and engines, be reduced.
Her stock of food, however plentiful,
Cannot support her population long,
Now doubly crowded with the peasant throngs
Who there have sought a refuge from our power.
Let us block up each passage of supply,
That those bold citizens may, from without,
No farther aid of sustenance receive.
Want and starvation soon shall do the work
Of their destruction, equal with our swords.
Let hunger spoil them of their energy,
Too feeble then to use their dread machines,
They to our arms an easy prey shall fall.
Mean time the neighbouring country we will waste,
Destroy its habitations, seize its spoils,
And ample vengeance on its people take
For all the losses we have here sustained."

The advice gave satisfaction; and the host
Was from the dread vicinity withdrawn,
Of the death-dealing engines. Round the place,
At cautious distances, environing guards,
In strong circumvallation, were arranged,
To hem the citizens in strict blockade,
And cut them off from succour and supply.

Then roamed the plunderers around the land,
With fiends of death and rapine in their train.
A thousand hamlets pillaged and despoiled,
On conflagration's red and rapid wing,

Soon from the trembling valleys disappeared,
And smouldering blackness marked where they
had been.

Oh! what despair then ravished virgins knew,
Imploring death in agony of soul!
And mothers bending o'er their slaughtered babes,
In anguish waiting for the friendly blow
That should their deep distraction terminate!
And grief-torn sires of all they loved bereaved,
In silent sorrow, opening their breasts
To give reception to the murderous steel
Already reeking with their children's gore!
Oh! then was spread of human carcasses,
A plenteous feast for beasts and birds of prey,
Who flocked to glut their ravenous appetites,
In myriads, to those carnage-covered plains.—
Since that dread period, never have mankind,
Through all their dark and savage history,
Beheld such scenes of cruelty and blood
Exhibited before appalled Heaven,
To make the angels weep to look on earth!

They who that dreadful massacre escaped,
Fled, some to wilds, and wastes, and caverns rude,
And in lone nature's bleak and barren haunts,
The tiger's and the lion's stern abodes,
Sought shelter from the fiercer savages,
In human form, that thirsted for their blood.
But some, more fortunate, by timely flight
To other regions in the distant west,

Where yet the desolators had not come,
Found safety and kind welcome from the swains,
Who heard the tale of their calamities
With grief and consternation, lest themselves
Should, in their turn, be fated to endure
The visitation of such barbarous foes,

THE ANTEDILUVIANS.

BOOK IX.

THE ARGUMENT.

GRIEF of Noah on hearing of the sufferings of the people in the invaded districts.—The Central army, under Ellam, hastens forward to restrain the excesses of the enemy.—Irak accompanies it as commander of a division.—On the approach of the Sethites, the siege of Sabbatah is raised, and Shalmazar prepares to encounter them.—A second battle is fought, more terrible than the first.—The division of Ellam is defeated, and himself slain in a single combat with Halmadin.—But Irak's division receiving timely assistance from the garrison of Sabbatah, under Shem, overpowers the left wing of the Cainites, commanded by the gigantic Mobawb, whom Irak slays in a personal conflict.—The victorious army of Halmadin advancing against Irak's troops, at this juncture, he is obliged to retreat, and, in conjunction with the force under Shem, takes refuge in Sabbatah.—The Cainites again lay siege to that city.—On the eighth day of this siege they are informed of the approach of a powerful Sethite army under the command of Japhet.—The siege is again raised, and the Cainites prepare to encounter the new assailants.—Order of battle on both sides.—Japhet despatches Ham with a strong force to attack the left wing of the enemy under Asmar.—He places an ambush under Hadar, to intercept any detachment from the centre of the Cainites, commanded by Halmadin, which might be sent to embarrass the operations of Ham.—He himself attacks the right wing of the Cainite army, and soon overthrows it, killing, with his own hand, its fierce leader, Ormadas.—Halmadin, at the head of the Cainite centre, perceiving the disaster which has befallen his right wing, is about hastening to its assistance, when he is obliged to hasten to the relief of Shalmazar, whose body-guard is attacked by the garrison of Sabbatah and the troops of Irak.—Shalmazar escapes the danger, and, protected by a portion of Halmadin's troops, leaves the field of battle. Halmadin defeats the troops of Irak, whom he kills in a personal rencounter.—His force, however, is soon attacked by the victorious division of Japhet, who gains over him a complete victory, and slays him in single combat.—This victory decides the fate of the invasion, for Ham had also, in his part of the field, been successful, having vanquished the forces of Asmar, and slain their chief.—Shalmazar, with the relics of his army, flies to his own dominions, pursued by the victors to the frontiers of the country.

THE ANTEDILUVIANS.

BOOK IX.

WHEN, borne on sounds of wo, to Noah came
The dark and mournful tale of those dread deeds
Of devastation and fell massacre,
Which marked the invaders' progress through the
land,

And plunged the unhappy people in despair,
How grieved his patriot spirit! Low to Heaven,
In sackcloth clothed and kneeling in the dust,
His heart he humbled and implored for aid.

“God of my fathers! whom my soul adores,
If 'tis thy will,” he cried, “avert this scourge,
This cruel scourge of desolating war!
'Tis true the victims are transgressors foul,
Rebels insane against thy holy laws:
Thy justice I impeach not. But I would,
With deep humility, thy mercy crave
For this devoted, sad, and suffering land!”

That eve, as sleepless on his couch he lay,
The anxious patriarch heard a voice from heaven,
Which thus declared the will of the Most High.

“ Oh! thou who sittest on the throne of Seth!
Hear and attend; my words are from above.
The sins of men, become so rank and foul,
Now cry aloud to Heaven for punishment.
The desolation which thou now deplorest,
Is but the work of justice. Yet think not
That those who fall beneath the stroke of war,
Are guiltier, or sustain a heavier doom,
Than the survivors, who must also die,
After endurance of a longer date
Of toil and sorrow in this world of crime.
Nor think the vict'ries of the Cainite race,
Bespeak them favoured more by Power Divine,
'Than they who fall the victims of their rage.
The wicked oft are used as instruments,
Upon the wicked justice to inflict:
Yet shall the day of retribution come,
When, in their turn, the executioners
Shall be the victims, and from other hands
Receive the penalty themselves have dealt.
For thee, sad ruler of degenerate men,
Thy steadfast virtues are observed in heaven;
And, fear not, they shall meet their recompense.
For though the guilty world become a wreck,
And vengeance overwhelm the human race
In universal ruin, virtue shall
Unharm'd survive the general doom, and midst
The dissolution of creation, sit
Secure, enthroned on immortality.
Hear further, Heaven approves thy patriot cares:

Send forth 'thy armies to assail the foe;
And he who acts the heroic patriot's part,
Though unsuccessful on the battle-field,
Shall not remain unhonoured nor unblest
Among admiring spirits in the sky!"

From the far western lands by Jordan's flood,
And Nilus, and the mighty mid-land sea,
The regions of Ham's government, not yet
The levies under his command, had come;
And anxious Japhet had proceeded there
To expedite their dilatory march.

Meanwhile the central troops, by Ellam led,
With ranks complete and eager for the war,
Marched eastward to arrest the enemy
And check him in his ravaging career.
And such their zeal, such their untiring speed,
That soon their ardent, anxious eyes beheld
The numerous ensigns of the intrenching foe,—
(Displaying on a flag of pitchy hue,
Three vultures hovering o'er a burning mount,
The image of rapacity and wrath,—)
Ranged round Sabbathah's still unconquered towers.
Those stately towers the Sethites too beheld;
And glad their hearts were on that day to see
Their own loved banner—(*stars supporting doves,*
Emblem of Heaven befriending innocence—)
Still floating on Sabbathah's battlements,
In bold defiance of the infuriate foe.

But yet a heaviness came o'er the hearts
Ev'n of the bravest of those patriot troops,

As they beheld the far extended camp
Of that innumerable hostile host
Which covered all the plain within their view,
And seemed as an interminable mass
Of men and horses, chariots, elephants,
Camels and oxen, tents and palanquins,
Shields, helmets, standards, glittering arms, and all
The plumed pomp of warlike equipage,
Arranged and stationed with true martial skill;
Bespeaking leaders eminent in war,
Who knew to use their formidable power
With art adapted, on the hard-fought field,
To force coy vict'ry, wavering in her choice,
To their embrace, by strength or stratagem.

But Ellam knew no fear; his cause was good,
And gallant and well-trained were all his men.
True, they scarce numbered half the mighty host
They must encounter now in deadly strife
At many a disadvantage. Yet he knew
That vict'ry not to numbers is enchained,
Nor ev'n to skill, with numbers when combined,
But as it pleaseth HIM who in his hand
Holds fate, and bids it favour whom he will.
His hope was in that Power; and he shrunk not,
When the foe offered battle, from the fight,
Though he must meet it with unequal strength.
In truth, his spirit into wrath had risen,
At the sad spectacle the land displayed
Of villages consumed, and corpses torn
By wolves and vultures, festering on the plain,

And all his generous soul impatient burned
To avenge, at once, and end such cruelties.

“ Again our foes with venturous armament,”
Shalmazar said to his assembled chiefs,
“ Have rashly brought themselves within our reach.
But think ye, chieftains, they will wait the attack
Of our resistless forces on the field?
When we approach to battle, much I fear
That they will fly, and skulk, like their compeers,
Into some stubborn town, and we shall lose
The triumph of their conquest in fair fight,
And in their hateful fortress, be obliged
Ingloriously to starve them into terms.
But let them fight or fly, we’ll to the attack,
And put their martial spirit to the proof.
Nor let us squander time in this vile siege,
But, with the dawn, our force for battle range
In open field, the sphere for valiant men,
Where laurelled vict’ry waits to crown our deeds.”

“ Wisely thou speak’st, my liege,” Halmadin
said:

“ This new arrived foe we must assail
Ere from his weary marching he repose,
Intrench himself, or to the foes besieged
Find access, and unite his strength with theirs.
We must awhile this wearisome blockade
Renounce, and our beleaguering lines withdraw
From hedging round this patience-trying town,
That with collected strength, we may at once
Subdue these rash destruction-seeking men .

Who so unwisely tempt us to the strife.
My liege, we will obey thee. By the dawn,
Our troops shall be in order for the affray,
Eager to pluck fresh laurels from the foe."

The morning came, and Ellam's scouts beheld
The enemy advance with all his force,
A huge and ponderous mass of moving men
Whose tread fell on the fix'd and solid earth,
With weight that seemed to shake it to its base
And bring its deep stability in peril.

Not slow was Ellam to arrange his troops
On ground selected with a warrior's skill,
To give reception to the enemy,
Such as a combatant would choose to give,
Who pants for vict'ry in a righteous cause.
One portion of his force to Irad's charge
He had committed: 'twas the southern wing,
And stationed on his right, behind the stream
Of Alkar which intrenched it from the foe.
The other portion, posted on a ridge
That from the river rose, flanked by a wood,
Was by himself commanded. And 'twas here
The hostile legions aimed their first assault.
'To over-bridge the stream, Halmadin saw
Was requisite ere he could reach his prey,
For so he deemed already Ellam's force.
And soon for this the adjoining forests fell
Dragged by gigantic power, and engines vast,
And strength of oxen, steeds, and elephants,
From hill-tops to the encumbered river's bed.

There to the margin moored with ponderous chains,
Or anchored to the bottom of the flood,
Each plank was to its fellow firmly bound;
Forming a sudden causeway, strong and large,
Extending its dimensions many a rood
Along each border of the burdened stream,
Of space to bear the formidable host
And all its dread artillery to the fight.
Nor did the sons of Seth look idly on
While in this threatening work their foes advanced,
But with perpetual missiles, from their heights,
Showered on the workmen death, and with the blood
Of its own builders stained the mighty bridge.

At length the floating structure joined each shore,
Spite of resistance. Then, without delay,
A thousand trumpets, from their brazen throats,
The dread command for instant battle, sound;
When from the lines a heavy-mailed mass,
With shields and sabres armed, rush to the attack
Impetuously, with wild terrific shouts.
In vain with showers of darts and javelins,
And the hailed missiles of ten thousand slings,
Did Ellam's men the fearful charge resist.
To desperate contact soon the Cainites came,
With the brave soldiers of the line of Seth.
Then man to man, the struggle was maintained
With stubborn firmness, every valiant heart
More bent on the destruction of his foe
Than his own safety. Fearless of himself,
Each warrior fought as on his single arm

Hung the whole fortune of the doubtful day.
Oft were the Cainites driven to their rafts,
But with fresh force supplied, as oft they drove
The battle's tide up the contested ridge,
And over thousands of the slain, at length,
By weight of numbers their gigantic power
Lodged in the centre of the Sethite camp.
Yet gallant Ellam would not yield the day.
His warriors fled not, but, like lions chafed,
Slow from the hunter's overpowering force,
Retreated with their faces to the foe,
Still looking stern defiance. At their head,
Ellam, whose arm had in that deadly fight
Been fatal to full many a son of Cain,
Still scattered death around; and terror flashed
Where'er the lightning of his spear was seen.

At length that spear and the destroying chief
Who wielded it with such terrific power,
Enraged Halmadin saw and recognised:
For they had oft, beneath his own command,
When rebel satraps were to be subdued,
Sent death and terror through the ranks of war.
To see them now in hostile attitude,
Inflamed his wrath: he fiercely onward drove
O'er fallen men, cutting his furious way
Amidst the fiery ranks of combatants,
Until he reached the object of his rage,
A warrior worthy of his utmost might,
A bold renouncer of his sovereign's rule,
Whom to destroy would please that sovereign well.

“Deserter! art thou here,” he loudly cried,
“In traitorous compact with thy country’s foes,
And worse than traitorous conflict with her sons?
Oh! shame to thee! a Cainite! and dost lead
The inveterate foes of all the Cainite race,
To odious war against thy country’s king
To whom, as true successor to the throne
Of glorious Cain of whom his sons are proud,
Thou ow’st allegiance thou hast basely broke,
And art an outlaw sentenced to the fate
Which from my hands this day thou shalt receive.
Thy strength, though fatal to the common herd
Of soldiers, if with me thou dar’st to try,
Full well thou know’st will prove but feebleness.
But why thus parley? On thy casque receive
The vengeful stroke that lays a traitor low!”

His weapon flew, launched with a giant’s force;
But watchful Ellam shunned its deadly track.
Through the high margin of his shield it pierced,
And held its way, scarce checked in its career,
Amidst a group of warriors, three of whom
Successively encountered its fierce sweep:
It rent the channels of their vital stream
Which gushing forth, they fell convulsed, and died.
Then his gigantic spear Halmadin grasped;
But ere he raised it for the wrathful blow,
Ellam addressed him, and he paused to hear.

“Attend, Halmadin! thou wert once my friend,
And ere thou strik’st I ask thee but to hear.
Thy strength I know; thy valour I respect;—

Oh! were they in a better cause employed,
How would my heart, for friendship's sake, rejoice!
But when my friend supports a cause unjust,
With sorrow I expel him from my heart,
Constrained to treat him as an enemy.

'Thou call'st me traitor! 'tis a slanderous charge:
To tyranny no fealty can be due.

A tyrant's yoke I scorned, and cast it off,
And every virtuous throb approves the deed;
And every manly impulse bids me arm
In opposition to that tyrant's power;
And in defence of justice and mankind,
Seek death or vict'ry on the field of war.

'Then, powerful as thou art, I fear thee not;
For, if in such a cause my arm prevail,
Angels shall triumph and mankind rejoice:
Or should I fall, 'twill be a glorious doom,
And ope for me the eternal gates of heaven!
On then, thou slave of tyranny and guilt!
I scorn thy master, and thyself defy!"

A javelin from his hand that moment flew,
With force enough the tripled plates of steel
'That helmeted Halmadin's lofty brows,
To pierce, and on the giant's forehead strike
With stunning power, and torture-giving wound
'That made him reel, and for an instant's space,
The light extinguished from his glaring eyes.
But soon recov'ring, the fierce Cainite chief,
Grasped with infuriate hand his massy spear,
And aimed at Ellam's breast a thrust so fierce,

That through the metal of the opposing shield,
It forced its way, and grazing on the ribs,
Tore harshly thence the warm and quivering flesh,
And bade the purple stream profusely flow.
The spear of Ellam on the giant's arm
Had fallen, but so slight the wound it gave,
It weakened not, but more enraged the foe
Who all his strength collecting, one more thrust
Made with his spear, and Ellam's heart was pierced.
The sons of Seth beheld the hero fall,
And seized with terror, fled the fatal field,
Where many a thousand of their brethren lay
Supine in death or writhing in their gore.

Meanwhile the force of Irad had given fight
To Mohawb's power, who brought his Cainites on
With fearful shock, in high assurance bold
Of easy vict'ry. But they were deceived.
Soon disappointment blighted their high hopes,
And sunk their proud presumption to dismay.
For scarce the ranks had in the encounter met,
When on the Cainite rear, with sudden shout,
Rushed a bold band, out of Sabbatah, led
By gallant Shem, and plunged into the fight.
On either side thus pressed with valiant foes,
The men of Mohawb into panic fell,
Threw down their arms and from the combat fled,
But not until whole legions of their slain
Lay heaped in thousands on the crimson field.

'Then was to Irad's warlike arm assigned
The task of retribution for the blood

Of martyred Jotham, which aloud to Heaven
For vengeance called on guilty Mohawb's head.

Maddened with the disasters he beheld,
His men dispersed or slain, himself enclosed
By injured foes all eager for revenge,
The haughty Cainite stood, at desperate bay,
Behind his shield, his back against a rock,
Giving dread battle to each coming foe,
Till thrice ten warriors, by his single arm
Clove to the earth, there weltered and expired.

At length the struggle meets young Irad's eye,
Who swiftly hastes to terminate the strife.

In the gigantic frenzy-goaded chief,
He soon descries fierce Mohawb's savage looks,
The guilty author of good Jotham's fate.

“Withdraw!” he cries to the assailing throng
That, eager for the unconquered giant's fall,
With unavailing efforts plied their darts,
And showered their missiles on his sounding shield
Which cast them off, just as the tile-clad roof,
In gelid storms, casts off the bounding hail.—

“Withdraw, and leave that giant foe to me.
I hear a spirit whispering to my soul,
That to my arm the vengeance due is given
For the misdeeds of his unhallowed life.”

His men withdrew. The giant with contempt,
Viewed the bold youth who singly dared his might,
And thus addressed him in the words of scorn.

“Unhappy stripling! what presumption brings
Thee here, to throw away thy vernal life

Which into manhood scarce hath budded yet.
If thy brief journey of existence hath
So painful been that it hath wearied thee,
And thou to shorten it occasion seek'st,
'Tis mine for thee that favour to perform,
And leave thy parents, if they still survive,
To seek their graves with one descendant less.
Approach and learn, 'tis worthy of thy pride,
How swiftly death flows from a veteran's arm."

"Boaster!" the youth replied, "great as thou
art

In strength and bulk, and in rude insolence,
I fear thee not, for victory belongs
Not to the strong so much as to the brave,
Not to the boastful but the valiant heart.
And now the eternal doom of justice calls
To inflict on thee the retribution due
For thy foul crimes; and Jotham's martyrdom
In me, this day, hath an avenger found."

"Thou an avenger!" the proud Mohawb cried:
"This blow, vain boy, will teach thee modesty."
He said; and lifted high his ponderous spear:
It swept like lightning through the air, and fell,
But harmless, on a cleft of jutting rock
Obtrusive hanging in the adjacent space,
And broke with sudden crash and splintering
sound;

While Irad, with a dexterous leap, beneath
That rock's projecting brow, found safe retreat
From the dread weapon's wild and furious course.

But long he staid not: with one forward bound,
And sword in hand, (while Mohawb yet confused
At the disaster of his shivered spear,
Saw not, or warded not, the swift assault)
Pierced, with one forceful thrust, the unguarded
side

Of the fierce Cainite, and let loose the flood
Of life, which flowed in rapid stream. Convulsed
The giant fell, blaspheming fate, and died.

Just then, as Irad thought the day was won,
And overthrown the invaders of the land,
Ev'n while his troops were shouting victory,
He suddenly beheld what crushed his joy,
And changed his triumph into deep alarm.
A mighty force which Cainite banners bore,
Conducted by the great Halmadin's skill,
And with the conquest flushed o'er Ellam's troops,
Appeared advancing in fierce warlike pride,
Eager the shock of battle to renew.
The scattered Sethites soon, at trumpet's sound,
Stood to their arms, in one firm band compact.
But to compete with the approaching foe,
All saw and felt their numbers were too few,
Thinned as they were in that destructive fight
In which, though conq'rors, they had freely bled
And freely died to purchase victory.

Awhile they stood, all thoughtful and dismayed,
To see the formidable foe advance,
Seven times their number on the martial plain.
The chieftains now to conference were convened,

When Shem, whose soul for human sufferings
grieved,

This counsel gave which gained the assent of all.

“A useless waste of gallant lives,” he said,

“Would but result were we to wait yon foe

Whose overwhelming columns soon would crush,

In spite of valour, our too weak array,

And from the slaughter of our vanquished band,

Acquire new triumph to augment their pride.

Let us retire—retreat is no disgrace

When, in the face of a superior foe,

We but retire to choose our battle-ground,

And that shall be, if wisdom guide our choice,

Within Sabbatah’s walls, where we may aid

The brave defenders of that noble town,

The unyielding bulwark of our eastern coast,

Where proud Shalmazar hath already learned

To fear the valour of the sons of Seth,

And where his fury we may long defy.

But, trust me, there we shall not long be kept;

For Japhet with the warriors of the West,

Those hardy men whose frames inured to toil,

And daring spirits, fit them well for war,

Will soon relieve our city from its siege,

And teach the foe he is not destined still

‘To reign victorious o’er embattled fields.’”

“Thy words breathe wisdom and humanity,

Illustrious son of Noah!” Irad said;

“Let us within Sabbatah’s towers preserve

Our strength until heroic Japhet comes,

That we may aid him in the important hour
When o'er the plain the raging combat swells,
And our deliverance from the invader's yoke,
Hangs tremulous in the scale of destiny;
Then in the balance we will cast our weight,
And to the side of justice press the beam."

The chiefs approved: and soon in order led,
The marching cohorts an asylum found
Within their ramparts, from whose frowning
heights

'They bade defiance to the baffled foe.
Seven days the Cainites idly circled round,
At cautious distance, those death-dealing walls
Which dread experience warned them to avoid.
As furious wolves encompassing a fold
Where hunted flocks a safe retreat enjoy,
Clamour, and scowl the heavens impatiently,
And in their fretful humours tear the earth,
Or howl impotent murmurs to the air:
So rage the baffled Cainites in their spite,
And call upon each fierce malignant fiend
To curse the brave men they cannot subdue.

The eighth returning morn of this vain siege,
Arose in soft and sweet serenity,
As if Heaven's face smiled tranquilly on earth,
'To form a contrast to the frantic scenes
Of strife and havoc then exhibited
By savage men on nature's loveliness;
When from their posts, Shalmazar's scouts beheld
The western plains adorned with banners gay
In warlike pride, like radiant clouds outspread,

In many a fold bright waving to the sky,
And moving on magnificently bold.

Now all is bustle in the Cainite camp:
Throughout the lines the alarum trumpets sound,
The tents are struck, once more the siege is raised,
And each division of the mighty host
Arrays itself for battle. In three parts
They take their stations to await the foe,
Whose aspect seems more potent to their sight,
And with more serious thoughts their bosoms fills,
Than any force they had encountered yet.

Though not dismayed, yet much with care perplexed,
Shalmazar thus the assembled chiefs addressed.
“Ye sons of Cain, the warlike and the brave,
Who never shrunk from fight nor feared a foe,
This day occasion worthy of your fame,
Is offered by our ancient enemies,
To try your skill in battle, and your brows
With brighter plumes of victory enwreath,
Than ever yet were won in earthly fight.
Collected now from all their provinces,
The sons of Seth put forth their utmost strength,
And under their bold prince, young Japhet, come
In one great struggle to decide the prize
Of this world's empire; whether they or we
Shall henceforth be the masters of the earth.
This is the mighty cause which has arrayed
One half mankind against the other now,
In glorious arms upon the field of war.

Be brave and conquer! If ye win this day,
'Then ye for ever are the lords of earth;
But lose it, and ye are for ever slaves,
Slaves to the sons of Seth, the younger born!
Were such your fate, your great progenitor
Would, from his starry residence, look down
With scorn upon his dastard race, so fallen
From the high standard of his warlike fame.
But warriors, no; slaves ye shall never be!
Ye have already been the victors twice
In bloody fields, since this great war began.
A third victorious day awaits you now:
'Tis all ye want to crown your glorious toils;
To gain for you the riches of the West,
Which teem profusely o'er the fertile realms
Where flow Euphrates, Jordan, and the Nile,
Or fill the vales of happy Araby;—
And more than all, secure to your ambition,
That noble birth-right of the great first-born
Whose heirs ye are, earth's splendid sovereignty!
Now chieftains, to your various posts repair:
Inspire your troops—bid them remember all,
Vict'ry is rule, defeat is slavery!
So the next rising of yon orb of day,
Shall see you conquerors of a subject world!"

The chiefs obeyed, to martial deeds inflamed,
And eager for the onset of the fray.
Halmadin in the centre took his post;
'The northern wing was led by Ormadas
The chieftain of the warriors of Bataar;

While Asmar, satrap of the farthest East,
Assumed direction of the southern band.
In rear of all, Shalmazar's body guard,
A formidable corps of horse and foot,
Beneath Halkasar's management was placed,
The chief who ruled the aromatic realms,
Of spices fertile, in the southern clime.

Soon as prince Japhet, from afar, surveyed
The strength and station of the enemy,
He ranged his forces to attack the points
Of access easiest to assailing strength.
Two grand divisions formed his armament.
Himself commanded one; the other Ham,
Youngest of Noah's sons, who bold and brave,
And zealous to expel the invading foe,
Was well deserving of the important charge
Which Japhet now committed to his care.

“ 'Tis yours, my brother, to commence the
fight,”

The careful Japhet said; “ lead all your force
Towards the extreme of Asmar's southern lines.
There no obstructing ground shall check the course
Of your assault, which for your country's sake—
Your bleeding country, mourning her brave sons
And daughters fair, in many a thousand slain
By this barbarian foe—in the great name
Of HIM who rules the battle's hour, and wields
The fate of kings and empires at his will,
Charge boldly, and expect His mighty aid.
Before your strength that wing shall soon give way:

Then from his heights, Halmadin must descend
'To its assistance, or despatch a force
For which, in ambush, with his Median troops,
'The gallant Hadar will await. My task
Shall be to assail the post of Ormadas;
And I fear not, with aid of Him Supreme,
Whose power our impious enemies defy,
To tear the plume of vict'ry from their brows,
To humble their proud vaunting, and avenge
The desolation of our mourning land."

Then all the assembled chiefs the prince addressed:

He called upon them by their country's love,
Their wives, their children, and their father's God,
To do their duty on this fateful day,
Which, pregnant as it was with great events,
Would see them rescued from a barbarous foe,
Or subjugated to a barbarous yoke.

With glowing hearts and pulses beating high
In martial fervor, now the troops of Ham
Marched to the conflict; and the Median band
Soon threw themselves in ambush unperceived
Amidst the woodland coverts of the scene.—
And soon the distant shouts of battle told
'To watchful Japhet, that heroic Ham
Had reached the foe, and the red work of death
Commenced with bold and vigorous promptitude.
To his own force, the prince then signal gave
To march, for now the battle-hour was come.
Then moved his gallant legions to the sounds
Of clarions, bugles, and the shrill-toned fifes

And wrathful drums, that stirred even timid souls
To mock at danger in the path to fame,
And woke resistless ardour for high deeds
Of vengeance on the ruthless enemy.

The station of the warriors of Bataar
Full soon they reached, with swords of temper
 keen

As even the wrath of those who wielded them,
To deal destruction on the hated foe.
Vain was the Cainite valour, vain its strength,
Vain all the bristling of its pointed spears,
And vain the shelter of its massive shields,
The terrible encounter to withstand,
Of warlike men resolved on deadly work
To free their country from invading foes!
The Cainite columns soon were overthrown:
For as the battle-word of Japhet's troops,
"God and our country!" flew from man to man,
Each felt inspired with more than mortal strength,
And, like a torrent, they together rushed
Upon the awaiting legions of their foes,
Who fell, o'erwhelmed by the impetuous force
Of the dread swelling storm that bore away
All opposition; or in terror fled,
If fly they could, its fierce and fatal course.

In vain the hardy Ormadas essayed
To keep his yielding warriors to their ground;
In vain he strove in thickest of the fight,
By his sole arm that deadly tide to stem,
Which from the field his o'erthrown legions swept.

True, like a rock amidst the assailing waves,
Where'er he stood the billows were repelled;
But only there; for all around they closed,
In dread career, upon the awful scene.
But soon, where Japhet bore the tide along
O'er fallen ranks, his quick excursive eye
Saw the resistance of stern Ormadas;
And as an eagle when the whirlwinds war,
With fierce wing shoots amidst the tempest-clouds,
He pierces through the thick and horrid throng
Of combatants, impatient to remove
The sole obstruction now to victory.

Now front to front the chieftains stand opposed,
And for a moment stern each other view,
Though without fear yet not without respect,
For the high bearing of their mutual strength,
Promised to neither laurels easy won.
They spoke not, but at once with forceful bound,
They charged, and on their solid shields received
The staggering blows of their resounding spears,
That strained and wearied both, but gave no wound
Till Japhet at the helmet of his foe,
Seized a choice moment to direct his aim;
And there, descending like the lightning's bolt,
The keen-edged weapon found a brittle part
Through which it drove and sunk into the brain.
The Cainite warrior rolled upon the earth,
Where the fierce soul forsook his writhing frame.

Their leader fall'n, the troops of Ormadas,
Contend no longer on that crimson field.

All weaponless they fly the hopeless strife,
While with dread slaughter, prompted by revenge,
The unsparing Sethites urge the keen pursuit,
Till called by Japhet back, whose watchful eye,
Perceived Halmadin with a mighty force,
Advance with fierce rapidity, to charge
The victors, in their lines now disarranged.
The signal is obeyed by Japhet's troops:
They cease pursuit, swiftly resume their ranks,
And take their station to receive the foe.

But lo! Halmadin halts in mid career.

Why pause his vengeful legions in their course?
Their foe confronts them; why advance they not?
Doth fear restrain them in their onward march?—
No; 'tis not fear, it is perplexity:

For there's another foe close on their rear,
In full assault upon Shalmazar's guards,
Who for their monarch's safety boldly fight,
In perilous combat, with the veteran force
Of Shem and Irad, from Sabbatah brought
To aid their country on this fateful day.

At first Halmadin hesitates to leave
Victorious Japhet's legions unassailed,
So keenly pants his bosom to revenge
The overthrow sustained by Ormadas:
But brief his pause: urged by Shalmazar's peril,
His march he swift retraces, but not far;
For now he meets the monarch's flying ranks
Fiercely pursued by Irad's conqu'ring powers.
Shalmazar soon is midst Halmadin's lines;

Where, struck with panic, he remains not long.
But, strongly guarded hastily withdraws
From the terrific, wild, death-raging scene
So nearly fatal to his tyranny.

Now Irad's men, pressed by superior force,
Retire, reluctant, from the advancing foe
Led onward by Halmadin to the attack.
But Irad, grieved to see their backward march,
With voice and weapon urges them to stand;
And, frenzied with the scene, careless of fate,
And spite of Shem's remonstrance, singly hastes
To meet the enemy and check his course.
A few choice cohorts turn: Shem leads them on
From ruin their loved chieftain to preserve.
But soon they halt, for soon they see 'tis vain
To interpose. His fate is on a die
Which, in his favour, Heaven alone can turn.
Within the scope of fierce Halmadin's strength
He stands, and thus the giant chief provokes,
With taunting words, his spirit to the fight.

“ What madness, Sethite, with thy weak array,
To venture combat with a force like ours!
’Twas useless slaughter of thy gallant troops,
Which soon they found, and therefore wisely fled!
Why then compel them to encounter death?
’Tis barb’rous, since they seem so fond of life.
But I will rid them of their cruel chief;
Then they may fly to earth’s remotest verge
And live; or tarry here their conqueror’s slaves,
A wiser choice than, as insensate clay,

Rot in the grave, or feed the hungry wolves
And ravenous vultures on the carnage-field.
Yield thou or fight; for now thou canst not fly,
This arm, whose stroke is death, prohibits that."

"That arm I fear not," Irad thus replied:
"Nor can thy vaunting words nor giant frame
Strike me with terror, since my cause is just.
I am as willing for the fight as thou:
Nor wilt thou be the first of giant strength
I have encountered in fair fight and slain.
The Power that nerved my arm when Mohawb
fell,
Will nerve it now that thou mayst also fall."

"Thou Mohawb's slayer!" cried the infuriate
chief.
"Ye fates, I thank you! sweet revenge is mine.
Sethite! thou doubly art mine enemy,
For thou hast slain a giant of my tribe;
A chieftain too who long hath been my friend.
Nor heaven, nor earth, nor hell can save thee
now!

Great Mohawb's blood demands thy forfeit life,
Which on this spot, I offer to his shade."

He said, and drew a ponderous battle-axe,
With which he met the thrust of Irad's spear
So forcibly, it clove the shaft in twain,
And dashed afar its glittering head of steel.
Another blow given with his utmost strength,
Despite the shield and gorget that opposed,
Fell with resistless weight on Irad's neck,

And burst the flood-gates of the vital stream
Which gushed a purple torrent, from the wound,
And the young warrior sunk to earth and died.
So by the woodman's axe, struck from its root,
A noble cedar, pride of Lebanon,
Falls to the ground and withers in its prime.
But short the triumph of Halmadin's arms
On that eventful day; for scarce performed
The sad exploit of youthful Irad's death,
When battle's shock o'er all the Cainite lines
Was felt, and slaughter in her wildest mood,
Rode frantic on the tempest-stream of war:
For Japhet's force had reached the enemy,
And with the lion's strength and tiger's rage,
Charged and o'erthrew the fierce and barbarous
host

Of stern invasion and foul massacre.
Halmadin saw the havoc; and confused
And anxious for the issue of that hour
Which, well he knew, must end this desperate war,
He hurried to the fearful battle's front.
There in the thickest fray he saw a chief,
Who carried death and terror in his course,
Like some war-spirit bounding o'er the plain,
Whole ranks he scattered, all resistance quelled,
For from the very flashing of his eye,
Proceeded power to sink heroic souls
To fear and feebleness. "This is a chief,"
Halmadin thought, "deserving of my arm,
Whom 'twill enhance my glory to subdue.

He is the princely leader of our foes,
The hero of the Sethites. He must die
Or we must yield, and the illustrious cause,
For which Shalmazar led his mighty force
Of gallant men, into this hostile land,
Be lost, and our great monarch be compelled,
In deep disgrace to seek his native clime."

These thoughts passed rapid through the chief-
tain's mind,

As on he strode to check prince Japhet's course
Upon the field of carnage. Japhet saw
His giant form, and knew of all his fame,
Yet feared him not, but rather joyed to meet
Thus, hand to hand, the most heroic chief
Of all the warlike progeny of Cain.

"Ah! valiant prince!" Halmadin loudly cried,
"At length we meet and thou or I must die
If we encounter in the martial strife;
But which most likely, they who see us both
May prophecy with ease. My strength to thine,
Is as the lion's to the hound's compared.
Therefore thy life preserve; yield to my power,
And reparation to Shalmazar make
For the foul wrong thou didst him. Let the fair
Of whom thou robb'd'st his harem, be restored:
Acknowledge fealty in thy father's name,
For the possession of Armonia's throne,
And be thy land, in tribute, bound to ours!—
Thou shalt be pardoned; and as thou art brave,

Be raised to favour in Gal-Cainah's realm,
And peace once more shall gladden human kind."

"Prescrib'st thou terms?" the indignant prince
replied;

"Art thou the conq'ror on this hard-fought field?
Look round and see whose legions are o'erthrown.
Whose are yon broken columns to the right?
And to the left whose are yon fugitives?
And yon victorious shouts, know'st whence they
come?

Yon banners see, *yon star-supported doves!*—
See how they fly triumphant o'er the plain,
Chasing thy scared and *vulture-pinioned flag!*
Is this the vict'ry that entitles thee
To dictate terms of peace?—Down on thy knees;
Implore thy conqueror to grant thee leave,
With the sad relics of thy vanquished power,
And thy now humbled monarch, to retire
In safety to the land ye left, disgraced;
No more in hostile mood to visit here.
Or wilt thou fight? Instead of fearing thee,
Strong as thou art, I will teach thee to fear.—
Then, in the name of the great Lord of Hosts,
Whose power thou hast defied, I thee defy,
And dare thee to the deadly conflict now!"

He ended; for Halmadin heaved his axe,
In frantic wrath, to strike the fatal blow.
That moment Japhet's javelin forceful flew,
And to the bone gashed the uplifted arm

Of the fierce giant, and the tendon snapped,
Which at the elbow joined the strong-knit limb.
Yet the dread axe descended with such force
As drove it deep within the cloven earth:
But Japhet safe had shunned its thundering course,
For from the giant's reach he bounded back,
And, with unerring aim, sent from a sling,
A brazen ball, which found its rapid way,
Through the left eye's deep socket, to the brain
Of the huge Cainite chief, who groaned and fell,
And shook the earth, even as a rock, that's rent,
By bolted lightning from a mountain's brow,
Rolls to the vale and makes the forest shake.

Soon as the Cainites saw their champion fall,
With universal rout, they fled the field,
And vict'ry crowned the gallant sons of Seth,
By Japhet led on that triumphant day.

Nor less successful were the troops of Ham
Against the Cainites under Asmar's charge.
That eastern chief in desperate conflict fell
Beneath the weapon of the Armonian prince;
And soon his men o'erpowered, resigned the fight,
And fled in panic from the bloody scene.
The Median ambush too had work that day,
And put to flight a force Halmadin sent
To Asmar's aid against the power of Ham.
It was a force which thrice outnumbered theirs:
But bold and suddenly they issued forth
From their concealment, and with gallant charge,
Destroyed or scattered soon the astonished foe:

And Hadar, their bold chief, the plaudits shared
And high rewards, their grateful country gave
To the brave warriors who had crushed her foes,
Avenged her wrongs, and saved her from the yoke
Of fell invasion and tyrannic power.

THE ANTEDILUVIANS.

BOOK X.

22*

THE ARGUMENT.

SHALMAZAR, after recovering from the panic occasioned by his disastrous defeat, determines to lead another and more formidable expedition against the Sethites.—To this he is encouraged by Asmodeus, who relates to him an ancient prophecy that a son of Belial should become monarch of the whole human race.—The fiend also recommends to him an artifice by which he is more likely to gain his purpose than by force of arms.—Shalmazar adopts it, and succeeds to the full extent of the demon's prediction.—Japhet having gone to attend his father in a tour round the empire, had placed Hadar at the head of the troops appointed to guard the frontiers.—Hadar agrees to a truce, and accepts of an entertainment to which Shalmazar invites all the Sethite soldiers, who are soon corrupted by the blandishments of the Canite women who accompanied the expedition for this purpose.—The defection thus introduced, extends over all the Sethite provinces.—The inhabitants of Sabbath expel Shem from their city, and establish idolatry instead of the worship of the true God.—Japhet hastens with a small body of hastily levied troops, to check the extension of the treason.—His troops rebel.—He is thrown into prison, but rescued by the angel Adareel, who informs him of the design of the Deity to destroy the whole human race, except his father's family, by a mighty flood.—In obedience to the command of God, Noah and his family fly to a distant northern region, where angels assist them in building the ark.—In the meantime Shalmazar is proclaimed monarch of the whole earth.—He discovers the retreat of Noah, and pursues him.—The ark is finished, and the beasts and fowls destined to be preserved, are gathered into it, when Noah, from the deck, perceives the approach of the enemy.—Shalmazar blasphemously defies Heaven to deliver the Patriarch now from his hands.—This defiance is answered by an awful peal of thunder.—The flood instantly commences, and Shalmazar is destroyed within view of the patriarchal family in the ark.—Description of the flood, and details of its destructive effects upon the earth.—All animal life and all memorials of human transactions are destroyed by its violence.—Hades, the subterranean abode of the earth-haunting fiends, destroyed.—The Isle of Love destroyed, and also the Garden of Paradise; so that no traces of either are left upon the earth.—The object of the flood being at length accomplished, the waters begin to subside.—The patriarch repeatedly sends forth a dove to discover the appearance of dry land.—From her second mission the dove returns with an olive leaf; from the third she does not return at all.—The ark rests on Mount Ararat.—Joy of the patriarchal family on coming out of the Ark.—The animals liberated.—Noah and his sons build an altar and offer up sacrifice.—The application of Noah in behalf of his posterity.—The angel Adareel appears, and communicates the promise of God that mankind shall never again be destroyed by a general flood.—In confirmation of this promise, a rainbow is placed in the heavens, seated upon which is seen a choir of angels basking the glory of God and celebrating his good-will towards men.

THE ANTEDILUVIANS.

BOOK X.

UPON the vanquished tyrant's haughty soul
Shame of defeat sat heavily, and fear
Of utter ruin seized his trembling heart,
And drove him, now a gloomy fugitive,
From realms which late he entered with such pride
And mighty pomp of military power,
As seemed to promise him the immediate sway
And empire of the subjugated earth.
The relics of his army with him fled,
Still numerous, though in courage broken down,
And bent with hardships, sickness and fatigue,
Hunger and thirst, and all the agonies
Of sharp remorse for the foul wanton deeds
They had committed in the wasted land
Which they had filled with mourning and despair.
No pause they made; for the avenging force
Of conquering Japhet, zealous in pursuit,
Allowed them none, till o'er the frontier passed,
They found, in strong holds of their own domains,
Repose and safety for their wearied frames.

Thus having from the victor's power escaped,
Shalmazar's fear subsided, and made way
For other passions springing in his breast
With vehement fierceness and intensity.
Pride and revenge there found a fitting soil
On which to flourish rank with bitterness
Of wrath, and hatred of his conquerors.
O'er his defeat he brooded poignantly,
And sighed his tarnished greatness to retrieve
By vengeance on the victors. All his soul,
Bent to that purpose, now became engrossed
With meditations of another war.

Soon his obsequious vizier, Asaphell,
Who in his absence had the empire swayed,
Received command new levies to provide
And warlike stores, to constitute a force
More formidable than his late array;
And to Halkasar, who alone survived
The great destruction of his slaughtered chiefs,
The conduct of the armament was given.

Yet much the tyrant feared, ev'n when he saw
The powerful aspect of his numerous host,
The Sethite force and warlike management
Of valiant Japhet, from whose skill he had
Experienced such disaster and disgrace:
And all-perplexed with dread of new defeat,
His anxious, pining spirit sank in gloom.
'Twas then his demon-sire, in Hades' shades,
Lewd Belial, for the troubles of his son
Felt sympathy, and sent Hell's messenger,

Asmodeus, to console him, and impart
A sure device by which the sons of Seth
Might be seduced to sin and overcome.
Glad on his errand flew the wily fiend,
And smiling thus the downcast king addressed.

“ Ruler of half mankind! why art thou sad?
What cause is there to grieve a mind like thine?
But one disaster through a prosperous life,
Hath yet assailed thee, wherefore should it weigh
Against the whole bright course of thy career,
And all the auspicious triumphs thou hast won
O'er secret traitors and o'er open foes?
Dost fear the power of Noah? or dost think
That Japhet's glory now eclipseth thine?
O'er both thou yet shalt triumph. Both shall fly
Before thy presence: and the sons of Seth
Shall own thee master, and thy laws obey
With willing servitude: for to their choice
Thy rule shall be congenial, while their hearts
Shall thrill with joys thy sceptre shall diffuse.
Commissioned by thy anxious sire, I come
With comfort's unction to thy heavy heart;
And to unfold what glory yet for thee
Is in reserve, if Heaven's own voice be true:
For there 'twas often to thy sire foretold—
Ere he was banished from those high abodes,
With that bright host of bold aspiring spirits
Who deemed not then ambition was a crime,
But aimed to rise to higher seats in heaven,
Despite of Him who reigns the sovereign there—

That o'er a new and strange-compounded race
In whom with spirit matter should combine,
His son should rule with unrestricted sway,
Sole monarch of the last created world.
And such, in truth, shall be thy destiny.
But more by art than arms, by love than fear,
By soft seduction than by martial power,
Shall this unrivalled monarchy be gained.
Hear, while I teach thee how to win the prize.
The troops of Japhet now to vict'ry trained,
By force of arms are not to be subdued.
But there's another force which thou canst wield,
Effectual to subdue all human hearts
And turn the sternest foes to willing slaves:
'Tis woman's beauty and soft blandishments.
For at creation of that wondrous sex,
A strange, mysterious boundless power was given
To her sweet smiles and tender-wishing eyes,
To enthrall the heart of man in magic chains,
To mould his acts and sentiments to hers,
And subjugate his wishes to her will.
To strength of warlike legions add the charms
Of woman, stronger far than armed bands.
From all thy empire let the fairest fair
Be chosen; and when thou against the foe
Once more proceedest, let them too proceed,
Thy surest instruments of victory.
When, front to front, thy formidable ranks
Look sternly on the pausing enemy,
Profess humanity, declare thy wish

To stay the horrors of the impending fight,
Its agonies, and waste of human life;
Proclaim thy readiness to form a truce,
And enter on a treaty that may yield
The blessings of fair peace to vexed mankind.
The enemy will deem thou art sincere,
Applaud thy sentiments and sign the truce.
Then of a royal feast, which thou shalt give
In token of returning amity,
Invite their chiefs and warriors to partake.
Thy fair-ones then shall practise on thy foes
The unfailing arts of dalliance and delight,
And bind them fast in sweet captivity
To sensual joys seductive of the heart.
The rigid morals of their native laws,
They will abhor, reject their monarch's rule
As too severe against their darling joys:
But thine indulgent to their loose desires,
Shall gain their hearts, and thou shalt be their lord,
While Noah and his sons resist in vain.
Thus shalt thou win by woman's sorcery,
An empire which thy arms could ne'er achieve."

“Asmodeus! faithful still to me and kind,”
Shalmazar said, “what gratitude to thee,
And to my sire who sent thee, do I owe?
Thou hast relieved my spirit of a load
Of torturing doubt and care: for much I feared
No force of Cainite power could overcome
The Sethite armies led by Japhet's skill,
Whom great Halmadin's self could not withstand.

That fear has fled before thy cheering words;
To Cainite power the sons of Seth shall yield;
For nothing human can resist the assault
Of that bewitching force we'll now employ.
Levies of fair ones shall be swiftly made
Through all my empire; and 'twill soon be known
Which is most powerful in the world's affairs,
The charms of woman or the strength of man."

Soon went the edict forth, and all the realm
Yielded its choicest beauties to the war,
And filled with fairy forms Shalmazar's camp.
And when once more the land of Seth he sought,
How joyous, gay, and brilliant was his march,
Cheered by the smiles of soft and fragrant lips,
Adorned by roses blushing on fair cheeks,
And animated by love-sparkling eyes,
To buoyant feelings and disdain of care!

Upon the borders of the Armonian realm,
To watch the first approaches of the foe
And cheek renewed invasion, o'er the host
Of Sethite conquerors, was Hadar placed.
On other duties had prince Japhet gone,
Attendant on his sire towards the west.
For Noah, anxious for the public weal,
In times so pregnant with alarm, and grief
For loved ones lost in battle's wasteful rage,
Made visitation to the provinces,
To soothe the people's sorrows, and inspire
Their hearts with fervor in the general cause,
Their virtues strengthen and their crimes restrain.

Where'er they came, the venerable sire
And his victorious son were loudly hailed
With acclamations to their virtues due,
By gratulating throngs, who felt their worth,
And spoke their grateful feelings loyally.

But loyalty inspired not every heart,
Nor e'en the natural throb of gratitude,
In that dark time of Seth's degenerate race.
For there were secret murmurs, low but deep,
Among offended thousands, sons of vice
And folly's votaries, because awake
To duty's call, the patriarchal king,
Anxious for reformation of the land,
Explored transgression in her hiding haunts,
And dragged her forth to day and punishment;—
Removed the venal and corrupt from power,
Raised honesty to office, and redressed
The poor man's wrongs and mortified the proud,
Making fair justice smile alike on all.
And strictly he commanded Enoch's laws,
Lately too much disused, to be enforced
In aid of virtue, and in hope to stem
The headlong current of the age to vice.

But righteous Patriarch! oh what grief intense
And terrible dismay, soon wrung thy soul!
Scarce hadst thou to thy capital returned,
When the sad news of fresh invasion came,
And the still sadder of thy army's fall
Into the abyss of treason and of crime.
Yes, into treason's gulf, that laurelled host

Which Japhet led to victory, had plunged,
And tarnished all its glory in the mire
Of rank pollution and apostasy.
Ah! too successfully Shalmazar had
The hell-suggested artifice employed,
And spread the alluring snares that caught man-
kind.

In the fond hope that war's disastrous scourge,
Threatening again to agonize the land
With deadly stripes, might, ere its fury fell,
Be checked and broken by the hand of peace,
Hadar consented to a truce, whose terms,
By patriarch Noah sanctioned, might unite
The long contending sons of Seth and Cain,
Once more as brethren, and to earth restore
Her gladsome vales and dwellings of repose;—
Consented too, seduced by promises
And artful flattery of the guileful king,
In token of returning peace, to share
With Cain's high nobles, and his warrior chiefs,
A sumptuous banquet in the royal tent.

That day a gala to both hosts was given;
When mutual intercourse, and free exchange
Of friendly offices, between the sons
Of Seth and sons of Cain, of late so full
Of deadly hatred, liberally took place;
And mem'ry of all variance was forgot
In social pledges of bright mantling wine,
That plenteous flowed to elevate the hearts
Of the gay revellers, into fellowship

Of radiant joy, beyond the grovelling cares
Of earth's concerns or duty's troublous tasks.
The tables groaned, on that luxurious day,
With viands suited to each appetite,
Enough to tempt ev'n temperance to excess.
While sports, and games, and care-dispelling dance,
And various music's mirth-exciting strains,
Afforded such diversity of joy
As kept the sense from wearying with delight.

But the chief fascination of that scene,
The charm which gave all other charms their
zest

And made their spell effectual on the heart,
Was woman's loveliness. Resistless there,
The peerless beauties of the glowing east,
Displayed their blooming graces to the eye,
And plied their soft allurements to the heart.
They moved complete in every winning charm;
Smiles wooing joy and gestures breathing love:
And Japhet's veterans, whom the armed force
Of half mankind could never have subdued,
Were vanquished then by woman's witchery,
And bound submissive captives in the chains
Which wantonness and beauty round them wove.

Nor fell alone the enchantment of that day
Upon the inferior soldiers of the camp;
Hadar himself and all his warlike chiefs,
To the delicious thraldom gave their hearts.
And sure if beauty's radiance to the eyes

Of man, e'er shone in conquering potency,
Bewildering all his senses with its sweet
Endearing glory, 'twas at that rich feast,
In that pavilion, when the Orient king
The signal gave, and swift to harmony,
From well-tuned instruments that briskly flowed,
There bounded forth with sprightly gracefulness,
Before the admiring gazers, in the dance,
A band of virgin beauties young and gay,
And lovely as e'er wanton poet formed,
When his enraptured fancy would portray
Perfection's image in the maid he loved.

As in the joyous dance the fair ones moved,
The flowing graces sported round their forms,
And warmed the bosoms of the gazing throng,
With fascinated wonder; while the smiles,
The complaisance, the arch, endearing looks,
And siren sweetness of the radiant train,
Sent soft seduction to the yielding hearts
Of Hadar's warriors, who enamoured sat
Panting, with secret passion's deep desire,
To win possession of such matchless charms.
Shalmazar saw the infection in their blood,
That made them victims to his baneful arts;
And soon as ceased the inebriating dance,
He bade each eager chief select the fair
Whose charms had warmed his glowing fancy
most.

He was obeyed: each chief his favourite chose,
She sat beside him in her witchery,

And with soft looks and passion-breathing sighs,
Infused delicious poison to his soul.

The watchful king the favouring moment seized,
And thus addressed the fallen sons of Seth.

“ Why should we, warriors, e'er again be foes?

Oh! why renounce such genuine joys as these,

The blest results, the noble fruits of peace,

For the dire horrors of inhuman war?

Perpetual amity now let us swear!

And, spite of Noah and his rigid sons,

Who bind you in the harsh and heavy yoke

Of stern austerity, denying you

The abundant pleasures this fair world supplies,

Let us, henceforth, the sons of Seth and Cain,

Be but one people, all as Adam's sons

Be only known and named; and let the man,

Whose hand seditious shall attempt to sow

Disunion's seeds amongst us, be denounced

Our foe—the foe of human happiness.

Hadar, and ye brave chiefs, yours is the power

To achieve the freedom of your race, and break

The gloomy fetters ye have borne too long.

The warlike force now under your command,

With mine united in the glorious cause,

Shall easily all opposition crush,

Which Noah's sons may dare, if so unwise,

To raise against the covenant we make.

Now fill your wine-cups, chiefs, and let us swear

By all our joys, and the long happy lives

We hope to lead, eternal amity!”

They filled, they swore, they drank; then cried
the king,
Elated with the crowning of his wish,
“On beauty’s lips the compact let us seal!”
’Twas done: fair lips, which taught the world to
sin,

Confirmed the deed for which it was destroyed,
And woman thus produced the second fall!

Weeks had elapsed since Hadar’s guilty host
Forsook allegiance to their patriarch’s rule,
And all Sabbatah’s citizens, debauched
By their example, had rebelled and driven
Shem from their precincts, and received the foe
And his lewd revellers within their walls,
And there set up Shalmazar’s images,
And owned him the sole sovereign of mankind,
When Japhet, anxious for his country’s fate,
Came with some legions levied hastily,
Relying on persuasion more than force.
But soon he saw that neither would avail
To check rebellion’s progress, widely spread
Already, o’er the far-polluted land.

Not only vain, but perilous the attempt
Which Japhet made, the apostates to rebuke,
For their desertion of their father’s God,
And warn them to repentance, by the dread
Of awful vengeance which they had incurred.
For wedded to their idols and their lusts
They had become, and scoffed at piety:
And uttering blasphemies against high Heaven,

The godly prince they from their presence drove
With imprecations and rude violence!

The infection now, swift spreading o'er the land,
Soon reached the bosoms of his new-raised troops,
Who hailed the alluring sirens in their camp,
And wooed and found perdition in their charms.
And spite of Japhet's warnings they arose
In open disobedience to his sway;
And God's pure laws renouncing, paid to Baal
The idol worship their deluders taught,
And which, with policy of Nebat's son,
To wean them from allegiance to the faith
Of their forefathers in the Great Supreme,
Which would attach them still to Noah's house,
Shalmazar, by imperial edict, caused
To be the worship of his followers,
As tests of their submission to his sway.
And well that worship pleased the downward race
Prone to licentiousness; for no restraint
Upon their loose propensities it placed,
But gave free scope to every wild desire
Of villain purpose and bold appetite.

Oh! how it rent the pious Japhet's heart
To see the images of Baal usurp
The consecrated shrines of the true God,
And in wild crowds, the giddy people draw
To impious homage and unhallowed rites!
His kindling zeal, at length too much provoked,
Burst forth in bitter grief and reprimand,
Which shamed the guilty, but reformed them not.

Their wrath arose; they seized the patriot prince,
And cast him into prison, there to wait
Whatever doom Shalmazar might pronounce.

What exultation swelled the tyrant's breast,
Soon as he learned that the illustrious chief
Whom of mankind he feared and hated most,
Was now his captive! "Now for sweet revenge
Upon the robber of my harem-fold!"
He proudly cried; "Now, now Hadallah's charms
Shall soon be mine! This prince I will not slay,
But tantalize him with the hope of life,
Until he yields Hadallah to my arms,
And witnesses what must his soul distract
With torments of the damned, my passion blest
In the possession of his wedded fair!
Then for my pleasure I will fix his fate
To tedious tortures both of mind and frame,
And glut my vengeance in his lingering death."

But disappointment in his cruelty
O'ertook the tyrant, and the prey was snatched
By interposing Heaven from his grasp,
So that in triumph's most exulting hour
His power was baffled, humbled was his pride,
The favourite purpose of his soul was crossed,
And harsh chagrin his tortured bosom tore.

'Twas at the hour of midnight; all was dark
In Japhet's cell, and not a sound was heard,
Save the low treading of the sentinel
On his monotonous and measured round,
Vibrating on the sullen ear of night,

When sudden light illumed the prison cell,
And all-amazed the sleepless captive saw
A radiant angel who approached and said,
“ Arise, thou son of Noah! follow me:
It is thy God commands!”—The captive rose;
From off his limbs the galling fetters fell
Spontaneous, and he stood erect and free;
And as the angel went he followed fast,
Unchecked by wall, or gate, or sentinel,
Till on the flowery margin of a rill,
Beneath the shadow of a spreading oak,
They stopped. Then with a wand that tree’s tall
trunk

The angel touched, when freely issued forth
A stream nectareous sparkling to the sight.
“ Drink!” said the angel, and the prince obeyed.
His frame was strengthened and his spirit cheered
By that blest draught; and falling on his knees,
He for his rescue thanked the God of all.
Then, to the angel turning, recognised
In his deliverer, Adareal’s form,
From whom he first the mission had received
To save Hadallah from the tyrant’s power.

“ Ah! thanks to thee, celestial form!” he said,
“ Again on friendly errand thou art come.
Say, what behest from the Almighty One,
Bring’st thou? Oh! I will show my gratitude
For all his goodness, and with joy obey.”

“ The tidings now, and the commands I bring,”
Replied the angel, “ will thy bosom fill

With deep dismay and anguish. But 'tis thine
To murmur not, but duly to submit,
And yield obedience to the Eternal Will.
Hearken the awful tidings: all mankind
Are doomed to perish, save thy father's house,
Which from the general death to longer days
Shall be reserved; for ye alone are found
Of either race, issuing from Seth or Cain,
Worthy of safety from the sentence passed
Of dire destruction, at one mighty sweep,
On Adam's progeny and all their works.
No longer will the Almighty strive with men
Forbearingly, as he so long hath done;
For to the abomination of the fiends,
Who have deluded them with carnal joys,
And all the grossness of voluptuous sense,
Have they resigned their hearts; and one
Broad torrent of corruption overflows
The earth, from rising to the setting sun,
Where'er mankind inhabit. Ev'n the seat
Of thy just father's rule, and all the West
That lately owned the government of Ham,
The hell-sent emissaries have received
With open arms, as liberators from
The bonds of virtue and of piety:
And the rebellion thou hast witnessed here,
Will soon embrace within its giant grasp,
Each tribe and province of the unhappy realm.
Hear the DECREE sealed and confirmed in heaven:—
An overwhelming deluge shall pass o'er

All earth's polluted surface, and shall thence
Sweep to destruction man's offending race,
And all memorials of his crimes and pride,
Until defilement from the land be cleansed
By the deep rolling of the heavy waves.—
Now hear the MANDATE: to thy father haste,
And fly with him and all his family,
From the contagion of a graceless world
Condemned to ruin. Seek the forest scenes
Northward of Shinaar, where the gopher trees
In sylvan grandeur shade the mountain sides.
Angels shall there assist you to construct
A mighty fabric, a capacious Ark,
That o'er the waves shall ride, a floating town
In which each kind of beast and bird may dwell,
In pairs the larger, smaller kinds in sevens,
To be preserved, such their Creator's will,
To that succeeding world of which your race,
For many a thousand age, shall be the lords.
Spontaneous these by Heavenly impulse warned,
Shall under your protection, safety seek,
From pending fate, within the sacred Ark.
'The wave-borne mansion shall outride the storm,
And when its rage is o'er, shall back resign,
To the cleansed earth, the rescued animals,
That Nature no deficiency may know
In the great scale of beings, at the first
Created to enjoy the breath of life."

"Alas!" said Japhet, "for the hapless race
Of erring man! Oh! must those millions all

Now warm in sentient life, who tread the earth,
Its lords, in full pursuit of every joy,
And proud of conscious vigour—must they all—
Be all cut off, ev'n in their pride of strength!
Oh! will no tears, no prayers, no sacrifice,
No heart-warm intercession, stay the doom
The offended God hath passed on human kind?"

“Repine not,” said the angel, “but obey;
And let no vain regret for human woes,
The natural consequence of human guilt,
Cause thee to linger with a convict race,
Lest thou partake its guilt and punishment.
But haste to warn thy father’s family
To seek the asylum which their God appoints.
Even while we speak, rebellious spirits plot
Within thy father’s house, his overthrow;
And orders from Shalmazar are gone forth,
To seize thy wife, and gentle Isamell
Who of thy brother Ham is now the bride;
And large rewards are to the man proclaimed
Who to the tyrant either fair shall bring.”

“Oh! lead the way!—assist my anxious haste,
Celestial friend!” the alarmed Japhet said,
“If Heaven permits—for I trust all to Heaven!”

“Heaven wills it,” said the angel; “follow me!”
A preternatural faculty of speed
And buoyant strength, imbued the hero’s frame,
As with untiring swiftness on he went,
Beyond the fleetness of an eagle’s flight,
When darting forward to protect her young

Against the invading vulture's ravenous rage.
The angelic influence led his rapid way,
Until his loved paternal home he reached,
So soon to be abandoned evermore,
When cheering him with heavenly promises,
The bright intelligence resought the sky.

Illustrious Noah! born to evil times,
Although the honoured favourite of Heaven,
What anguish rent thy sympathizing heart,
When tidings of man's fast approaching fate,
Irrevocably fixed by God's decree,
Were told thee by thy sad and sorrowing son!
Yet pious was the patriarch in his grief:
He murmured not, nor questioned, nor delayed
To yield obedience to his God's commands.
His swiftest steeds were to his chariot yoked:
With hastening ardour Japhet seized the reins,
And secretly those dear ones to his heart,
Whom Heaven exempted from the general doom—
His parents, brethren and their pious wives,
And his beloved Hadallah—he conveyed,
At rapid pace, by unfrequented paths,
And guided by the Almighty hand of Him
Who from a sentenced world their flight enjoined,
Till at the appointed region of the north,
Far from the abodes of man, their journey ends.

There, aided by angelic architects,
Soon did they build that blest and wondrous

Ark,

The Ark of Safety for all living things

Permitted to survive the world destroyed,
As sole transmitters of terrestrial life.

Of gopher wood, compacted close and firm,
'The spacious mansion was composed, of strength
Both wind and waters to resist, though roused
To all their force of elemental strife.

Three hundred Hebrew cubits was its length,
The breadth was fifty, thirty was the height,
Divided into three successive floors.

In each full many a various-structured cell
Was formed, the different animals to lodge,
From the bold lion and behemoth huge,
'To the dull beetle and the duller moth,
And from the imperial eagle to the wren,
Or smallest, weakest thing that skims the air
On waving pinions.—On the upper floor,
The chambers for the human family,
Were placed, and cheerful windows there allowed
The light of heaven, whene'er that light shone forth,
To visit human eyes; while dark below
The forest monsters lay enwrapt in sleep,
Or fed and drank as human care supplied.

For at that season man's supremacy
Was o'er earth's creatures strongly manifest;
The fiercest at his sovereign voice was mute,
And awe of him preserved the general peace
Within the thronged dominion of the Ark.

Scarce to the mighty fabric had the beasts
And fowls been gathered, and each kind disposed
Into its proper place and there secured,

When unexpected danger from the foe,
The active and inveterate foe, now lord
And sovereign o'er all human kind, proclaimed,
Seemed to assail the patriarchal train.
Directed by Asmodeus on the way
The fugitives had taken in their flight,
Yet warned that all pursuit would be in vain,
Since spirits from on high their escort formed,
The demi-fiend, defying heavenly powers,
To reckless passion's voice alone gave ear.
Mustering his fleetest troops, he, in pursuit,
With chariots and with horsemen swiftly drove,
In hope to seize Hadallah, and destroy,
At once, in exiled Noah and his sons,
All opposition to his love and throne.

The heavens became inflamed with crimson
hue,

Deep and portentous, like one sheet of fire
With dusky vapours mixed at intervals,
That made the burning fiercer to the gaze
Of the astonished millions of mankind.
The air was full of stagnant heaviness,
As if it stood in mute and breathless awe
Of some dread change in nature's government,
That should convulse and scatter round the globe
Her tortured elements. The heat intense
Drove into thickest shades or mountain cells,
The birds and beasts for refuge from its glare.

O'ercanopied upon the Ark's high deck,
The patriarch household stood, and thence sur-
veyed,

With solemn feelings, the dread face of things,
That spoke the hand of Deity stretched forth,
In terror, over nature's awe-struck frame.
There, as they gazed, behold towards the East,
Far as the eye could see, a martial host,
Beneath the vulture banners, caught their sight,
And soon they knew it was the enemy,
With horsemen and armed chariots in pursuit
Of their retreat, and on their ruin bent.
Yet Noah felt no fear in that dread hour;
But with his family, upon that deck
He knelt and worshipped; and to God resigned,
The God who ne'er had yet forsaken him,
His safety and the fortunes of his house.

“ Oh! Thou whose will hath brought me to this
hour,

Surrounding me with dire portents above,
And the fierce wrath of enemies beneath,
Uphold my faith from wavering. Though thou
com'st

Clad in thy terrors, yet in thee I trust,
Yea, though thou slay me, I will trust in thee!
For, in the general ruin of all things,
Thy promise hath gone forth that these loved ones,
Whose safety is more precious than my own,
Thou wilt preserve, that from them may proceed
The generations of a world renewed,
And purified from the admixture foul,
Of evil spirits from the infernal deep,
But Oh! forgive our weakness, if we grieve

To contemplate the ruin of this world
So fair, of late so full of happiness,
And beautified with temples for thy praise,
In which with thee, full many a holy heart
Hath held communion and partook thy love!
Assist us to endure the fearful doom
Which now approacheth on our fellow men,
And the dread terrors of a **WORLD DESTROYED!**”

While thus the patriarch prayed, Shalmazar's
soul

With triumph swelled, to see within his grasp
The sole disturbers of his peace below.

Two troops of rapid horsemen he despatched
On separate paths, designed on either hand
To enclose the ark, lest from it might escape
The victims now within his meshes caught;
For so he deemed the objects of his hate.

“Fate smiles at length! my enemies are mine!
And earth shall see,” blasphemously he cried,
“If **HE** of heaven can save them from my power!”

That instant pealing thunder spake aloud
And answered the defiance. Heaven and earth
Felt the concussion of the mighty shock,
And nature trembled to her inmost core.
At once the fiery sky turned black as night,
And clouds rolled thick in many a billowy mass
Of surging vapours by the south wind driven,
Which loosened from the Antarctic regions, came
With headlong rage, upheaving seas and lakes,
And forests, towns, and temples in its course,

With fearful devastation. In the heavens,
The spirits of the tempest rode sublime
On viewless steeds. With God's artillery armed,
They launched the vollied lightning through the
air,

Commanding in the thunder's clamorous voice,
The congregated clouds to melt in floods
And in dread cataracts from their heights descend
Upon the groaning valleys of the earth.

'Then was the hour of vengeance; then the stern
Hell-generated tyrant felt dismay,
And in his chariot fled, but fled in vain:
Whirlwinds assailed him; rising streams opposed
And drove him back on rising streams behind,
While round him earth became a torrent gulf,
Each moment deepening with terrific swell.

Now from his station in the sheltering Ark,
Noah beheld the hostile hosts, their steeds,
Chariots and charioteers, and glittering arms,
All disarrayed in many a mingled group,
Amidst the wild commotion of the scene.
How bled his heart to hear the piercing cries
Of numerous human beings, in despair
Struggling in vain against o'erwhelming death!
Then as he stood with mute and mournful gaze,
Behold a floating chariot, drawn by steeds
Of gallant strength, that breasted the dread deep,
Like dolphins plunging through the stormy main,
With rage their nostrils swoln, their manes erect,
Approached the Ark. The chariot was half sunk:

But clinging to its top, a giant form
Was seen, who with loud voice and gestures wild
Contorted by despair, to Noah cried
For rescue from the yawning watery grave.

“It is the fierce Shalmazar,” Japhet said:
“Justice at length upon his head hath fallen;
And now he knows that God is greater far,
Than he and all the hosts of hell combined.”
He scarce had said, when burst an awful peal
From the dark rolling clouds: the forked bolt
The chariot smote, and into fragments rent
The floating vehicle. At once it sunk
With all its freight, and strength exhausted steeds:
Shalmazar’s demon spirit fled to hell,
And Cain’s dread empire on the earth was o’er.

Still rode the tempest-spirits in the sky,
And on the earth the watery torrent poured.
Alas! what anguish now for lost mankind!
What shrieks of horror, madness and despair!
What late repentance, and what prayers to Heaven,
Arise from hearts that never prayed before!
Oh! danger can the sternest bosoms melt;
And iniquitous souls, when comes the hour of fate,
Will own a God with trembling and despair,
And yield that homage, they before denied.

The whelming torrents still on earth descend.
In vain to roofs, and towers, and aerial spires,
As swell the rushing waters in the streets;
In vain to lofty trees and mountain heights,
As rise the impetuous currents on the plains;

The helpless crowds, in desperation, fly
For refuge from the ascending billowy death,
Which soon o'ertakes them with unsparing surge.
'Then youths and grandsires found one common
fate;

And maids and wives, and harem-mistresses,
And mothers with their infants at their breasts,
Sank in one whelming ruin. Equal death
Came at one moment on the rich and poor,
The sick and healthy, skilful and unskilled,
Famed and obscure, the master and the slave;
All, all alike the foaming waters reached,
Scattering around one wide impartial doom:
And midst the wreck of temples, towns, and towers,
And monuments of genius, art, and pride,
Sad human nature found one general grave.

In this destruction of a world depraved,
The fiends of Hades saw their intercourse
With human fair-ones, and their tyranny,
And magical dominion o'er mankind,
Ended, perchance to recommence no more.
They roused them, therefore, boldly to oppose
'The dreaded deluge; and from Hades sent
Through mighty tubes, eruptions dire and vast,
Of liquid fire, by many an orifice
Made in the rent convulsive-heaving earth
That opened in huge craters, pouring out
Their burning lava in thick molten streams,
To scorch and dry the watery element.
But vain the turmoil of those fiery fiends

And their dread engines, whose volcanic throats
Exploded nitrous flames, upturning rocks,
Displacing rivers, and unseating hills,
With huge and direful havoc. Soon they felt
The horrors of the deluge on themselves;
For soon the tempest-angels in the sky,
Opened the sluices of the mighty flood,
And poured a current through their sulphurous
realms,
Which quenched their flames; and filling all their
dens

And subterranean haunts, destroyed the frail
And sinful fair, the victims of their lust,
And drove themselves down to the nether pit
Of deepest hell, to dwell midst horrors there,
Nor more seduce the daughters of mankind.

And you, ye fair, who in the Zarian Isle,
With erring angels lead a life of bliss,
Ye too were in the general doom embraced,
Which the dread flood brought on humanity.
The impetuous waters rushed upon your isle,
And bore you headlong to the southern main,
Amidst whose coral beds ye found your graves,
And gentle mermaids sang your requiems there.—
Your isle defaced of all its palaces,
Its gardens, groves, and rosy bowers of love,
Is now no more the abode of woman's charms;
But desolate and barren, forms the haunts
Of serpents, cormorants and crocodiles,
And loathsome bats and spiders venomous.—

Your spirits, when your beauteous frames they left,
Were by your angels borne to that bright star
Which lights true lovers on their evening walks,
And by whose radiance oft they pledge their vows:
For there kind Heaven your angels homes assigned,
As yet unfit for residence in heaven,
When the dread flood destroyed their happy isle;
And ever since this is the Star of Love.

Nor did that all-destroying deluge spare
The holy loveliness of Paradise,
Although by angels guarded.—Such the will
Of HIM who sent the mighty torrent forth
With dread commission, in its awful march,
To change the face of nature, and remove
All vestiges of that convicted world
Which, leagued with fiends, plunged into every
crime

That fiends might practise and their God offend.
Ere came the sweeping ruin on the earth,
The angel sentinels of Paradise,
Received commandment to resign their charge,
Return to heaven, and leave the sacred place
To undergo the wild transforming rush
Of furious waters passing o'er the world,
And carrying cities, temples, towers, and tombs,
And all memorials of the pride of man,
Afar from land into the unfathomed deep.

Celestial beings from their seats above,
Now saw all earth beneath the waters sunk.
No tree, no dome, no mound, no pyramid,

Nor mountain top o'er all the globe appears;
But one huge ball of waters, round and round,
Was now the rolling planet. Midst the waste
Monotonous, of that dread ocean scene,
One object only caught angelic eyes:
'Twas the bold ark which rode triumphantly
O'er all the havock of the awful storm,
Holding her dauntless eminence sublime,
For full three hundred most terrific days
'Time e'er through all his fateful course beheld,
On the chafed billows of the shoreless sea,
Sustained by HIM whose will had launched her
there.

Now was the purpose of the flood performed,
And the destruction of the world complete:
'The Almighty spake, and all the storm was hushed,
The spirits of the tempest left the sky,
The portals of the raining heavens were shut,
The clouds dispersed, and the fair face of day
Once more looked forth, and showed the joyous sun.

At that returning beam of heaven's blest light,
How throb'd the human bosoms in the Ark,
Now all the human bosoms in the world!
They hailed it as the harbinger of peace
Among the long embattled elements.
It told them that the laws of nature yet
Would be obeyed, and harmony restored,
At the great mandate of all nature's God.
It told them that their God remembered them,
Amidst the desolation of all things,
And would restore them to the bounteous joys

Of a replenished, green and fruitful earth;
And they with fervent gratitude adored.

The watery mass in gradual lapse withdrew,
Partly in vapours to the thirsty air,
Partly to caverns in the central earth,
And partly, rushing to each polar sea,
Filled the late emptied chambers of the main,
And with them bore the clay-cold carcasses
Of men and beasts, for deep interment there,
To free the purified and freshened land
Of all corruption and offensiveness.

Now Noah, anxious to behold once more
The face of verdant nature, hid so long
Beneath the incumbent waters, sends a dove
To explore the surface for some rising land,
That might assure his hopes of treading soon
The flowery sward which he had ever loved,
And longed for now as for his native home.
As yet the dove could find no where to rest,
And sought the Ark on wearied wing again.—
After a lapse of seven protracted days,
The longing patriarch sent her forth once more;
When to his joy, the faithful bird brought back
An olive leaf, which in his hand she placed,
An emblem of the peace that was restored
Through nature's works, and justice satisfied.

Yet seven days more the anxious patriarch waits,
Then on her mission sends the dove again.
But now the rising hills appeared so green
With springing grass, and gay with blooming
flowers,

And rich with leafy grandeur of the trees,
That, with the sight delighted, long she staid
Regaling in the bright and sunny scene,
With truant spirits joyous and enrapt;
And ere she thought of visiting the Ark,
That citadel of all earth's living things,
Had settled on the heights of Ararat.
Her cell the truant entered not again,
But in a neighbouring wood her station took,
Where her loved mate soon shared her liberty.

The morn was soft and beauteous. Golden rays
Flushed from the Orient o'er the face of things,
Enriching all with radiant gayety,
When the glad patriarchs issued from the Ark
And trod the solid ground, by human feet
So long untrod. Joyful they kissed the soil,
And praised all-gratefully the Power Divine,
Whose care preserved them through the perilous
scene

Of warring nature and a wrecking world.
They opened now the portals of the Ark,
When the long-prisoned animals came forth,
And drank the sweetness of the freshened air,
Joyous for freedom; and with many a bound,
They gamboled round to show their gratitude:
Then to the mountains some, some to the plains,
And others to the woodlands took their way.

Then Noah and his sons an altar built
For worship of the great Protector God.
And kneeling round it with their grateful wives,

All of the human race upon the earth
There offered up the incense of their hearts,
With sacrifice of aromatic fruits,
Gathered, already ripe, from laden trees:
For earth, inspired with power miraculous,
Rose from the waters, clothed in perfect bloom
And amply freighted with her choicest stores,
As at her first creation she appeared.

Joyful the pious family beheld
The beauty and abundance round them spread,
And gratefully the accepted rites performed.
Then in the midst the fervent patriarch prayed.

“How shall we speak our thanks, Almighty Power,
For this deliv’rance? Oh! what just return
Can beings weak and destitute as we,
Make for such benefits as on our heads
Thou hast so graciously and amply poured!
But well thou know’st the fervour of our hearts
In love for thee and reverence of thy name,
And in intensity of gratitude
For all thy goodness; and thou wilt accept
Sincerity of zeal to do thy will,
And pardon what’s defective in our power!
Oh! when we on our nature’s frailty think,
Can we be sure that guilt shall not again
Provoke just vengeance at some fatal day,
On our posterity, so that once more,
Earth may be swept and all its habitants,
With the dire ruin of another flood!
Let us entreat thou wilt forbid it, Lord!—

We would implore that mercy may transcend
The rigid claims of justice, and preserve
Thy erring creatures, even amidst their crimes,
From such dread chastisement as we have seen!
All-conscious of our weakness, Gracious Power!
We to thy mercy through all future time,
Commit ourselves and our posterity!"

He scarce had ended, when a glorious form,
Benignant as from Heaven it just had come
Sent on some gracious errand, mild approached;
And Japhet soon, in the bright visitant,
'The friendly spirit Adareeal knew.

"Illustrious father of a future world!"
The angel said, "thy prayer hath gone to Heaven,
And God to it hath lent a favouring ear.
I am commissioned to proclaim his will,
'That earth and human race no more shall fall
Beneath the ruin of a general flood.
While time shall last, no more for man's offence,
Shall earth with penal barrenness be cursed;
Nor shall the rolling seasons in their course,
With summer and with winter, heat and cold,
With seed-time and with harvest, and sweet change
Of day and night, forget their due return.
And to confirm this covenant with thee,
Behold His radiant bow shall span the earth,
And raise its top to heaven, an emblem bright
Of mercy from above to men below!"

He said, and lo! the glorious arch arose
Gilding with mercy's hues the ambient air;

And on its outer rim a choir divine,
Of minstrel spirits sat and sweetly sang;
And human bosoms kindled at the strain
Into a holy fervency of joy,
As thus the burthen of the anthem ran,
"Glory to God on high, to men below
Peace and good will, now and for evermore!"

THE END.



