













THE  
CAPTIVITY IN BABYLON.





THE  
CAPTIVITY IN BABYLON  
AND  
OTHER POEMS.

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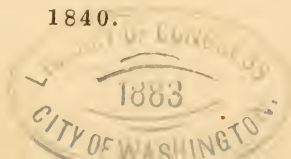
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BY THE  
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TO  
THE EROSOPHIAN ADELPHI  
OF  
Waterbille College, Maine,  
THIS POEM,  
DELIVERED BEFORE THEM  
AT THEIR RECENT ANNIVERSARY,  
IS DEDICATED.

*Boston, September, 1839.*



THE  
CAPTIVITY IN BABYLON.

I.

Not through the maze of philosophic song,  
Nor o'er the wilds of metaphysic lore,  
Although to these unnumbered themes belong,  
The muse to-day on trembling wing would soar;—  
In homely guise she seeks to wander o'er  
The fields of simple Narrative again,  
And, taught by voices from the Past, to pour  
Her descant wild, commingled with the strain  
Which swept from Judah's harps o'er Babel's spacious plain.

## II.

Broad is the plain of Shinar,<sup>1</sup> and as fair  
As it is broad and fertile ; vineyards rise  
And waving cornfields glimmer here and there  
Through groves of spreading palms : the cloudless skies  
Bend in blue arch above—the South wind's sighs  
Breathe perfume round, and the Euphrates, slow,  
Deep and majestic, like a mirror lies  
Catching morn's earliest glory, as still low  
The orient sun springs up, bidding all nature glow.

## III.

But not on thee, Euphrates, his first smile  
Falls, as he looks on Earth ;—long ere thy stream  
Reddens beneath his radiance, the tall pile  
Of Belus hails his coming, and a beam  
Of brightness wraps his towers in one rich gleam  
Of ruby and of gold : then down the wall  
Runs the rich glory, till, like fairy dream,  
Palace and arch and dome and pillar tall  
Burst brilliant on the eye from Night's enclosing pall.



## IV.

There standeth Babylon the mighty :<sup>2</sup>—grand,  
Lovely and lone amid the spreading plain,  
E'en as an Eastern queen may proudly stand  
Without a rival near : the eye in vain  
Strives the stupendous object to contain ;  
For by the river's brink on either side  
For many a mile (by tall and gilded fane  
And waving garden<sup>3</sup> in exalted pride  
O'ertopped) the giant wall outstretches high and wide.

## V.

And many a dark-browed gate, by massive shaft  
Flanked, and surmounted by deep chiselled stone,  
On which the handiwork of skilful craft  
Its efforts deemed exhausted, there hath shown  
Serpents bright scaled in many a tortuous zone  
Knotted and twined ;—the valves of solid ore  
Below fling back the splendors o'er them thrown  
From the unclouded sun, while on the floor  
Broadly the shadows sleep by niche and corridor.

## VI.

Above, high up along the frowning wall  
Hang the embattled parapets, which sweep  
In long perspective onward, until all  
Melt in the distance, though the eye may keep  
For many a mile beyond (until the deep  
Dinness of space forbids) the towers which hide  
The archers and balistæ ; bright they sleep,  
Crowning the long defences, in the tide  
Which morning pours around on all that home of Pride.

## VII.

Within, along her streets of palaces,  
The mighty stream of human life rolls by,—  
Sorrow and Joy, and Pain and careless Ease,  
Youth and Old Age—Beauty—Deformity—  
Health—Sickness—Want and Splendor—on the eye  
Press million after million, though the street  
Hath yet uncrowded space : the busy cry  
Of Labor, and the sounds of myriad feet  
And Art's continual hum, in one wild murmur meet.

## VIII.

Nor from the streets alone the sounds of life  
Rise in commingled tones ;—the porticoes—  
The temple steps—the walls—with noise are rife,—  
The bridge across the river's deep repose  
Swarms with its thousands, and the stairs<sup>4</sup> which close  
The stream on either hand are tenanted ;  
And music over all its softness throws  
From many a pinnace, gilt and garlanded,  
With flags and silken sails o'er broad Euphrates spread.

## IX.

And here and there along the level way  
Pass menial bands, with robes of 'Tyrian dye,  
Of guarding slaves, whose mistress goes to pay  
Her early call of courtesy :—on high  
O'er her gemmed litter spreads a canopy  
Of silk whose crimson folds the morning gale  
Plays gaily with, and flutters fitful by,  
Lifting the fringe, whose silver bells their tale  
Of tinkling music tell—a soft, rich, slumberous wail.

## X.

High on the echoing road which bends around  
The lofty summit of the broad-topped wall,  
Sweeps by, with glittering pomp and thundering sound,  
The chariot of some noble, whom the call  
Of duty or of pleasure wakes to all  
The glories of the scene :—his prancing steeds  
Fret on the golden bit, and toss their tall  
White plumes, and shake their breast-encircling beads,  
And stamp with restless foot, if aught their course impedes.

## XI.

While stationed at each gemmed and studded rein  
Attendants run in splendid dress arrayed,  
Their turbans looped with jewels and their cane  
Of office with bright rings of gold inlaid ;  
And low upon the dust each servile head  
Bends in profound obeisance as that train  
Of gorgeous state sweeps by ; too well repaid  
If the proud Satrap from his height but deign  
To wave his ivory wand, and bid them rise again.

## XII.

But lo ! he pauses o'er the Western gate,  
And looks across the plain with eager gaze,  
Along whose level margin (which but late  
Slept still and silent in the day-god's blaze,  
Moving alone with morning's gauze-like haze,)   
Now sweeps a long, dark, slowly moving train,  
Which, as it nears the City wall, displays  
Steeds, camels, oxen with the groaning wain,  
And footmen, dragging slow the weary step of pain.

## XIII.

Who may they be ?—Traders from foreign land  
Laden with goodly merchandise ?—bright gold  
From distant Ophir ? gems from Afric's strand ?  
Linens from Egypt ? gums of price untold,  
And rich Sabæan odors, to be rolled  
In smoking incense at the gleaming shrine  
Of Belus or of Ashtaroth ? or hold  
Those heavy wains, the juice of Sibmah's vine,  
Or that from farther hills where milder suns may shine ?

## XIV.

Yet why with lance and banner come they on ?  
Thy need not these on peaceful journey bent  
O'er Shinar's plain to strong-armed Babylon.  
Is it some distant Satrap who hath sent  
His troops with long owed tribute, to prevent  
The monarch's rising anger ?—or the king  
Perchance hath humbled Judah, for he went  
From Babylon so purposed,<sup>5</sup> and doth bring  
The nation at his feet their lives and wealth to fling.

## XV.

Yes ! 'tis rebellious Judah ;—gleaming there  
In splendid heaps upon the wains behold  
Flagons and cups and goblets passing fair,  
And rich chased chalices with lips of gold—  
The vessels of their worship—formed to hold  
Incense and wine and blood of sacrifice ;  
And golden lamps, and, wrapped in many a fold,  
The rich, mysterious Veil ; and gems of price  
Which decked her priests who stood in sacrificial guise.

## XVI.

And altars there are piled in goodly show,  
Plated and cased with gold, around whose rim  
Rise crowns of chiselled ore in many a row,  
With brazen gratings for the quivering limb  
Of lighted sacrifice : the gold is dim  
Still with the sprinkled blood which fell around  
As, with the smoke, to Heaven arose the hymn  
From white stoled Levites, chanting to the sound  
Of psaltery and of harp within the Temple's bound.

## XVII.

And there are silver cymbals which gave out  
Their clashing music in the battle's van,  
And bannered trumpets which prolonged the shout  
Which, through the land to hail the new-moon, ran  
From Beersheba to ocean-girdled Dan ;  
There in rich piles the golden censers lie  
Dark with the incense smoke which rose to fan  
The sacrificial flame,—and, piled on high  
Jewels and gems and vests and cloths of gorgeous dye.

## XVIII.

And there, surmounting all the splendid heap,  
The gilded table stands, whereon were laid,  
In golden baskets richly carved and deep,  
The cakes and loaves of consecrated bread ;  
And there the Cherubim with wings outspread,  
Guarding the Mercy Seat—the golden lid  
Of the much treasured Ark,—wherein the dread  
Stone tables of the Law are closely hid,  
And many a holy thing to touch and sight forbid.<sup>6</sup>

## XIX.

The escort to the gates their jaded steeds  
Urge in advance : wide at their coming flies  
The brazen door, and he the band who leads  
Springs through the arch and to the palace hies,  
To meet the Viceroy : there in humble guise  
He speaks the monarch's orders to admit  
The captive nation—furnish due supplies—  
Assign their quarters—and at season fit  
Duties entrust to each which none might intermit.



## XX.

The massy bolts from every gate are drawn  
Along the Western wall, and two by two  
The weary captives march desponding on  
To exile and to bondage: there were few  
E'en in that home of triumph who could view  
With tearless eye the sad procession form;  
On every captive check the pallid hue  
Of pain and sorrow sat, and though still warm,  
Like Summer's rain, their tears, how bitter was that storm!

## XXI.

There passed the sorrowing Monarch, by decree  
Of his stern foe forbid to see the woes  
Which none but demons could untroubled see;  
A linen bandage winds its foldings close  
Around his orbless brow,<sup>7</sup> which burns and glows  
With smart of recent torture;—whilst his mind  
Revolves the double prophecy,<sup>8</sup> he knows  
The truth he doubted once, when *doubly* blind,  
From other hands than God's, safety he sought to find.

## XXII.

There passed the weeping Priest;—his ephod rent,  
His long, white vestment deeply soiled with blood,  
Partly from bleeding victim when he bent  
Before the altar,—partly from the flood  
Which flowed around him as in arms he stood  
Guarding the Temple from the spoiler's hand—  
But all in vain! In melancholy mood  
He treads the streets of exile 'mid the band  
With bondage cursed for sin, slaves in a foreign land.

## XXIII.

There passed the widowed Mother, at whose side  
Two weeping orphans clung—their father lay  
Lifeless amid the desolation wide  
Of overthrown Jerusalem, and they  
Following their wretched mother far away  
From their dear home, now swelled the troubled stream  
Of grief, which through the open gates, to-day,  
Of Babylon flowed in, o'er which no beam  
Of hope or comfort fell, its darkness to redeem.

## XXIV.

There passed the childless Father, though his arm  
Bore what was late of nine the youngest born,  
Fair scions which, alas! the ruthless storm  
Had from the blighted trunk too rudely torn ;  
For days of pain and sorrow he had worn  
That faded flower upon his heart, too dear—  
Too precious to relinquish ; and forlorn  
His silent partner followed ever near,  
Yet sorrow's founts were dry, for neither shed a tear.

## XXV.

And there the noble Youth, whose brow displayed  
The lines of age by toil and misery traced,  
And at his side a pale and weeping maid  
Hangs on the arm which clasps her fragile waist ;  
In happier days that sinking form had graced  
Her childhood's home, and that wan lover deemed,  
With youth's impatience, Time too leaden-paced,  
And oft of coming hopes and joys he dreamed,  
And that near marriage-feast which all too distant seemed ;

## XXVI.

Till, when that morning dawned, and many a guest  
Donned for the bridal halls his robes of pride,  
He saw the troops of Babylon invest  
The ancient City round on every side ;—  
And hill and vale in morn's refulgent tide  
Flashed with the gold and armour of the foe,  
And in the home where Pleasure should abide  
Came, all unbidden guests, Distress and Woe  
And Terror, o'er the board their blasting sight to throw.

## XXVII.

On—on they passed :—a melancholy train—  
A concentration of all care—all woe—  
All heart-subduing sorrow and all pain  
That Hate and War and Conquest can bestow ;  
There all the closest ties the heart can know  
Asunder had been rent, and despot Hate  
Had bade the cup of bitterness o'erflow,  
And yet it was not full! On their sad state  
Exile and pinching want and degradation wait.

## XXVIII.

Crushed and deserted Judah ! thou hast left  
No name among the nations ; for a race  
Once hated—scorned and humbled, has bereft  
Thee of thy ancient heritage and place :  
And slavery now, and toil and deep disgrace  
Must be thy portion. Once thou wast a queen,  
Virgin of Judah ! and thy haughty face  
Was beautiful, but dreadful to be seen  
By the fierce nations round who on thy aid would lean.

## XXIX.

But now thy sceptre is departed :—lone  
Thou sittest by the streams of Babylon,  
Waking in grief thy wild harp's saddest tone,  
Wailing the former days and glories gone ;  
For of thy greatness now remains not one  
Poor remnant, but within a foreign land,  
A stranger and a slave, thou toilest on,  
Eating the bread of sorrow, and thy hand  
Fulfil from day to day a master's stern command.

## XXX.

No Temple sacred to JEHOVAH'S name,  
Arises near thee in its solemn state,  
Echoing with hallelujahs' loud acclaim,  
From countless numbers, who impatient wait  
Admittance at its strong, majestic gate,  
Or from its ample court in volumes vast  
Rolling the smoke of sacrifice : stern Hate  
Hath to the ground its lofty turrets cast,  
And o'er its broken walls hath Desolation passed.

## XXXI.

The holy fire<sup>9</sup> in darkness hath gone out,  
So long preserved with strict religious care,  
No more in arms thy gathered people shout,  
As white-robed priests the Ark to battle bear ;  
The Urim and the Thummim<sup>10</sup> are not there,  
Nor golden cup of manna undecayed,  
Nor Aaron's rod with budding blossoms fair,  
Nor those mysterious tablets which were made  
On Sinai's awful top, when God his power displayed.

## XXXII.

Thy *sins* have been thy curse, and God hath used  
 But as an instrument proud Babel's might,  
 To humble and to punish ;—that, accused  
 By thine own thoughts, and by the holy light  
 Which prophecy shall shed, thy bondage-night  
 May in its dark and lonely hours display  
 Visions of mercy to thy spirit's sight,  
 'To point to thee Hope's angel-trodden way,  
 And bid thee feel thy sins, and mourn, repent, and pray.

\* \* \* \* \*

## XXXIII.

Years have passed by :—to Dura's spacious plain  
 Millions are hurrying, not from thee alone,  
 Thou royal City, but they pour amain  
 From distant provinces and tribes unknown ;  
 The neighbor towns and cities, too, have thrown  
 Their streams of life thereon, and from the crowd  
 Voices of every dialect and tone  
 Rise mingled, as of old the discord loud  
 Rose from that very plain,<sup>11</sup> when God dispersed the proud.

## XXXIV.

Thither from Persis came they, and the lands  
Of far Carmania—Syria also sent  
Her rough barbarians, with the distant bands  
Of Bactria and Armenia ;—others bent  
Their steps from Media, and from many a tent  
Arabia poured her thousands ; and the men  
Of Tadmor came : Elam and Susa lent  
Their dwellers, with Ecbatana, for then  
A summons called them there which none might hear again.

## XXXV.

Rising in splendor o'er each meaner thing,  
Tall, lone and glorious, stands a god of gold,<sup>12</sup>  
Whose features in the sunlight glimmering  
Smile warm and bright—though all within is cold.  
Ah ! many an idol since to man hath told  
Its falsehood by such smiles. Then clear and high  
Arise the voice of heralds, who unfold  
The King's command, to worship there or die  
In yonder sea of flame that roars and flashes nigh.



## XXXVI.

Forthwith harmonious tones upon the air  
Of that still morning rise with thrilling note,  
Wild as the sounds Æolian harp-strings bear,  
Now swelling near—now more and more remote,  
Yet in such sweet accordancy they float,  
That magic hands appear to guide the strain ;  
The hushed and ravished multitude devote  
Attention so profound, that they remain  
Forgetful of the god a moment on the plain.

## XXXVII.

Sudden the music ceased ; to thought recalled,  
The head of all, as one vast body, bowed ;  
Prostrate upon the earth they fall, appalled  
By the dark smoke which rose in sulph'rous cloud  
From the dread furnace near ; the mighty crowd  
Sank—but erect, amid the suppliants there,  
Three noble forms remained—untrembling—proud—  
Bold in a righteous cause, they scorned to share  
The rites to idols paid—the foul, unholy prayer.

## XXXVIII.

And from the fiery trial forth they came  
Unblackened and unhurt ; no hair was singed—  
No garment injured in that sea of flame ;  
The fires had lost their energies, and tinged  
Scarce with a ruddier glow those features fringed  
With manhood's earliest down ; for God was there  
Supporting those who honored him, nor cringed  
Before a tyrant who would gold compare  
With Him who rolls the orbs through boundless fields of air.

## XXXIX.

Awed into admiration of His power,  
The King ascribes to God the honor due,  
And loads with gifts the men who would not cower  
Before those threats whose ruthless ire they knew,  
Proving by faith that Judah's God was true ;—  
Stations of trust he delegates to those  
Whom late he doomed to ruin, and the Jew  
Perceived his burdens lightened, and his woes  
Vanish before the smiles the monarch now bestows.

## XL.

Heavy the griefs that Judah's heart had pressed :  
For black had been her sins, and long the scroll  
Of her abominations ; she had dressed  
Her priests in Baal's vestments, and the stole  
Of those who from unhallowed censers roll  
The incense unto Dagon, and had built  
To unknown gods and devils, and the whole  
Bright host of Heaven rich altars, and in guilt,  
E'en in God's house, the blood of sacrifice had spilt.

## XLI.

She had profaned His Temple, and had given  
The worship due to Him to tree and stone,  
And thus called down the bitter wrath of Heaven  
Long waked, but long delayed :—her crimes had grown  
Beyond the reach of pardon, and the throne  
And sceptre passed away to other hands ;  
Then in her long captivity her moan  
Ascended to the Mercy Seat, her bands  
Are one by one relaxed, her wakening heart expands.

## XLII.

Again the prophets of the Highest bear  
Kind messages of mercy, holding out  
Hope, pardon, peace, to penitence and prayer,  
But bitterer woes to those who blindly scout  
The offers of His love ; doubt after doubt  
Melts like a cloud away ; for grief had taught  
Humility of heart, and whilst about  
Their bosoms played the ever cheering thought  
Of freedom and of home, their cares they half forgot.

## XLIII.

Among the messengers of God, who came  
In mercy to his people, Daniel rose,  
For wisdom honored much,—for holy flame  
Of inspiration more ;—he came with those  
Sad exiles to the City of their foes  
A child,—supported o'er the toilsome road  
In that safe seat a mother's love bestows,—  
Her tireless arm ; and well the precious load  
Repaid her tender care and blessed her lone abode.

## XLIV.

And former monarchs to their palace led  
And loved the Hebrew boy, and soon he knew  
All lore by Eastern sages writ or read,  
And angels from the founts of wisdom flew,  
And bathed his brow with inspiration's dew,  
And touched his lips with fire ; and when there came  
Heaven-messaged visions on the monarch's view,  
That youth put all Chaldea's seers to shame,  
And thus to honors rose, to favor and to fame.

## XLV.

The courts of Belus' temple flash with light  
Gleaming from thousand lamps ; around are spread  
Banquets of royal luxury, which invite  
The sated sense anew. His mighty head  
High o'er the feast,<sup>13</sup> with costly incense fed,  
The grim-eyed idol rears ; and wanton song,  
And drunken revel, by Belshazzar led,  
Rise round it as fit worship, and prolong  
E'en to the midnight hour the joys of that lewd throng.

## XLVI.

Dizzy with love and wine, and deeming all  
Those pleasures naught, till stern excitement throw  
Her frenzied joys around him, at his call  
The slaves of proud Belshazzar, bending low,  
Bear in the golden cups, whose burnished glow  
Reflected once the altar of the LORD,  
In Judah's ruined Temple ; they o'erflow  
Now with unhallowed wine, where rites abhorred  
And sensual pleasures reign around the madman's board.

## XLVII

And Nisroc, Ashtaroth and Bel behold  
Their sin-polluted altars freely flow  
With deep libations from those cups of gold  
Used in JEHOVAH's worship long ago ;  
The very flames that o'er their grimness throw  
A flickering radiance, rise from golden stem  
And polished branch, which caught its earliest glow  
From thy shrined Shekinah, Jerusalem,  
Flashing reflected light on purple, ore and gem.

## XLVIII.

What dims the waning lamps ?—Hath morning burst  
Too soon upon the revel ?—No ! a light  
As brilliant, but less gladsome, catches first  
The trembling monarch's eye, and blasts his sight.  
His cheek hath lost its flush, and wild affright  
Seizes on him and all his thoughtless crew ;  
Along the wall a visioned hand doth write  
Strange characters of fire, whose threatening hue  
Throws with a fearful glare each object on the view.

## XLIX.

Summoned in haste with scrolls of mystic lore,  
And potent rods and robes of sombre dye,  
And girdles, with strange letters painted o'er,  
Swept by their snowy beards, the wise men hie,  
And by the seat of splendor prostrate lie,  
Waiting the King's behest ; his trembling hand  
Points to the flashing letters, and with eye  
Averted still, he bids the wondering band  
Reveal the words of fate that all might understand.

## L.

Dismayed they pause : their thoughtful eyes they strain  
Long on the gleaming words, then seek the line  
Of wisdom in their scrolls, but seek in vain ;  
Each to the other makes some silent sign  
To ask if there be hope the words divine  
To read and to unravel, but reply  
Receiveth none, and still the letters shine,  
Glaring with awful brightness from on high,  
Full on the baffled seers and the pale company.

## LI.

“ What ! is there none whose magic skill can read  
Those letters of astonishment and fear,”  
The King exclaimed, “ and to their purport lead  
My troubled thoughts ? Is there *no* prophet here ?  
I will give glory to the godlike seer  
Who leads my mind this hidden thing to know.  
Wealth shall be his, and fame—he shall appear  
Enrobed in regal scarlet, while below  
The throne but three degrees his seat I will bestow.”



## LII.

Then, called in haste, Daniel before him stood,  
Severe, yet modest, and unawed, as one  
Long conversant with courts ; the wall he viewed  
A moment where the wondrous writing shone,  
Then turned him to the King :<sup>14</sup> “ to me be none  
Such gifts, O Prince ! but hear from lip unpaid  
The doom thou hast awaked and cannot shun,  
The judgments now to burst upon thy head,  
Traced by the hand of God, and soon to be displayed.

## LIII.

“ Thy sire by Sorrow’s teaching learned to own  
That GOD alone rules Earth : and that His will  
Bestows on each the sceptre and the throne,  
Till they their several destinies fulfil :—  
And this *thou* knew’st ; and yet, rebellious still,  
Hath scorned JEHOVAH, daring to pollute  
These holy vessels, and from them to spill  
Libations at an imaged monster’s foot,  
Honoring above thy GOD the dæmon or the brute.

## LIV.

“Hear then the message HE to thee conveys  
By this mysterious writing, clear and bright :  
MENE—thy kingdom hath fulfilled its days,  
Thy reign shall end on this eventful night :—  
TEKEL—the balance hath declared thee light,  
For thou by God’s just judgments hast been weighed,  
PEREZ, division cometh, and the might  
Of Media and of Persia shall invade  
This thy ancestral seat, and seize thy sceptre-blade.”

## LV.

The prophet’s duty is fulfilled—the hand  
Fades, like a fleeting shadow, from the view,  
No longer in their withering brightness stand  
Along the wall the mystic words which threw  
So late around their doom-denouncing hue ;—  
Through heavy arch and brazen gateway passed  
The holy man, though oft as he withdrew,  
Pausing, a sad and pitying glance he cast  
O’er the pale revellers there—that banquet was their last.

## LVI.

But with the hand and with the words of fate  
Passed to the winds the terrors which had thrown  
Their cloud upon the festival ;—elate  
Belshazzar bids his guests in gayest tone  
Drown graver thoughts, and leave the dim, unknown  
Future to seers and dreamers :—high in pride  
He lifts a bowl, whose golden radiance shone  
Bright through the purple stream which laves its side,  
As on the ground he pours the full libation tide :—

## LVII.

Then to his lip :—but why in startled haste  
Doth his unsteady hand relax its hold,  
Bathing the marble pavement with rich waste,  
As rings upon its stones the empty gold ?  
Why, springing to his feet, doth he unfold  
The royal purple from his breast, and throw  
His diadem to Earth ? A shout hath rolled  
From broad Euphrates' banks, and cries of woe  
Rise on the midnight air and fill the courts below.

## LVIII.

The Median is upon thee ! He hath turned  
Aside Euphrates' waters<sup>15</sup> from their bed,  
And through its arch and empty channel learned  
The pathway to thy palace, and hath sped  
Up through the open gates, which should have spread  
Their barriers riverward, his course to stay ;  
Hopeless defence ! the infuriate foemen tread  
O'er useless arms, and on the marble way  
The wine enfeebled guards and silken menials slay.

## LIX.

On, on like torrents from the mountains hurled,  
Rush the invaders to their glorious prey ;  
The joys of sense have all their lures unfurled,  
And beckon onward through the bloody way :  
Riches more vast than in her wildest play  
Fancy could paint or Avarice could require,  
Doth Babel, in her regal affluence, lay  
Before the astonished sense, and that soft fire  
By lewd Astarté lit, and fanned by wild Desire.

LX.

And slight repulse from faint-souled troops they meet,  
And soft, luxurious slaves ; wide, wide they swarm  
Through many a sculptured arch and palaced street,  
And Belus echoes to the loud alarm ;  
Around his feet the jewelled floor is warm  
With blood of thousand worshippers, who lift  
Their hands to him for safety,—but his arm  
And glance alike are impotent, and swift  
The Median's sabre sweeps ;—the tomb hath many a gift.

LXI.

The courts which echoed late with shout and song  
And revelry and mirth,—resound with wail  
And shriek and lamentation, loud and long ;  
The voice of Power can now no more avail,  
Nor Beauty's mute appeal, as trembling, pale,  
She spreads her hands and lifts her brow of light,  
And those wild, lustrous eyes, whose eloquent tale  
Then first no pity moved ;—the dæmon might  
Of Fury baffled long, now gains its curbless height.

## LXII.

But of that coward herd which knelt before  
The Persian's arm, one heart had thrown aside  
His woman's softness, and stood forth no more  
A pale-eyed Sybarite ; but kingly pride,  
And stern resolve to meet the o'erwhelming tide,  
And noble daring, in his form and eye,  
At length had found their home, and flashing wide  
His death-bestowing scymetar on high,  
Swept with the whirlwind's power, and bade the bravest fly.

## LXIII.

Behind a wall of slaughtered foes he stood,  
Like lion turned to bay ; around him fell  
Arrow and javelin, thirsting for his blood,  
In frequent shower, ringing continuous knell  
Upon his full orb'd shield ; and oft the swell  
Of victory's shouting, premature, arose,  
As near him flew some lance directed well,  
Or grazing arrow point, for still his foes  
Feared his excited ire, nor dared around him close.

## LXIV.

Sudden a shout was heard—a warrior sprang  
Beyond the bleeding mound, and, hand to hand,  
Long time their clashing blades and bucklers rang,  
While breathless stillness falls on either band ;  
Invaders and invaded, on the grand  
Yet awful scene, intensely looking on,  
And leaning on their useless weapons, stand ;  
One falls—Belshazzar’s fated life is gone—  
Darius—thine alone is wide-walled Babylon.

## LXV.

Babel hath fallen, but Judah is not free—  
She hath but changed her master—yet her yoke  
Doth daily press less heavily, and she  
Dares to believe that Freedom’s keen-edged stroke,  
Which once in Egypt slavery’s fetters broke,  
Full soon may fall. Her sons to honors rise—  
Jewels and gold adorn the purple cloak  
Which vests her Daniel with authorities,  
And powers, assigned to none but those whom monarchs prize.

## LXVI.

O'er six score subject provinces preside  
As many favored nobles, over whom  
Is placed a high triumvirate, and wide  
Its sway, and irreversible its doom ;  
It holds the reins of empire, and the room  
Wherein it sits, displays a thronging crew  
Of summoned princes, doffing helm and plume  
Before its power,—but chief is honor due  
To him, first noble there,—a captive and a Jew !

## LXVII.

But in that chair of state doth Daniel meet  
The meed that haunteth all of humble state,  
By merit lifted to the dizzy seat  
Of influence and honor :—Envy—Hate—  
Assumed Contempt—yet inward Dread—await  
Around his path ; his rivals, day by day,  
Station their spies around his palace gate,  
And seek to snare him, but his perfect way  
Beams, like the virgin ore, more bright from the assay.



## LXVIII.

And *therefore* he must fall : his virtue shines  
Too bright, too dazzling, for their clouded eyes,  
And his stern honor thwarts their base designs ;  
*He worships not their gods.* The fact supplies  
A ready path to vengeance. Then arise  
Fawning and cunning voices round the throne :  
“ O King ! the good, the noble and the wise,  
Have framed an edict, that to thee alone  
For thirty days shall prayer or suppliant vow be known.

## LXIX.

“ And if to any other, save to thee,  
The voice of supplication shall ascend,  
Then with the lions let his portion be,  
Who dares the laws of Media to offend ;  
'That this be 'stablished, let thy hand append  
'Thy seal and signature, that every one  
Where'er thy mighty empire shall extend,  
May know the royal will.” The deed is done,—  
And Media's laws change not,—Daniel, thy race is run !

## LXX.

The edict has gone forth :—" behold how smiles  
The stern triumvir as he hears his doom !  
Let him sneer on—he shall not scape our wiles,  
But sink accursed within a living tomb :—  
The sun's descending glory lights the room  
Where stands our victim, but its parting ray  
*Tomorrow* shall that gorgeous hall illume,  
And find no Daniel there !" —He kneels to pray,  
Turning with hand and eye far to the West<sup>16</sup> away :

## LXXI.

Sunrise is gilding Babylon :—again  
His foes assemble in the street below,  
Watching with eager eye and ear, to gain  
More certain proof their victim to o'erthrow ;  
Morn's balmy breathings through the casement flow,  
And there again the holy prophet kneels  
In calm yet deep devotion, and the glow  
Of solemn rapture lights his cheek, and seals  
His brow with impress bright, which Truth alone reveals.

## LXXII.

And noon again beholds him with his hands  
Expanded wide towards the bright Western skies,  
Where once in worship from the distant lands,  
The tribes went up to offer sacrifice ;  
And as to Heaven his prayers, like incense, rise  
From the heart's altar, warmed with sacred fire,  
His dæmon foes behold, with raptured eyes,  
The proof which seals his doom and gluts their ire,  
And to the palace-gates with hurried step retire.

## LXXIII.

And Daniel's crime before the King is laid,  
And judgment asked by laws which cannot fail,  
And King Darius, by his haste betrayed,  
Mourns with hot tears, which cannot now avail,  
And sentence must go forth. Perplexed and pale,  
He bids his slaves the gloomy cavern ope,  
And whilst he strives his bitter grief to veil,  
The fearless victim strains the grating rope,  
And to his prison sinks, dark, yet illumed with hope.

## LXXIV.

Morning had scarcely streaked the Eastern sky  
With its first blush, ere kneels the King before  
The lions' cavern with an anxious cry :  
“ Servant of GOD ! can He thou dost adore  
Save thee indeed, and still the savage roar  
Of these infuriate monsters ?” Then arose  
The prophet's calm reply—“ He can restore  
His servants, and deliverance work for those  
Who on His mercy trust, whose innocence He knows.”

## LXXV.

In haste the joyous Monarch bids his slaves  
Remove the royal seal, and spread the gate  
Wide, which gave entrance to the gloomy caves,  
And bring the prophet forth,—that baffled Hate  
May meet the fearful doom it had so late  
Planned for the innocent ; and forth they bore  
The man of GOD unharmed :—the doors of fate  
Close on his doomed accusers, and their gore  
Flows ere their bodies touch the dark, sepulchral floor.

## LXXVI.

But now from honors, courts and cares, retires  
The holy man, to studies and to prayer ;  
Age had begun to quench his early fires,  
For seventy years had vanished, since, a fair,  
A goodly child, his anxious mother bare  
His wearied limbs through Babel's thronging street ;  
And in these latter days 'twas his to share  
High converse, in his calm and fair retreat,  
With angels spreading wide the Future's mystic sheet.

## LXXVII.

Yea, many a glorious sight of after things  
Fell on his raptured eye—he saw displayed  
The Church's future glory, and the wings  
Of angels and archangels o'er his head  
Flashed visible music, bearing news which bade  
His aged heart expand ; from them he knew  
That seventy annual weeks<sup>17</sup> should rise and fade,  
And then should wake on earth's adoring view  
Messiah—Saviour—God of Gentile and of Jew ;

## LXXVIII.

And that the long captivity, which he  
And exiled Judah bore in that far land,  
Foreshadowed those dark years, ere man should see  
That bright and great deliverance from the hand  
Of Satan and of Sin ; the high command  
Came from the throne of Glory, and he saw  
Those typic years were numbered, and the band  
Of Jews once more their ancient lot should draw,  
And in their cherished home again restore the Law.

## LXXIX.

Darius sleeps where Media's monarchs sleep,  
In monumental pomp, and on his throne  
The Persian Cyrus sits, his state to keep,  
And rule the subject nations, now his own ;  
Isaiah's heaven-taught pages had foreshown  
That his should be the glory to release  
Lone Judah from her chains,<sup>18</sup> and bid her groan  
Melt into smiles—her long affliction cease,  
And all her clouds disperse before the sun of Peace.

## LXXX.

And deeply in his heart had sunk the word  
Of prophecy, and in his ardent mind  
Deep thoughts, like voices of the trumpet, stirred  
To noble deeds his soul, and he resigned  
His will to that high destiny and shrined  
Its mandates in his heart ; and, ere a year  
Of regal sway had left its cares behind,  
The kingly proclamation, far and near,  
Had bade the farthest bounds of that wide Empire hear.

## LXXXI.

“ Thus saith the King :—God hath on me bestowed  
Power over all Earth’s Kingdoms, and hath bade  
My hand establish His beloved abode,  
Where once it stood in goodly show displayed ;  
Let all whose vows to Israel’s God are paid—  
The only God—to Judah’s land return,  
Where’er among the subject nations spread,  
And build again the holy house, and burn  
Incense and victim there, and there His judgments learn.”<sup>19</sup>

## LXXXII.

Then was there joy and gladness once again  
In that long exiled nation :—Judah rose  
Bright from the dust, where she so long had lain,  
In all her virgin beauty, for the woes  
Which pressed her down now left her to repose ;  
Then from her long and troubled sleep she waked  
To all the light which rising Freedom throws  
In genial streams to Earth, wherein she slaked  
Those hopes so long deferred with which her heart had ached.

## LXXXIII.

Gladness and hope on every feature glowed,  
As band by band, and tribe by tribe, they pressed  
To Babel's walls, by many a distant road,  
From town and province long their home of rest ;  
And, as obedient to the King's behest  
And their hearts' homeward yearnings, ranged they stood  
On that wide plain, their faces to the West  
They turned, and streaming tears their cheeks bedewed,  
Soft as the April shower, with nought of grief imbued.



## LXXXIV.

And forth they went, a glad and goodly train ;—  
How far unlike the melancholy crew  
Which seventy years before, in toil and pain,  
Along proud Babel's streets their wailing threw ;  
That race had well-nigh passed, and these, a new  
And proud assemblage, turned their willing feet  
To Judah's vine-clad hills, and deemed they drew  
More vigorous breath, as balmy, soft and sweet,  
The Western breeze from home their raptured senses greet.

## LXXXV.

Yet were there some among that joyous band,  
Who thro' long years their treasured thoughts could throw  
Back to the scenes of childhood, and could stand,  
In memory, on the mount, whereon the glow  
Of the sun rested gorgeously, as low  
He wheeled his evening course, and bathed in light  
The Temple's pinnacles, and bade them show  
Their golden outline, glittering, rich and bright,  
Far o'er the lower lands till evening mixed with night.

## LXXXVI.

And when from gilded spires the light had passed,  
Leaving the solemn Temple all in shade,  
It slept upon the waving column vast,  
Which in the calm, still twilight, reared its head—  
Smoke of the evening sacrifice—and played  
Brightly around its top, like that of yore,  
Whose moving course their fathers had obeyed,  
When, toiling through the wilderness, they bore  
From Egypt's hated land their tyrant's cherished store.

## LXXXVII.

And oft upon that homeward march, they told  
Strange tales of all their childish eyes had viewed  
Within that glorious house—jewels and gold,  
And precious things, in brilliant order strewed—  
And gilded beams of odorous cedar wood  
Magnificently carved, and relics kept  
Within the ark, which could not be renewed,<sup>20</sup>  
Whose sad destruction Judah's sons had wept  
Oft in their exile home, e'en whilst their children slept.

## LXXXVIII.

And when they told how all that glorious pile  
In ruins lay, o'erthrown and desolate—  
Mark for Samaria's jibe and Gentile's smile—  
The home where beasts or fiercer robbers wait—  
Their aged eyes o'erflowed ; and then they sate  
On some rude stone, and gave the rein to grief,  
Till rose the thought that they to reinstate  
That holy house had come, and soft relief  
Fell on their troubled hearts, and made their mourning brief.

## LXXXIX.

And with renewed alacrity they sped  
Across the stony plains which skirt the bound  
Of Araby, and thence the deserts spread  
Far by the walls of Tadmor ; till they found  
Their feet upon the pleasant vallies round  
Far-famed Damascus, and the waters blue  
Of Abana and Pharpar ; then the mound  
Of Tabor glads their sight, and soon they knew  
The ruined heaps of home which rose upon their view.

## XC.

Nearer they came, till, by the gentle brook  
Of Kedron pausing, one,<sup>21</sup> whose snowy hair  
Waved brightly in the sun, his station took  
Before the holy Mount, and kneeling there,  
With outstretched hands, and reverend forehead bare,  
He communed with his God, as erst he prayed  
In Babylon his fervent, fearless prayer,  
Though envious foes in ambush near were laid,  
And though the lions' den its yawning portals spread.

## XCI.

Thus ran his supplication :—" O, our God,  
Who with thy mighty hand didst hither lead  
Thy people from Ægyptia's dark abode,  
From woes and pains and cruel bondage freed,—  
Hear us, O LORD,—bow down thine ear, and heed  
Thy people's supplications ;—for we know  
That we have sinned, and urged, by many a deed  
Of deadly hue, thy holy wrath to flow  
On our deserving heads, with waves of bitter woe.

## XCII.

“But let no more thy mighty anger burn,  
O God of mercy! From thy holy seat—  
Thy chosen heritage—in pity turn  
The fierceness of thy wrath. Behold we meet  
Bitter reproach and enmity’s fierce heat  
From the surrounding nations, and the gust  
Of fiery persecution; but repeat  
Thy favor as of yore, and from the dust  
Restore thy holy hill, O Merciful and Just!

## XCIII.

“O, let thy servant’s voice before thy throne  
Meet blest acceptance! For thy mercy’s sake  
Look with compassion on this City lone,  
Which once thou deign’d’st thy earthly home to make,  
And from thy Temple and thy altars take  
The deep reproach by Heathen tyrants brought;  
Behold our desolations, LORD, and break  
The heavy chains of sorrow, which have wrought  
Anguish in every heart, and crushed each fondest thought.”

## XCIV.

The prophet ceased ; yet still he bent him there,  
Perchance in *silent* worship ; but he kneels  
So long, so mute, so motionless in prayer,  
That each a silent apprehension feels,  
And oft a glance of strange inquiry steals,  
Yet fears to interrupt him, until one,  
At length, with hesitating step, reveals  
The half-suspected truth ;—his course is run—  
Fit death for life of prayer—in worship sets his sun !

## XCV.

And there, amid the prophets' sepulchres,  
Daniel reposes—and around him rise  
The walls, rebuilt by sad artificers,  
And hindered long by cruel enemies ;  
And well the tears became those aged eyes,<sup>23</sup>  
As, with the memories of the past, they view  
The far diminished glory which supplies  
Grace to that second Temple ;—yet they knew  
At least it was their own,—the Temple of the Jew.

## XCVI.

And after years beheld a glory<sup>24</sup> fall  
On that late building, which surpassed the gold  
And gorgeous hangings which adorned the wall,  
The courts, the halls, the chambers of the old ;  
When the long lapse of centuries had rolled  
Its destined course, and to the world revealed  
The HOLY ONE, whom prophets had foretold,  
The Saviour of the nations, who unsealed  
Shadows and hidden types, whose letter he repealed.

## XCVII.

That second house no Shekinah could boast,  
Lighting the Mercy Seat, and showing there  
The presence of JEHOVAH to the host  
Who filled the courts with sacrifice and prayer ;  
But through its halls and sculptured gateways fair,  
Passed, veiled in flesh, revealed to human eye,  
The mighty God Himself, who deigned to bear  
The sorrows of His people, to apply  
Balm to their wounds, and died that they might never die.

## XCVIII.

And from that meaner Temple, to all lands,  
Hath sped the word of life, o'er fertile plain,  
Deep-tangled forest, hot and burning sands,  
And o'er the wild and solitary main ;  
Borne on by men of faith, through toil and pain  
And persecution, e'en to life's last hour,  
And leaving, when their souls returned again  
To Him who sent them forth, a richer dower  
Than ever monarch owned in times of palmiest power.

## XCIX.

And to *these* shores, unknown, when in their day  
Christ's earliest heralds fought their holy fight,  
That word of power hath made resistless way,  
And changed the moral darkness into light ;  
And in its train, refined, ennobled, bright,  
By rays reflected from its sacred flame,  
Its handmaid Science, like the moon at night,  
Shedding her silvery glory, meekly came,  
To aid that blessed power, which gave her strength and fame.



## C.

And *here*, where late the untutored Savage trod,  
She hath a seat to humanize the mind,  
And bring its noblest energies to God ;  
To draw its vigor forth, and then to bind  
That vigor, strengthened, sanctified, refin'd,  
Down to the noblest task that man can know,  
The task to bless and reconcile mankind  
To God's offended justice, and to show  
What riches and what joys from Christ's atonement flow.

## CI.

Go on and prosper ! From this classic seat  
Let Truth, as from a centre, spread her rays,  
Diverging and increasing, till they meet  
And girdle earth in one wide, bright embrace !  
Onward their march, till error finds no place  
Wherein to hide ; till every desert shore  
Bloom with the rose of Sharon—until praise  
Load the four winds with melody, and pour  
One universal song, to peal for evermore !

## CII.

Go on and prosper ! Give to truth a voice  
Of trumpet tone, till through the Earth it sound  
Its glorious echoes, bidding man rejoice,  
Shaking Sin's high-walled cities to the ground,  
And bidding bondage (where the mind is bound  
By Sin and Error,) cease the Earth to tread ;  
That man redeemed, of every race, be found  
Like Judah, from the walls of Babel led,  
Pressing to that blest home where dwells their glorious Head !

## NOTES.

### NOTE 1. STANZA II. LINE 1.

#### *Plain of Shinar.*

The plain of Shinar, lying E. of the Euphrates, and between it and the Tigris, is nearly 300 miles in length, and about 100 in breadth. Babylon was situated near its N. W. extremity. When the historian Herodotus visited Babylon, this plain was extremely fertile, but it is now little better than a morass, covered with sedge and weeds, and inhabited by loathsome reptiles, thus wonderfully verifying the words of the prophet, Isaiah xiii. 20, 21.

### NOTE 2. STANZA IV. LINE 1.

#### *Babylon the mighty.*

How well this epithet applies, may be learned from the descriptions which historians give of this wonderful City. It was built in an exact square, each side measuring 15 miles. It was entered by 100 gates, 25 on each side, all of solid brass. From each gate a street, 150 feet wide, ran entirely across the City, intersecting the other streets at right angles. The wall, comprising a circuit of 60 miles, was 350 feet in height, and 87 feet in thickness. The Euphrates, which ran through the City, was crossed about the centre by a magnificent bridge:—at its east end stood the old Palace and the Temple of Belus; at the west end was situated the new Palace, which occupied nine entire squares of the City, and must consequently have been about 8 miles in circumference; a vault below the bed of the river afforded a secret communication between the two Palaces. The Temple contained the statue of Jupiter Belus, of solid gold, forty feet high, probably the same which Nebuchadnezzar erected on the plain of Dura. Its weight was one thousand Babylonian talents, and its value consequently, must have been about \$20,000,000. There were in the Temple, besides this, two other statues, of female deities, scarcely inferior in magnitude or value, which, together with the golden vessels, tables and other furniture, made the whole estimate of its riches amount to above \$100,000,000. How are the mighty fallen! “Babylon, the glory of Kingdoms, the beauty of the Chaldees’ excellency, shall be (and truly is) as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah.”

## NOTE 3. STANZA IV. LINE 8.

*Waving garden.*

Perhaps nothing in that wonderful City was more wonderful than the hanging gardens. "To gratify his queen Amyte with a resemblance of her native mountains of Media, or to have a commanding prospect of the whole City, Nebuchadnezzar built them in his new Palace. They contained a square of 400 feet on each side, and consisted of terraces, one above another, carried up to the height of the walls of the City. Upon the uppermost terrace was a reservoir, supplied by an engine with water from the river."—*Brown's Dictionary*.

## NOTE 4. STANZA VIII. LINE 5.

*The stairs.*

The river, where it passed through the City, was bounded on each side by a wall, of the same thickness with that which encompassed the City. In this wall, at the termination of each street, were brazen gates, and from them a descent by steps to the river.—*Brown's Dictionary*.

## NOTE 5. STANZA XIV. LINES 7 AND 8.

*for he went**From Babylon so purposed.*

Josephus. Antiq. Book x. ch. viii., says—"they were indeed only generals of the King of Babylon, to whom Nebuchadnezzar committed the care of the siege of Jerusalem, for he abode himself in the City of Riblah." There is little doubt, however, that he was present during a part of the time, and was certainly absent from Babylon when the captives arrived there.

## NOTE 6. STANZA XVIII. LINE 9.

*Many a holy thing to touch and sight forbid.*

These were the two tables of the Law—the golden pot of manna—Aaron's rod that budded—and a copy of the Pentateuch. The ark was so sacred, that it was death for any but the priests to look at it, and was therefore carried under a cover.

## NOTE 7. STANZA XXI. LINE 5.

*His orbless brow.*

The eyes of Zedekiah, King of Judah, had been put out at Riblah, by command of Nebuchadnezzar, his children having been first murdered in his presence, as a punishment for his treachery and rebellion.

## NOTE 8. STANZA XXI. LINE 7.

*The double prophecy.*

“Thou shall not escape out of his hand, but shall surely be taken and delivered into his hand; and thine *eyes shall behold* the eyes of the King of Babylon, and he shall speak with thee mouth to mouth, and thou shalt *go to Babylon*.”—Jeremiah xxxiv. 3.

“I will bring him to Babylon, to the land of the Chaldeans; yet he shall not see it, though he shall die there.”—Ezekiel xii. 13.

## NOTE 9. STANZA XXXI. LINE 1.

*The holy fire.*

The sacred fire, which descended at the dedication of the Temple by Solomon, was preserved till about the beginning of the Captivity in Babylon.

## NOTE 10. STANZA XXXI. LINE 5.

*The Urin and the Thummim.*

These words signify *lights* and *perfections*, and are mentioned as being in the High Priest's breastplate; but what they were cannot with any certainty be determined; all that is known about them is, that they were consulted on occasions of great moment, and by some means, impossible to be discovered, gave an oracular reply.

## NOTE 11. STANZA XXXIII. LINE 9.

*That very plain.*

The plain of Dura stretched away W. of the Euphrates, and as the temple of Belus lay on the E. side of the river, strictly speaking, in the plain of Shinar, the expression “that very plain” is not literally correct; yet as the two plains are often mentioned indiscriminately, when speaking of the region around Babylon, there cannot be any great impropriety in laying the scene of the confusion of tongues on the western side of the river.

## NOTE 12. STANZA XXXV. LINE 2.

*A god of gold.*

Probably the same as that afterwards known as the Jupiter Belus, in the Temple of Babylon.

## NOTE 13. STANZA XLV. LINE 5.

*The feast.*

It is almost a hopeless task to attempt a description of Belshazzar's feast, after it has been done so fully, so powerfully, and so poetically, in Martin's wonderful picture. I have, therefore, done little else than to endeavor to bring the leading objects of that great picture again to the reader's memory.

## NOTE 14. STANZAS LII. LIII. LIV.

See Daniel v. 17—28.

## NOTE 15 STANZA LVIII. LINE 2.

*He hath turned**Aside Euphrates' waters.*

An enormous lake of about fifty miles in circumference, and from thirty to seventy-five feet deep, had formerly been dug on the west of the City, into which, during the annual freshet, caused by the melting of the Armenian snows, the superabundant waters of the river were diverted. Cyrus, despairing of taking the City by assault, turned off the stream of the Euphrates into this lake, and entered with his whole army through the low arches which carried the wall across the bed of the river. This, however, would have availed him nothing, but that the feast in honor of Belus happening the same night, had produced so great a neglect, that the gates leading down to the river, which were generally closed at night, had been left open, and the guards, asleep or intoxicated, were unable to offer any effectual resistance to the victorious army.

## NOTE 16. STANZA LXX. LINE 9.

*To the West.*

It was, and still is, customary with the Jews, when offering up their supplications in a foreign land, to turn towards the Temple at Jerusalem: this was in accordance with the sentiment expressed in the prayer of Solomon, at the dedication.—1 Kings viii. 23—53

## NOTE 17. STANZA LXXVII. LINE 7.

*Seventy annual weeks.*

Daniel ix. 24—27. Prideaux had traced out, with great industry and learning, the exact date of the decree issued by Cyrus for the restoration of Jerusalem, and proves that exactly 490 years elapsed from that event to the birth of the Saviour.

NOTE 18. STANZA LXXIX. LINES 5, 6, 7.

*Isaiah's heaven-taught pages had foreshown  
That his should be the glory to release  
Lone Judah from her chains.*

Isaiah xliv. 28.

NOTE 19. STANZA LXXXI.

Ezra. Chap. i. 2, 3, 4.

NOTE 20. STANZA LXXXVII. LINE 7.

*Which could not be renewed.*

Not only the holy things kept within the Ark, but the Ark itself, and all its furniture, had been lost during the Captivity. The second Temple was also deficient in other things which the first possessed, viz. the Shekinah, or cloud of the Divine Presence—the holy fire—the Urim and Thummim—and the spirit of Prophecy.

NOTE 21. STANZA XC. LINE 2.

*One.*

It is certain that Daniel lived till very near the end of the Captivity, and there is nothing to render his return to Jerusalem improbable. There can, therefore, be no impropriety in introducing him here.

NOTE 22. STANZAS XCI. XCII. AND XCIII.

Daniel ix. 4—19.

NOTE 23. STANZA XCV. LINE 5.

*And well the tears became those aged eyes.*

Ezra iii. 12.

NOTE 24. STANZA XCVI. LINE 1.

*A glory.*

Haggai ii. 9.





P O E M S .



## P O E M S .



### AMERICAN ANTIQUITIES.

WHAT though they tell thee thou hast nought,  
Young land of beauty, to bear back,  
Midst crumbling tower and fane, our thought  
To Time's long hallowed track,—  
That thine antiquity began  
When other lands were growing old,  
Thy name unwon, till Spain's bold son  
Came to thy shores for gold ;—

Heed not the imputation thrown  
So rashly on thy rising fame :  
Each giant cone of thine was known  
When Rome was but a name ;  
Each glorious stream, which bears its foam  
To the vast Ocean's deep repose,  
Was known and named before a dome  
On Tyber's banks arose.

His bow hath many a warrior bent  
In deadly conflict or the chase,  
Whose long descent was closely blent  
With Judah's royal race ;  
And many a sage had made his grave  
By ceaseless Niagara's roar,  
E'er Cæsar's legions crossed the wave  
To Albion's chalky shore.

What are the castles' turrets gray,  
Clothed with the moss of centuries ten,  
Or what the scenes of fierce affray  
Between half-savage men ?

Point to thy hills and rivers vast,  
Rife with the deeds of glory's day,  
Unknown because no muse hath shrined  
Their memories in her lay.

What are the pyramids which tower  
High o'er old Egypt's sandy plain,  
Those altars to Oblivion's power,  
Which Time has touched in vain?  
Thou too, if aught of praise redounds  
From home of death and mourning stone,  
May'st boast thy mounds—thy burial grounds  
Of heroes long unknown.

When Israel's tribes were captive led  
To Gozan's deep and distant tide,  
Far from the oppressor's hand they fled  
O'er many a desert wide;  
And many a foamy stream they passed,  
And many a forest wandered through,  
And trod at last the barriers vast  
By Behring's waters blue.

But islands, since by fire subdued,\*  
In ceaseless chain before them lay,  
And o'er the flood on rafts of wood  
They took their untried way,  
And trod these shores, before untrod  
By mortal foot since time began ;  
Alone — deserted by their God,—  
Deserting tyrant man.

And though full many an ancient rite  
Of sacrificial laws they bore,  
Preserved through Error's gloomy night,  
To this untrodden shore,  
Their end and spirit were forgot,  
Their lifeless forms they held alone,  
For they had brought no *record* fraught  
With Inspiration's tone.

And thus they lost that art† which bids  
Defiance to the tooth of Time,

\* The Fox Islands, some degrees South of Behring's Straits, all bear traces of Volcanic action.

† The art of Writing.

When mounds and crumbling pyramids  
Forget the tale sublime;  
And the exciting deeds, which filled  
The space of full two thousand years,  
Lie unrevealed, in darkness sealed,  
Where never ray appears.

Long else had been the scroll of fame  
Thy storied Muse had handed down;  
Else should thy lengthened annals claim  
Antiquity's renown.  
Lament it not: in every age  
Too long the tale of woes and crimes:  
Would that the sage had *torn* the page  
He traced in ancient times!

Happy, unhistoried, art thou,  
Happy, that thought may soar away  
Where but Conjecture tells her how  
Transpired the former day.  
Imagination paints with hues  
More fair than Truth—old artist stern—  
Better the deeds of old to lose,  
Than blush the tale to learn.

## MEMORY.

“ One clear idea wakened in the breast  
By memory’s magic lets in all the rest ”

MOORE.

How finely memory’s chords are strung !  
The slightest touch will wake a strain  
Which long ago our childhood sung,  
But hath not wakened since again :  
Some far-off music faintly caught,  
Rouses the energies of thought,  
And back upon the soul return  
Scenes, forms and faces long forgot,  
Kind words that bade the bosom burn,  
And looks of Love which changeth not,  
Connected, how we know not well,  
With that faint music’s magic swell.



I sat a lazy brook beside,  
Marking its slow and silent tide ;  
It passed the tree that gave me shade,  
Scarce rippled by the knotted limb  
Which lay across its course, and made  
A barrier to its waters dim,—  
Then with a long and gentle sweep  
Through level fields it held its way,  
Till down a chasm dark and deep  
It vanished with a sudden leap,  
Studding the rocks with silver spray.

All, all was strange, I sought in vain  
Semblance to some familiar scene ;  
The link was gone from memory's chain,  
Severed the golden thread between  
Present and Past, which should convey  
The electric flash of thought away  
To distant points of joy or tears,  
Made faint and fainter day by day  
By the still thickening veil of years.

I sat beside that lazy brook,  
Tracing the devious track it took,

And fancied in my waking dream  
I looked on Life's symbolic stream ;  
Gentle and weak, but pure, at first,  
Leaving with smiles the fostering breast,  
Where long and fondly it was nursed,  
Till, far beyond that home of rest,  
It mingled with the grosser tide,  
By many a distant source supplied ;  
In fuller strength and influence wide,  
But lower, level than before,  
Sweeping along in stately pride,  
But decked with purity no more ;  
Its surface wreathed with smiles and gold,  
Its breast beneath foul, dark and cold.

As thus I mused, beneath mine eye  
A mimic vessel floated by :  
The hull, a chip ; the mast, a reed ;  
A strip of bark supplied the sail ;  
The streaming flag, a water weed ;  
The precious load, a rusty nail ;  
That poor device of childhood's play,  
To cheat the lagging hours away,

Gave the lost link to Memory's chain,  
And when I raised mine eyes again  
The scene had changed ; before me spread  
The fields in recognition smiled,  
The tree above me seemed to shed  
The very leaves upon my head  
It showered around me when a child ;  
The twisted limb which swept the tide,  
Brought visions crowding on my brain  
Of clip-boats caught by eddies wide,  
Deprived of mast, sail, pennon, vane,  
By bending twig or hanging bough ;  
And so perchance the urchins now,  
Who play around this grassy brink,  
Behold their hopes and vessels sink.

So small the links that form the chain  
Which binds the Present to the Past ;  
So web-like are the chords we strain  
In thought across the torrent vast  
Of rolling years to scenes beyond,  
A slender, but a mighty bond,  
Like frail Al Sirat, which supplies  
The Moslem's path to Paradise.

## THE PLAY-GROUND REVISITED.

ANOTHER tree, and yet the same,  
Round which in boyhood's hour I played,  
Witness of many an anxious game,  
Contested in its giant shade;  
Beneath *this* branch the ring was made,  
*Here* was the line for "knuckling down,"  
On yonder knarly root were laid  
Superfluous jackets, blue and brown,  
And caps, that on each curly crown  
Were seldom seen, save when we went  
Sworded and feathered through the town,  
On deeds of desperate knighthood bent:  
And when, with Pleasure's labor spent,  
Brief rest we sought in Summer's heat,  
Yon shady bench its refuge lent;  
E'en now upon its mouldering seat,

With feelings deep and strangely sweet,  
Full many a well remembered name  
In rudest letters carved I greet.—  
We yearn — how early ! after Fame—  
Alas ! of all who joined our game  
When those young names were graved, how few  
Since have I seen, or now may claim  
Our boyish friendships to renew.  
O'er some of that once merry crew  
The grave has closed, o'er some the Sea,  
Some to their homes have bade adieu  
For years, perchance eternally ;  
And some who stood around that tree  
Happy with childhood's careless play,  
From vice and sensual influence free,  
Have thrown their innocence away,  
In vain pursuits grown early gray ;  
In look deformed, in soul and mind  
Degraded by the sins that prey  
Upon the vitals of mankind.  
O ! would they cast a look behind  
To this old tree, and think how fair,  
From Guilt's dark influence disentwined,  
Their hours of early boyhood were,

Perchance they yet might breathe a prayer  
To be from Folly free again,  
To fly from Pleasure's dangerous snare,  
And break the links of Passion's chain.

O! Joy is ever mixed with Pain  
In this strange world.—I cannot think  
Of those who joined our merry train  
In former years, but I must shrink  
From following Memory's golden link  
When to the Lost my mind it leads :  
I came to this old well to drink  
Refreshing draughts,—and lo! the seeds  
Of bitter memories grow to weeds  
Upon its waters.—

Yet the spring  
Is not *all* filled with slimy reeds ;—  
Flowers of rich hues and odors cling  
Around its marge, and they shall fling  
Pleasure so sweet upon my sense,  
That the fond thoughts and hopes they bring  
Shall drive all painful memories thence.

## BY-GONE DAYS.

How do the mists of Memory dress  
Our childhood's scenes in loveliness !  
How through the vistas of the past  
Our thoughts will wander, and forget  
The clouds above the present cast,  
While Fancy paints the fair vignette  
Which stands upon Life's title-page  
With hues which glad the eye of age ;  
Hues which in truth it never wore,  
But which to childhood's joyous eye  
It seemed to wear in days of yore,  
And after life would fain believe,  
Despite of cold philosophy,  
That Fancy *there* could not deceive.

How oft before my mental sight,  
Dressed in such robes of fairy light,  
Comes up the rude and rocky shore  
My infant footsteps wandered o'er.  
The crescent beach along whose marge  
The waters of the ebbing tide  
Their freight of weeds and foam discharge,  
Where tiny billows curl and break,  
Leaving a soft and snowy streak,  
The limits of two Empires wide ;  
The frowning cliffs on either side  
With bases buried in the beach,  
Like giant arms extended, reach  
Far out where stormy billows ride  
And buffet with the wilder waves  
That roar around their echoing caves.  
While the blue water sleeps between  
Those rocky barriers all serene,  
A little bay whose soft repose  
Seldom and slight disturbance knows.  
How oft across that placid bay  
Hath danced my Lilliputian barque,  
And as it swiftly sped away  
Mine anxious eyes its course would mark,



Now bright with joy to see it brave  
Some ripple which I deemed a wave ;  
Now dim with terror as its mast  
Bent to some overpowering blast,  
Which scarce disturbed the thistle down,  
Or shook the poppy's silken crown.

No merchant marked with greater glee  
His gallant, gold filled argosy  
Press home, her voyage of peril done,  
Than I, when o'er the mighty tide,  
Stretching full fifty fathoms wide,  
My-six inch ship her course had run,  
And struck with leaden keel the sand  
Which formed the "make believe" far-land.

Those days have passed, and many a year  
Hath vanished since that beach I prest,  
But still in memory's eye as clear,  
As though but yesterday I drest,  
Sweet sister ! aided well by thee,—  
My ship in muslin sails, and made  
My blocks of cork, my ropes of thread,  
And sent her o'er the mimic sea.

Each cavern there, each stock and stone

Brightly on memory's vision glow,

Like old acquaintance kindly known.

Ah ! easier task those rocks to know

Than face of friends seen long ago.

The cavern and the rock are there,

The very same they ever were,

But those who watched my infant play,

Oh, tell me *where* and *what* are they ?

Vanished or changed — and I should be

As changed to them as they to me.

## N I A G A R A .

DESCRIBE Niagara !—Ah, who shall dare  
Attempt the indescribable, and train  
Thought's fragile wing to skim the heavy air,  
Wet with the cataract's incessant rain ?  
The glowing " muse of fire," invok'd in vain  
By Shakspeare, who shall hope from Heaven to win ?  
And " burning words" alone become the strain,  
Which to the mind would bring the awful din  
Where seas in thunder fall, and eddying oceans spin.

Long had the savage on thy glorious shroud  
Fring'd with vast foam wreaths, gaz'd with stoic eye,  
And deemed that on thy rising rainbow cloud  
The wings of the Great Spirit hovered nigh,  
And, as he marked the solemn woods reply

In echoes to thy rolling thunder tone,  
He heard *His* voice upon the breeze go by,  
And his heart bowed—for to the heart alone  
God, speaking through His works, makes what He utters  
known.

But ages passed away—and to the West  
Came Europe's sons to seek for fame or gold,  
And one, perchance, more daring than the rest,  
Lured by the chase, or by strange stories told  
By Indian guide of oceans downward rolled,  
Felt on his throbbing ear thy far-off roar,  
Then sped the mighty wonder to behold,  
Thy voice around him and thy cloud before,  
Till breathless—trembling—rapt—he trod thy foaming shore.

Upward he gazed to where, with furious hiss,  
Thy waters spurn the precipice, and leap  
Into the vexed and indistinct abyss,  
Where Rage and Tumult ceaseless battle keep,  
Filling, with roar monotonous and deep,  
The wearied echo;—there he fixed his gaze,  
Like one entranced who fears to break his sleep,  
Lest the wild vision fade that sleep doth raise,  
All thought lock'd up and chain'd in stern and strange amaze.

Till, slowly rallying from the first surprize,  
Thought from its magic prison breaks at last,—  
The gazer from the foam-whirl lifts his eyes  
And scans thy whole arena wild and vast ;  
From point to point his eager glances cast,  
Take by degrees thy wide circumference in,  
And as his speechless wonder slowly passed,  
Delight succeeded, deep, intense and keen,  
Heart, soul and sense absorbed in that unrivalled scene.

Then through his mind like lightning flashed the thought,  
Once o'er the Patriarch's soul in Bethel thrown,  
“Sure God is with me, and I knew it not,”  
I see his power in yon majestic zone  
Of mighty waters, and its thunder tone  
Brings to mine ear His voice—and deeply felt,  
And almost seen His Presence reigns alone.—  
Then meekly by the rock the wanderer knelt,  
Feeling in awe and love his heart's full fountain melt.

And long with shaded eye and bended head  
He prayed before that Temple's wond'rous veil,  
Whilst from its foot, in ceaseless eddies spread,  
The mist-cloud rose, like incense, on the gale ;

And half he deemed that on its pinions frail  
His prayers, upborne, would blessed acceptance know ;  
He rose with gladdened eye and heart to hail  
Mercy's fair type and seal, the rainbow's glow  
Spanning with calm embrace the troubled scene below.

And when the westering day-beam warned him back,  
Lingering he stood, as spell-bound by the strain,  
And oft he started on his homeward track,  
And oft returned one parting glance to gain ;  
And twilight had usurped its fitful reign  
Ere to thy foam his last farewell he bade,  
Then like an arrow, o'er the woody plain  
Homeward he hurried through the deepening shade,  
Again in dreams to view thy wonders round him spread.

And oft alone, and oft with friends he came  
To scan thy charms, and worship at thy shrine,  
And feel again devotion's hallowed flame  
Blaze in thy presence fanned with breath divine :  
And oft from morning until day's decline  
He sat and mused beside thee, for his eye  
Saw nowhere majesty and grace like thine ;  
And in his soul thy mighty minstrelsy  
Woke stern and glorious thoughts, and visions wild and high.

In silence long forgot the wanderer sleeps ;—  
But still as when thou met'st his startled gaze,  
Thy glorious scene the heart in wonder steeps  
Of him who seeks thee in these later days :—  
Sublime in simple grandeur ! Art can raise  
No rival to thy throne, nor words convey  
Thine image to the mind, though noblest lays  
Have vied in thy description.—Day by day  
Thy roar shall speak of God till Nature fade away.

## ATHENS.

CITY of Gods and heroes ! In the dust  
The foot of Time—the tyrant and the slave,  
Have trodden down thy glory, and the grave  
Holds all thy greatness ;—the corroding rust  
Of centuries has bid the record pass  
From sculptured marble and memorial brass ;  
The hundred columns of thy Parthenon  
Were all too few the massive roof to bear,  
And undisturbed the birds and summer air  
Find passage, where, disjointed one by one,  
Pillar and portico the Earth have strewed,  
Like ancient trees in forest solitude.



The wingless Victory, in thine hour of pride  
Enshrined and chained, that she may never leave  
Her seat in the Acropolis, nor give  
Her smiles to thine antagonist, has died :—  
Unwinged and bound, like Love, her life *must* end,  
She could not flee, and thou couldst not defend,  
And o'er her grave, deserted by thy sons,  
Oft hath the foeman's shout of triumph rolled,  
And bondsmen's slaves have given for strangers' gold  
The sculpture from her shrine, which barbarous Huns,  
Less classic, but therein more truly kind,  
Left in their desolating march behind.

Well could thy Pericles design, and well  
Thy Phidias execute ; but how the rush  
Of Time and War and Ignorance may crush  
Genius and Taste, thy ruined towers may tell.  
The torch of Attila,—the iron shower  
Of Venice,—and the Moslem's grinding power  
Have cursed thee in their turn ; and from thy brow  
Have crumbled one by one the precious things  
Which Art designed to give thy glory wings  
Wherewith to fly o'er Earth ;—behold them now  
Spurned by base feet, or borne across the sea  
To lands unknown to fame when thou wert free.

The works of man, erected for renown,  
Are fallen or falling,—but the hills remain  
Around thee, reared by God, and shall retain  
Those names, which were the jewels of thy crown,  
When time hath broken every chiselled stone,  
And scarce their sites and stations shall be known.  
The mount of Mars no mark of ruin shows—  
Cithæron is yet beautiful—the hill  
Of Pynx arises in its glory still—  
Still on Hymettus evening's radiance glows  
And marks no change, though many a goodly wall,  
Dug from its quarries, trembles to its fall.

Thou hast been long degraded, but thy night  
At length beholds a dawn, and o'er the plains  
Where late raged Anarchy, mild Order reigns,  
And Law and Justice shed their equal light :—  
And a New World, which had received no name  
Till many a century since thy day of fame,  
Sends her enlightened heralds to unbind  
The veil of Ignorance which wraps thy heart,  
Thou once proud fount of Knowledge and of Art,  
And to relight within thy darkened mind  
The lamp of holy truth, that thou again  
May'st hold thy station in the ranks of men.

## SPRING.

CLOUDS of the mountain  
And mist of the plain,  
Spray of the fountain  
And foam of the main,  
Flee from your station  
On pinions of air,  
The face of creation  
No shadow shall wear.

Bright from the Ocean,  
O day-star, arise !  
Speed thy glad motion  
Along the blue skies !  
Scatter thy glory  
On valley and lea,  
On mountain top hoary,  
On streamlet and tree.

Leap from your slumber,  
    Ye flowrets, in mirth,  
Deck without number  
    The bosom of Earth ;  
Give out your treasure  
    Of odors and hues ;  
Stint not the measure  
    Of joy ye diffuse.

Nature rejoices ;  
    Ye birds of the grove,  
Pour out your voices  
    Of music and love ;  
Stretch forth your pinions,  
    Your plumage renew,  
Air's broad dominions  
    Are open for you.

Swift flowing rivers  
    Are open again ;  
Soft Spring delivers  
    From fetters the main ;

Glad fins are lashing  
The billows in play—  
Bright scales are flashing  
In streamlet and bay.

Forests are showing  
Green mantles again—  
Verdure is glowing  
O'er valley and plain;  
Labor is guiding  
The plough-share in toil,  
Safely confiding  
The seed to the soil.

Soft breezes breathing  
From climates serene,  
Where spice-flowers wreathing  
Their tendrils are seen,  
Float rich and balmy  
O'er Nature's broad breast,  
And, whispering calmly,  
Hush sorrow to rest.

Rejoice thee, O mortal,  
In spring's gentle noon,  
Death's gloomy portal  
Shall open full soon—  
And hallow life's morning  
To life's holy King,  
And Death's wintry warning  
No terrors shall bring.

## TO A CLOUD.

FLEECY cloud, I envy thee,  
Soft and white-robed wanderer there,  
O'er a pure and silent sea,  
Lonely, passionless and fair ;  
Who on Earth would pine unblest,  
Mix with rage and strive with care,  
Could he fly and be at rest  
In thy home of boundless air ?

On thy free and gentle course  
What hast thou to fear or shun ?  
Even though the tempest hoarse  
Howl when darkness has begun,  
\*8

Thou upon his steeds can'st sit,  
Safe as when the evening sun  
Hath thy quiet pathway lit  
To the coming twilight dun.

Though the keen-edged lightning's spear  
Through thy form a passage find,  
Soon the wound shall disappear,  
Leaving not a pang behind.  
Who the pains of Earth can bear,  
Pains of body and of mind,  
Nor betray the aching care  
Which around his heart hath twined?

Thou canst look on all below  
From thy high and holy seat—  
Smile at nations' overthrow,  
Caused by man's unbridled heat—  
Mark the tide of human things  
O'er their ancient barriers beat—  
And expand unruffled wings  
Where the storms of passion meet.



Man their changes too may mark—

Man may battle with their wave—

But amid the tumult dark

Nought he finds that man should crave ;

He may mix amid the fray,

Now to cheer and now to save,

But he bears at best away

Broken heart or troubled grave.

Oh ! to spend with thee on high,

Lovely cloud, a sinless day,

In the free and holy sky,

Far from care and strife away.

Hold ! the wish were impious, vain ;—

Rather while on Earth we stay,

Strive its tumults to restrain—

Strive its sorrows to allay.

Then when life's brief sun hath gone

Downward to its evening close,

If Religion's hand hath drawn

Glory round its soft repose,

Far above thy home shall rise,  
Free the soul from fears and foes,  
And from purer, holier skies,  
Pitying look on human woes.

Then, than thou more highly blest,  
Far its chainless wings shall sail,  
Where no storm shall mar its rest,  
No dark shades its beauty veil ;  
But around its sinless breast,  
Light, whose glories cannot fail,  
Still shall float a fadeless vest,  
Where the Sun himself were pale.

## RIZPAH.

THE love of woman ! what a deep  
And fixed devotion marks her love !  
Billows may rage, and whirlwinds sweep,  
But they are powerless to remove  
That rooted principle—her breast  
Seems with its influence all possest—  
In her it hath a mighty power,  
Force cannot quench nor terror tame—  
Slumber it may in joyous hour,  
But blazes with redoubled flame  
When foes invade or sorrows frown,  
Or suffering seeks its light to drown—  
It trembles to the slightest breath,  
But conquers agony and death.

A female form, with hair unbound,  
And haggard eye with famine dim,  
And sunken cheek and wasted limb,  
Sits houseless on the chilly ground,  
Her thin hands clasped upon her knee,  
Her head the rock's hard pillow presses,  
Whose points, despite her ample tresses,  
Her fair brow lacerate—but she  
Feels not the agony they bring,  
For deeper woes her bosom wring—  
The body's pangs how light and vain,  
Compared with that intenser pain  
Which numbs the heart and burns the brain!

Who are the sleepers scattered round,  
On whom her anxious looks repose?  
Her quick ear, quickened by her woes,  
Hath caught from far the whirring sound  
Of night birds' wings, and up she springs  
To scare them from the sleepers' bed—  
The jackall's cry is sounding nigh,  
The panther steals with silent tread—  
He cannot shun that watchful eye,  
Which through the long night slumbers never—

The surly bear goes prowling by,  
But there is one who guards the way  
Between him and his destined prey,  
Frail, faint and sad, but dauntless ever !  
The savage monsters shrink away  
From those wild eyes unearthly ray,  
They flee the gesture of that hand,  
That hollow voice's stern command—  
The majesty of love is there  
The strength of weakness, and the power  
To do, to suffer, and to dare,  
The high soul, nerved by dark despair,  
Gives the frail arm in trial's hour.

The sun upon her sleepless eye  
Rises in cloudless brilliancy—  
But rouses not that slumbering band,  
The objects of her ceaseless care—  
Why wake they not to greet his rays ?  
The breeze of morning, soft and bland,  
Lifts their long hair, and fluttering plays  
Among their vesture—doth it there  
For them no joyous influence bear ?

Nor summer's sun, nor summer's air  
Shall glad their eye or warm their cheek—  
Those livid features once were fair—  
Fondly those blood-sealed lips could speak  
Once to that lovely watcher—now  
Death's signet is upon their brow,  
The bloated worm and foul decay  
Have banquet held for many a day  
Within their long insensate clay—  
But she, whose fond maternal breast  
Once formed the pillow of their rest,  
For weeks unwearied and alone  
Hath sat beside their gibbet stone,  
Her only care to watch and weep,  
The guardian of their dreamless sleep.  
The dews by night, the heats by day  
Have fallen on her defenceless head,  
Nor chilled nor scorched her love away,  
Nor sleep hath charmed her eyeballs red  
From their long watch, nor hunger driven  
Her wasted body from the rock,  
Love its most holy power hath given  
To that lone heart, by sorrow riven,  
At frailty, famine, death to mock—

She hath had strength to conquer all  
That might the bravest breast appal.

Rizpah ! thy task is ended now—  
Behold, o'er yonder mountain's brow  
The men of Judah come to bear  
The bodies to their father's tomb—  
Bind up thy long dishevelled hair,  
Chase from thy brow the cloud of gloom ;—  
With pomp thy dead they shall inbume,  
Pomp that becomes the sons of Saul,  
Fresh flowers upon the bier shall bloom ;  
And 'scutcheons deck the funeral pall.  
Quit then thy solitary seat  
For some serene and fair retreat,  
Where from the dismal scene removed,  
Rife with the fate of those beloved,  
Thy days and thy subsiding woe  
On to their close may gently flow,  
And thou of mothers queen confessed,  
Shalt sleep with those thou lov'dst the best.

## L E T H E .

“GIVE me,” the sorrowing Roman cried,  
“To drink of Lethe’s blessed tide,  
For woes too great for man to bear  
The Gods upon my heart have thrown,  
And the dark spectre of despair  
Falls upon memory’s eye alone.  
Could I but taste that stream of Peace,  
Hope might revive and sorrow cease—  
The past, a blank, the future free  
For new pursuits, and pleasures new,  
Life may again move cheerily,  
Unblasted by the shades which threw  
Ill-omened colors, vaguely cast,  
Far o’er the future from the past.”



The lip is mute which woke the word—  
Long stilled the heart which sorrow stirred—  
And Lethe's stream, that could assuage  
The woes which curse the sons of clay,  
Lives only in the classic page—  
The school-boy's dream,—the poet's lay.

But if that fabled stream could glide  
Through earth, with all that power supplied  
With which mythology once thought  
Its dark and slumberous waters fraught,  
Still, still how few would bend the lip,  
That dim, oblivious stream to sip,—  
Save those, who rushing on their fate,  
Weigh no results and count no cost,  
Nor pause to think, or pause too late,  
When thought recalled declares them lost.  
What though along the path of life  
Lie many a trace of bitter strife,  
What though the whirlwind and the storm  
At times across its course have driven,  
Though rains too fierce and suns too warm  
Waste and sterility have given,

Have there not risen some holier joys  
Those hours of gloom to counterpoise ?  
Were there not heights along the road  
Which floods have never overflowed ?  
Were there no shady bowers to meet  
The scorching sun's intensest heat ?  
No rock, on caverned arches based,  
To shelter from the whirlwind's haste ?

Pause ere thine eager lip is wet  
With Lethe's tide, and ponder o'er  
The days and hours thou wouldst forget,  
Days, hours, to be reviewed no more—  
Think that within their circle rise  
All boyhood's blessed memories,  
When through hope's many-colored glass  
Thou look'dst on life, and saw it pass,  
With hues of beauty round it thrown,  
And gorgeous colors not its own,  
When care was but a passing word,  
Whose meaning was to thee unknown,  
When thou couldst carol like the bird,

And like the bird roam far and free  
By mossy rock or shady tree,  
And deem their beauties thine alone—  
When grief, if grief assailed those hours,  
Was but a passing summer cloud,  
Melting in brief and fitful showers,  
With rays of sunshine glancing through,  
Too bright for shadows long to shroud,  
Or, if they shrouded, but to strew  
Their dimness with the rainbow's hue.

Think, ere thou taste the oblivious tide  
Thou wouldst from memory's tablet blot  
The blessings ripening youth supplied—  
Blessings which life reneweth not—  
The generous warmth of hearts unchilled  
By contact with an icy world—  
The trusting confidence which filled  
The breast of childhood, yet unstilled,  
Though Doubt had many a missile hurled  
With bitter force and deadly aim—  
Hours, when young Friendship's sacred flame,  
Too bright to die, too soft to harm,  
Conferred on life a double charm—

Hours, when the thirst for happiness  
Came o'er the heart in such excess,  
That still the renovated sun  
Saw the pursuit again begun,  
And though condemned the prize to miss,  
The very chase itself was bliss—  
Hours, when the light of "Love's young dream"  
Danced ceaseless o'er life's onward stream,  
Changeful indeed, but ever bright,  
Like streamers of the northern light,  
Aye, and as many-hued as they,  
Yet filled with warmth unknown to them,  
The life springs glowed beneath its ray,  
Flashing and sparkling like the gem  
Filled with the strong electric spark  
Within the artist's chamber dark.

Pause, if a wife have blessed thy side,  
Pure, loving and beloved by thee,  
Pause, ere thou drink that flattering tide—  
Pause, if a child have climbed thy knee—  
Oh, canst thou in all after life  
Recall that soft delicious strife

Of doubt and joy and hope, which rolled  
Swift through thy heart when thou didst hold  
That hand resigned to thee alone,  
And first didst feel its timid pressure  
Gently responding to thine own,  
Proof that thou hadst obtained the treasure  
Much sought, and soon thy heart to cheer  
For long, long days of doubt and fear?

Say, can thine after years renew  
That first strange thrilling joy which flew  
O'er heart and brain when on thine ear  
Came up thy first-born's plaintive cry,  
Or when, beholding it, a tear  
Produced by feelings new and dear,  
A father's feelings—dimmed thine eye?

Joys such as these, and many more,  
Mortal, thou canst, whoc'er thou art,  
Draw out from Memory's hidden store,  
To soften and to bless the heart.  
The very retrospect of pain,  
Of sorrow, danger, woe and care,

May waken feelings which contain  
More that is soothing, soft and fair,  
Than sad or bitter.—

If to lose  
With painful memories all the good  
Be Lethe's gift—be mine to choose  
That sweetest joy of solitude,  
The memory of the past, with all  
Or dark, or bright her power can bring ;—  
And if the one may thought appal,  
The other still a light shall fling,  
So glorious that the shades of pain  
Shall sink to rise no more again.

## THE PASSAGE OF THE JORDAN.

THE hosts of God, by Joshua led,  
Approach the Jordan's eddying tide,  
And priests, with veiled and bended head,  
Bear to its grassy side  
The Ark, beneath whose cherub wings  
Are kept the pure and precious things ;—  
Behind the morn its radiance flings  
On bannered lance and buckler bright,  
And brazen trump, whose music rings  
To hail the dawning light.

The flood before them boils and leaps  
Along its deep and rocky bed,  
But still the moving column keeps  
Onward its fearless tread,

As though no foamy current flowed  
Between it and the blest abode,  
To which by many a thorny road  
    And desert plain its steps had past,  
And which in morning's glory glowed  
    Green, beautiful and vast.

And now the Levites' sandalled feet  
    Are moistened by the river's edge,  
Which curls and breaks with murmur sweet  
    Amid the bending sedge.

Yet pause they not ; with heart of prayer,  
And faith supported strength they bear  
That which the torrent shall not dare  
    Submerge or mar with angry tide—  
They know not how—but know that there  
    God will a way provide.

Their faith hath triumphed ;—with the sound  
    Of rushing thunder backward fly  
The affrighted billows, and the ground  
    They moistened now is dry ;



Cleft in the midst the waters stand  
Obedient to their God's command,  
Towering aloft on either hand  
    A glassy and resplendent heap,  
Where scenes which blessed the promised land  
    In mirrored beauty sleep.

And fearless down the dark defile  
    The countless hosts of Israel go,  
And loud from trump and harp the while  
    The strains of gladness flow.  
The depths that voices never gave,  
But those of warring wind and wave,  
Send from their dark and oozy grave  
    The echoing tread of joyous throngs,  
And praise of Him whose hand can save,  
    In loud triumphant songs.

And now the farther shore they gain,  
    And kneeling kiss the promised spot,  
Which through long years of toil and pain  
    Their anxious steps had sought.  
Whilst with a wild and maddening roar  
The tides, disjoined from shore to shore,

Their long suspended waters pour '  
To fill the yawning gulf between,  
Closed is the bright mysterious door  
By which they entered in.

Christian, behold the typic shade  
Of that dim path prepared for thee—  
Behold in Jordan's tide displayed  
Death's ever flowing sea.  
Thou treadest still life's desert plain  
In toil and sorrow, care and pain;  
Trials and doubts and fears maintain  
With thee a fierce and bitter strife,  
And but for heavenly aid would gain  
The conquest o'er thy life.

Yet soon that toilsome war shall cease,  
And thou beside the flood shalt stand,  
Beyond whose waves are realms of peace,  
A pure and holy land.  
But if thou still hast kept the ark  
Of God before thee as a mark,

Fear not the troubled waters dark,  
Howe'er they rage and chafe and roar,  
On that mysterious voyage embark,  
And God will guide thee o'er.

Pass boldly on in faith and prayer,  
And waves of doubt and floods of fear  
Shall part and leave a passage there  
To changeless glories near.  
The dim obscurity shall fail  
In Death's dark pass and shadowy vale,  
And thou with gladdened eye shalt hail  
Bright glimpses of the glorious things  
Which lie beyond and render pale  
The angels' flashing wings.

And when thou'st gained that blessed shore  
Forever freed from sin and pain,  
Death's cheated waves shall hiss and roar,  
Mingling their streams again.  
Thence ever closed, that shadowy door  
Shall entrance give to earth no more—

But thou shalt reach the golden floor

By Jesus lit and angels trod,

Ever and ever to adore

Thy Savior and thy God.

## THE KENNEBEC.

HE, who hath sped the billows o'er,  
Which break on Maine's rock-girdled shore,  
Will marvel when those rocks are passed,  
Which seem like sturdy barriers cast  
Against the tempest and the tide,  
How calm within, how soft and fair,  
How robed in glory and in pride  
The smiles and hues of Nature are.

There, Kennebec, like childhood's dream,  
Flows on thy full and placid stream,  
Now clasping in its soft embrace  
Some islet with its woody crown,  
Now hurrying on with swifter pace  
Where rocky barriers sloping down  
Give narrower egress to thy tide,  
And press thy waves on either side.

And thou dost yield where Nature throws  
Her bars thy wide expanse to close ;  
But where those puny efforts rise,  
Thrown up by man thy course to stay,  
Thy waters free those bars despise,  
And thou dost sweep them all away,  
Thou wilt not let *his* arm restrain  
Thy march to join the mighty main.

What lovely scenes, fair river, rise  
Along thy banks, and in thy stream  
Reflected each in beauty lies  
Like paintings of a fairy dream.  
Through tangled dell and forest deep  
Thy new-born waves in gladness leap  
Through groves once bright with council fire,  
By fortress-rock and signal hill,  
Where Indian warrior roamed at will,  
And where, unworthy of their sire,  
His wretched offspring wander still,—  
His vigor and his spirit fled—  
All but the name changed, lost or dead.

But thou art sweeping on the same  
As when that race bestowed thy name,  
On by the rock which memory keeps  
Of where good Ralle in silence sleeps ;  
On, by the vale and by the hill,  
The classic spires of Waterville,  
And many a town of lesser name,  
Till, sweeping round the broken bar  
Which man did make and thou didst mar,  
Augusta, like some lovely dame,  
Sits by thy flood and sees her grace  
Reflected in thy glassy face.

Thence on with calmer, deeper swell,  
Thou lav'st the shores of Hallowell ;—  
Thence, onward still, thy streams divide,  
Twin sisters of thy widening tide,  
Gardiner and Pittston ; fair they spread,  
'Mid verdant slope and forest shade ;  
The gothic spire that crowns the hill,  
In thought, before me rises still,  
Such as it rose, ere hid from view,  
By curving bank and wooded height,

When to your shores we bade adieu,

Homes of true kindness and delight.

Ah! swiftly passed the light-winged hours,

Amid your hospitable bowers,

And soon arrived the destined day,

To bear us from those bowers away,

And soon upon her foamy path,

The steamer gained the shores of Bath,

Where, pausing well-known forms to leave

And stranger voyagers to receive,

Soon to thy tide she bade adieu

And slept on ocean's billows blue.

And oft in thought thy quiet scenes

Come o'er my mind,—O gentle river,

And through thy green and waving screens

I see the trembling sunlight quiver

Across thy face ; or, as at eve,

When sunset's beams a rose-robe weave,

So deep the smile of Heaven impressed

Along thy still and mirrored breast ;

I've seen extend from shore to shore

The ripple of the boatman's oar.



Still calm be thou, and calm the days  
Of those who on thy "banks and braes,"  
Have found a quiet, fair retreat !  
Far from thy vales be War's red heat !  
Far, strife of arms and battle flood,  
Staining thy Paradise with blood !  
Rather let Peace to ploughshares beat  
The swords rash valour bade to shine  
Erewhile along thy northern line,  
And teach those nobler arts which spread,  
Not mar, the gifts which God has shed.

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