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The Fall of Mexico

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FREDERIC THOMAS BLANCHARD
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THE
FALL OF MEXICO,

A
P O E M.

BY MR. JERNINGHAM.

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REPUBLIC OF MEXICO

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ADVERTISEMENT.

GUATIMOZINO, the last emperor of MEXICO, having opposed the SPANIARDS with great bravery, in various engagements, was at length defeated and taken prisoner. In order to extort from him a discovery of the principal mines, he was laid on burning coals; The second in command was also condemn'd to the same torture, and amidst his sufferings called upon his royal master to be released from the vow of secrecy, which drew from GUATIMOZINO these memorable words: *Am I on a Bed of Roses?*

DRYDEN has put these words into the mouth of MONTEZUMA contrary to the testimony of the historians.

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T H E

F A L L O F M E X I C O .

THE Sun now glitter'd in the front of day,
And wide-diffusing his resplendent ray,
Look'd willing to adorn the glorious meed,
The realm!—To GUATIMOZINO decreed!
Whom for his valour tried and virtue known,
His country's voice invited to the throne.

Now, thro' th' applauding clamour of the throng,
Th' august procession slowly mov'd along,
While in the rear of this progressive scene,
Endearing fight! the chosen Youth was seen,

Rais'd on a lofty feat of burnish'd gold,
Which twelve illustrious MEXICANS uphold.

I I T

The law ordain'd a signal to display
The function, mode, and colour of the day :
A splendid streamer playing to the view, 15
(Inwrought with plumage of celestial blue)
Mark'd from the summit of a lofty tow'r,
Of Joy's great festival the leading hour :
This master-sign the distant flag obey'd,
And prompt alike the glad report convey'd, 20
Which posting on the rapid wings of flight,
To ev'ry city urg'd its speedy flight,
Till MEXICO throughout her vast extent
Burst into joy with one declar'd assent !

Behold the solemn slow-advancing train 25
Approach the precincts of the sacred fane ;
A venerable, rude, majestic pile,
Of time remote, which claim'd the stubborn toil :

By gloomy Fancy on the portal plann'd,
 Bold from the sculptor's all-creative hand, 30
 Full many a wild terrific image sprung :
 There angry serpents intertwining hung :
 There the God's agent, Terror ! fond to dwell,
 Breath'd all around his awe-diffusing spell.

See now the train the spacious dome receive, 35
 Where clouds of fragrance circling altars heave !
 Four golden columns with bright jasper crown'd,
 The hallow'd image of the God surround.
 Now from his seat the chosen Youth descends,
 And to that image prompt his footsteps bends, 40
 Where ANDALUSIA, form'd in Beauty's mould,
 And high on Virtue's sacred list enroll'd,
 With fear, with love, with bashful youth impress'd,
 Expecting stood the bride of his request.

“ Deign to partake, th' illustrious chieftan said, 45
 “ The growing honours that around me spread ;

“ Consent the glory of a throne to share,
“ Be thine the pleasure, and be mine the care.”

Lo at their side the priest TALEPO stands,
And joins, in wedlock's tie, their willing hands : 50
Then rearing to the view th' imperial crown,
The pontiff said : “ Thou fav'rite of renown,
“ Warm in whose breast each kindred virtue lives,
“ Behold the glorious meed thy country gives !
“ The trembling hand which late to thine I join'd, 55
“ Is as the pledge of her love-glowing mind,
“ So is this crown the thronging votes impart,
“ The sacred token of thy country's heart.
“ The radiant wisdom to thy birth allied,
“ Thy valour in the field of danger tried, 60
“ Thy sympathy that wakes at Sorrow's sigh,
“ These are the charms that glitter in her eye !
“ Thy valour rushing as th' impetuous stream,
“ (Ah let me linger on th' enchanting theme)

“ Impell'd thee to resist the foreign host, 65
 “ That pour their numbers on our wond'ring coast,
 “ And hurl'd, like Gods, destructive thunders round !
 “ Alarm'd, astounded at th' unusual sound,
 “ Our archers hurried from th' unequal fight,
 “ And urg'd precipitate their trembling flight ; 70
 “ While female shrieks, and children's piercing cries,
 “ With mix'd discordance, issued to the skies.
 “ 'Twas then, amid this universal fear,
 “ That thou, undaunted, did'st thy valour rear,
 “ And as the rock that checks the torrent's roll, 75
 “ Ev'n so did'st thou the flying throng control,
 “ And on each archer's breast, to terrour prone,
 “ Did'st pour the warm effusions of thy own :
 “ Charm'd by the spell of thy enliv'ning word,
 “ They face the daring foe with one accord ; 80
 “ With thee the terrors of the combat brave,
 “ And make th' extensive coast one SPANISH grave.
 “ For this thy country decks thee with renown,
 “ And fixes on thy brow this splendid crown.”

He ceas'd—while thro' the wide extending fane, 85

The voice of Gladness pours her plausive strain, "

"

Lo! now, an herald comes with speedy pace, "

His thought expanding o'er th' expressive face: "

Festivity resigns her short-liv'd charms, "

While loud he cries—"To arms—To arms—To arms! 90

" Proud of their daring, an alarming host "

" Of warring SPANIARDS darken all the coast: "

" High-rais'd on beings of superior force, "

" They urge resistless their destructive course: "

" Their chieftan's voice these monsters well obey, 95

" Fierce they pursue where he directs the way! "

" Babes, mothers, men, are in one carnage trod, "

" By these new engines of that demi-God!" "

"

" Hail to th' event, the new-crown'd youth returns, "

" To meet these foes my panting bosom burns:" 100

Then to the beautiful bride, o'erwhelm'd with grief, "

With plaintive voice applied the royal chief: "

“ The joy expectancy had painted high,

“ And bath'd in all the colours of the sky,

“ Flies like the bird who deck'd with ev'ry hue, 105

“ Wings gayly by, and shoots beyond the view :

“ Now to the House of Sorrow urge thy way,*

“ Whose darksome round forbids the laughing day :

“ As there thou shalt revolve the future scenes,

“ While Fancy lifts the veil that intervenes, 110

“ Let Hope celestial inmate of the heart,

“ Her half-expanding prospects still impart :

“ Think thro' the perils that encircling rear,

“ I shall securely urge my bold career,

“ And at the closing of th' embattled strife, 115

“ Return perchance with fame-ennobled life,

“ And fondly hanging on thy neck, recite

“ The toil, the havock of the daring fight.

The fair return'd (with deep affliction fraught)

“ When Gratitude first wak'd my infant thought, 120

* ANTONIO DE SOLIS mentions in his history the House of Mourning, which was frequented in the season of calamity.

“ And bade me raise it to th’ august abode,
“ In thanks for ev’ry gift the God bestow’d,
“ In glowing thanks did I pour out my mind,
“ That thou best gift was to my wish assign’d :
“ Still with the fond expectancy elate 125
“ Oft would my heart forerun the ling’ring date :
“ Now as the Sun the splendid hour ascends,
“ Misfortune o’er the scene her cloud extends :
“ Ah, GUATIMOZINO, what voice can tell
“ The various ills that darken this farewell ! 130
“ Expos’d to peril, that enchanting form
“ The thunder of the stranger may deform :
“ Methinks I view thee in that blasted state,
“ Dread spectacle—what horrors round thee wait ?
“ In vain these anxious eyes attempt to trace 135
“ Ev’n the last ling’ring melancholy grace
“ That death bestows !”—Her voice now fails to flow,
Curs’d with the dire presagement of her woe.
Behold, encircled by her virgin train,
The sorrow-wedded fair forfakes the fane : 140

The parting fair the hero's eyes pursue,
While glisten'd his young cheek with Pity's dew.

Lo, now commence the military rites,
While love of fame each panting breast excites.

Two youths, whom friendship and whom glory warms, 145
Come to demand the privilege of arms :
Beside the statue of the God they stand,
And rev'rent kiss the darts that grace his hand :
These sacred darts the pow'r above bestow'd,
A spirit bore them from the bright abode, 150
And in his passage to the sphere below,
He dipt their plumage in the vernal bow.

See now at GUATIMOZINO's command,
To tuneful measures move the warlike band !
The square encircling an extensive plain, 155
Receives the patriot military train :
To them approach'd with speedy march the foe,
While on each bosom valour pour'd a glow.

D

But chiefly GUATIMOZINO confess'd
 The hero's feelings lab'ring in his breast : 160
 There youthful Valour wak'd his ardent flame,
 There breath'd contempt of death and love of fame,
 There Intrepidity that scorns to stoop,
 And soft-ey'd Clemency—enchanting group !
 O'er these as Fancy stretch'd her brooding wing, 165
 Precient she saw, from this assortment, spring
 Some great, she knew not what, excelling deed,
 That shou'd from Glory's hand obtain a meed.
 Ey'n thus the bard who sleeps near Avon's wave,
 To whom the Muse her unfeign'd treasures gave, 170
 When Genius smote him with his fiercest beam,
 And rous'd his bosom to some lofty theme,
 His heart confess'd the something yet unknown,
 Which shou'd (to vigour's full perfection grown)
 Rise on the field of Poetry sublime, 175
 And brave invincible the scythe of Time.

Now from the bows the pointed weapons fly,
 While from the foe the thund'ring tubes reply :

Of CORTEZ rushing on a fiery steed
 The new-crown'd chieftain dares the course impede; 180
 His eye illum'd with Valour's sparkling glance
 Deep in the courser's chest he roots his lance;
 But not his valour does the foe appall,
 Still bleeding warriors round their hero fall.
 Now to the lofty fane his troops repair, 185
 Whose high ascending tow'rs are lost in air,
 From whence the MEXICANS with speedy art
 Show'r on the foe the death-inflicting dart:
 Yet then by CORTEZ led, still undismay'd,
 The SPANIARD host the lofty fane invade. 190

The two illustrious youths (whom Friendship's hand,
 Had join'd with her indissoluble band).
 Beheld indignant, smit with patriot grief,
 The great achievements of the hostile chief:
 And now JANELLAN thus accosts his friend: 195
 " Firm to no purpose, active to no end,

- “ See from our gallant men yon hallow'd tow'rs
“ Already ravish'd by th' invading pow'r :
“ Must this, committed to our mutual care,
“ The same defeat, the same dishonour share ? 200
“ If so—the victor shall not long survive—
“ A thought that bids my fading hope revive :
“ A thought—that like the thunder-flash of night
“ Darts on my darken'd mind a radiant light—
“ But ere my veil'd designment I unfold, 205
“ Declare, however rash, however bold,
“ Thou'lt not o'ershade with Caution's chill controul,
“ The splendid purpose of my ardent soul.”

VENZULA to his breast his hand applied,
And thus beyond the pow'r of words replied. 210

The youth resum'd—“ From this aerial height,
“ Bid thy bold vision take its deepest flight,
“ Down to yon rock, far stretching o'er the shore,
“ 'Gainst which the raging waves incessant roar,

- “ Whose clashing voices into stillness fade, 215
 “ Ere this tremendous distance they pervade :
 “ If Fortune blefs what my proud counfels urge,
 “ Yon waves shall murmur soon the victor’s dirge !
 “ My fecret project I will now unveil :
 “ Should CORTEZ o’er this valiant band prevail, 220
 “ Should thro’ controlment, and thro’ stubborn force,
 “ Pour like a torrent his destructive course,
 “ When on this summit first he shall appear,
 “ I will advance, with well-diffembled fear,
 “ And, fuppliant as I kneel to win his grace, 225
 “ I’ll dauntlefs lock him in a ftern embrace,
 “ Bear him reluctant to yon giddy fteep,
 “ Where yawns a dreadful opening to the deep,
 “ And thence—felf-ruin’d for my country’s good,
 “ Plunge with her foe into the whelming flood !” 230

VENZULA answered—“ Yes, I much admire

“ What now thy matchlefs virtue dares infpire :

- “ But wilt thou, with an avarice of fame,
“ The meed of Glory all exclusive claim ?
“ Wilt thou to perils close to Death adjoin’d 235
“ Advance, and leave thy faithful friend behind ?
“ In infancy we shar’d the glitt’ring toys,
“ And in one circle play’d our harmless joys :
“ And when we quitted childhood’s lowly vale,
“ Where springing flow’rets scent the playful gale, 240
“ Still hand in hand we climb’d youth’s arduous height,
“ Whence greater scenes expanded on the fight,
“ Still our pursuits consenting to one plan,
“ Like wedded streams our lives united ran :
“ And wilt thou now oppose the sacred tide, 245
“ And bid the friendly waves disparting glide ?”

- JANELLAN spoke—“ Endearing youth forgive :
“ The conq’ror of some future CORTEZ live !
“ Nor mark my fall with Grief’s dejected brow,
“ View from my death the bright effects that flow : 250

“ Behold the tomb that Gratitude shall raise,
“ Illustrious signal of my country's praise.”

To this the brave VENZULA made reply,
And as he spoke, tears started from his eye :
“ What tho' Felicity thy gift shall stream 255
“ Sunlike o'er MEXICO with brightest beam,
“ Not all the splendour that her rays impart,
“ Will e'er illumine my benighted heart,
“ When destitute of thee, its only ray,
“ Without the hope of kind returning day.” 260

“ Thou best of friends, JANELLAN said, suppress
“ Of thy bright amity this warm excess,
“ Left shrinking as it scorches I dissolve,
“ Unfram'd, unequal to my great resolve !”

“ Yet lend thine ear, VENZULA then rejoin'd, 265
“ Sublimar motives urge my steady mind :

- “ Recall, recall that joy-diffusing hour,
“ When gay Prosperity adorn'd my bow'r,
“ As thy fair sifter, half-afraid to speak,
“ With down-cast look, and blush-embellish'd cheek, 270
“ At Love's request assented to be mine :
“ Of fleeting blifs vain momentary shine ;
“ For she, in flow'r of Youth and Virtue's bloom,
“ Was swept untimely to the rav'nous tomb :
“ As sorrow-wounded o'er her couch I hung, 275
“ To catch the tones that faded as they sprung,
“ *The God, she said, now summons me away,*
“ *Far from the confines of th' endearing day :*
“ *Thou of the life I lose the dearest part,*
“ *Thou chosen spouse ! thou sun-beam of my heart,* 280
“ *Say, by Affection's glowing hand impress'd,*
“ *Shall I not live in thy recording breast !*
“ *If sacred be the suff'rer's last desires,*
“ *Revere what now my parting soul requires :*
“ *I leave a brother, by bright Honour rear'd,* 285
“ *By all approv'd, and much to me endear'd :*

“ *Be, for the sister’s love, the brother’s friend ;*
“ *Nor from his side depart when storms descend :*
“ *The palm of Glory waving in your fight,* 290
“ *In council, peril, enterprise unite.”*

“ Shall I, when danger calls, conſign to air
“ The laſt bequeathing wiſhes of the fair ?
“ Perdition catch the baſe unmanly thought !
“ By Love’s ſubliming pureſt dictates taught 295
“ Amid the perils that around thee wait,
“ View me reſolv’d to ſhare th’ impending fate :
“ Now to this ſpot the foe impels the war,
“ Diſcordance ſcreams, oppoſing lances jar :
“ The ſteep aſcent lo CORTÉZ now has gain’d, 300
“ Ah, mark his ſpear with ſtreaming gore diſtain’d.

Th’ illuſtrious youths now act their dread deſign,
See at the victor’s knee they low incline !
Now claſp with circling force th’ incautious foe,
And cloſe adhering to his figure grow : 305

Their deadly aim his better fate controll'd,
With matchless pow'r he bursts their stubborn hold :
The heroes, blasted in their bold intent,
Approach'd (Death hov'ring near) the dire descent :
Then, in each other's circling arms compress'd, 310
The last and dear farewell in sighs express'd :
'Twas Friendship burning with meridian flame,
One cause—one thought—one ruin—and one fame——
Tremendous moment! See, they fall from light,
And dauntless rush to never ending night! 315

Ye self-devoted patriot victims, hail!
Oblivion's gulph shall ne'er entomb your tale :
While History to Time's extremest goal
Her stream majestic shall thro' ages roll,
Like two fair flow'rets on one stem that blow 320
Ye on her margin shall for ever glow.*

* This sublime instance of heroic Friendship is recorded by ANTONIO DE SOLIS.

The royal youth, who saw th' aspiring foe
 The faint-opposing MEXICANS o'erthrow,
 Felt (as he saw proud SPAIN's victorious scene)
 The wound of Shame, the pointed shaft unseen: 325
 That stings the heart: yet then to valour true,
 The palm of Victory his thoughts pursue:
 " Oh, youth of MEXICO, once valiant train,
 " Raze from your radiant life this dark'ning stain:
 " Say, shall the breasts where Valour's flame should burn,
 " Your lifeless hearts as sepulchres inurn?
 " Thou western Sun retard thy closing race,
 " Nor to the Godhead witness our disgrace:
 " Our souls returning, a new contest claim,
 " Still thy last ray shall on our honour flame." 335

The daring chief, with these exalting words,
 Each slacken'd heart to Valour's tone accords:
 And as a cloud by adverse winds repell'd,
 Returns full oft with double force impell'd,

Then sailing pregnant with destructive storms, 340
 Diffuses darkness, and the day deforms,
 Till now descending with terrific roar,
 Bursts from its womb the dire engender'd store :
 So, vengeance-flor'd, the fierce returning train
 Impetuous rush upon the sons of SPAIN ; 345
 Who ill the fierce destructive impulse meet,
 While terror whispers to their souls—*retreat* :
 That ignominious counsel they obey,
 And urge precipitate their speedy way.
 The warm pursuit the MEXICANS release, 350
 Night spreads her starry veil, and all is peace :
 When sudden from the tow'r's aspiring height
 The clarion * pierc'd the drowsy ear of night ;
 That sacred instrument ! whose voice renown'd
 Yields rarely to the world its tone profound : 355
 TALEPO breathing thro' its brazen throat,
 Diffus'd around a deep-inspiring note,

* The MEXICAN Historian takes notice of the *sacred Trumpet*.
 It was not permitted to any but the priests to sound it ; and that
 only when they animated the people on the part of their Gods.

While on each youthful valour-heaving breast
 Religion her warm energy impress'd :
 Now tenfold rage impels the martial train, 360
 While leaps the pulse thro' ev'ry ardent vein :
 Fierce they pursue the fleeting SPANIARD host,
 Who from the neighbouring lake's projected coast,
 Rush down (as on their prey the Falcons dart)
 And trust to safety from their buoyant art : 265
 Vain hope ! see at the royal chief's command
 Of dauntless MEXICANS a chosen band,
 Prompt as the quickness of the lightning's gleam,
 Plunge with their leader in the roaring stream :
 With one bold arm thro' clam'rous waves they steer, 270
 With one they raise aloft the threat'ning spear :
 Thus vehement they urge the hostile train,
 Inflicting vengeance on the sons of SPAIN,
 Ev'n till the wide-diffusing drops of blood
 Spread like a scarlet mantle o'er the flood. 375

Of MEXICO the Genius now descends,
 And near the angry waters as he bends,

The crystal goblet that his hands sustain,
 He plunges thrice into the tinctur'd main !
 Then soars, and on the neigh'ring mountain's height, 380
 The radiant pow'r arrests his rapid flight,
 Where in full conclave a terrific band,
 The spirits of illustrious chieftains stand !—
 Not with the patriot does his passion die,
 It breathes—'tis Immortality's ally : 385
 Still from the tomb the warm affections flow,
 Ev'n as the sunset-sky retains a glow.

“ Mark, mark, the Genius said, this precious vase,
 “ Here pleas'd affix, here feast your raptur'd gaze :
 “ The vast canal near MEXICO that flows, 390
 “ Assumes the colour that this crystal shows :
 “ Its swelling surges dash the sounding shore,
 “ Inflam'd and crimson'd with the hostile gore.”

Touch'd at the welcome tidings they rejoice,
 And to the gale commit their feeble voice : 395

Lo, now disburden'd of their pressing care,
 They tow'r aloft, and vanish into air.

Tho' Victory her sun-bright glory shed
 Full and unfullied round the hero's head,
 At Nature's voice, he checks the smile of Joy,
 400
 And fun'ral duties now his thoughts employ :
 The death-ground opening its capacious womb
 Receives the dread deposit in its gloom.
 Now, with uneven, but persuasive strains,
 To wake the bosom, Harmony complains, 405
 While Joy, obedient to the magic lay,
 Dissolves like snow before the melting ray :
 Now fades th' expiring sweetly plaintive sound,
 While still as midnight, Silence reigns around :
 Chain'd is each voice, while o'er the awe-struck sense 410
 Distill the sober horrors of suspense :
 At length the chief th' expecting silence broke,
 While pointing to the patriot tomb, he spoke :

- “ Hail, sepulchre, which ev'ry coward shuns !
“ Thou glorious hecatomb of Valour's sons ! 415
“ On thee, oh sacred altar of renown,
“ Th' eternal being looks propitious down !
“ They, they are dear to that all-seeing eye,
“ Who greatly daring act, or bravely die.
“ Let this suggestion soothe the bleeding heart, 420
“ In which despair has lodg'd his poison'd dart :
“ To you I speak, ye fair afflicted train,
“ Who weep for brothers, friends, and lovers slain :
“ To you I speak, ye widows plung'd in care ;
“ And you whose sons stern fate refus'd to spare. 425

As thus he said—deep from some breast unknown,
Burst unsubdu'd Affliction's piercing moan,
Now intermitting, now returning loud—
At length, advancing thro' the wond'ring crowd,
A matron-form th' attentive hero view'd, 430
Her robe neglected, and her tresses rude,

With hurried step the royal youth she sought,
Her wild eye speaking th' inexpressive thought :
Close at her side a lovely boy appears—
Now through opposing grief her voice she rears : 435
“ Give, give to me, the virtue that repels,
“ The whelming surge of Sorrow at it swells :
“ Two valiant sons, in age my comfort's store,
“ My lov'd, my dutious children, are no more :
“ This morn, this direful morn, a prey to fears, 440
“ I bath'd our parting with presaging tears :
“ That they expir'd on Honour's sacred bed,
“ That their souls mingle with th' illustrious dead,
“ Well do I know—and glory in the thought :
“ Bright Virtue's flame, perchance, from me they caught,
“ From me th' instructive lesson first they claim'd,
“ This bosom nurtur'd, and this voice inflam'd.
“ Yet ill with this vain pomp of splendid words,
“ My drooping, loaded, sinking heart accords :
“ Ah, still to Glory's thought despair succeeds, 450
“ And th' agonizing mother inly bleeds.

“ This orphan babe to you I now bequeathe,
“ With Honour’s brightest flow’rs his mind inwreath.”

The child, half-conscious of the mother’s grief,
As if attempting to dispense relief, 455
Stretch’d forth his little arms, and playful smil’d.
In vain the boy her scorpion thoughts beguil’d,
Inclining at his call her anguish’d face,
Death-struck she perish’d in the wish’d embrace.

’Twas then the hero thus his thoughts express’d: 460
“ Fly, wounded spirit, to the realms of rest !
“ This orphan child committed to my care,
“ This tender object of thy closing pray’r,
“ The blood that warms his breast, his helpless years,
“ But most thy last request, to me endears.” 465

The hero added—“ Shall the captive train
“ Partake the fate the rigid laws ordain ?
“ As erring friends ’tis virtuous to forgive;
“ ’Tis godlike to decree the foe to live !

“ Ah then, while Pity does her thoughts suggest, 470

“ We feel the glowing God within our breast.

“ Amid the captives one superiour moves,

“ Whose gen'rous deeds humanity approves,

“ One whose pure bosom all the Virtues claim,

“ Respectful man! LAS CASAS is his name : 475

“ He for Religion's sake Religion woo'd,

“ Warm at her shrine the priest enamour'd stood :

“ When cruel Havock bade the war encrease,

“ Still o'er the plain he strew'd the flow'rs of Peace :

“ To soothe the prostrate foe his wisdom plann'd, 480

“ While hover'd o'er the wound his healing hand :

“ Yet not to these endearing acts confin'd,

“ He pour'd the balm of comfort on the mind :

“ Let then the sacred priest your friendship share,

“ And at his voice the death-doom'd captives spare.” 485

He said—and to the God of war ordain'd

A spotless rite by human gore unstain'd.*

* See the character of this SPANISH Bishop, so celebrated for his humanity, as it is drawn by the masterly hand of the Abbé RAYNAL in the third volume of his *Histoire philosophique et politique*.

Now, see the hero with the wedded fair,
(While sportive Fancy runs before) repair,
By Truth conducted to the dim alcove, 490
Where Pleasure rears the rosy couch of Love.

TALEPO now the Christian priest address'd:
" While Silence lulls the drooping world to rest,
" Let us enjoy the conf'rence of an hour
" Within the bosom of this secret bow'r: 495
" Say, 'mid the spoilers of this peaceful land,
" That rude unfeeling, bold destructive band,
" Who their base hands in guiltless blood imbrue,
" Oh, priest of meekness, what had'st thou to do?
" Say, of your country thus inur'd to fight, 500
" Do all in strife and massacres delight?
" Say, to what rigid Deity ye bend,
" If thro' our woes your pray'rs approv'd ascend?

LAS CASAS spoke—" Compell'd to join the host,
" Reluctantly I fought your peaceful coast: 505

- “ Nor of my country, with inhuman joy,
“ Do all uplift their weapons to destroy :
“ Nor is the Deity to whom we bow,
“ Such as your vague bewild’ring thoughts avow :
“ Indignant He beheld the martial train, 510
“ With bloody purpose rushing o’er the main :
“ Ill we deserve the blessings he bestow’d ;
“ For us he quitted the divine abode—
“ As on the humble earth with man He trod
“ Thro’ all her works aw’d Nature own’d her God. 515
“ The palsied suff’rer left his weary bed,
“ While on his cheek Health’s brightest colour bled :
“ And stranger still—the tenant of the tomb,
“ Who long had dwelt in Death’s relentless womb,
“ Upborn abruptly from the yawning ground, 520
“ Amazement-smitten cast his eyes around
“ Ah, highly favour’d race, TALÉPO cried,
“ Say, wherefore was your blifs to us denied ?

- “ God of the Christians, speak the crime unknown
“ For which an host of Virtues can't atone ! 525
“ For which proscib'd, disgrac'd, this hapless coast
“ Is ravish'd of those gifts your children boast !
“ Ah now, LAS CASAS, hasten to relate,
“ The bright effects of your exalted state,
“ The fruits that ripen from celestial feeds ! 530
“ Heroic thoughts ! and burst of glorious deeds !
“ You pause—what means that sorrow-shaded eye ?
“ That fix'd reluctance, that betraying sigh ?
“ Forbear, the priest return'd, thy vain request,
“ Nor call the truth from this unwilling breast : 535
“ Tho' many godlike deeds our faith endear,
“ The Christian story blasts th' expecting ear,
“ The Godhead spoke—*Let Meekness as a dove*
“ *Brood in man's heart the sacred acts of Love.*
“ But mark the strange result—in hostile bands 540
“ The Christians hurry to remoter lands,

“ To Death consigning, deaf to Pity's claim,
“ The realms unknowing of their founder's name,
“ From these dire acts they rous'd to new alarms,
“ And on each other turn'd their reeking arms: 545
“ The gen'ral Faith receiv'd Destruction's shock,
“ And as a vessel dash'd against a rock,
“ Was split into a thousand jarring creeds,
“ Each breathing rage and sanguinary deeds.
“ Then Persecution wak'd the Martyr's pile, 550
“ And hail'd the sparkles with a greedy smile.”

TALEPO said—“ The creed of distant tribes,
“ From your high-favour'd realm remote, imbibes
“ No knowledge of your God.—Ah, tell me true,
“ Bright Virtue's path do we in vain pursue? 555
“ Say, do we nurse with ineffectual care
“ The hope which soothes the pain that all must bear,
“ Who speaks of bliss beyond this lower sphere,
“ And whispers comfort to the dying ear?”

- “ Thrice virtuous sage, the feeling priest rejoin’d, 560
“ Ah let not doubt o’ershadè thy spotless mind :
“ The diff’rent tenets that each nation claims—
“ To heav’nly pow’r affix’d the various names—
“ Are as the rays projecting from the sun !
“ Are but the titles of th’ Eternal One ! 565
“ The many modes of worship, as they tend
“ To one refining pure celestial end,
“ Ev’n from that, diverse homage may aspire
“ A grateful off’ring to th’ immortal Sire,
“ As from the flow’rs of variegated dyes 570
“ Exhales a blended incense to the skies.
“ On us with energy the Godhead beams,
“ And on thy valiant clime but faintly gleams,
“ Yet be not thou disturb’d, nor fear to stray
“ In quest of Virtue far from Virtue’s way : 575
“ As round his little path, tho’ gloom’d, by night,
“ The radiant insect throws a guiding light ;
“ So all unerring see to act their part,
“ Taught by the glitt’ring glow-worm of the heart.”

TALEPO now, to bright conviction won, 580
 Exclaim'd, enchanted, " Oh thou better Sun !
 " Thy words like dayfpring on the breast of night,
 " Pour on my darken'd soul th' endearing light—
 " But partial light, for still within the mind
 " Full many a painful doubt remains behind. 585
 " What is that pow'r we Chance or Fortune call,
 " Who holds her veering ministry o'er all,
 " Resembling still that spirit of the sky,
 " Whose secret form eludes the human eye;
 " Who now unmindful of its matchless pow'r 590
 " Indulgent whispers to the vernal flow'r,
 " Plays with her leaves, and hov'ring o'er her bloom
 " From her young breast allures the enclos'd perfume :
 " And now envelop'd in a fullen mood,
 " Tempestuous rushes on the groaning wood, 595
 " Arm'd with destructive energy, invades,
 " Despoils, devasts the consecrated shades.

“ Still with the cloud of Ignorance oppress'd,
“ Enlighten'd priest, unfold to my request,
“ Of dire Necessity the hidden cause, 600
“ Who seems on Freedom's ground to fix her laws,
“ And combats and distracts the human will,
“ As the wild storm confounds the pilot's skill,

“ Tell, if thou can'st, what pow'r impels the mind,
“ When, loth in narrow bounds to be confin'd, 605
“ She breaks disdainful from her native sphere,
“ And soars exulting in a new career :
“ And in her progress sends a daring glance
“ Along Futurity's opaque expanse,
“ That dread depository, veil'd abode, 610
“ Where breathe the secret counsels of the God!

“ Still in my soul perplexing doubts remain,
“ All knowing sage, that radiant pow'r explain,
“ Who when the world with low'ring clouds is hung,
“ Darts like the sun from his high orbit flung, 615

“ And wing’d with swiftness, wild distracted flies,
 “ Dispersing terrour thro’ the conscious skies :
 “ Then the tremendous voice that speaks on high,
 “ As if some angry God bade Nature die.”

Thus thro’ their converse stole with magic pow’r, 620
 All unobserv’d, the slow nocturnal hour ;
 Till, as the shades forsook the morning sky,
 The God of day disclos’d his radiant eye,
 Which dropping lustre on the conscious main,
 Shew’d to the deep-desponding sons of SPAIN, 625
 A kindred fleet by urging zephyrs fann’d,
 Triumphant sailing to th’ impatient strand,
 Rich tablature ! by Expectation glaz’d,
 By Hope high-colour’d, and by Joy emblaz’d.
 See CORTEZ now, emerging from despair, 630
 For all the butchery of war prepare ;
 Revenge and Massacre, the saints that crown
 The bloody altar of his base renown,

Now goad him on to snatch the wealthy prize,
 Whose golden treasures glitter in his eyes. 635
 Meanwhile Despondence (like approaching night)
 Of INDIAN valour dims the splendid light;
 O'er MEXICANS her fenny pinions spreads,
 And on their bosoms chilling fear-drops sheds.
 To raise their drooping soul the chief compels 640
 The magic seers to quit their lonely cells:
 Three awful forms appear—in white array'd,
 Whose rev'rend temples silver tresses shade.
 To them TALEPO—"If your hallow'd mind,
 "As Fame reports by Wisdom's ray refin'd, 645
 "Can glance into Futurity's contents,
 "And wander forth to meet the great events
 "At distance sailing thro' their long career,
 "To take their station in this lower sphere!
 "Then speak our fate—does Ruin hover near? 650
 "And do we vainly grasp the hostile spear?"

DRACONO spoke—"Thy wond'ring vision raise,
" And mark yon angry comet's threat'ning blaze!
" Haft thou not heard loud howlings of despair,
" And shrieks of horror vex the midnight air? 655
" The dreaded pow'r, who from his baleful breath
" Sends pains, sends pestilence, and sudden death,
" Amid the terrors of the conscious night,
" That God malignant rush'd upon my fight:
" *Advert to MEXICO's distressful state,* 660
" *Behold the future picture of her fate,*
He said—when lo a low'ring cloud o'erspread
" And mantled MEXICO's imperial head:
" Tall columns of dun smoke encircling join'd,
" Which wreaths of flame like angry snakes entwined."
" Peace, terrour-spreading priest, the chief replied,
" Think not my people in your voice confide:
" Well I recall, how, in my early youth,
" Your dark predictions wander'd far from truth:

“ The mid-day sun recoil'd, invol'd in night, 670

“ While thou, the pander to the gen'ral fright,

“ Did'st dastard-like thy voice prophetic rear,

“ And loud assert—*The death of Time was near,*

“ *That at her flood-gates flood Destruction's pow'r*

“ *To deluge Nature in a fiery show'r.*” 675

“ The trembling world the chain of Silence bound,

“ While dreadful Expectation hover'd round :

“ When from his cloud emerg'd the God of day,

“ And nature burst into a grateful lay :

“ So from the low'ring cloud of our distresses 680

“ May dart the glorious sun-beams of Success.

“ To war, to war let us again resort,

“ And Victory by deeds of valour court.”

He added not—but hast'ning to the shore,

He bade his warriors grasp the guiding oar, 685

Determin'd on the bosom of the main

To dare the proud augmented pow'r of SPAIN,

Whose stately brigantines, with spreading sail,
 Approach obedient to the fullen gale,
 Which like a mischief-urging spirit guides
 The hostile vessels o'er the rolling tides : 690
 With ruin fraught the vast progressive scene
 Disparting—leaves a dreadful space between.
 To this dread space to war, the stronger foe,
 The daring chief directs his light canoe : 695
 So mariners have seen the Sword-fish sail
 With bold intent to wound the giant Whale,
 Now SPANISH art unlocks her deathful store,
 While on the gallies bursts Destruction's roar,
 Dark o'er the scene impends a veil of smoke,
 By frequent flashes of the cannon broke. 700
 'Twas then Fatality, mysterious queen,
 Who reigns despotic o'er this lower scene,
 Unquestion'd guides the rise and fall of realms,
 An empire now exalts, and now o'erwhelms, 705

Beheld her priestess, Revolution, stand!

Prompt on the mystic wheel to lay her hand :

“ Urge, urge thy task, the fatal Goddess said,

“ For MEXICO must bend her regal head.”

The mystic wheel performs th' appointed round, 710

And mark the chief in chains disgraceful bound :

Ah, see the youth approach the crowded shore,

While from the foe ascends th' applauding roar.

Now to the royal dome his steps he bends,

So lately peopled with his valiant friends : 715

There, there, oh sight accurs'd, in evil hour

He views proud CORTÉZ on the seat of pow'r :

Who meanly vain, thus loud insulting said,

“ Is all thy courage and resistance dead ?

“ The loyal troops that tread thy subject plains, 720

“ Do they consent to view their king in chains ?

“ Audacious MEXICAN, behold how vain

“ To war against th' uplifted arm of SPAIN !

“ Beneath yon plains, in some sequester'd scene,
“ Well do I know that Nature works unseen, 725
“ Forms with creative hand the buried ore,
“ To you an useless and unheeded store :
“ Does strong desire still prompt thy heart to live,
“ Then give to my impatient fight, oh give !
“ The cunning artist at her secret toil, 730
“ And glut my wishes with the glittering spoil !”

The captive hero gave these words to flow
(While his eye flash'd defiance on the foe)
“ These chains but only reach th' exterior form,
“ The bulwark of the mind thou can'st not storm : 735
“ Misjudging man ! think not thy proud control, }
“ Tho' all around your boasted thunders roll, }
“ Can e'er invade the temple of the Soul ; }
“ There lives the secret that thou woud'st devour,
“ And laughs at thy vain impotence of pow'r.” 740

“ Still shall thy haughtiness be taught to crouch,
“ The victor said—Prepare the fiery couch,
“ Pile glowing torches on th’ extended frame,
“ And clothe it with a robe of raging flame.”

Yet unappall’d the godlike youth rejoin’d : 745
“ If thro’ the night of thine umbrageous mind,
“ Could radiant mercy dart a cheering ray,
“ And melt to softness thy tyrannic sway,
“ To thy distinction would I then confide
“ That youthful captive, to my blood allied : 750
“ Ah, on that venerable grief-struck face
“ Look down, and smooth the rugged path of age!
“ But most relenting to this mourner bend,
“ And o’er her days thy guardian care extend.”
He ceas’d—and turning to the drooping fair, 755
Who stood a monument of dumb Despair;
While Sorrow’s iron hand her bosom wrung,
He on her neck in mournful silence hung.

Now from the chains that frame this fond delay,
Victorious o'er himself he breaks away, 760

And now advances, by rude ruffians led,
With step undaunted, to the tort'ring bed :

Alarm'd to meet his kindred warrior there—

“ Oh thou, he said, who did'st the battle share,

“ Must thou, unhappy youth, endure with me 765

“ This last severe result of SPAIN'S decree ?

“ Then raise thy heart superiour to the task,

“ Nor fear beneath those transient flames to bask ;

“ Ev'n ere they fade th' immortal Soul shall rise,

“ And take its seat of bliss in yonder skies, 770

“ Where to thy wond'ring vision shall expand,

“ Adorn'd with heroes, a refulgent land,

“ Where valiant MEXICANS, secure from woe,

“ Look down contemptuous on the SPANISH foe.”

He said—and to his rigid doom resign'd, 775

Along the flaming couch his form reclin'd :

The partner of his fate submissive bends,
And o'er the tort'ring bed his frame extends ;
Yet then unequal to the conq'ring pain,
He spoke his suff'ring in lamenting strain : 780
“ O, royal master, give me to disclose
“ Where in the mine the golden treasure glows—
“ I shrink, I faint, inferiour to my part,
“ And this frail frame betrays my daring heart.”

Amidst the raging flames that round him blaz'd, 785
The royal chief his martyr'd figure rais'd,
Cast on the youth a calm-reproaching eye,
And spoke——oh eloquent, sublime reply !
Oh heav'n ! oh earth ! attend

“ DO I REPOSE

“ ALL ON THE SILKEN FOLIAGE OF THE ROSE ?”

He ceas'd——and deep within his soul retir'd,
To honour firm, triumphant he expir'd.

Thy arduous task, brave youth, thou'ft well perform'd,
Tho' perils, threats, and tortures round thee storm'd :

O'er thy last scene admiring angels hung, 795

And at thy exit loud applauding sung :

Thy spirit glowing with celestial fire,

To Heav'n is wafted by th' angelic quire :

The gorgeous spectacle ascending high,

Sails thro' the portal of the parting sky, 800

And at the living throne arrests its flight,

O'er which is spread a brilliant flood of light ;

There the dread presence dwells in deep recess,

Encompass'd round with Glory's rich excess.

Now, thro' the veil of bright redundant beams, 805

A voice is heard—" From me Creation streams—

" I am the Pow'r—I from th' entombing Earth

" Exalt the virtuous to a second Birth ;

" To them delighted I disclose the ray

" Of Immortality's long Summer Day." 810

But see TALEPO, venerable sect,

Approach the scene, impress'd with busy fear,

When first th' inhuman deed appall'd his sight,
 Ev'n as the cedar shrunk in sudden blight,
 He stood—while at the dire appearance thrill'd, 815
 Each function of the soul stiff Horror chill'd :
 At length relenting into conscious grief,
 He loud exclaim'd—“ Oh lov'd, oh hapless chief !
 “ The ashes still that feed yon ling'ring flame,
 “ Do they of all thou art th' existence claim ? 820
 “ Long school'd in pale Adversity's rude porch,
 “ Where Hope's gay domes are burnt by Havock's torch,
 “ For me, with grief adjoin'd to age oppress'd,
 “ Remain'd but this to cleave my care-worn breast,
 “ In early youth to me thou wast consign'd, 825
 “ I watch'd the dawn of thy celestial mind,
 “ I saw, by Nature wak'd, thy talents rise,
 “ And Virtue mark them with her brightest dies.
 “ Ah what avail these fruitless tears I shed ?
 “ Tho' thou art gone—yet Vengeance is not dead : 830
 “ The pregnant womb of Time”—He added not—
 While from his eye a radiant meaning shot.

His bosom heav'd with a prophetic thro',
Till language gave his struggling thoughts to flow.

“ Methinks Futurity, celestial maid, 835
 “ Thro' distant Time's dim length'ning isle display'd,
 “ Pours on my favour'd vision days unborn,
 “ That pant impatient for the ling'ring morn :
 “ Smooth as the clear expanse of vernal skies,
 “ A world of water claims my wond'ring eyes, 840
 “ See on its wavy breast, in splendid pride,
 “ Innum'rous brigantines triumphant ride : *
 “ Mark how the gorgeous mafs advancing ploughs
 “ The groaning main with high aspiring prows :
 “ Secure in all the haughtiness of strength, 845
 “ It moves a crescent of tremendous length,
 “ And big with thunders and destructive force,
 “ To BRITAIN'S coast directs its threat'ning course.

* The SPANISH Armada failed in 1588, disposed in the form of a crescent, and stretching the distance of seven miles from the extremity of one division to that of the other.

“ Oft has LAS CASAS, in applauding strain,
 “ To me reveal’d that sea-encircled plain. 850

“ Thou Glory of the West ! enchanted isle,
 “ Where beauteous maids on godlike heroes smile:

“ By Nature’s hand with Nature’s chaplet crown’d

“ In arts, in commerce, and in arms renown’d ;

“ August, magnificent, exalted Dame, 855

“ As with a garment rob’d in Freedom’s flame !

“ Arise, arise—forefall th’ intended blow,

“ See to thy portal sails th’ audacious foe.

“ Another scenery is now display’d

“ No more the main assembled vessels shade, 860

“ A beggar’d remnant (of the splendid throng

“ That swept in conscious majesty along)

“ With prows disfigur’d, and dishonour’d masts,

“ While thro’ the rent sails mourn the hollow blasts,

“ In shatter’d, mean, dismantled rude array, 865

“ Steal o’er the waves their ignominious way.

“ Oh of thy brilliant and extensive train

“ Do these, ARMADA, these alone remain ?

“ Who has o'erthrown the honours of thy helm ?

“ The voice of Fame replies — ELIZA'S realm ! 870

“ Where lurk thy galleons that surpris'd the deep ?

“ Loud Fame replies — in Ocean's tomb they sleep !

“ And of HISPANIA once the bright renown,

“ Now glows an added gem to BRITAIN'S crown.

“ Enough—enough, submissive to my fate 875

“ I now return to my distressful state :

“ Thanks to the God, whose kind revealing pow'r

“ Gilds with a chearful ray my closing hour.”

373

(1) In the first place, the fact that
 the Government has not been able to
 secure the necessary amount of the
 loan, is a serious matter. It is
 a matter which has caused the
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374

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T H E

VENETIAN MARRIAGE,

BY THE SAME.

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VENETIAN MARRIAGE

BY THE SAME

T H E

VENETIAN MARRIAGE.

THE western sun's expiring ray
To VENICE gave a milder day;
Till by degrees the ling'ring light
Hung trembling on the verge of night.
CAMILLA then, with fearful soul,
To th' Adriatic margin stole,
Where in a bark, at Love's command,
PLACENTIO took his faithful stand,
Possessing now his future bride,
He bade the bark securely glide,
Which far unlike that gally show'd
That down the silver Cydnus row'd,

Beneath whose purple sails were seen,
Proud Ostentation's gaudy Queen,
Who sure of conquest, vain of mind,
All languishingly lay reclined !
Here Beauty undefil'd by art,
Whose bosom own'd a tender heart,
Beneath the sails from home remov'd,
And trusted to the man she lov'd.

A vernal calmness lull'd the deep,
And hush'd each wavy surge to sleep:
The air along the sultry day,
Scorch'd by the Summer's fervent ray,
Was freshen'd by a recent show'r,
While Silence solemniz'd the hour.

The still solemnity impress'd
With awful thought's CAMILLA's breast,
For now by prompting Love impell'd,
Now by Timidity withheld,

The words which to pronounce she tried,
Recoil'd, and unaccented died.
PLACENTO too alike subdued,
They fail'd along in silent mood,
And stillness reign'd from shore to shore,
Unbroke—but by the dashing oar.

At length the fair dissolv'd the charm—
“ Ah, wonder not I feel alarm!
“ Confiding in thy love I came,
“ And risk'd for thee my virgin fame:
“ Ah tell me to what place we sail,
“ For in my bosom fears prevail:
“ Yet answer not this idle fear,
“ Where'er thou art bright honour's there.”

“ The plan I form, the youth replied,
“ To Innocence is close allied,
“ And fearful of thy virgin fame
“ As of her babe the tender dame.

- “ These waves that wander to the sea,
“ Wash in their pilgrimage a tree,
“ Which spreads its lowly branches wide,
“ And dips them in the passing tide :
“ There, in a shade compos'd of reeds,
“ An aged hermit tells his beads :
“ He, gen'rous sage, will join our hands
“ In wedlock's unremitting bands.
“ Then to VALCLUSA we'll repair,
“ Where LAURA's soul informs the air :
“ Where PETRARCH's spirit hovers round,
“ The guardian of the sacred ground,
“ Forbidding still that fiend of art,
“ That shrewd perverter of the heart,
“ The snake, Inconstancy, to rove
“ Within the paradise of Love.

“ As when chill Winter quits the land,
“ The snow-drop does her leaves expand,

“ So may chill fears your breast release,
“ Till gently it expands to peace,
“ Mild as these twilight breezes blow,
“ Soft as the waves on which we flow.”

“ Ye walls where first I drew the air,
“ Return'd (assur'd) the beauteous fair ;
“ Ye turrets which but dimly seen
“ Encrease the terrour of the scene !
“ Ye stately tow'rs ! and rising spires !
“ From you CAMILLA now retires.
“ Thou tomb whose pious urn contains
“ My sacred parents' cold remains !
“ Ye partners of my tender years,
“ Whom youthful sympathy endears :
“ Ye joys that crown my native coast,
“ Well for PLACENTIO all are lost.”

She ceas'd—and on her pensive soul
Again an awful musing stole,

Such as the twilight scene excites,
Such as the feeling heart delights ;
For as the coy nocturnal flow'r
No more its sweets at eve witholds,
So the meek heart at th' evening hour

Its sensibility unfolds.

See now they reach the sacred cell
Where Wisdom, Peace, and Virtue dwell :
There, bent beneath the weight of age,
They find prepar'd th' expecting sage.
He hail'd them in a friendly tone,
And bade them call his cell their own :
Where rose an altar form'd of moss,
Crown'd with a simple wooden cross !
There too a taper, mildly bright,
Supplied a pompous glare of light :
No holy relick rich-enchas'd
This unambitious altar grac'd :

Here Flora, Nature's priestess, stood,
And round her fragrant off'rings strew'd.

The hermit spoke—"Hail, virtuous pair,
" May your misfortunes perish here :
" Tho' youth be yours, yet well I know
" You've tasted deep of human woe !
" Control, and art, and baseness join'd,
" To cancel what your hearts design'd :
" But now Misfortune's reign is o'er,
" And Pleasure opens all her store."

He paus'd—and now the youthful pair
Th' irrevocable vow prefer :
And now the hermit clos'd their hands
In willing and unvenal bands,
Unspotted bands ! which mutual Love,
And Confidence and Virtue wove.

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