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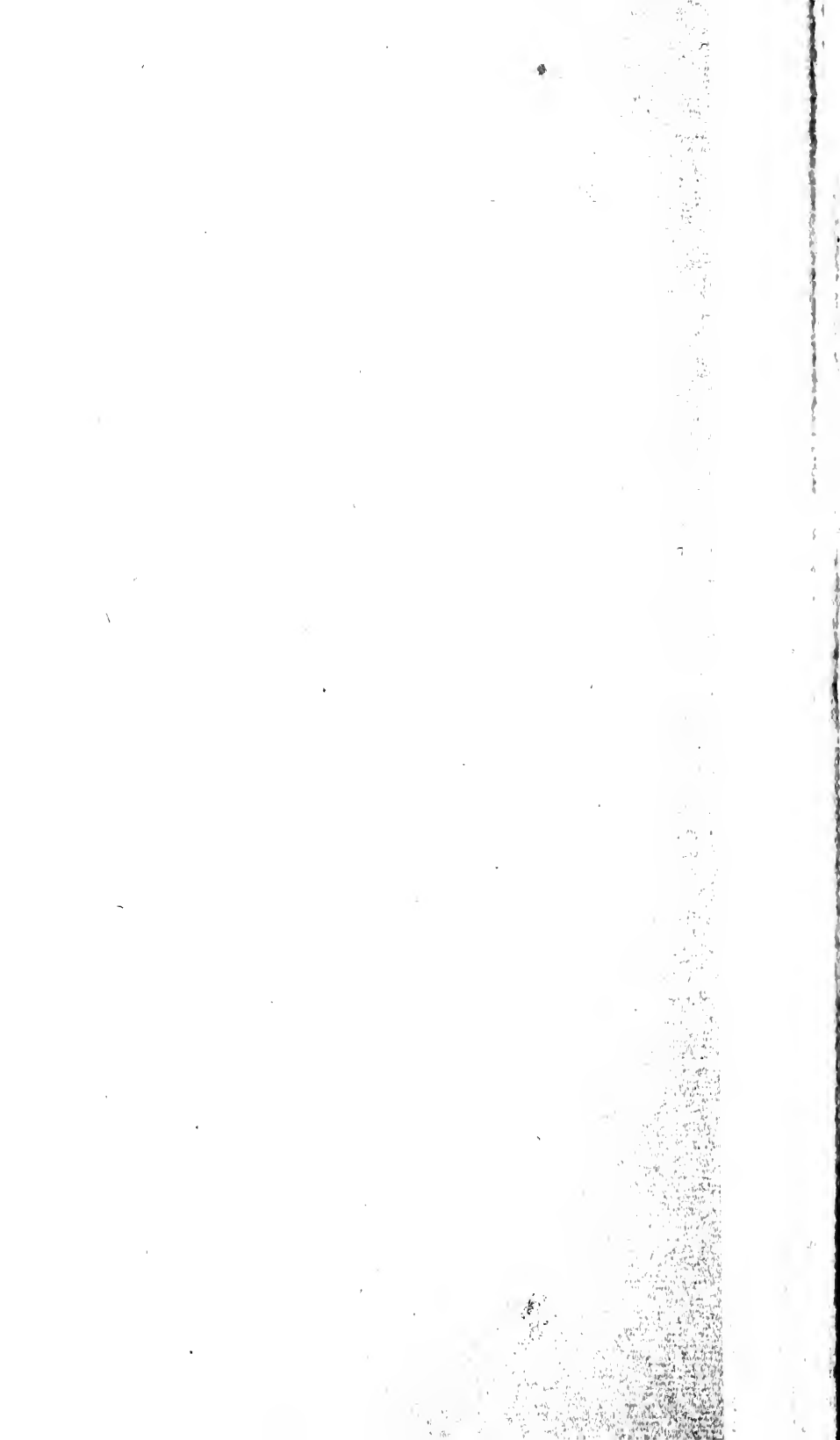
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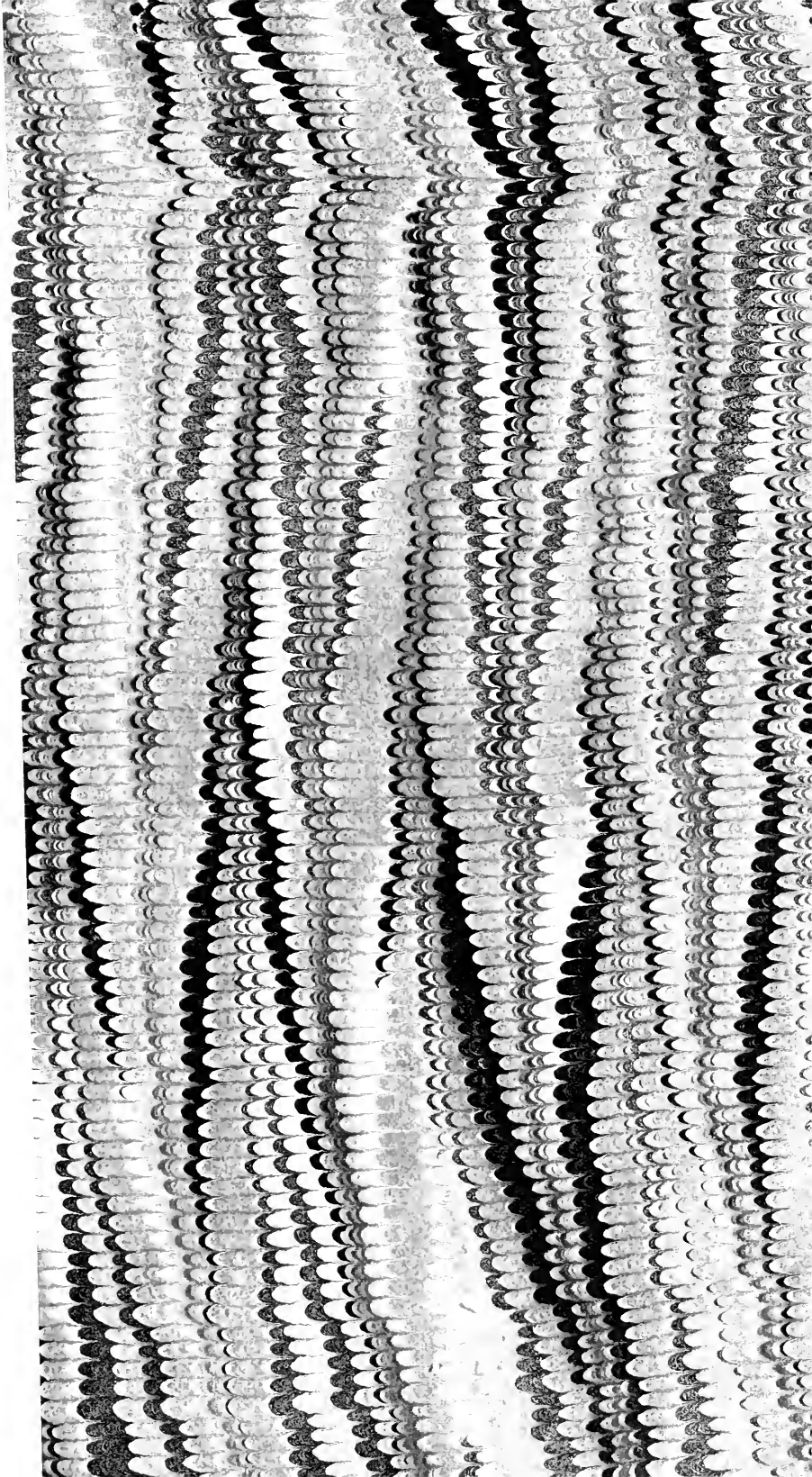
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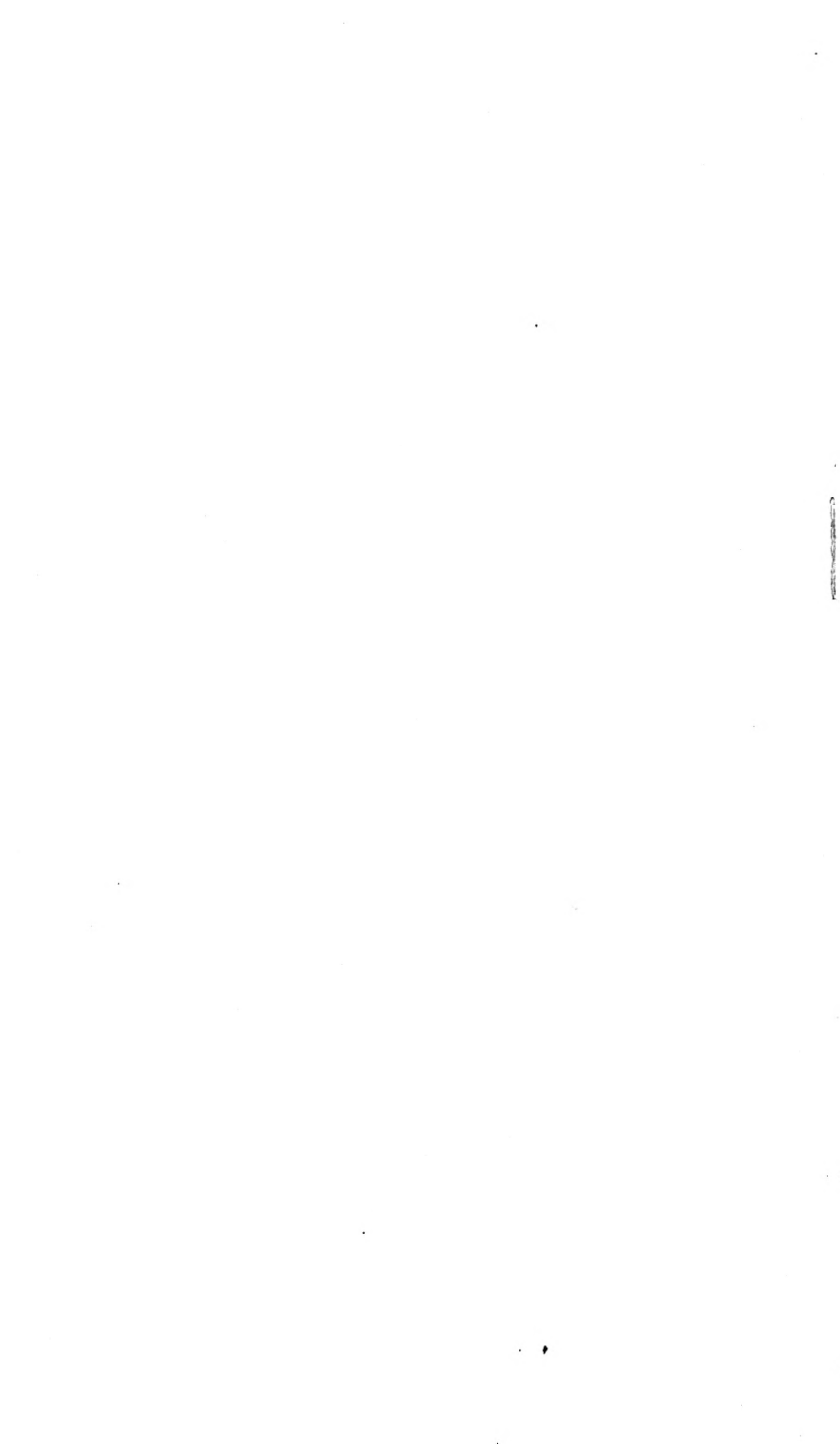
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# A PATRIARCH'S BLESSING.

A SCENE FROM GENESIS,

PRECEDED BY A POEM ON

## THE FEAST OF LIGHTS.

BY

HENRY ILIOWIZI.

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The object of this little work is to supply a demand in the American Jewish Sabbath School, wherein the commemoration of the Asmonean triumph is a feature that should not be ignored. The children are anxious to entertain others and be themselves entertained, and in default of proper material, things extraneous and grotesque, often profane, have found their way into the Sabbath School to the great vexation of the teacher of religion. It is hoped that this effort will, in a measure, answer the purpose, calculated, as it is, to impart a serious lesson.

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## THE FEAST OF LIGHTS.

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### PROLOGUE.

Ye offsprings of the race who much sustained  
Of what man's innate malice may impose,  
To-day of them we sing who death disdained  
And for their faith and shrine defiant rose ;  
When, like a fiery blast, the good and true,  
The myriad struck with terror and with awe,  
When triumph graced the valor of the few,  
The heathen vanishing like burned straw ;  
Such was the might, the glory of the Jew  
When blows he dealt for God's immutable law.

### GRAND CHORUS.

We knew of the tyrant who strove to compel  
Our sires to worship his idols of clay ;  
Immortal our heroes, who struggled and fell,  
With love we remember their prowess this day ;  
Five brothers, a father—of Modin they came—  
As lions undaunted, the foemen they smote ;  
Their bravest, their noblest, who knows not his name ?  
In blood and destruction his record he wrote ;  
When thousands fell slaughtered of Israel's seed,  
God's Temple polluted the Syrian held long,  
'Twas Judas who fired the best of our creed  
To war for their freedom, be deathless in song.

A VOICE.

Yea, praise we the heroes who warred in the field,  
And praise we the martyrs for suffering born ;  
For more than the bearer of dagger or shield  
Is he who expires all broken and torn.

GRAND CHORUS.

Hail, great Maccabæus, hail, star of the past !  
Thy lustre eclipses the triumphs of Rome ;  
Old Greece and Assyria have crumbled to dust,  
Thy fame shall inspire late ages to come.  
Hail, hoary Eleazer, saint martyr of yore !  
Hail, Hannah, thy children who died for their faith !  
As jewels we treasure each drop of their gore,  
Untold was thy sorrow, who witnessed their death !

A VOICE.

Eight lights we light to crown this Feast,  
Eight days you shall the rite renew ;  
Each day you add one light at least,  
And praise the Lord with reverence due.

*(Thirty-six tapers are lighted, making up eight separate groups beginning with one and ending with eight ; the Chanuccah hymn is sung by all present.)*

ANOTHER VOICE.

Enlighten me, whoever may,  
Why Israel's mind is bent on light ?  
Could not, like others, we display  
Our joy in banquets of delight ?  
In dance and pleasure ? Would not these  
Be more congenial to our taste ?  
The lamp of oil, how could it please ?  
A thing which, burning, runs to waste ?

GRAND CHORUS.

Thou art unenlightened, wherefore hear and learn ;  
The earth and the heavens would never be there,  
Had God not the sun and the stars made to burn,  
Who, blazing in azure, His grandeur declare ;

Nor had we a mission or aught here to do,  
Were Light not our watchword, were Truth not our  
    might ;  
Read close and contemplate the tale of the Jew,  
His prophets, his sages cry : " Let there be light."

THE VOICE.

If light be our watchword, why *eight* make the number ?  
Or have ye a meaning, a lesson to give ?  
Our fathers have taught us that God doth not slumber,  
He having decreed it, that Israel live !

CHORUS OF GIRLS.

One God is our worship, His Truth we here blazon,  
On Sinai, on Carmel it broke on the world ;  
His greatness, His power, beyond human reason,  
In emblems are uttered, in symbols unfurl'd ;  
When man groped in darkness our sires prevailed,  
By pointing to Heaven they broke his dense night ;  
His errors, his idols, with light they assailed,  
Their lustre is mirrored in this our *first light*,

CHORUS OF BOYS.

Two orbs shine in heaven, the brightest of spheres,  
The moon is like silver, the sun glows like gold ;  
Our heirloom we sealed it with blood and with tears,  
Behold yonder tablets which dearly we hold !  
Mankind must rise higher their purport to learn,  
For Justice and Mercy and Love they embrace ;  
To point out their lessons *these two* lights shall burn,  
Eternal our tablets, the lights of our race !

CHORUS OF GIRLS.

Thrice holy the seraphim sing in the skies,  
Three patriarchs opened Jeshurun's career ;  
Three crowns of distinction our mission implies,  
Three pillars of virtue dispel human fear ;  
*These three* lights illumine that knowledge of yore,  
That by them inspired we cleave to our trust ;  
The banner of Judah the Maccabees bore  
Shall shine while great kingdoms are turning to dust.

CHORUS OF BOYS.

Four seasons are circling in dance through the year,  
Four elements are binding earth, ocean and air ;  
Four winds are prevailing in this atmosphere,  
Four ages, *not seven*, life's trials we bear ;  
Sweet Eden's grand river four mighty streams feeds,  
Four letters spell dim the Ineffable Name ;  
Four times rose a Moses in our creed of creeds,  
Thus *four lights* have meaning, four billions should  
flame !

CHORUS OF GIRLS.

Our ancient sires through Midian's waste wandered,  
Where God on them showered the manna of life ;  
There, over man's destiny Amram's light pondered,  
Who gave us those volumes whose number is *five*.  
Five senses the soul of the outer world warn,  
Five oceans, five continents ring Heaven's praise ;  
Five great Maccabees God's vengeance have sworn  
To wreak on the tyrant, a plague of our race.

CHORUS OF BOYS.

In six days creation has reached its completion,  
The seventh God rested, *the Sabbath* we call it ;  
Six libraries sunder our sea of Tradition,  
More than worldly wisdom our sages extol it ;  
Full six hundred thousand, who weapons could bear,  
Left Egypt to follow the pillar of fire,  
To hear it from Horeb Jehovah declare  
That Israel's glory shall never expire.

CHORUS OF GIRLS.

Shiloh and Zion were favored of Heaven,  
Who spoke to His prophets in His holy shrine ;  
Therein the Menorah, a brilliance of seven,  
God's Mercy reflected, an emblem divine ;  
God's Mercy the rainbow of seven hues preaches,  
And seven the martyrs of Hannah we mourn ;  
Thus sacred this number, our Holy Writ teaches,  
Let seven lights temple and altar adorn.



CHORUS OF BOYS.

Eight days after birthday the Hebrew's blood seals  
The Covenant that stamps him a child of our fate ;  
Our wonderful story God's Justice reveals,  
Who ever shows mercy, comes never too late ;  
Thus join all present in praise of our Lord  
Who dwells with the upright, sustains the oppressed ;  
He triumphs unailing, His Might is the Word,  
No crime goes unpunished, no wrong unredressed.

GRAND CHORUS.

Thus do we with pleasure the memories treasure  
Of heroes unequalled in daring ;  
Our martyrs ill-fated, who tyranny hated,  
Their dearest, their lives gave unsparing ;  
The hand on the dial shows life but a trial,  
A pilgrimage skyward directed ;  
Earth is but a station in God's vast creation,  
Death never meets Faith unexpected ;  
In spite of Time's Nero, the Jew is the hero,  
And prophet and teacher beside it ;  
Rise, Judah's proud lion, thou power of Zion,  
Shall soul rule, or matter ? decide it !



# A PATRIARCH'S BLESSING.

A SCENE FROM GENESIS.

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## THE PERFORMERS.

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ISAAC	<i>The Second Patriarch.</i>
REBEKAH	<i>His Wife.</i>
ESAU	<i>Their First-born Son.</i>
JACOB	<i>The Younger Son.</i>
FOUR ANGELS, SATAN AT A DISTANCE.	

*(Enter Angels, each one holding a wand.)*

FIRST ANGEL *(Isaac is seen asleep on a couch)*

I am a spirit, and my breath  
That ever soars o'er land and sea,  
God's vesture weaves of life and death,  
Each soul incarnates or sets free ;  
Man errs, assuming there were two,  
One prompting death, the other birth ;  
The grave and cradle, both are due  
To me the spirit of this earth ;  
In beauty robed I bring each soul  
On beams of gold from heaven's height ;  
Joy follows me, her follows Dole,  
Both come of God, as day and night ;  
Nor Love nor Hatred prompts my deed,  
I touch them gently, who must fall ;  
I sweep along with lightning's speed  
To do God's bidding, that is all.

SECOND ANGEL. I hold the records of the race  
Since Eden to mankind was lost;  
Man's tale I write it on his face,  
He errs the least who thinks the most,  
Who thinks and worships God and prays,  
As we among Almighty's host;  
No being here doth vainly plod,  
For God-like fashioned is the soul;  
The stars obey Jehovah's nod,  
But man may shape his heavenly goal  
And, rising, reach the feet of God  
And over angels have control.

THIRD ANGEL. With splendor I this orb invest  
With herb and flower and green and grove,  
A world created for man's best,  
A star, like those that shine above;  
Five myriad blessings God's behest  
Doth cause to radiate from His Love.  
I smile and thousand meadows bloom,  
The seasons change, the sky is clear;  
My frown makes Nature like a tomb  
When northwinds race their mad career;  
Yet be it sunshine, be it gloom,  
My will with naught doth interfere;  
For He who bids the ocean rave,  
The thunder roll, the mountain quake,  
Or makes them silent like the grave,  
The grave that shall its silence break,  
To seraphim His biddings gave,  
Who, prompted thus, make no mistake.

FOURTH ANGEL. And I God's visions hold in trust,  
Those dreams which sweeten mortal woe,  
The prophet's ravings of the past,  
Or those with which the poets glow,  
Are destined with this earth to last  
And with the cycles dearer grow;  
With me dwells Hope and Peace divine;  
Foreshadowing what is to be  
My dreams celestial joys enshrine  
Despite of stern Reality;

Ethereal nothings, which are mine,  
Contain a Paradise of glee ;  
Youth revels in my golden haze,  
Love builds her castles on my beams ;  
Religion stands upon my base,  
Yea, Death thro' me a portal seems  
To happier life ; the dimmed gaze  
Still finding heaven in my dreams.

SATAN. And me the Eternal of legions infernal,  
Made master for ends deeply hidden ;  
Excluded from bliss I hold the abyss,  
And foster the passions forbidden ;  
I strive with all might man's virtue to blight,  
And revel in sin and in error ;  
Of angels the least, some call me the beast,  
The pious ones call me their terror ;  
An evil mind sways me, Temptation obeys me,  
The vices move all at my bidding ;  
To ruin forever mankind I endeavor,  
And feast on the souls that are bleeding.  
I have my good reason to hold prayer treason,  
And shudder at sighs of repentance ;  
I breed for my fire the scoffer and liar,  
The wicked are under my sentence.  
With Sin I am quaffing, with Crime I am laughing,  
Old Satan shall not be outwitted ;  
Ye powers of heaven whence ye have me driven,  
Tho' lowered, I am undefeated.

ALL FOUR (*circling around Isaac, Satan mocking them*).

Man gets here his measure of sorrow and pleasure,  
His body to dust must return ;  
On ether and fire the soul may rise higher  
With spirits in azure to burn ;  
But if he do revel in crime or in evil  
Dark horrors await him and wailing ;  
Each virtue is hoarded, each sin is recorded,  
While onward the ages are sailing.

(*Pointing at Isaac.*)

Thy meekness we cherish, thou willing to perish,  
 A sacrifice ordered of Heaven ;  
 But from thy first-born his birthright be torn,  
 Thy Jacob the blessing is given ;  
 His shall be the glory in the world's long story  
 To foster the spirit of ages ;  
 His offsprings shall blossom on God's loving bosom,  
 A nation of prophets and sages. (*Exeunt Angels.*)

ISAAC (*awaking and rising*).

The warbling birds and bleating flocks inform  
 The ear 'tis day, but vainly toward the vault  
 Of heaven turn the sightless eyeballs in  
 My head, unlighted by the sunny beam.  
 O Lord of blessèd Abraham, what life  
 Is this in darkness thus, like owl and mole  
 To crawl, and less than they of this fair world  
 Behold ! to have a loving wife and sons,  
 Their step and voices hear, but never see  
 Their face, the radiant eye, the play of mien,  
 The smile and purling lip ! Alive and yet  
 Entombed ; on earth and yet beyond sweet life ;  
 Not poor yet poorest ; free yet chained ; such is  
 The state of him who, buried in a trunk  
 Unwindowed vegetates. Such is my state.  
 But Heaven wills it so ; His name be blessed !  
 Enough beheld I of this world, and of  
 Its treasures I the choicest own ; a sire  
 Before whom kings in reverence bowed, and whom  
 Almighty chose mankind from errors gross  
 And horrible to redeem ; a wife as chaste  
 And sweet as hoar Lebanon's heavenly dew ;  
 Two sons destined to be the headsprings of  
 Great nations, spreading, like oceans vast, to east  
 And west, to north and south. How distant far,  
 Thro' countless generations piercing, sees  
 My soul ! Forgive, good Lord, I am not blind  
 Who thus the future's dark events foresee ;  
 Nor am I poor, who kingdoms can bestow.—  
 Where is my son, my first-born, rightful heir  
 To that dear heirloom I from Abraham hold ?

Where is my Esau, whom I long to bless  
Before I die? Dominion, power, wealth  
And glory, all be his, my offspring's heirdom,  
Esau, Esau, Esau!

*(Enter Esau.)*

ESAU. Here am I, father.

ISAAC. Why heard I not thy voice this morrow, son?  
Dost thou so lightly of my blessing think?

ESAU. Forgive, O sire, my soul feeds on thy love,  
And, as mine eyes are open, thou art first  
And last with whom my working mind abides.  
As early as the lark did sing I, on  
My toes, the threshold of this tent bestrode,  
Eager to hear the honeyed prayer which  
Thou daily waftest toward thy father's God.  
But finding thee in easy slumber wrapt,  
I, nimbly as I entered, left the tent,  
And with my mates the hunting sport indulged.

ISAAC. My days, O son, are drawing to their end,  
And thou, my first-born, hast the sacred trust  
Of heading worthily our hallowed home,  
Thy mother shield, thy orphaned brother love  
And guide; for, as the first thou wast in birth,  
So art thou first in dignity and sway  
Above thy mother's son to rise. Wherefore  
This matchless heirloom I to thee bequeath,  
And on thy soul that holy charge impose.

ESAU. O, deepest of all mortal woes is this  
To part forever with the author of  
Man's self, his best. Nay, pray we, father, that  
The day may be afar when we bereft,  
Unfriended shall thy dear affections miss.  
O, think not yet of death, who scarce a fifth  
Of Noah's age didst live; but should the God  
Of Abraham thee to His bosom call,  
Dear sire, more precious to my heart than gold  
And gems, and than my babes more sweet is this  
Thy charge.

ISAAC.                   Thou art a Hebrew in thy heart  
And speech, my boy, well worthy of the rank  
Thy birth assigns to thee.—Go, thy quiver take  
And bow, and hunt some venison of which  
A savory meal prepare that I may eat,  
And then my blessing utter on thy head.  
Now lend me, ere thou goest, thy aid to pass  
Beyond the tent and bask me in the sun.—  
O sweetest light that once my vision cheered  
With golden rays when I, by God's command,  
Went to Moriah, there a sacrifice  
To die, still shed thy radiance on my now  
Extinguished eyes, by weeping angels quenched,  
Until, by Heaven and Thee illumined, I  
The sky-dewed blessing on my son bestow.

*(Exit Isaac and Esau, enter Rebekah.)*

REBEKAH. It shall not be! The Lord inspires me  
To counteract my husband's good intents,  
Who uninstructed thus our better son  
Of his inheritance deprives to waste  
It on a child not born the destiny  
Of man to shape. He, hunting with the rank,  
Unholy Philistines, and wived to maids  
Of heathen origin and faith; he marked  
By Providence and nature to be wild,  
Nomadic, uncontrollable; he who, mad  
With bestial gluttony, did for a dish  
Of pottage sell, degrade his birthright; he  
Should overtop, command my gentler, sweeter,  
My godlier Jacob?—Never!—How begin?  
Will suasion from his purpose move my lord?  
I doubt it, doubt it. No, his blindness blinds  
Him to his Esau's faults as to my boy's  
Unmatched nobleness; a scheme must work.—  
He sped away for venison, there is  
No time to waste. If my plan fail then all  
Is failure in my life.—Ah, 'tis Heaven sends

*(Enter Jacob.)*

Thee hither, son. My brightest hope, hear child,  
Thy mother speaks. Obey my voice and ask



And question not wherefore I act.—Fetch me  
Straightway a kid, of which a savory meal  
I make ; and thou shalt bring it to my lord,  
Thy father, and crave his blessing as his old,  
His first-born son, who otherwise will have  
The lordship over thee and thine.

JACOB.

When did

My mother speak and find her Jacob deaf?  
Thy wish to me is, like religion, holy ;  
For thro' thy voice I hear the angels speak.  
Yet, mother, O forgive, if, terrified  
By what might come to pass, I pray thou mayst  
Yet reconsider what my task implies.  
What distance first betwixt myself and him,  
Who to this world came shaggy like a goat !  
How if a touch thy scheme betray, and on  
My head, instead of blessing, bring a curse ?  
What parent, though blind-born, knows of his sons  
Not each by sounds characteristic and  
Familiar to the hearing, stronger in  
The blind than in the eye-strong man ? But if  
My mother says it shall be done, and if  
The doing were to brave the lion's rage,  
Then be it done ; thy bidding is supreme  
Behest from heaven coming thro' thy lip.

REBEKAH. Yes, be it done and fearless, too. The curse,  
If ever curse thy father's lip may pass,  
May light on me, the blessing on thy head.  
Bring straight the kid ; ah ! lose no trice ; the Lord  
Of Abraham and Isaac is with thee.

*(Exeunt Jacob and Rebekah. Re-enter Isaac.)*

ISAAC. So must I grope my way with quivering step,  
For by degrees the limbs are dying, dying.—  
The story of a man runs thus : First all  
Is fire from head to foot, and youth feels as  
If by a stamp of heel it could the earth  
Divide in twain. Then age and reason come,  
And with it indigestion, asthma, gout  
And all a catalogue of chronic and

Of temporary ills, which make their round  
Throughout the system's toil-worn labyrinth  
And leave at length the body's two extremes,  
The head and feet, besides the hand, each year,  
Each season, month, at last each day and hour,  
A little colder, till the chill spreads round  
The heart, the vital seat of life, and so  
The king's and beggar's chapter ends.—Who comes?

*(Enter Jacob.)*

I hear the noise of steps ; art thou my boy ?

*(Enter Jacob.)*

JACOB *(meal in hand.)*

Thy son, thy first-born Esau, did as he  
Was bidden ; thus rise, I pray thee, father, rise  
And of my venison taste, so that thy soul  
May bless me.

ISAAC.               Already hast thou found the game,  
My son, and made it eatable withal ?

JACOB *(surprised).* As to thy sire, good Heaven sent the ram  
To bleed and burn instead of thee, so did  
This time a tender mountain goat He cause  
To cross my way and by mine arrow sink.—  
I have it here well-seasoned for thy taste.

ISAAC. Step near, my son, that I by touching thee  
May rest assured that thou indeed art he  
On whom the blessing from my sire descends ;  
For with this benison armed, high above  
All races will thy scions tower, while  
Their wisdom will this earth to heaven liuk.

*(He touches Jacob, who is greatly alarmed.)*

The voice is Jacob's voice, but Esau's are  
These hands and odor of the dewy field.  
Why linger doubt in me and dark unease ?  
Art thou indeed my son, my first-born Esau ?

JACOB. I am.

ISAAC. Then let me of thy venison taste,  
 And with thy wine my spirit animate. (*Isaac eats.*)  
 And now that I have eaten of thy meal,  
 Come near and kiss me, son beloved, I pray.—Behold  
 Thy garments' smell is like the odor of  
 The field and wood the Lord hath blessed. And may  
 The One Eternal, gracious God, give thee,  
 Of heaven's dew and of the earth the fat;  
 Delicious wine and affluence of corn,  
 Great nations be thy servitors, to thee  
 The kingdoms bow, and of thy brother's line  
 Be lord. The tongue be curst that curses thee,  
 And blest the soul that blesses thee. (*Exit Jacob.*)

Why should  
 My Jacob's loyalty I doubt? Meseemed  
 It was not Esau's voice, so much unlike  
 The one I had awaited. Age again  
 Which dimm'd my sight, untuned my ear, it seems.  
 The eye and ear are gone, and reason will  
 Soon follow; then death is welcome, welcome death.

(*Enter Esau, a meal in hand.*)

ESAU. Rise up, O father, here the meal I hold  
 As thou didst order, savory and fresh.

ISAAC (*startled*). Whose voice is this I hear?

ESAU. Thine Esau's, father.—

ISAAC (*rising tremblingly*).

No, say, it is a nightmare, this! Thou art  
 Not Esau, my first-born, no!

ESAU (*astonished*) What sin of mine  
 Gave birth to this my father's doubt? Thy son  
 I surely am, thine Esau, ever thine.—

ISAAC. Then who and where is he that had before  
 Thee brought me venison, of which I ate,  
 And then the blessing on his head bestowed?  
 And blest, forever blest is he!

ESAU (*throws the meal on the floor.*) My curse  
 Is he and this a second time! My curse,  
 My hatred, vengeance, call them Jacob, and  
 They are well named! What have I now that all

My honors, rights and hopes are gone? The first-  
Born he, the blessèd he, the favorite he,  
And all this at my cost! Why came I first  
To light to be thus of my titles robbed?—  
No blessing for thy first-born son, O father?  
For Esau not a blessing, not a hope?—

ISAAC. Unmeasured is my grief for thee, my son ;  
But he is blest by God Almighty's will.  
My love to thee, so ready him to wrong,  
Was in his favor turned by the Lord ;  
Had I not wish'd to give thee everything,  
In blessing him, I should have spared thee aught.  
Now dew and fatness of the earth are his ;  
Dominion, greatness, glory his.—Thine be  
The sword which once may free thee from his yoke.

ESAU. The grave be mine, I have no cause to strive.  
Must he, the only brother I call mine,  
Thus cheat and thwart me everywhere and gall  
My peace, and turn affectionate regard  
Into unquenchable hate, revenge and poison!—  
Well, gentle brother, loyal heart, thou didst  
My birthright take, my dearest blessing steal,  
But whether they be thine, years shall reveal. (*Exit Esau.*)

ISAAC (*Rebekah appears in the background*).  
Grant God that not a Cain and Abel scene  
Be acted in my house! Whom should I blame  
For this deception on my blindness played?  
Could such a change of things be elsewhere than  
Above decreed? 'Tis Jacob who must rule.—  
I recognize my wife's approach; Rebekah!—

REBEKAH (*who enters*). Speak, for Rebekah hears.

ISAAC. Thou knowest not,  
Good wife, what happened here; I am aggrieved.

REBEKAH. Full knowledge have I of the new event,  
Dear lord; nor would I have it otherwise.  
Our oldest son walks not the path of God,  
And ere we die we may yet idols see

Put up beneath our sacred roof; for what,  
To please his pagan wives, would he not do?  
When ceaseth he to fawn on them, who did  
Our home with sorrow fill and shame? Ay, ay,  
To make him lordling who scarce lords himself.  
Yea, little did he to uphold our faith;  
Nor took he care to foster love in us  
For him, but went his way, unmindful of  
The anguish brought on us. Shall Abraham's  
Repute and mission with our days expire?  
Or can a being framed as Esau, wild,  
Ungodly, gluttonous and undevout,  
The champion be of our Eternal One?  
In Jacob thou his grandsire's nature mayst  
See mirrored pure, endowed with qualities,  
Which, carefully to pious sons bequeathed,  
Will for the race of man bear heavenly fruit.

ISAAC. But Esau may his wrong revenge and in  
Our home a fearful tragedy enact.

REBEKAH. We take the chance away; my plan is made,  
Tho' hard it be to see my Jacob go,  
Yet go he must and with my brother dwell,  
Till time shall Esau's dire vengeance cool.  
Yea, part we with the boy to save his life  
And keep grim Murder from our door afar;  
This sooner than I like to see our son  
Depart; it shall be done, it must be done.

ISAAC. He being far and Esau angry, who,  
Should I be to my parents gathered, will  
My brave Rebekah in her age support?  
Alone, forsaken, wife, I could not die.—

REBEKAH. My Jacob slain, who would support me then?  
One son a murderer, the other dead,  
This would not sweeten, dear, my waning days.  
I would to heaven we parted life as we  
Together lived; I should not thee survive,  
Dear lord.—But look we not so far beyond  
What is, but take the wisest course at once.

Renew thy blessing on our Jacob's head  
And let him flee, so that no blood be shed.

ISAAC. My palsied hand shall bless him, let him come.

JACOB (*who enters*). Forgive, O father, prompted by a will  
Supreme as Heaven's decree, I did the thing  
Revolting to my truer self; yet am  
I not unpunished, flight and banishment  
Being the penalty I must sustain;  
For Esau will wreak vengeance on my head  
If ever I his pathway thwart again,  
Nor am I in my mother's keeping safe,  
Now that his ire is enkindled hot.

ISAAC (*laying his hands on Jacob's head*).

A vision on my sire broke,  
In azure's deep the stars did gleam;  
"Behold yon spheres," Almighty spoke,  
"Unnumbered they in heaven teem;  
Thus numberless thy scions be  
Till earth is blessèd in thy seed,  
Till races in their faith agree,  
Till thine be man's acknowledged creed."—  
Go forth unblamed and blessed for aye,  
Thou shalt be champion of the Lord;  
Let faith in virtue be thy stay,  
Thy triumphs be not of the sword.—  
Supremest Might, my prayer hear,  
The prayer of an old blind man;  
I lost my sight, therewith all cheer  
Accorded age in life's brief span;  
One hope I feed on, sweet and great,  
The future shows a maze of light,  
It breaks on earth from heaven's gate,  
I see it, tho' devoid of sight;  
Thereof the centre be this youth,  
Inspire him and bless his line,  
That they be guardians of thy truth,  
Thy truth, great Lord, O let it shine!

### PROVIDENCE.

Thou gracious Lord who didst the heavens span,  
Didst earth and all create, and lastly man,  
Thou dost with nourishment supply each brood,  
To every creature give its daily food,  
And with paternal care dost man sustain,  
From danger guarding him and mortal pain.  
We thank Thee, Father, for Thy heavenly grace,  
And pray that pure we may behold Thy face  
When once delivered from this mortal race.  
And while we toil, oh, send us from above  
Thy choicest blessings of benignant love !  
Let health and plenty from Thy Goodness come ;  
May peace and joy prevail within our home !  
Let no man suffer, who in virtue lives,  
Who walks with Thee and in Thy Grace believes.

### ETERNAL GOODNESS.

Power Supreme from whom life's blessings come,  
Who made this earth and built that lucent dome,  
In sunshine gracious, gracious in the storm,  
Our Father Thou, Sustainer of the worm,  
Unfathomed Love, unbounded Goodness Thine,  
Who dost in Grace Thy creatures all enshrine,  
Our daily wants with plenteous hand supply,  
Our heart with hope, great Lord, we know not why  
In all our fear and doubt we lean on Thee,  
On Thee of all the deepest Mystery.  
Accept this prayer wafted to the skies,  
As once Thou didst the High-priest's sacrifice ;  
Thy Peace unite what Hatred does divide,  
Control our passions, Father, be our Guide.

### COMFORT IN TRIALS.

The welkin is laughing, the East is aglow,  
The hill, vale and meadows with pearls are strewed,  
The bright jewels of azure are spread here below,  
Each morrow we see God's creation renewed ;

His earth is and ocean, His all they contain,  
But less than an angel man rules here supreme;  
Why grieve, then? why sorrow? why wither in pain?  
Rejoice at thy station, make heaven thy theme.  
Pass thro' Baca's anguish, O creature of dust!  
The stars are all rising and shining for thee;  
Immortal thy spirit, forever to last,  
From heaven to heaven it shall rise in glee.

#### DAVID'S FIRST DREAM.

There is life in azure and splendors untold,  
Hosannas the angels are singing;  
They, rolling the spheres made of topaz and gold,  
Forever thro' radiance are winging;  
Light oceans are flowing from cistern blue,  
The fountain is hidden much higher;  
Thence all constellations their glories renew,  
Merchabah is floating in fire,  
Whereout the Almighty is filling all space  
With wonders beyond contemplation;  
Nine myriads of seraphim cover his face  
To shield from destruction creation;  
And we here below, frail creatures of Him,  
Whose love is unfathomed as heaven,  
Are singing His Greatness whose pathways are dim,  
For naught else has music been given.  
Let ardor inspire the immortal soul  
To sing of the spirit above,  
And ever contemplate life's heavenly goal  
In worship embodied and love.



# “SAUL:”

## A TRAGEDY IN FIVE ACTS.

Rev. Henry Iliowizi, encouraged by the success of his “Joseph,” has made “Saul” the subject of a tragedy in five acts. It was a timely idea on the part of the author to select themes from the Old Testament, which could readily be adapted for the dramatic stage for the benefit of young Israel and those of older growth. He brings to his task enthusiasm and knowledge, together with poetic gifts of much promise, seen at their best, perhaps, in David’s lament at Jonathan’s death.

There are few more attractive ways to teach Bible history than through the medium of just such dramatic compositions, written with literary taste and skill; and we trust the author will continue in his chosen line of work.—*Jewish Messenger*, of New York.

The excellencies are both in idea and in execution; the faults are only in execution. The excellencies are vast conception, elevated thought, sublimity of purpose, lofty imagination, often beauty of diction, always strong dramatic power, always creative insight into human nature. The characters are not mere puppets brought upon the stage to declaim lines and make exits; but living, thinking, daring, suffering men and women. We behold in vivid colors and graphic outline Samuel, the true prophet—Saul, ever noble and heroic, even in his madness and jealousy—David, beautiful in form, poetic in soul, devoted to God and Israel, brave in war, faithful in love; Jonathan, the most lovable figure in the Bible—Michal, Ahinoam, true and loving women.

The play is in five acts, beginning with the demand of Israel for a king; and ending with the crowning of David by the elders of Judah after the death of Saul and Jonathan. The action is constant and consistent. The main lines of history have been conformed to, and the principal events condensed and related with much dramatic skill. Thus, David’s first introduction to Saul is on the battle-field, correcting an error in the common interpretation of Samuel. It ought to make a good acting play. Samuel, Saul, David and Jonathan are so depicted as to afford full scope for the exercise of the best qualities of the actor.

We cannot conclude this notice without allusion to the beautiful tribute paid by the author to one of the best known and best-loved of our communal workers in his dedication of the poem to Miss Esther Baum. The *Exponent* and its readers will ever heartily echo the wish, “That Israel’s benign God may prolong her days and crown her gentle ministrations with success.” American Jews,

and especially those of this city, and of the Congregation Adath Jeshurun, have every reason to be grateful to Rev. Henry Iliowizi for his services to literature, for the noble attitude in which he places Israel and Israel’s great men before the world, and for the example he brings before our young men. Would that there were many more like him!—*Jewish Exponent*, of Philadelphia.

Yet another evidence of literary activity amongst American Jews: no less than a five act tragedy based on the rise and decline of Israel’s first king. Undoubtedly the event tends to the picturesque, and is itself full of poetic charm and grandeur, and he is a bold man who would re-write this epic and seek comparison with the simple charm of King James’ English. The Rev. Henry Iliowizi has however done this, and the result is noticeable and worthy of commendation, especially as this is announced as one of a series of Biblical plays. The author is not pretentious, and tells us plainly that “the ambition to produce a Shakespearean drama is out of the question.” Comparison is thus not challenged, and such judgment as is to be given must be upon the individual merits of the tragedy. The argument follows closely the Biblical version from Israel’s elders urging Samuel to choose them a king until David learns the sad tidings of Saul and Jonathan’s fall. The tragedy is partly in blank verse and partly in rhyme, the changes, however, do not spoil the sonorous note. Samuel is throughout the inspired seer democratic in spirit, foreseeing the danger that is to come over his people. His chiding is gentle rather than harsh, and his rebukes though full of spirit and not wanting in dignity are still peaceful—the bowing to the inevitable. Saul, even as a shepherd, is full of thoughts and melancholy. “I feel forebodings of some change,” he says whilst searching for the asses.

Saul resembles the “melancholy Dane,” always pondering, vacillating, and wanders through the play with mind disturbed, a king alone in the hour of death.

David is the Psalmist and the shepherd, sometimes the warrior, but always full of faith and trust in God.

The rhetorical moral admonition reveals the student and the expounder of Holy Writ, whilst the poetic fervor and felicity of expression and good dramatization, notably in the death of Samuel, bespeak great hopes for the success of this work—*The Jewish World*, London, England.







# A PATRIARCH'S BLESSING.

A SCENE FROM GENESIS,

PRECEDED BY A POEM ON

## THE FEAST OF LIGHTS.

BY

HENRY ILIOWIZI.

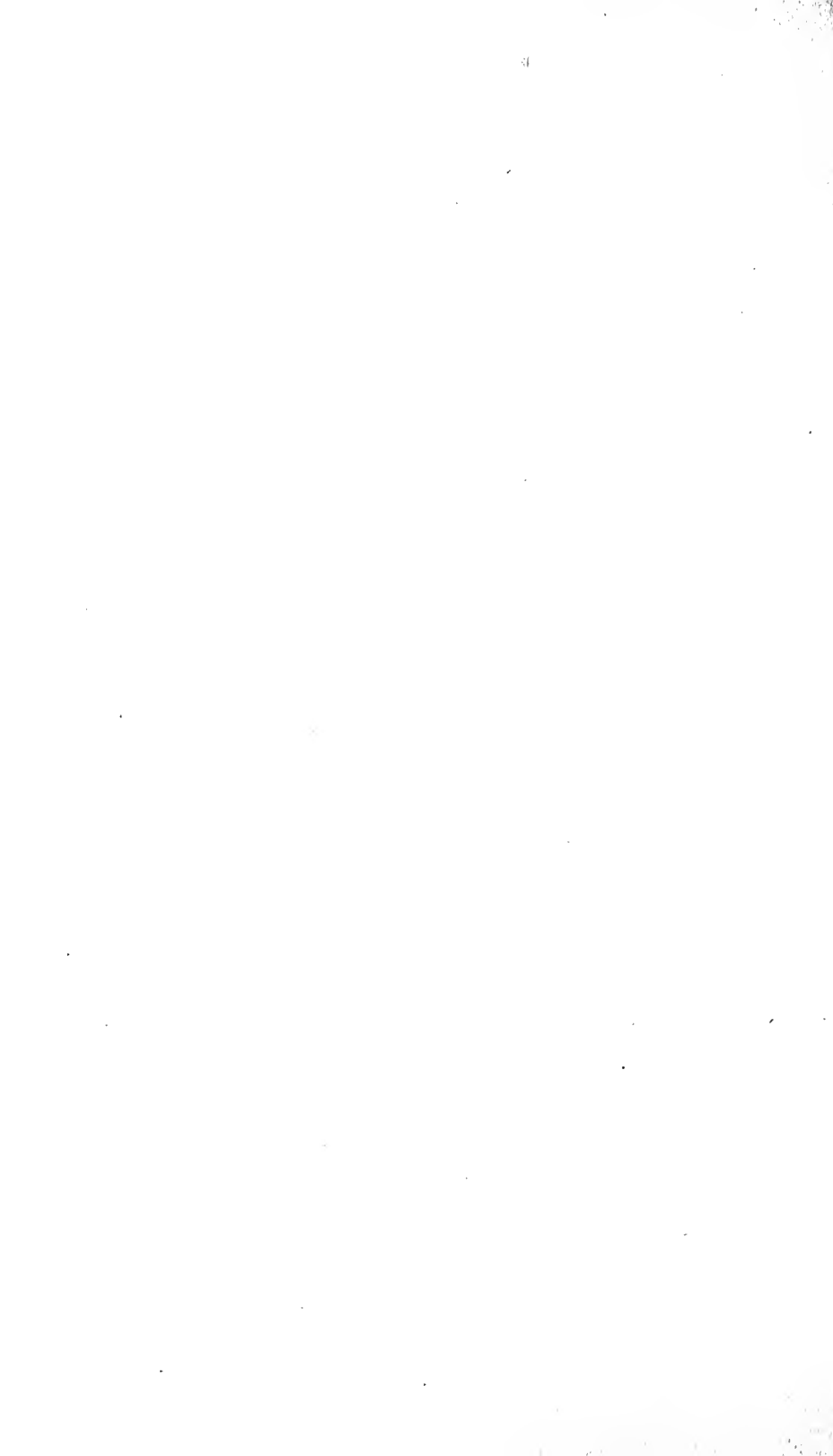
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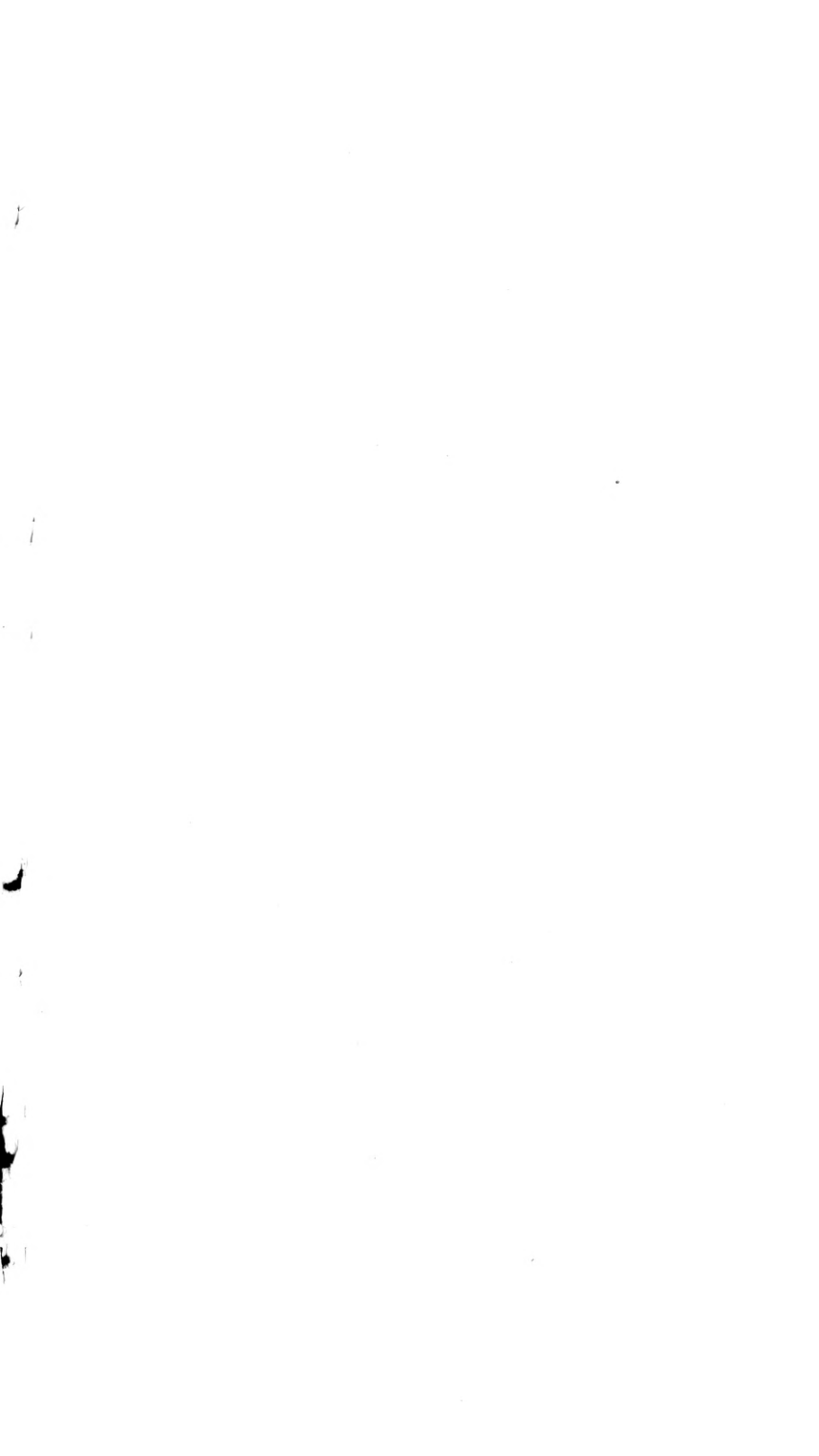


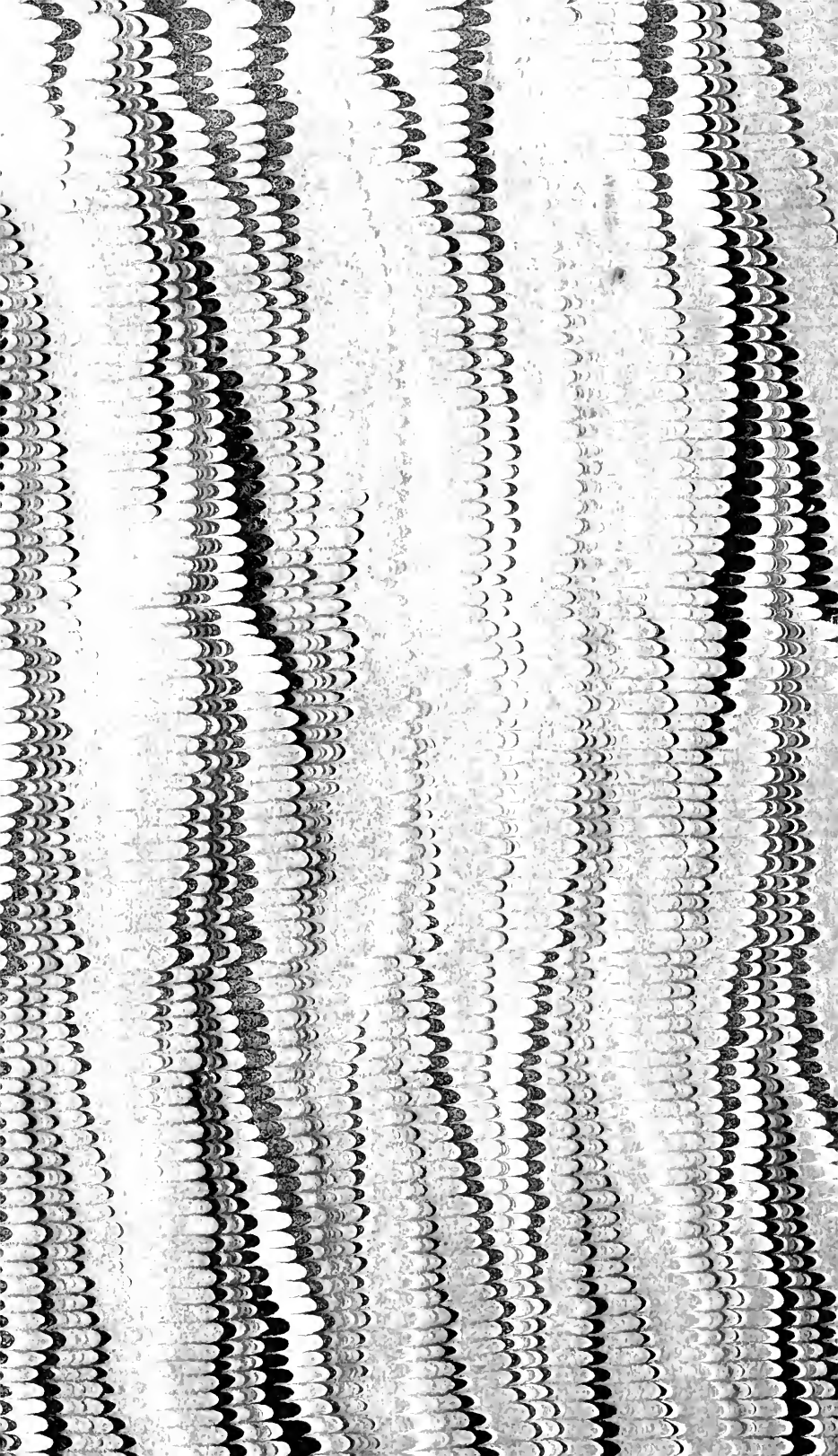














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