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SATAN  
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C. P. CRANCH

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# SATAN:

A Libretto.

BY

CHRISTOPHER PEARSE CRANCH.



BOSTON: 4  
ROBERTS BROTHERS.

1874.

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1874

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I CALL this poem a Libretto, because, as in a Cantata, Opera, or Oratorio, the verses may suggest or accompany a music they only in part embody. A Libretto is too often a mere thread on which the composer strings his pearls, — a text for some work of art nobler than itself. While this poem makes no claim to be full-strung, it may perhaps serve to awaken a few snatches of a music containing some vital symbolic conceptions of the grandest of all harmonies, — the Divine Order in Creation.

C. P. C.

CAMBRIDGE, December, 1873.

OH that I could sinne once see !  
We paint the devil foul, yet he  
Hath some good in him, all agree.  
Sinne is flat opposite to the Almighty, seeing  
It wants the good of vertue, and of being.

But God more care of us hath had.  
If apparitions make us sad,  
By sight of sinne we should grow mad.  
Yet as in sleep we see foul death, and live,  
So devils are our sinnes in prospective.

GEORGE HERBERT.



# SATAN.

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## THE OVERTURE.

HAD I — instead of unsonorous words —  
The skill that moves in airy melodies  
And modulations of entrancing chords  
Through mystic mazes of all harmonies, —  
The sounding pulses of an overture  
Whose grand orchestral movement might allure  
The listener's soul through chaos and through night,  
And seeming dissonance, to concord and to light, —  
I would allow the harsh Titanic strains  
To wrestle with Apollo and with Jove ;  
The savage war-cries on barbaric plains  
To affright the chords of wisdom and of love.  
For still the evolutions of old Time,  
Amid the wrecks in wild confusion hurled,  
Would move with grander rhythm and nobler rhyme  
Along the eternal order of the world.  
The swift contending fugue, — the wild escape  
Of passions, — long-drawn wail, and sudden blast,  
And heavy-footed bass should weave and shape  
The prelude of a symphony so vast,

That only to the ears  
Of spirits listening from serener spheres  
Of thought, the differing tones would blend and twine  
Into the semblance of a work divine.  
I would unloose the soul beneath the wings  
Of every instrument :  
I would enlist the deep-complaining strings  
Of doubt and discontent ;  
The low sad mutterings and entangled dreams  
Of viols and bassoons,  
Groping for light athwart the clouds and streams  
That drown the laboring moons ;  
The tones of crude half-truth, — the good within  
The mysteries of evil and of sin ;  
The trumpet-cries of anger and despair ;  
The mournful marches of the muffled drums ;  
The bird-like flute-notes leaping into air,  
Ere the great human-heavenly music comes  
Emerging from the dark, with bursts of song  
And hope and victory, delayed too long.

Ah, what are all the discords of all time  
But stumbling steps of one persistent life  
That struggles up through mists to heights sublime,  
Fore-felt through all creation's lingering strife ? —  
The deathless motion of one undertone  
Whose deep vibrations thrill from God to God alone !

PART I.

*Daybreak.*

CHORUS OF WORLD-SPIRITS.

Ye interstellar spaces serene and still and clear,  
    Above, below, around !  
Ye gray unmeasured breadths of ether, sphere on  
    sphere,  
We listen, but no sound  
Rings from your depths profound.

But ever along and all across the morning bars  
    Fast-flashing meteors run,  
The trailing wrecks of fierce and fiery-bearded stars  
    Scattered and lost, and won  
Back to their parent sun.

Through rifts of bronzing clouds the tides of morning  
    glow  
And swell and mount apace.  
We watch and wait, if haply we at last may know  
    Some record we may trace  
Upon the orbs of space.

Above, below, around we track the planets' flight.  
    Their paths and destinies  
Are intertwined with ours. Remote or near, their light  
    Or darkness on our eyes  
A mystic picture lies.

## FIRST SPIRIT.

Close to the morn a small and sparkling star-world  
dances,  
Bathed in the flaming mist,  
Flashing and quivering like a million shivered lances  
Of gold and amethyst  
By bursts of moonlight kissed :

A fairy realm of rapid and unimpeded sprites  
That fly and leap and dart ;  
All fierce and tropic fervors, all swift and warm delights,  
Bound and flash and start  
In every fiery heart.

## SECOND SPIRIT.

Deep in the dawn there floats a star of dewy fire,  
So pure it seems new-born,  
As though the soul of morn  
Were pulsing through its heart in deep divine desire  
Of poesy and love ; — the star of morn and eve,  
Whose crystal sphere is shining  
With joys beyond divining, —  
Passion that never tortures, and hopes that ne'er  
deceive.

## THIRD SPIRIT.

There swims a pale green world, half drowned and  
thunder-rifted,  
Steeped in a sea of rain. One peak alone uplifted,

The baffled lightnings play around its crags and  
chasms ;  
So far away they flash, I hear no thunder-spasms.  
But now the scowling clouds are drifting from its spaces,  
And leave it to the wind and coming day's embraces.

## FOURTH SPIRIT.

See where yon planet rolls with darkly lurid sides,  
Flooded and seamed and stained by drenching Stygian  
tides ;  
Deep gorges up whose black and slimy slopes there  
peep  
All monstrous Saurian growths that run or fly or creep ;  
And in and out the holes and caverns clogged with  
mud,  
Crawl through their giant ferns to suck each other's  
blood.  
I see them battling there in fog and oozy water,  
Symbols of savage lust, deformity, and slaughter.

## FIFTH SPIRIT.

I see an orb above that spins with rapid motion,  
Vaster and vaster growing,  
Belted with sulphurous clouds, and through the rents  
an ocean  
Boiling and plunging up on a crust of fiery shore.  
And now I hear far off the elemental roar,  
And the red fire-winds blowing :

A low dull steady moan, a million miles away,  
Of whirling hurricanes that rage all night, all day.  
No life of man or beast, were life engendered there,  
Could bide the flaming winds and white metallic glare.

## SIXTH SPIRIT.

But yonder, studded round with lamps of moonlight  
tender,  
And arched from pole to pole with rings of rainbow  
splendor,  
A world rolls far apart, as though in haughty scorning  
Of all the alien light of his diminished morning.

## SEVENTH AND EIGHTH SPIRITS.

Cold, cold and dark, and farther still,  
We dimly see the icy spheres,  
Like spectre-worlds who yet fulfil,  
Through slow dull centuries of years,  
Their circuit round the distant sun, who winds them at  
his will.

## CHORUS.

Round and round one central orb  
The wheeling planets move,  
And some reflect and some absorb  
The floods of light and love.

The rolling globe of molten stones,  
The spinning watery waste,  
The forests whirled through tropic zones,  
By circling moons embraced,

We watch their elemental strife,  
We wait, that we may see  
Some record of their inner life,  
Where all is mystery.

Their future, like their voiceless past,  
Is but a clouded gleam,  
Our hope with fear is overcast,  
Our prophecy a dream.

*A Pause. The Sun rises.*

SECOND SPIRIT.

Look, brothers, look ! The quivering sunrise tinges  
Our nearest orb of Earth. The forest fringes  
Redden with joy, and all about the sun  
That gilds the boundless east the cloud-banks dun  
Flame into gold, and with a crimson kiss  
Wake the green world to beauty and to bliss.  
See how she glows with sweet responsive smile !

Hark how the waves of air lap round her !  
As though she were some green embowered isle,  
And the fond Ocean had just found her  
In Time's primeval morn of unrecorded calms,  
Hidden away with all her lilies and her palms ;  
And, flattering at her feet, had smoothed his angry mane,  
And moving round her kissed her o'er and o'er again.

## THIRD SPIRIT.

And now, behold, our wings are rapid as our thought,  
And nearer yet have brought  
Our feet, until we hover above the Asian lands  
Beyond the desert sands.  
There, girt around by mountain peaks that cleave the  
skies,  
A blooming valley lies ;  
A pathway sloping down from visionary heights,  
Through shades and dappled lights,  
Lost in a garden wilderness of tropic trees  
And flowers and birds and bees.  
Far off I smell the rose, the amaranth, the spice,  
The breath of Paradise.  
Far off I hear the singing, through hidden groves and  
vales,  
Of Eden's nightingales ;  
And, sliding down through pines and moss and rocky  
walls,  
The murmuring water-falls,  
And lo ! two radiant forms that seem akin to us  
Walk calm and beauteous,  
Crowned with the light of thought, and mutual love  
whose blisses  
Are sealed with rapturous kisses.  
Ah, beautiful green earth ! ah, happy, happy pair !  
Can there be aught so fair,  
O brothers, in your vast and fiery worlds afar,  
As these bright beings are ?



(*A Pause.*)

## SECOND SPIRIT.

But what is yon Shadow that creeps  
On the marge of her crystalline deeps ?  
On the field and the river and grove,  
    On the borders of hope and of rest,  
On the Eden of wedlock and love,  
    On the labor contentment hath blessed ?  
That crawls like a serpent of mist  
    Through the vales and the gardens of peace,  
With a blight upon all it hath kissed,  
    And a shade that shall never decrease ?  
That maddens the wings of desire,  
    And saddens the ardors of joy, —  
Winged like a phantom of fire,  
    And armed like a fiend to destroy ?

## THIRD SPIRIT.

Before me there flitted a vision, —  
    A vision of dawn and creation,  
Of faith and of doubt and division,  
    Of mystical fruit and temptation ;  
A garden of lilies and roses,  
    Ah ! sweeter than dreams ever fashioned ;  
Hopes in whose splendor reposes  
    A love that was pure and impassioned.  
But alas for the sons and the daughters  
    Of man in the morning of nations !  
Alas for their rivers of waters !

Alas for their fruitless oblations !  
The curse and the blight and the sentence  
Have fallen too swift for repentance.  
I see it — I feel it — O brother !  
It shadows one half of the garden.  
O Earth ! O improvident Mother !  
Where left'st thou thy angel, thy warden ?  
Is it theirs, or the guilt of another ?  
Must they die, without hope of a pardon ?  
What is it they suffer, O brother,  
In the red rosy light of their garden ?

## THE ANGEL RAPHAEL.

Beyond the imagined limits of such space  
As ye can guess, I passed, yet heard your cry.  
For ye are brother-spirits. And I come,  
Swifter than light, to shield you from the dread  
Of earth-born shadows, and the ghostly folds  
Of seeming evil curtaining round your worlds.  
Yet can I bring no amulet to guard  
One peaceful breast from sorrow ; for yourselves  
Are girt about, as I, by that divine  
Exhaustless Love, whose pledge your souls contain.

## THE SPIRITS.

Ah, not for ourselves, for our brothers  
We plead, in their dawn overglooming !  
For the death is not ours, but another's.  
Help ! help ! from the doom that is coming.

## RAPHAEL.

To spirits time and space may be condensed  
Into a throb of feeling, or a thought.  
While ye were singing, as ye watched your worlds,  
They budded into life, from fiery globes  
Girdled with thunder, wreathed with sulphurous steam ;  
Or from the slime where rude gigantic forms  
Of crocodile or bat plunged through the dense  
And flowerless wilds of cane, or flapped like dreams  
Of darkness through the foul mephitic air.  
These shapes gave way to forests, rocks, and seas,  
And shapely forms of beast and bird, and man, —  
The last result of wonder-working Time, —  
And the vast complex tissues he hath wrought,  
Of life and laws and governments and arts.  
All this ye knew not, tranced in choral song :  
Your music was the oblivion of all time.

## THE SPIRITS.

Have we not seen the approaching doom of Earth ?

## RAPHAEL.

The vision ye have had of joy and doom,  
Flashing and glooming o'er two little lives,  
Is truth half-typed in legend, such as fed  
The people of the ancient days, distilled  
From crude primordial growths of time, when sin

Saw the fierce flaming sword of conscience shake  
Its terror through the groves of Paradise,  
Grasped by Jehovah's red right hand, in wrath.

## THE SPIRITS.

Was it a dream? We saw that red right hand.

## RAPHAEL.

The events and thoughts that passed in olden time  
Dawn on your senses with the beams of light  
That left long, long ago, those distant worlds,  
And flash from out the past, like present truths.  
It was a poet's dream ye saw. The earth,  
That seems so near, is many myriad leagues  
Away. 'Tis yours to unfold the mythic form  
And guess the meaning of the ancient tale.

## THE SPIRITS.

We mark thy words : we know that thou art wise  
And good ; and yet we hover in a mist  
Of doubt. Help us ! our sight is weak and dim.

## RAPHAEL.

Know, then, that men and angels can conceive  
Through symbols only, the eternal truths.  
Through all creation streams this dual ray,  
This marriage of the spirit with the form, —

The correspondence of the universe  
With souls through sense, — the incessant undertone  
Of melody and chord through all the worlds ; —  
The life of man reflecting life divine ;  
Yea, even the blank and sterile voids that span  
The dead unpalpitating space twixt star  
And star, shall speak, as light hath spoken once.  
Hark ! even now the unfathomable shades  
Of fate begin to stir. I hear a sound  
Of shuddering wings, beyond the hurrying clouds,  
Beyond the stars, — yet nearer, nearer still !

DISTANT VOICES *confusedly*.

Behind us shines the Light of lights.  
We are the Shadows, we the nights,  
That blot the pure expanse of time.  
And yet we weave the destined rhyme  
Of creatures with the Increate,  
Of God and man, free-will and fate ;  
The warp and woof of heavens and hells ;  
The noiseless round of death and birth ;  
The eternal protoplasmic spells  
That bind the sons of God to earth ; —  
The ceaseless web of mystery  
That has been and shall ever be.

## RAPHAEL.

Far off I seem to hear a chorus strange,  
Rising and falling through the gathering gloom.

And now the congregated clouds appear  
To take the semblance of a Shape that bends  
This way, as when a whirling ocean-spout  
Drinks, as it moves along, the light of heaven.

Spirit, — if Spirit or Presence  
Thou art. or the gloom of a symbol, —  
Approach, if thou canst, to interpret  
Thy name and thy work and thy essence !

*(A Pause.)*

Behold, the Shadow spreads and towers apace,  
Like a dense cloud that rolls along the sea  
Landward, then shrouds the winding shore, the fields,  
The net-work of the gray autumnal woods,  
And the low cottage-roofs of upland farms.  
What seemed a vapor with a ragged fringe,  
Changes to wings that sweep from north to south.  
And, round about the mass whose cloudy dome  
Should be a head, I see the lambent flame  
Of distant lightnings play. And now a voice  
Of broken thunder-tones, and winds and waves  
Commingled, muttering unintelligible things,  
Approaches us. The air grows strangely chill  
And nebulous. Daylight hath backward stepped,  
And blotted with eclipse the morning sun.

CHORUS OF THE WORLD-SPIRITS.

Like the pale stricken leaves of the Autumn  
When Winter swoops downward to whirl them

Afar from the nooks of the woodlands,  
And up through the clouds of the twilight,  
We shudder ! We hear a wind roaring  
And booming below in the darkness ;  
A voice whose low thunder is mingled  
With waves of the whispering ocean.  
The clouds that were pearly and golden  
Are steeped in a blackening crimson.  
The spell of a magical presence  
Is nearing us out of the darkness.  
What is it ? No shape we distinguish ;  
The shadows are hopeless and voiceless.  
We are troubled. O help us, strong Angel !  
A Form gathers out of the darkness,  
Awful and dim and abysmal !

## RAPHAEL.

Fear not the gloomy Phantasm. Speak to him.  
If he will answer, ye may learn of him  
Some truths your books of dead theology  
Have never taught, nor poets, though they sang  
Of Eden and the primal curse of man.

## THE SPIRITS.

What art thou ? Speak ! whose shadow darkens thus  
The eye of morn ?

## SATAN.

I am not what I seem.

## THE SPIRITS.

Art thou that fallen angel who seduced  
From their allegiance the bright hosts of heaven,  
And men, and reignest now the lord of doom?

## SATAN.

I am not what I seem to finite minds ; —  
No fallen angel ; for I never fell,  
Though priest and poet feign me exiled and doomed ;  
But ever was and ever shall be thus, —  
Nor worse nor better than the Eternal planned.  
I am the Retribution, not the Curse,  
I am the shadow and reverse of God ;  
The type of mixed and interrupted good ;  
The clod of sense, without whose earthly base  
You spirit-flowers can never grow and bloom.

## THE SPIRITS.

We dread to ask, — what need have we of thee?

## SATAN.

I am that stern necessity of fate,  
Creation's temperament, — the mass and mould  
Of circumstance, through which eternal law  
Works, in its own mysterious way, its will.



## THE SPIRITS.

Art thou not Evil, — Sin abstract and pure ?

## SATAN.

There were no shadows till the worlds were made ;  
No evil and no sin till finite souls,  
Imperfect thence, conditioned in free will,  
Took form, projected by eternal law,  
Through co-existent realms of time and space.

## THE SPIRITS.

Thy words are dark : we dimly catch their sense.

## SATAN.

Naught evil, though it were the Prince of evil,  
Hath being in itself. For God alone  
Existeth in Himself, and good, which lives  
As sunshine lives, born of the Parent Sun.  
I am the finite shadow of that Sun,  
Opposite, not opposing, only seen  
Upon the nether side.

## THE SPIRITS.

Art happy, then ?

## SATAN.

Nor happy I, nor wretched. I but do  
My work, as finite fate and law prescribe.

## THE SPIRITS.

Didst thou not tempt the woman and the man  
Of Eden, and beguile them to their doom?

## SATAN.

No personal will am I, no influence bad  
Or good. I symbolize the wild and deep  
And unregenerated wastes of life,  
Dark with transmitted tendencies of race,  
And blind mischance ; all crude mistakes of will  
And tendency unbalanced by due weight  
Of favoring circumstance ; all passion blown  
By wandering winds ; all surplusage of force  
Piled up for use, but slipping from its base  
Of law and order ; all undisciplined  
And ignorant mutiny against the wise  
Restraint of rules by centuries old indorsed,  
And proved the best so long it needs no proof ;  
All quality o'erstrained until it cracks, —  
Yet but a surface-crack : the Eternal Eye  
Sees underneath the soul's sphere, as above,  
And knows the deep foundations of the world

Will not be jarred or loosened by the play  
Of sun and wind and rain upon the crust  
Of upper soil. Nay, let the earthquake split  
The mountains into steep and splintered chasms : —  
Down deeper than the shock the adamant  
Of ages stands, symbol no less divine  
Of the Eternal Law, than heaven above.

## THE SPIRITS.

Shall we, then, doubt the sacred books, — the faith  
That Satan was of old the foe of God ?

## SATAN.

Nations have planned their Devil as they planned  
Their gods. Say rather, God and Satan mixed,  
A hybrid of diseased theology,  
Stood at the centre of the universe,  
Ormazd and Ahriman, in ceaseless war ; —  
A double spirit, through whose nerves and veins  
Throbbled the vast pulses of his feverish moods  
Of blight and benediction. Did the Jew  
Or Pagan (save the few of finer mould)  
Own an unchanging God, or one, flesh-veiled,  
Who like themselves was moved to wrath, revenge,  
And jealousy, to petty strifes and bars  
Of sect and clan, — the echo of their thought ?

## THE SPIRITS.

What if it were revealed to holy men  
By faith, that God had formed a spirit vast,  
Who fell, rebelled, tempted the race to death?  
Whether a foe who rode upon the wind,  
Or one within, in league with some sweet drift  
Of natural desire, tainted yet sweet.

## SATAN.

Alas ! did ever human eyes o'ertop  
And pierce beyond the hemisphere of tints  
That overarched their thought and hope, yet seemed  
A heaven of truth ? As man is, so his God.  
So, too, his spirit of evil. Evil fixed  
He saw, eternal and abstract, whose tree  
Thrust down its grappling tap-roots in the heart,  
And poisoned where it grew ; its blighting shade  
By no sweet wandering winds of heaven caressed,  
No rain-drops from the pitying clouds. No birds  
Of song and summer in its branches built  
Their little nests of love : no hermit sought  
The shivering rustle of its chilly shade.  
Accursed of God it stood, — accursed and drear  
It stood apart, — a thing by God and man  
Hated, or pitied, as a pestilence  
O'erpassing cure. So hate not me. For I  
Am but the picture mortal eyes behold,

Shadowing the dread results of broken laws  
Designed by Eternal Wisdom for the good  
Of man, though typed as Darkness, Pain, and Fire.

## THE SPIRITS.

Must not the Eternal Justice punish man  
And spirits — now, or in the great To-Be ?  
What sinner can escape His burning wrath ?

## SATAN.

His name is Love. He wills no curse on men  
Or spirits, who condemn themselves, and hide  
Their faces in the murky fogs of sense  
And lawless passion, and the hate and feud  
Born of all dense inwoven ignorance.  
Man loves or fears the shadow of himself.  
God shines behind him. Let him turn and see.

[*Vanishes slowly.*]

## PART II.

## A CHORUS OF ANGELS IN THE DARKNESS.

Far in the shuddering spaces of the North  
    We live. We saw a Shape  
Of terror rise and spread and issue forth ;  
    And we would fain escape  
The anger of his frown. We know him not,  
    Nor whether it be he  
Who claims our homage, for the shadows blot  
    The sun we may not see.

We lift our prayers on heavy wings to One  
    Who dwells beyond the sun,  
Whose lightnings are decrees of life or doom,  
    Whose laws are veiled in gloom.  
Thick clouds and darkness are about thy throne  
    Where thou dost reign alone ;  
And we amid the mists and shadows grope  
    With faint bewildered hope.  
We fear thy awful judgments and thy curse  
    Upon thy universe.  
For we are told it is a fearful thing,  
    O thou Almighty King,  
To fall into thy hands. Oh, spare the rod, —  
    Thou art a jealous God !

O save us by the blood of Him who died  
That sin might not divide  
Our guilty souls from heaven and Christ and thee.  
And yet we dread to see  
Thy face. How can the trembling fugitive  
Behold that face, and live !

A VOICE BEHIND THE DARKNESS.

Fear not ; for ye shall live. There is no frown  
Upon his face. He shall lift up your heads.  
Fear not, but trust him ; for his name is Love.

CHOIR OF ANGELS IN THE DISTANCE.

God who madest the tempest's wingèd terror,  
And the smile of morn,  
Who art bringing truth from sin and error,  
Love from hate and scorn ;

Lo, thy presence glows through all thy creatures,  
Passion-stained or fair ;  
Saint and sinner bear the self-same features  
Thy bright angels wear.

Human frailty all alike inherit ;  
Yet our souls are free.  
Giver of all good, it is no merit  
That we turn to thee.

Thou alone art pure in thy perfection :  
    We thy children shine,  
But as our soiled garments take reflection  
    From thy light divine.

Thou art reaching forth thine arms for ever  
    Struggling souls to free,  
Leading man by every good endeavor  
    Back to heaven and thee !

#### CHORUS OF WORLD-SPIRITS.

The presence that awed us and chilled us  
Dissolves in the dews of the morning ;  
The darkness has vanished around us,  
And shrunk to the shadows that color  
The cloud-flakes of gold and of purple.  
So vanish the thoughts that obscured us,  
The doubt and the dread of the evil  
That stained the starred robe of creation ;  
And we hear but one music pervading  
The planets and suns that are shining ;  
The spirits that pine in the darkness,  
Or float in the joy of the morning.

#### SEMICHORUS.

Have we wronged thee, O monarch of shadows ?  
    Have we named thee the Demon of spirits ?  
We know that the good and the evil  
    Each mortal and angel inherits —



The evil and good that are twisted  
As fibres of brass and of gold —  
To the All-seeing Eye have a meaning  
We know not, — too deep to be told.  
But the wise and the merciful Father,  
Though they stray in the desert and wold,  
Will lift up his lambs to his bosom,  
And gather them into his fold.

## CHORUS OF HOPEFUL SPIRITS.

## I.

Praise, praise ye the poets, whose pages  
Were wisdom and love for the ages ;  
Who saw, in their marvellous trances  
Of thoughts and of rhythmical fancies,  
The manhood of man in all errors ;  
The hopes that have triumphed o'er terrors ;  
The great human heart ever pleading  
Its kindred divine, though misleading  
Fate held it aloof from the heaven  
That to spirits untempted was given.

## 2.

Praise, praise ye the prophets, — the sages  
Who lived and who died for the ages ;  
The grand and magnificent dreamers ;  
The heroes, the mighty redeemers ;

The martyrs, reformers, and leaders ;  
The voices of mystical Vedas ;  
The bibles of races long shrouded,  
Who left us their wisdom unclouded,  
The truth that is old as their mountains,  
But fresh as the rills from their fountains.

*SEMICHORUS.*

The creeds of the past that have bound us  
With visions of terror around us,  
Like dungeons of stone that have crumbled,  
Beneath us lie shattered and humbled.  
The tyranny mitred and crested,  
Flattered and crowned and detested ;  
The blindness that trod upon Science ;  
The bigotry Ignorance cherished ;  
The armed and the sainted alliance  
Of conscience and hate, — they have perished,  
Have melted like mists in the splendor  
Of light and of beauty supernal ;  
Of love ever watchful and tender,  
Of law ever one and eternal.

*THE SONG OF A WISE SPIRIT.*

The light of central suns o'erflows  
The farthest bounds of time and space ;  
The shadows are but passing shows  
And clouds upon creation's face.

From out the chaos and the slime,  
From out the whirling winds of fire,  
From years of ignorance and crime,  
From centuries of wild desire,  
The shaping laws of truth and love  
Shall lift the savage from the clod ;  
Shall till the field, and gild the grove  
With homes of man and domes of God.  
And Love and Science, side by side  
With starry lamps of heavenly flame,  
Shall light the darkness far and wide,  
That fixed the nations' curse and shame ;  
Shall bury in forgotten graves  
Old Superstition's tyrant brood ;  
Shall break the fetters of the slaves ;  
Shall bind the world in brotherhood ;  
Shall hurl all despots from the throne,  
And lift the saviors of the race :  
And law and liberty alone  
From sea to sea the lands embrace.

## THE HYMN OF A DEVOUT SPIRIT.

The time shall come when men no more  
Shall deem the sin that blights the earth  
A taint inherited at birth,  
A curse for ever to endure.  
  
Shall see that from one common root  
Must spring the better and the worse,  
And seek to cure before they curse  
The tree that drops its wormy fruit.

For God must love, though men should hate  
The vine whose mildew blights its grape :  
And he shall give a fairer shape  
To lives deformed by earthly fate.

O, praise him not that on a throne  
Of glory unapproached he sits,  
Nor deem a slavish fear befits  
The child a Father calls his own.

But praise him that in every thrill  
Of life his breath is in our lungs,  
And moves our hearts and tunes our tongues,  
Howe'er rebellious to his will.

Praise him that all alike drink in  
A portion of the life divine,  
A light whose struggling soul-beams shine  
Through all the blinding mists of sin.

For sooner shall the embracing day,  
The air that folds us in its arms,  
The morning sun that cheers and warms,  
Hold back their service, and decay,

Ere God who wraps the universe  
With love, shall let the souls he made  
Fall from his omnipresent aid  
O'ershadowed by a human curse.

## THE SPIRIT OF A POET

*sings from a bright cloud on a mountain-top.*

I sang of Eden and Creation's morn ;  
Of fiend and angel, triumph and despair.  
I caught the world's old music in the air,  
The strains that from a people's creed were born.

I soared with seraphs, walked with lords of doom ;  
Basked in the sun, and groped in utter dark.  
I lit the olden legends with a spark  
Whose radiance but revealed eternal gloom.

I stood enveloped in a cloud o'ercharged  
With thunder ; and the blind, mad bolts that flew  
Were heaven's decrees. They spared alone the few  
Whose hearts by grace supernal were enlarged.

Upon imagination's star-lit wings  
I flew beyond the steadfast earth's supports ;  
And stood within Jehovah's shining courts,  
And heard what seemed the murmur of the springs,

The streams of living and eternal youth.  
Was it a dream ? Hath God another word  
Than that between the cherubim we heard,  
When Israel served the Lord with zeal and truth ?

Are those but earth-born shadows that we saw  
Thronging the spaces of the heavens and hells ?  
Is there a newer prophet-voice that tells  
The trumpet-tidings of a grander law ?

The lurid words above the fatal door, —  
The door itself, — the circles of despair,  
Are fast dissolving in serener air.  
They were but dreams. They can return no more.

No more the vengeance of a demon-god ;  
No more the lost souls whirling in black drifts  
Of endless pain. The illumined spirit lifts  
The fog where once its trembling footsteps trod.

I looked, and, lo ! the abyss was all ablaze  
With light of heaven, and not abysmal fire ;  
And fain would tune to other chords my lyre,  
And fain would sing the alternate nights and days, —

The days and nights that are the wings of Time ;  
The love that melts away the eternal chains ;  
The judgments only of remedial pains ;  
The hidden innocence in guilt and crime.

Behold, the light that dawneth on the earth  
Is but the primal light now first discerned ;  
And the great creeds the world hath slowly learned  
Are truth evolved from forms of ruder birth.

The tides of life, divine and human, swell  
And flood the desert shore, the stagnant pool.  
And sage and poet know where God hath rule  
There is no cloud in heaven, — no doom in hell.

## FULL CHORUS OF THE WORLD-SPIRITS.

Hear ye, O brothers, the voices around that are swelling in chorus,

Nearer and sweeter they rise and fall through the nebulous light ;

Voices of sages and prophets, while, under our footsteps and o'er us,

Roll in their orbits the worlds whose circles we tracked through the night.

Melting away in the morning, we follow their pathways no longer,

Knowing the hand that has guided will bear them for ever along,

Bear them for ever, and shape them to destinies fairer and stronger

Than when the joyous archangels hailed their creation with song.

Not with a light that is waning, not with the curse of a dooming,

They shall accomplish their cycles through ages of fire and of cloud :

Ever from chaos to order unfolding, progressing, and blooming,

Till with the wisdom and beauty of ages on ages endowed.

Out of the regions of discord, out of the kingdoms of  
evil,

God in the races to come shall abolish the reign  
of despair.

Who shall affront his decrees with the phantoms of  
demon and devil ?

Who shall unhallow the joy of his light, and the  
health of his air ?

Lo ! on the day-star itself there are spots that, coming  
and going,

Send through the spaces mysterious thrillings, like  
omens of blight.

And the great planets afar are convulsed, as when win-  
ter comes blowing

Over the shuddering oceans and islands of tropical  
light.

Shadows are shadows ; and all that is made is  
illumined and shaded ;

Bound by the laws of its being, heaven and earth in  
its breath.

He who hath made us will lift us, though stained and  
deformed and degraded,

Lift us and love us, though drowned in the surges of  
darkness and death !

THE END.













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