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SPECIMENS
FROM THE DUTCH POETS
WITH
ORIGINAL POEMS.



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P O E M S.

ORIGINAL AND TRANSLATED.



SPECIMENS
FROM THE DUTCH POETS,

WITH

ORIGINAL POEMS.

BY

W. R. T.



UTRECHT,
W. F. DANNENFELSER.
1858.

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P R E F A C E.



It is not an easy matter, for a young beginner, to write a preface to his first attempt to catch the ear of the Public. He falls, too often, into one or other of two extremes — self-confidence, or a very self-denying submission to the 'recommendation', the 'urgent wishes', the 'oft-repeated desire', of friends and admirers.

Far from wishing to lapse into the first extreme, the writer and translator of the following verses, does not desire to thrust himself before the Public, under shield of the laudatory criticism of the often too lenient circle of hearers, and readers of manuscript productions. It would be unjust and ungenerous to say, that the indulgent praise of friends has in no way influenced him, in his determination to bring these pages under the eyes of the great and unsparing

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Public ; — but, it would be more unjust and ungenerous to present his effusions under cover of their protection, and to hold them, as it were, responsible for the cool reception he may meet with.

No one, surely, is fool enough to venture into print, with the conviction that he is making a very sorry appearance. Whether he say so or not, every author comes before the Public, believing that he has something new, amusing, instructive, or beautiful to tell.

The writer of these 'Specimens', would — had his own reputation alone been concerned — have thrown himself upon the mercy of the Public, without a single word of preface. But the fact, that other names than his own appear on his title-page and index, compels him to venture a few prefatory remarks. He believes that he can at least assume to himself the first of the four requisites, which he has named, for an attempt upon the patience of readers.

He presents to the English Public, 'Specimens from the Dutch Poets.' Dutch Poets! — he can fancy he hears the reader of his title-page exclaim — what an anomaly! are there such beings, in the aqueous land of dykes, and fogs, and cheese? Yes, gentle reader, such beings there are in this land, many in number, and often most voluminous in their productions. And a residence of some years in this country, has convinced the writer, that many of the poems of men, whose very names have never been heard in England, are worthy of a far more extended reputation than they at present enjoy. This conviction has urged him, to present a few 'Specimens' to English readers. They are mere speci-

mens — and are gathered, with the single exception of the 'Hymn to God', from the 'Lucifer' of van Vondel — the great contemporary of Milton — from works published in the present century, and, for the greater part, are the productions of poets still living.

But, the writer anticipates the question: Why, in opening a new language and literature, do you present specimens, so circumscribed as to date; so few in number; and — so meagre in merit? To the first objection he would answer, that he has purposely confined himself to the present poets of Holland; if these meet with a favourable reception, he does not doubt that the works of the Dutch poets of the 18th and 17th centuries — the age of Holland's greatest glory, not only as an European Power, but also as a centre of light, for learning and the fine arts — will gain more ready readers, among the inhabitants of that country which has learned so many of the 'arts of war and peace', from the now less known and respected 'United Provinces'. To the second objection the writer can only answer, that the fear of failure has withheld him from making the risk too great and costly for his pocket. And if, unfortunately, the third objection be also raised by his readers, then the translator would only desire to pray the critics to vent their criticism and abuse upon himself, and not too hastily — judging from these specimens — condemn the Poetry of the Netherlands. If these specimens, therefore, meet with an unfavourable reception, let the blame be laid upon the translator, and not upon those whom he has attempted to introduce in an English garb.

*And, as to his own effusions, the author would only add :
if he has erred, in making them public, he takes refuge in
the lines of Burns : — ♦*

“O wad some power the giftie gie us,
To see oursels as others see us!
It wad frae mony a blunder free us
And foolish notion.”

UTRECHT,
19 August 1858.

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T R A N S L A T I O N S.

ABD-EL-KADER.



I.

„The dread of the desert, the lion is tamed,
The lion who roar'd for his prey,
Who the battle-set ranks, where his red eye flamed
With terror like death did dismay;
Who scorn'd that a stranger should ever be named
As lord of the land he did sway.

The eagle has fall'n, his pinions are shorn,
Let him spread out his wings as he will,
With talons, and beak let him tear on, forlorn,
His own blood is all he does spill,
And gnawing those bars, which can never be torn,
Let him pant, and drink grief to his fill.

Now paled is the star, with the glittering beam,
Which long watch'd the crescent beside,
And over the mosques of the Moslem did gleam,
And high in the heavens did ride;
But tott'ring at last, like a meteor did stream,
And blood-red has sunk in the tide!"

II.

Dos't hear that base insulting song? 'Tis me
 They mock, me, Abd-El-Kader, Emir, who
 With more than kingly might endow'd, for blood
 Of priestly Marabout runs in my veins,
 Fought for my God and prophet, and have bared
 My vengeful sword against the infidel,
 And Frankish rule; I am that eagle, I
 That lion fierce, who growling answer gave
 From Bora's wilderness, when thund'ring rose
 The battle-cry to heav'n.

I honour'd high
 By vassals, and by slaves revered, I free
 Like to the wind which sweeps my hills; in song
 Extoll'd as messenger of God, I am
 That star which fell from heav'n's high dome; to grief
 A wretched prey; surrounded, and stared at
 By soldiers, like some beast, which huntsmen trap
 Upon my plains, and keep in durance vile.

Aumale! is this thy faith? Hast broken word,
 And honour too! Thou lying general!
 Is this thy friendship's boon? or know ye not
 What ye both promised Abd-El-Kader, when
 His sword he did resign? ye said: nay keep
 Thy sword, though conquer'd, thou art safe
 From farther ill; all France, with us, extols
 The courage which inflames thy soul; thou hast

Our soldier-word, which sacred is esteem'd
 By France, that, soon again, she'll break thy chains.
 O keep that word! forgiveness never will
 I crave, but I demand fulfilment of
 That knightly word, which ye, in sight of heav'n
 And earth, me gave. I ask no grace, I scorn
 Your boons, but I demand my right; fulfil
 The dear-sworn vows ye made — the God to whom
 I kneel, destroys each lying man — the God
 Of Christians — does He leave unpunished,
 The breaker of His word? Is perjury
 So light esteem'd by Him?

O keep that word!

O grant me liberty! and I'll resign
 The lost inheritance, for which I fought
 Too long: take back this sword, I lay it down.
 For not a sword suits now my hand, enslaved,
 The Derwish-staff becomes me more, I'll seek
 In distant lands, sweet balm and comforting,
 For wounds incurable, and clad in garb
 Of pilgrim, eastward shall I go, and there
 Confess my sins, upon my prophet's grave! —

In vain lamented! and in vain I shake
 My chains, in vain I tear my nails against
 The heavy-bolted door; Ha! gilded hall!
 Thou art, for me, a gloomy dungeon, e'en
 Though carpets soft I tread upon; I, free,
 And haughty son of Afric's strand, am doom'd
 Here still to sigh in exile, and my soul

Shall never, never, drink the fiery stream
Of thy free air...! my sinking Fatherland!

Glut your revenge! and lash my back with cords,
Meet out full measure to your deeds, and steal
The sunlight from me, hateful through those bars;
Drag me, chain'd as your slave, down to a cell
The foulest ye can dig, or plunge me else,
Deep in the midland seas; and then, ha! then
Thou cursed Paris! with a shout of joy,
Let then thy Marseillaise hellish ring,
Through all thy streets, for Abd-El-Kader's fall!

III.

O had I the chance, were my chains cast away!
I'd fly as the sparrow-hawk skimming the wave,
I'd roar as a lion that seeks for his prey,
My tent in the desert would rally the brave!
For the Islam I'd muster my tribes, one and all,
And the earth would rebound, as I stamp on the sand:
An army would rush to my side at the call,
Like the desert-cloud, burning which sweeps o'er the land.
My warhorse! my warhorse! I hear his glad neigh!
He sniffs up my breath, and he snorts as if scar'd,
Then prancing, with foam-wreaths he litters his way,
But stands, when I call, for his rider prepar'd;
He stretches his flanks, and he camel-like kneels,
I mount to the saddle, I stroke his proud neck;
And heav'nward he rears, if my touch he but feels,

Or daintily steps, at the bridle-reins' check.
 I pluck from my girdle my pistols, amain
 He bears me, where thickest the scimitars flame;
 I stoop low my head, and thus hid in his mane,
 I choose in the smoke of the battle my aim.

The onslaught is past... and he arrow-like goes,
 As I point with my sword, where my legions must rush;
 Then I, panther-like, spring on the flanks of my foes,
 Or, headlong careering, their centre I push.

I hear my old war-cry, — it rings in my ears!
 I rise in the saddle, more fierce than of yore,
 I mow down their ranks, like a reaper who shears,
 My scimitar, thirsting, gets drunken with gore.
 Or yielding... my flight swift and bird-like I take.
 Though lead rains around me, yet death nears me not!
 From the folds of my mantle their bullets I shake,
 Unsinged by their powder, unharm'd by their shot;
 And Victor I am, 'neath the shield of thy wings,
 Mohammed! of prophets the greatest, and last.
 Again as a captive thy proud foe I bring,
 And kill him with bullets, which 'gainst me he cast.
 Then the crescent shall wave o'er Algeria's strand,
 The Frankish tricolor, their standard, sinks down,
 And I'll raise on the spot, where the last bit the sand,
 As the sword hew'd him down, with the flag in his hand,
 The greatest of Mosques to thy name and renown.

IV.

Ah! whither did I stray? 'Tis done . . . : no light
 Shines on my future way! Earth has naught more
 To hope, or fear from me, no longer man
 But worm am I; which men, despiteful, tread
 Beneath their feet. Ha! in the book of fate
 'T was written with an iron pen, that base
 And dastard Abd-El-Kader would resign
 His trusty sword, and yet — live in his shame.

If I do hate, and curse you? . . . breakers vile
 Of Europe's peace! you? scourge of Africa!
 You? murderers of liberty! my hate
 Grows with my grief, and lightning-like it gleams
 From out mine eyes, and though my strength should waste
 Itself away in hopeless cries, with all that's left
 Of wasted life, I'll spew my curse at you.
 And die

The day of vengeance comes! e'en now
 Has fate revenged me, and the sceptre proud
 Of Orleans is broken like a reed!
 In exile, haughty son of kings! thy pride
 Is laid in dust! Thou king without a crown!
 Thou mightier than the mightiest

Still lower than I fell — and without fame —
 Hast sunk! in truth, the hand of God was there.
 The day of vengeance comes! e'en now I see
 A fire unquenchable, which saps the bloom

Of France Ha ! dig in madness at the grave
Which shall entomb your sons ! go raging on ,
And tear each other like the beasts , your guilt
Shall speedy retribution bring ; and that ,
Which liberty ye deem'd , shall soon become
Your sorest penalty !

The day of vengeance comes ! for on the clouds
I see great Issa , and he weighs the fate
Of down-trod nations ; but I tremble not
To see him come ; I , Emir of the free
And sun-lit wilderness ; the sentence dread
That judge shall speak , may doom , by Afric's blood ,
Fierce vengeance on the guilty France ; 't will grant
To Abd-El-Kader , Emir , quittance free.

TO THE STARS.



Are ye sheep of snowy whiteness ,
Which the night as shepherd leads ,
When the sun sinks down to slumber ,
Through the blue ethereal meads ?

Are ye lilybuds of silver ,
Op'ning at the hour of eve ,
Wafting down in balmy fragrance ,
Rest , poor mortals to relieve ?

Or are ye the waxlights burning
On the altar of heav'ns dome ;
Which , in solemn, silent darkness ,
Wraps itself when night doth come ?

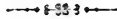
Are ye coastlights , are ye beacons ,
Lighting up the sea we roam ?
Gleaming friendly from the windows
Of our Heav'nly Father's home ?

Doth some saint gaze down upon us,
From each glitt'ring star on high,
Hailing us with fondest greeting
From his ever beaming eye?

Or are ye the cross of honour,
Hung upon the Christian's breast,
Since, through faith, he stood undaunted
Whilst the cross of grief him press'd?

No! ye are a book of praises,
Written out in living flame,
Hymns ye are, in silver graven,
Blazing forth your Maker's name.

RECOLLECTION.



Nay, think not that we have forgotten thee at last,
Dear young one, e'en though thrice the autumn-blast
Has striv'n to make thy grave unknown, and cast
Sere leaves o'er it; and though two years have pass'd,
Since a young daughter fair has come,
And fill'd thy empty place at home.

Nay, think not that thy image fades from sight,
In midst of all the joy which fills the hearts,
To which, again, thank God! with fond delight
We press another infant bright;
Nay, fear not child, thy image from us ne'er departs.

Thy parents' hearts are true, their offspring dear
Given up to God, are not forgotten; here
We trust the lost one to the darksome grave,
And, comforted, look up to Him who gave.
No might of years, no night of death,
Can part from him who drew their breath;
No new-found father's joy, no later mother's care,
No God-giv'n consolation, peaceful, true,
Can blot thy image from those hearts, which ne'er
Count o'er their children, but they count the dead ones too.

Ah me! with heavy step, and tearful eye
 I brought thy loved corpse to its burial ground,
 A lovely spot! where oaks, and plane-trees high,
 And blooming chestnuts cast their shade around;
 How beauteous was that hour! the fading day,
 With all the glory of its setting sun,
 In purpling gold, through the dense shade did play,
 And cast its last, and loveliest ray
 Upon the grave, which waited for the dust it won.

I know the church-yard well; for twelve long years,
 In which I wield the pastor's stave,
 I've had to gaze in ev'ry grave,
 And give speech to my many thoughts in tear:
 There, for the dead, I often waited have;
 And always, waiting for the dead,
 Musing the while with down-bent head,
 It did me good to walk around,
 And, pensively, my look to cast
 O'er each green gently surging mound,
 And, as I on some tomb-stone trod,
 Or on a new-laid yielding sod,
 Pause — and revivify the past.
 Oft I went round, my steps no spot did seek,
 Naught but pure chance directed then my way,
 But, since that night, blood and affection speak;
 The church yard gate I ne'er pass, since that day,
 But, well I know a spot, tow'rd which the first to stray.

That gate my child! when, in the summer night,
 The nightingale's sweet note far o'er the church-yard rings,
 And tempts thy mother to go hear what song he sings,
 And, at my side, she goes there in the fading light,
 Whene'er she nears that gate — I've seen her start,
 And anxious peer through chink and bar;
 And through the tall grass, from afar
 Her glance upon the stone she'd dart
 Deep buried in the shade behind,
 The stone we know so well to find.

Then, silent, we pass on.... a sigh oft from us slips,
 But, neither speaks, e'en though desire be strong.
 At last.. it is too much! Thy name must on our lips,
 Thy name, dear namesake, then we talk so long
 Of thee, we sketch thy form, thy tricks of youth,
 Thy childish joy, thy sweet looks when asleep,
 That soft blue eye, from which young love did peep,
 Those cheeks, as roses fresh, that budding mouth
 Which dying kissed our hands. We say no more, but weep!

And, in the winter, when without the storm
 Roars, crackling through the snow-clad trees,
 And shakes the window panes, we gather warm
 Around our fam'ly hearth, and sit at ease.
 And oft, thus circled by our offspring dear,
 The offspring which the Lord has vouch'd,
 The youngest on her mother's lap, and here
 Another at her feet low crouch'd,

A third held to his father's breast ;
 When naught but thankfulness should reign
 In parents' hearts so highly bless'd ,
 Still , as the eye , once and again ,
 Rests on each glad face , beaming joy ,
 Our hearts yearn for thee , dear-loved boy ,
 And say : there is his place ; thence was our darling ta'en .
 Then oft , a tear starts to thy mother's eye ,
 Thy father's voice grows faint in some quaint tale ;
 The children look up to him wond'ring why —
 And know not how he thinks that now the pale
 Cold moon is shining o'er the grave in which you lie .

Nay , fear not that we have forgotten - thee .
 But thou , dost ever in that Eden , — where ,
 In Jesus arms , thou grief nor tears dost see —
 Dost ever think , — I say not of our misery —
 But of our tender love , and loving care ?
 There thou dost know how well we loved thee dear !
 And yet , we did not envy thee the joys of heav'n ,
 But when thy Saviour call'd , grieved , yet with joy could hear
 And say : Go child ! Go to the God who thee had giv'n .



DESTRUCTION OF THE FIRST WORLD.

(INVOCATION.)



I sing the doom of the primeval world,
And of that race, with hell and devils leagued
In deeds iniquitous, which dared to tempt
Heav'n's Majesty, and, impious, sought to scale
The battlements of Paradise; till God,
Weary of wrestling with sin-ruin'd man,
Crush'd, and o'erturn'd the guilty world, in wrath
Hurling creation into chaos back;
But — in His mercy — from the gen'ral wreck
One man preserving, to re-people earth
And raise upon the ruins of the world
A mortal race, seed for eternity.

Whom shall I pray, with eye to heav'n up-turn'd,
To form anew, and call to life again
That world, the mem'ry of whose wreck — the sole,
Sad remnant which the mighty flood had left
Behind — the ebb of long-drawn years, has swept
From the fast-fleeting thoughts of mortal man?

Who shall, out of the impenetrable gloom,
 Who can, recall her form? — Thee! I invoke
 O Thou! whose glance does pierce all shade, whose gaze
 Brings days, where'er Thy god-like face is turn'd.

Spirit of Poesy! Or leading now
 The angelic choir, to hymn in heav'n the song
 Of praise to God, where myriad tongues burst forth
 In rapt'rous notes, till heav'n's wide arch resounds
 With one great chord, whose pow'r now rolling loud,
 Thrills ev'ry nerve, then melts each heart in joy;
 Or, to the universe distributor
 Of God's great mercy, show'ring down sweet drops,
 Dost lave the hearts of fallen man, and joys
 Dost bring, from heav'n's clear-shining diamonds-halls,
 To weary souls in bowls of amethyst. —
 Send light from thy divinity! command —
 But not the strains of earth-born melody,
 Wherewith mad luxury and lust with feet
 Light-shod, in wanton revellings oft hail
 The breaking dawn, whilst laughing pleasure hides
 The cancring sorrow, gnawing at the heart.
 Ah no! here, noble numbers wake, like those
 Wherein the kingly bard, the Eternal eye
 Directs to fallen man, and sings the praise
 Of His most god-like love; or make to swell
 Majestic tones, the soul's just praise to God.

Nay! Poesy, be thou my soul! no art,

No science more; but let me feel, and live
 In thee alone, yea, fill and penetrate
 My very being, raise, O raise me up
 Above this earth, to heav'ns high pinnacles,
 Where, on the clouds, the eagle rests, and give
 The poet wings whereon secure to mount;
 Or, if he fail, may no dishonour vex
 Th' Almighty One whose vengeance dread he sings.

But Thou! who, high above all heav'nly spheres,
 Did'st mount th' eternal, uncreated throne
 At God's right hand; Thou! God in God, and yet
 Son born of man, Who, doom'd to death's dark shades,
 Did'st publish peace, in subterranean caves,
 To the first world's inhabitants, whilst they,
 Chain'd in eternal night, beheld their bonds
 Asunder riv'n, by Thy victorious hand! —
 Saviour! look down on this presumptuous deed,
 And favour it, if but a poet's dream!
 But, if it pass all Christian rule, O then,
 In mercy Lord! O check my impious flight.



DESCRIPTION OF THE FIRST WORLD AND ITS INHABITANTS.



Adam, firstborn, with two descending lines,
The debt had paid of frail mortality;
The human race, thick-peopling earth, had spread
By God's decree, to her far ends, and built,
With arms by labour nerved, great towns and walls
Of wood impenetrate, in which secure
They till'd the soil around, fearless of all
That threaten'd them beyond their solid mounds.
— Or, roving on, their tents and growing flocks
Their earthly all, they pitch'd their nightly camps
In mountain-vallies, far from former woes.
— The lordly Hanoah rear'd its tow'rs to greet,
In the far east, the sun's first rays, and ruled
The many towns and countries, stretching wide
To where the Hiddekel's most western branch
Left the sun's setting, and, returning, sought
Its way through mountain-clefts, till sucking sands
Stole its fresh waters near the northern main.
Midway flow'd Gihon's channel, link'd and twined,
In sinuous curves with Pizon's stream; and there,

Through cedars, palms, and olive-trees fast flow'd
 The rapid Frath, to where the mirror'd sun
 Shone from the waves that wash'd the massy hills
 Far stretching on tow'rds Hanoch's battlements.
 Closed in a mighty mountain-wall, the north
 Kept back the storm, which, rushing from the pole,
 Wrung from the ocean-depths the crested waves,
 And dash'd them thund'ring on the rock-bound shores.
 Like to a batter'd, brazen shield, up-rose
 In swelling lines, out of the azure rim,
 With many a scar and bruise, from east
 To West — the habitable earth; — a crust
 Of soil upon a granite floor. — No rocks,
 In wild confusion hurl'd, lined that first strand
 All uniform, no jutting peaks rose up
 To hide the mirror'd stars upon the sea.
 One land, one sea, no other shore to break
 That unity. — One mountain range, whereon
 Grew stately pines and lofty elms; no hills,
 Than where the purling brooks sprang forth to flood
 The fields, or lose their puny waves, dissolved
 In the great streams which flow'd from Eden's groves.
 — Enwrapp'd in clouds, one higher spot alone
 From men, near-seeing, hid that garden where
 The tree of life its fruit still gave, — but leaves
 And blossom only, shed the Knowledge-tree,
 Ere since its mystery our parents lured
 To touch, and pluck death from its boughs.
 Sometimes a balmy breeze of odours sweet

Was wafted thence upon the nether earth ;
 Such scents as fall , in honied drops , from beds
 Of autumn-roses , where the nightingales
 Wax faint with luxury ; but sin-blind men
 Knew not their source , nor saw the heav'n-born guards
 Who , night and day , invisible , kept watch
 Around the holy spot



CAIN'S REPENTANCE.

. Cain cried upon the God
 Of blessing , when his firstborn Hanoch's smile
 Lit up his curse-stamp'd brow : — Almighty God !
 Thine is the victory ! No more I'll steel
 My sinful breast ; I melt away , in tears
 Of penitence dissolve ; my soul grows weak ,
 Grows tender , yea , is humanized. O joy !
 I am a father. — O my God ! I feel
 A father's blood run coursing through my heart ,
 And changing my whole soul. — Let childless ones
 Go fight th' Omnipotent. — Go , sinful man ,
 And curse thyself and God , and urge thy soul
 To loathe itself. O thou unfortunate !
 Who hast no pleasing child to bear thy name ,
 Know'st not how bright a heav'n there smiles on man
 Out from the countenance of his own child ,

His second life, his recreated self.

— I can no longer live thus hardenèd,
 Nor tempt Thy mercy, O my God! I have
 Both wife, and child, O visit not on them
 The father's, husband's sin; but punish me,
 Yea me alone — spare those in whom I live;
 That, that alone, were punishment, were grief
 Too great for me a father; — O my God
 I worship Thee! have mercy now, and look
 In love upon the first great murderer.
 My parents sinn'd; I, in mad passion slew,
 To Thy dishonour, Abel born with me,
 And, by his death, bereft myself desire
 In my own life; O bless my seed, and I
 With blessings on my lips to Thee will die....

He sank down speechless, drench'd in tears. 'Tis said,
 An angel, at these words, let fall a tear
 Like a heav'n-dewdrop on his brow, which wash'd
 That sign of blood from thence, and made it fade
 As doth a mist at morn, and wiped away
 Therewith that vengeance-call from earth — the curse
 Of His most righteous Father for his sin.

FROM PORTUGAL.



To Africa, to Africa!
Spake Don Sebastian; 1)
Beyond the midland sea I'll lead
Old Portugal's proud van.

My nobles, up! gird on those swords,
Which 'gainst the Moorish brood,
Your fathers all, and mine did draw,
And bathed in reeking blood!

For yet upon Morocco's shore,
Our five-fleck'd flag must stream!
That blood of which those spots are sign,
Shall blot the crescent's beam!

1) Don Manuel, surnamed the Fortunate, was succeeded on the throne of Portugal (in 1521) by his son Don John III, who survived all his six sons, and (in 1557) was succeeded by his grandson then 3 years old, Don (in Portugeze: Dom) Sebastian. The unfortunate issue of the adventurous expedition of this prince, against the king of Fez and Morocco, gave rise to the wellknown *sage* with which the ballad closes. (author.)

A cry of knights gave answer loud :
 „Hail , king Sebastian !
 And woe , and woe , and woe , and woe ,
 Woe to the Mussulman !”

That cry doth ring through Portugal ,
 The king's own mother wakes ;
 Her sombre , and presaging heart
 With deeper anguish quakes :

„For you , your knights , and kingdom e'en ,
 You dig a certain grave ,
 My king , my son ! O leave , O leave
 This fatal plan I crave .

What draws thy fiery hero-heart
 That scorch'd and scorching way ?
 The blooming West or Eastern lands
 Bid fresher fame and prey .

But , at this time , far better things ,
 Than prey or battle-call ,
 Waits , from the seed of Manuel
 The favour'd Portugal .

Now , prospering , it prays thy reign
 A long continuing ;
 It longs for , hopeful greets e'en now
 A bride beside its king !”

„My hand, my heart, my crown I'll ne'er
 To royal maid accord,
 Ere that in th' unbelievers' blood
 I bathèd have my sword;

Ere that, upon its native soil,
 The Moslem crescent wanes,
 Ere that, e'en there, in battle's rush
 Our cross the vict'ry gains!

Till then, thou widow of a king,
 For Portugal no rest,
 And for her high-born knights no peace,
 For me — in life no zest."

The monarch speaks, the monarch stands,
 In purpose fix'd and fast;
 The widow weeps, the court is still,
 Rings the knights' cry at last:

„To Moorish lands, to Moorish lands!
 And, hail Sebastian!
 And woe, and woe, and woe, and woe,
 Woe to the Mussulman!"

The mother of the king they bear
 Thence, fainting at his knee: —
 Her eyes alas! the woeful day
 Shall never, never see.

Who meanwhile pleads the mother's cause
 Before her son and lord,
 Though trembling with the weight of years,
 With fire of look, and word?

'Tis one, clothed in a scarlet robe,
 Th' Infânt of Portugal,
 Who shall succeed the childless prince,
 The king and cardinal.

It is of the king Manuel
 The last remaining son;
 Heir of the Lusitanian crown
 The sole and only one.

„I know, O prince! head of our line,
 The sign that marks our race;
 I know that hearts, unquench'd in zeal,
 For church and cross, us grace.

Thou too, e'en from thy greenest youth,
 Unto thy fathers leal,
 Orique's famèd inheritance
 Hast kept with pious zeal.

But, though Alfonzo's victory
 O'er th' unbaptizèd Moor,
 In people's chronicles and songs
 Through all time shall endure, —

That enemy calls now no more
 Our royal house to strife,
 But other duties, other wars
 Has brought our later life.

Why look'st thou, king! unto the South?
 It thunders in the North,
 There war, that feeds on heresy,
 In flame has broken forth.

Dost leave thy Austrian uncle then
 To fight with single hand?
 And fliest not with thine armed hosts
 To rebel Netherland?

Or scorn we now our righteous share
 In this holy crusade?
 O may we ne'er feel in the end
 Spain's yoke upon us laid!

And O! may ne'er our Portugal,
 — Six ages fame in vain —
 Wake from this dream of Africa
 A conquer'd prize of Spain!"

The church-prince bows, the int'rest grows,
 A shudder passes round!
 The monarch hears, the monarch speaks,
 Smiles grace the utter'd sound:

„Most rev'rend son of Portugal
 Thy words, I ween, are true:
 Let us not, for our kingdom's sake,
 Confound old times with new.

Nay! nay! 'twixt Spain and Portugal
 Never shall strife be moved;
 Both are invincible, and this
 Has long, long since, been proved.

For, Toro's victory is theirs,
 Algibarrota ours;
 And further, for one common soil
 We fight with joined powers.

We'll wield th' avenging sword, and purge
 Our common soil from stain,
 On ours the heretic shall die,
 On theirs the crescent wane.

With Philip king of Austria
 I'll this division make:
 The Northern heretics are his,
 The Mussulman we'll take." —

And, once again, the cry resounds:
 „Hail king Sebastian!
 And woe, and woe, and woe, and woe,
 Woe to the Mussulman!"

And to that loud call answering,
 Another voice doth bring
 To ears of knights, against the king,
 These words of threatening:

„Why would'st thou sail unto the south
 O king, so joyously?
 A curse awaiteth Portugal,
 Beyond the midland sea; —

The curse of Israel's progeny,
 Forth-driven from this strand
 Unto the islands of the west,
 And Barbary's hot sand.

Dost still call back that deed of shame,
 And fear'st not vengeance fell?
 That vengeance, due from Israel,
 May come from Ishmael!"

Impatiently the king doth stamp,
 His eye with fury gleams,
 And firmer than it ever stood
 This hour his purpose seems; —

„Who dares defend the cause of Jew,
 As if of guiltless blood?
 Whene'er his pride stoops to the cross,
 For him my sceptre's — good;

But, if he holds with stubborn will
 The guilt that brands his name,
 Then waits for him, with Ishmael,
 One doom, one sword, one flame!

Come then! in spite of woman's tears,
 And spite of fancied ban,
 My nobles, up! begin the strife
 Against the Mussulman!"

And frantic rose the cry again:
 „Hail king Sebastian!
 And woe, and woe, and woe, and woe,
 Woe to the Mussulman!"

From Lisbon went the fleet to sea,
 With the noble of the land;
 With princes brave and gallant knights,
 In hour most evil mann'd.

The Spanish sister-kingdom soon
 From Cadiz greeting sends,
 And, with that greet, a helping band
 Of Chivalry she lends.

The fleet sails down the ocean-path,
 It sails with swanlike pride,
 Along Trafalgar's fronting ridge,
 Gibraltar's rock beside;

With sound of drum and clarion,
 And warlike minstrelsy,
 With flash of steel, and colours gay
 Of knightly blazonry :

The Silva's lion blazed on green,
 Almeida's eagle stream'd;
 The stars of great Coutinho's house,
 The Sousa's crescent beam'd.

The Costa's bones of silver white,
 Pereira's cross there waved,
 With many a shield of princely house,
 With bar sinister graved.

And there too gleam'd the royal shield
 On unstain'd banner bright,
 Known from the farthest western shore
 Unto the dawn of light.

There, midst the thunder of their shouts,
 Arzila meets their gaze,
 And soon on Moorish soil the king
 His warlike host arrays.

Soon through Morocco rings the shout:
 „Hail king Sebastian!
 And woe, and woe, and woe, and woe,
 Woe to the Mussulman!”

That shout the trembling shores have heard . . .
 But the bright light has fail'd ;
 The pale sheen of the golden stars
 In gath'ring mist is veil'd.

A strange, wild motion breaks the rest
 Of their broad water-path ;
 And, red as blood, shines down their track
 The full moon boding wrath !

In Lisbon, in the summer time,
 Was the king's will obey'd ; —
 And autumn found all Portugal
 In mourning weeds array'd.

The great fight had been fought and lost,
 Blood flow'd like water there ;
 Mown down was all the kingdom's flow'r
 At Alcazarkabier !

Right gallantly on either side
 With lion-might they fought !
 But numbers gain'd the victory,
 Presumption down was brought.

And at the state's forsaken helm,
 Press'd sore on ev'ry hand,
 The church-prince, few dark moments short,
 Though dying took his stand.

Ere yet two years have run their course,
 That place he must accord
 To Charles' son, whose claims are won
 With bloody Alva's sword.

Ah! though each fought right gloriously,
 Like true-born cavalier.
 In vain! the Moor did win the day,
 At Alcazarkabier!

But how, in that unhappy hour,
 Sped he the foremost man?
 How fell, among the fallen brave,
 The king Sebastian?

They saw him in a ring of knights,
 Who fell down one by one,
 And then, 'gainst sixty thousand Moors,
 Still dauntless stand alone.

At last, all cover'd o'er with wounds,
 With upraised vizor, there
 They saw him fall down in the fight
 Of Alcazarkabier!

His corpse they saw, and recognised
 In dwelling of a Jew;
 For there the king of Portugal
 His latest life-breath drew.

But still, in every age, the tale
 Is told from mouth to mouth,
 That king Sebastian ne'er died
 Far in the burning South; —

That king Sebastian still lives,
 And soon shall come again,
 Deliverer, and conqueror,
 In Portugal to reign.

For when the Spaniard rules the land,
 Or when his rule is gone,
 Or when an emperor gives way
 To Miguel's raging throne; —

The self same words are whisper'd still,
 And die not, — through all pain,
 Through scorn, through Inquisition's flames: —
 „Sebastian comes again!”

Can thus a people's loyalty
 Its bigotry become;
 To all opposing reason blind,
 And to all doubtings dumb?

No! deeper doth the meaning lie,
 And higher up it looks,
 Enwrapp'd in wond'rous mysteries; —
 For truth oft lurks in nooks.

That, which lies hidden in the hope
Of longing Portugal,
Is the great hope by nations felt
For One who comes to all; —

He, who from heaven shall return,
The sole, all-ruling One,
He, who shall free the world from bonds,
The humanizèd Son.

Earth! at His coming, cast away
Your gods of wood and stone;
All superstitions vanish then,
Self-righteousness begone!

For He, that king, shall bring to us
His peace and righteousness!
Woe to all error then! He comes
To doom, as well as bless.



HYMN TO GOD.



CHORUS OF ANGELS

(STROPHE.)

O who is He exalted high,
Throned in a light impenetrate?
Time nor eternity can try
To measure Him; no counterweight
Supports His being; He alone,
Lives in Himself, nor prop nor stay
Bear up His uncreated throne: —
Whose will creation doth obey;
In, and around Him, undisturb'd
By thought of change, all things rehearse
His will, by Him are moved and curb'd,
Sole centre of the universe!
Sun of all suns! the spirit, life,
The soul of all that thought doth bring
To mind, or dares to bring; the fountain rife,
The heart, the ocean, primal spring
Of all things good, which from Him flow,
And by His mercy, wisdom, pow'r,
Still are upheld. — Who bade bade them grow

From naught, ere yet, complete, did tow'r
 This glitt'ring palace-dome, the heav'n
 Of heav'ns; where — with eyes veil'd in wings
 Before His Majesty — 'tis giv'n
 To us to serve, while heav'n's arc rings
 With songs of praise; — or, struck with fear,
 In adoration low we all,
 As His all-glorious Presence near,
 Burns on us on our faces fall!
 Who is He? Tell us, sing of Him!
 Sing loud His name in glorious lays,
 In words fit for the Seraphim;
 Or have ye words fit for His praise?

(ANTISTROPHE.)

'Tis God! O unbegotten fount!
 Unending source of all! forgive
 The weakness wherewith we recount
 Thy praise. Created forms, that live,
 And all that have no life, still find
 Eternity too short to name
 Thee! dread Unutterable! — Mind,
 Tongue, nor sign can give Thee fame!
 Thou wert, Thou art, and shalt be still,
 The same Unchangeable! all thought,
 All speech — e'en of Archangel — will
 With weakness and sore faults be fraught!
 Each being bears his name; but none

Dare call Thee by Thy name! no time
The myst'ry solves which guards Thy throne!

Who dares exalt himself? Thou Prime!
Art what Thou art, self-known, reveal'd

To none beside! To whom was't giv'n
To know Thee as Thou wert, ere wheel'd

The orbs through space, and stars in heav'n
Sang to Thy praise, all-glorious Light,

And Life-pulse of eternity!

To whom revealed was the sight?

Who shared the awful mystery?
That sight sublime, from ev'ry eye

Was hid. Age comes to us as days
Roll on; o'er Thee, unchanged, times fly.

Exalt the Godhead, sing His praise!



THE NURSERY-MAID'S DEATH.



She was an orphan-child , friends had she none
Nor kin ; a stranger from far lands ; alone
She came , to ask , for faithfulness and zeal ,
A roof , a refuge , and a scanty meal .

She was so gentle , modest , and retired ;
She won each heart before she spoke ; desired
And envied was their lot who saw her roam ,
And bade her welcome in a kindly home .

How nimble , charming , amiable her ways !
Her step , so light and graceful , drew each gaze .
How polish'd was her language , and so well
Match'd with her voice , clear as a silver bell !

How beautiful she was ! . . . Her face did smile
With happiness unconscious of a guile ;
Hers was unwrinkled purity of youth ;
A child-like soul , of most angelic truth .

How good she was! what deep-felt love she show'd
 For those whom grief or anguish lowly bow'd;
 How willingly each tear of woe she'd dry
 While sympathetic tears bedew'd her eye!

And when she pray'd...! O God! her mien and air
 Were such, when murm'ring out her whisper'd pray'r,
 That all who saw, their hands together laid,
 And then, unconsciously, with her they pray'd.

No! purer soul, with such rare grace refined,
 And holier heart, with happier richer mind,
 And form more beautiful, with brighter virtue crown'd,
 Combined, were never in one being found.

Alas, alas! it was a dream soon told!
 She was a plant of far too tender mould;
 She 'gan to wither, droop beneath her toil;
 She could not thrive in that strange foreign soil.

Bleak, cold, and damp became that foreign land;
 And sickness seized on her with clammy hand;
 Bereft of strength, in pain, long time she lay,
 Then bade farewell to earth, — and pass'd away....

She died.... Well then? that is the lot of all;
 One young, one old, each must obey Death's call;
 And then, the loss is not so great, 'twas said;
 'Twas but an unknown foreign nurs'ry-maid!

She's dead Well! — women came into the room,
 And laid the body out with looks of gloom; —
 They dress'd it in a winding-sheet, and gave
 A corpse, the fin'ry all wear in the grave.

A coffin with its trestles then was brought,
 The last wood-house, which even kings ere bought;
 They laid her in, and screw'd the lid down tight,
 And hid the dead and faded flow'r from sight.

A carriage came, and bore the load away;
 And those who follow'd — few, O few were they!
 Not one of them, O God! woe-stricken walk'd;
 Not one, who follow'd, of the dead girl talk'd.

And O! no sigh, no groan, no plaint was heaved
 By those whom she had left, but not bereaved;
 Not one „Farewell” was sobb'd; none shed a tear;
 „We'll meet again,” was not sigh'd o'er her bier.

The foreign orphan . . could she wish for more?
 All are not nourish'd with the care they bore
 For her; in sickness nought was her denied;
 A decent grave they gave her when she died.

O God! O God! the purest innocence,
 The rarest bud of loveliness borne hence
 By hands ungentle; buried, without gloom,
 By hearts cold as the earth which was her tomb!

I saw the grave, the coffin which contain'd
The precious dust — 'twas all that now remain'd
Of her so angel-like; — the digger's spade
Soon hid e'en that!.... In earth she's laid!

I stood distracted, lost in pensive thought;
Strange fancies to my brain, confused, were brought;
With eyes fix'd on the grave I stood, apart,
While deep-fix'd sorrow moved my breaking heart.

I look'd around, to see if no one wept; —
The grave was fill'd, away the mourners crept —
I look'd in ev'ry face, search'd ev'ry eye,
In vain! none shed a tear, not one — but I.

TO MY CHILD.

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Dost see that church my child? There rests the dust
Of thy dear mother, from thy father's heart
Torn suddenly. — She pray'd to God when thou
Wert born; thought but of thee, and light esteem'd
Her own sore pangs. God heard the pray'r. What means,
My child, that look of pain, that cry, that flood
Of briny tears? Does thy young, childish heart
Already feel my fearful woe? or has
The milk, drawn from a stranger's breast, no taste
For thee? Why dost thou stretch thy little hands
Out tow'rds that dismal church? Dost thou then wish
That I should bear thee to thy mother's grave,
That, resting on mine arms, or creeping slow
Along the grass, thy bitter tears may fall
Upon the hallow'd sod? Patience awhile
My little son; whene'er thy limbs are strong,
You'll, hand in hand, with me, go to the tomb
Where she is laid, and there, knelt on the stone,
We'll pour our tears together on her grave.
Patience till then my child; a little while,

And then thy limbs are strong enough to walk
 Alone. O this delay I must crave, for
 Though light the burden is, my bleeding heart
 Has robb'd my arm of strength, I cannot bear
 Thee to that grave; and, if thy father's will
 Thou could'st obey, I'd have thee shed no tears
 Till then; those drops but aggravate my pain,
 And thy lost mother is thus robb'd of tears
 Meant for her grave. — Thou hear'st not child. — Then weep
 My boy! thy grief I'll reverence, though thy sobs
 Are killing me; — I'll not flee from them now;
 Pour forth thy bitter plaints; O God! 'tis hard
 To tell the child that's motherless to stop
 His tears. Do I not weep with him? I ne'er
 Can kiss the darling babe, but streaming floods
 Come rushing from the fount of woe, and fall
 Like drops of fire upon the poor boy's face!
 Weep on, my son, thy father teaches thee.

Yes, mourning is my task, a desert is
 This house, where once connubial vows were crown'd
 With happiness supreme. — A chair stands here
 Beside me, but, I miss her at the board
 Which she was wont to spread. Each morn, afresh,
 When the faint daylight wakes me from a sleep
 Short and disturb'd, in vain. I look around
 For that sweet face, to press the morning kiss
 Of love upon that lovely brow; — I rise
 At break of day, and to the garden go

To pour my burden'd soul in plaints, which back
 Are cast into my ears, from the high wall
 Which fronts me; or my sighs are mingled with
 The wind, which murmurs through the lofty trees;
 And then, in fancy, I can hear her whom
 I love; my raptur'd gaze is heav'nward turn'd,
 As if her spirit would revisit me.....

Ah no! for ever is she gone! I feel
 The cold drops of the leaves upon my brow
 So hot; the trees hear my loud wail, and seem
 To share my woe, for mourning branches shake
 Their dewy tears upon my down-bent head.

And I forbid my son to pour his grief
 Into God's ear, the orphans' Shield? O no!
 I could not truly love the dead, and bid
 Her child not mourn his mother's death. — Does not
 The rose-bud fade, when some rude hand has torn
 The parent-stem, which nourish'd stalks and leaves
 And flow'rs? Nature withdrew her care, and though
 Art may do much, the bud thrives not, but fades
 And dies... No! No! pledge of our love, that were
 Too hard a punishment; the cruel wish
 I now recall; weep, weep for her, e'en though
 Thy tears fall not upon her grave; then pour
 Them on thy foster-mother's breast; and, if
 The briny flood should mingle with the milk
 Thou drink'st, withdraw not then thy mouth, for know
 Poor child! that th' earth, whereon thou liv'st, though fond

Of boasting of her many sweets, does feed
 Her children oft with bread of tears, and such
 Thou too must eat

Alas! this is our share
 On earth! I clasp'd unto my breast a wife,
 Dear to me as my life, none happier e'er
 Than I, — but Ah! the vows were scarcely ta'en,
 The rites perform'd, and we scarce tasted had
 Such happiness as tongue cannot recount, —
 When He, who gave her, closed our joy, and took
 Her to Himself

How heavily did weigh
 That old man's death on her, who through long years
 Had watch'd so faithfully o'er him, had lent
 Her arm to steady his frail steps, had soothed
 Him in each hour of need, and freely giv'n
 Her youth and strength, to cheer her father's age.
 Though snow-white hair fell round the rev'rend head;
 And though the tott'ring feet could scarcely bear
 The body, bent with weight of eighty years
 And five, still nature seem'd too soon to ask
 For his release. He died. — I praised the good man's worth
 And christian courage, and directed her
 To heav'n's high home, where age renews youth's bloom,
 Where Death's fell scythe is laid aside, where God,
 Who wounds and heals, shall wipe away all tears!
 I spoke to her of future days, and told her how
 The old man in her offspring would revive

From death; and that a mother's joy would heal
 The daughter's grief — She took fresh courage then,
 And, comforted, there, at the narrow grave,
 Thought of the many-mansion'd home on high,
 Where then her father's sp'rit she saw; she dried
 Her cheeks, and knelt before her gracious God
 As angels kneel. —

He who, imprison'd, sighs
 And longs to hail the day that sets him free,
 Cannot with stronger eagerness be fired,
 Than burn'd now in her bosom; how she long'd
 To greet the gift, which should complete the sum
 Of our domestic happiness!... E'en now
 We saw the child; in turn we seized on him,
 And strove to win his smiles; we saw him sport
 Around our board; we saw him stand upright
 Upon his little feet; — his mother show'd the spot
 Where, in the garden, he should play. — The boy
 Grows up, God-fearing, virtuous, good;
 And soon the youth's an honour to his friends
 And us. — The son becomes a man; — our joy
 Is perfect; — all is gain'd; — naught more have we
 To pray for... Thus we dream'd! The bitter pangs
 Of childbirth came. — She cried to God for help
 And grace; — I am the father of a child
 And she — the sacrifice to Death. — Mourn child
 Thy mother's loss, thy father mourns his wife.

Why dost thou tremble so my child? Though sore
 Thy pain, O pity me! Or dost thou not
 Feel love for me? Thou dost not blame me that
 Thy mother died? I know how heavily
 The burden weighs; and thy young shoulders are
 So weak, but, fear not child, thy father bends,
 And will bear up whate'er he can; for men
 Such burdens are, free children go; — but live
 My cherish'd son, and I'm content. — O may
 The features of my angel-wife be stamp'd
 On thy fair face! O, tremble not so child;
 For my sake live, for thy life's mine, it binds
 Me to the earth. — A Father's loving hand
 Is thus chastising us; these strokes are dealt
 In love; — but why so sore oppress'd, is not
 For us, sons of the dust, to ask of God.

Yes, Father! low I bend: though struggling fierce,
 Yea, though my brain grows giddy, as I look
 Into th' abyss of woe! I'll kiss the rod
 Which chastens me so bitterly; I'll build
 My hope upon thy love, and conqueror
 In life's sore battle I'll remain. I'll stand
 Firm at my post, and wait the high command
 Which calls me hence, for what remains on earth
 Is dedicated to the dead. — I'll fight
 All that I can, or dare, not like a reed
 I'll tremble now, nor coward-like I'll fly.
 — Ten months — my God! a night-watch seem'd the time,

Ten months, and she, my loved one, died but how
 Dare I complain? each day, each hour, then spent
 With her, was token of Thy love; — a gift
 Of Thy good grace. Thanks for that love! — Or, Lord
 And Father, is 't too much to render thanks
 When the sick heart breaks with its woe? But strength
 Enough is left me now, e'en though the words
 Be choked in sobs, to murmur rev'rently:
 Amen, my Father! Good Thou art always.
 — Amen, good God! Thy hand did mix the draught,
 Thou gav'st it me; I took the bitter cup, and drank
 It to the dregs. If it had better been
 For me that it were dash'd to earth and spill'd,
 My Father had not giv'n His child the cup. —
 — Perchance, long ere my pulse has ceased, I'll praise
 God's name, and thankful worship Him, who gave
 A wife, and took the idol from my heart.

O God! great God! what vision mocks my sight,
 And scares my soul! what terror seizes me,
 And drives this shudder through my veins? O God!
 No mortal dares to read the secrets, writ
 In Thy dread book of fate; — but O! forgive
 An anguish'd father's care, — shall this dear child,
 My life, my hope, my crown of joy, shall he,
 This dear-bought son, bring sorrow to my heart,
 And send me, grey'd with care, down to a grave
 Of misery? Shall ever sin's vile stamp
 Disfigure this pure face? shall this young plant,

Pray'd for with such intense desire — too frail
 To set his weak foot on my knee — disturb,
 In future days, my rest, crush my fond hopes,
 Yea, trample on my heart? Was it for this
 That my dear treasure pass'd away, and closed
 Her eyes so soon; that she might not behold
 The sins of the base miscreant whom she bore?
 Was 't therefore Mary died? O, mercy Lord!
 That I thus penetrate Thy will. Resigned
 To Thee, Director of my ways, I'll bear
 What Thou dost send; this duty is; — to call
 Thee to account were arrogance. — But O!
 If that sharp sword must pierce my soul. where then,
 Where shall I hide myself? Here, on my knees,
 Beside the cradle of this babe. I call
 To Thee, Almighty Father! God of love
 And pity; turn this stroke from me. Thou gav'st
 This child, and, for the gold of earth, I'd not
 Resign the charge; but, if this pledge of love
 Shall strew my future way with thorns, take back
 In mercy then what Thou hast giv'n; rob me
 Of this dear babe, unconscious yet of sin
 And evil thoughts. O take him, ere he grow
 To be a plague-spot in mine eyes! In peace
 Then shall he rest within the arms which ne'er
 Have nursed him, softly sleep upon the breast
 He ne'er has suck'd; then shall the little corpse
 Not startle her, when in Thine acre laid
 To ripen like the corn; she'll slumber on,

And, when she wakes at last; she'll recognise
 Our flesh and blood, and kiss her sleeping babe
 To life again. — If thus his guiltless dust
 Be mingled with her guiltless dust, O then
 I'll joyful bear him hence, and celebrate
 This second, solemn festival; and think
 Of her as blooming in the Paradise
 Above, where he, rank'd as a cherub, flies
 Attendant to his Saviour's ev'ry word. —

But, whither am I lead in dreams? Alas!
 Calamity has wrapp'd my woeful soul
 In gloom, dark as the grave; if but a ray
 Of hope streams down, then quick a mist doth rise
 To veil the glimm'ring light, and darkest night
 Falls o'er me. — O my soul! why art thou crush'd?
 Hope never dies; — sore though the hand of God
 May fall, O never misconstrue His love
 And faithfulness; O Father, Father kind,
 What! would I dare to doubt that honour'd name
 Thou bear'st: the comforting, compassionate
 And ever-loving God? — While sleeping yet
 Within his mother's womb, the tender babe
 Was dedicated to Thy name. — To life
 He came, and seem'd — e'en in his birth — a prey
 To Death; Thy help was near, he lived; and now
 I clasp the prize won with his mother's loss.
 And — O what may I not hope from Thy love!
 To Father, Son, and Holy Ghost my child

I consecrated have ; upon his head
Has dropp'd the water of my covenant
With Thee ; Thou see'st Thy finger- mark , engraved
Upon his brow , and know'st the double name
Wherewith he's named. In lhy memorial-book
This infant has a place ; and e'en if I
Forget him , Thou wilt ne'er forget ! Peace then
My troubled heart , whene'er the hour shall come
That takes me from my child , I know to whom
His youth and innocence committed are ;
I'll lay my body , worn with pain , to rest
In peace ; the Shepherd good keeps watch , His sheep
Can never go astray. — Th' exalted Prince
Who rules on high , was , like this babe , once wrapp'd
In swaddling clothes. — Behold in Him ,
My son , thy Guide , thy Guardian kind
Through life. To Him I thee resign , and may
A father's pray'rs and blessings go with thee.

THE UNIVERSE WITHOUT GOD.



Niemand ist im Universum so sehr allein, als ein Gottesläugner: er trauert mit einem verwaisten Herzen, das den grössten Vater verloren, neben dem unermesslichen Leichnam der Natur.

JEAN PAUL.

Musing I sat, one eve, upon a hill
Of glist'ning sand; the sinking sun shone soft,
And, peacefully, his golden arrows fell
Round me. Sudden the hand of slumber wax'd
Too strong, and closed mine eyes. — I dream'd. — Me thought
I waked upon the churchyard, where the harsh
And cumbrous clockwork of the tow'r had roused
Me from my sleep. Eleven, call'd the tongue
Of the huge monitor of Time, and then
Deep silence reign'd again. I sought in vain
To find the blessed sun in the great dome
Of heav'n, a hairy cloth hung there, the sun's
Black winding-sheet; — itself no more. —
All graves
Uncover'd were; — the charnel-house's door

Moved on its hinge; I saw no hand which oped
 Or closed that door; and shadows flitted by,
 Of forms invisible, along the wall;
 And spectral shapes, such as the moon doth cast
 At midnight, glided past. I look'd, and lo!
 All coffins emptied were! the young alone
 Still slept in their cold beds! And drearily
 A mist came down, like some vast network spann'd
 O'er all the earth. I heard a sudden burst, as if
 An avalanche rush'd from on high, and 'neath
 My feet the earth with wild convulsions rock'd,
 As if an earthquake dread would instant rend
 The shudd'ring world in twain. — The cumbrous church
 Did tremble with discordant sounds, which roar'd
 Within its narrow bounds, and vainly strove
 To melt into one harmony. — Sometimes
 I saw aught, like a lambent flame, run round
 The gothic panes; and where the lurid tongue
 One moment flicker'd had, there burst the glass,
 And lead and iron, melting, shower'd down
 A clatt'ring metal rain. — I wish'd to fly....
 But could not go; and, driven on, I near'd
 The fearful temple, at the door whereof
 Two basilisks did brood. The porch was torn
 Away, the altar stripp'd; but, dead men group'd,
 Soulless and bodiless, around it; dead,
 And yet not dead! One, newly buried, slept
 Still there; and softer radiance shines at morn
 Not on the snow-white lily's leaf, than beam'd,

On that pale countenance, the sweet smile born
 Out of the light of some glad dream; but, when
 I nearer came, he waked: — a look of pain
 Dissolved the smile, and heavily he raised
 His eyelids, but — there were no eyes within!
 And, where his heart once beat, a gaping wound
 Pour'd thence the warm blood gurgling o'er his bier.
 — It seem'd as if he'd pray, for, tremblingly,
 He tried to clasp his bony hands, but when
 They touch'd, their strength was gone — they fell!

Against

The vaulted roof, there stood the cipher-plate
 Of timeless Time; no number show'd the hours,
 Now told no more! The plate was the sole number!
 Late, early were not reckon'd there, for Time
 Was gone!

And lo! descending from the clouds,
 With grief unutterable stamp'd upon
 His brow, a heav'nly form stood on the altar;
 And all the dead ones flew to him, and cried:
 „O! tell us Lord, is there no God in heav'n?”
 He answer'd them: „There is no God!” — Then fright
 Seized all those mournful shades; they shrank away,
 And whirl'd confused, like yellow autumn leaves
 When winds rush through the woods. He spoke again:
 „The mighty archipelago of stars
 I've travell'd through, and rousèd sleeping worlds;
 I've flown along the milky way, and track'd

The seven firmaments, which blaze above
 In one vast wilderness of light, but ah!
 There is no God! I reach'd the farthest bounds
 Of being; and — borne as on eagle's wings —
 I search'd the lowest depths; and cried aloud
 Down that abyss of dread infinity:
 Where art Thou Father?... but the echo cried:
 Where art Thou? And, above the soundless deep,
 Stood faint, traced without light of sun long gone,
 Life's rainbow, and then sank! And when I look'd
 Up to the eye of God, an eyeless orb,
 Call'd Chaos, loom'd on me, a dusky rim,
 A shade, round which sunless eternity
 Did circle like a mist! — Sing, discords, sing
 Your hopeless song! Die; dead ones, die! for know,
 There is no God!"

And then those spectral shades
 Exhaled, as fade the flow'rs which winter paints
 Upon the clammy glass. The kingdom of
 The dead seem'd emptied; — nay, the multitude
 Of little children, pale, and shivering
 With their long sleep, crept from their graves, and rush'd
 Like hunted birds, thick clustering around
 The temple's altar, and there cried aloud
 Unto that heav'nly form: „O! tell us Lord,
 Is't true that we no Father have?" A flood
 Of tears gush'd as the answer came: „Tis true!
 Both you and I are fatherless!" And then,
 More hideous than before, the discords howl'd

Within the temple's walls; the pillars shook,
 And, from the lofty roof, the chisel'd flow'rs
 Came show'ring to the ground, like wither'd leaves
 From an old faded wreath... The solid pile
 Sank down amain, and all the children sank
 With it. — The earth, the mother sun, and all
 The planetary orbs evanishèd!
 The mighty fabric of creation reel'd,
 And crashing to destruction, rush'd by me
 And sank away! — Black chaos reign'd again
 Around — but — Jesus stood alone, and look'd
 Upon the ruin of the Universe
 Which, formless, lay beneath His feet; a mine
 Vast, measureless, where stars thick-scatter'd, gleam'd
 With faded light — like uncut gems; — and faint,
 Like a long silver vein, the milky way
 Meander'd through the awful gloom! And when
 He saw worlds hurl'd 'gainst worlds, and heav'n's great host
 Of wand'ring lights beheld, aimless, confused
 Dance through the chaos; — myriad hearts beheld
 Around Him throb, ceaseless in motion — like
 A living coral-bank; — when worlds beneath
 He view'd, as, one for one, they shook all things
 That being had, upon that sea of Death: —
 In sombre majesty He raised His eye
 To heav'n, and spoke: „And this then is thy reign
 Cold, speechless Nought! blind Lot! Necessity!
 Wild, lawless Chance! How shall I name thee? This,
 From age to age, is then thy work? Poor Chance!

O when wilt thou annihilate this wreck
 And — Me? O Chance! when thou dost wander on
 Through stars, which whirl like snow-flakes in thy storms,
 Or when thy hurricanes sweep, dashing through
 The ruffled dome of heav'n, and quench the lights
 Hung in the azure vault; when sparkling suns,
 Thick scatter'd like the dew, like dew exhale
 Where'er thou turn'st thy countenance — dost know,
 Blind Chance, what thou then doest? O behold,
 How lie thy hope-forsaken victims, thrown
 With all the Universe into one grave!
 — Where is Thy breast, O Father? Did I dream,
 That I shall never, never, rest thereon?
 If ev'ry I be his own maker, why
 Can he not be his own destroyer? Or
 Lurks there in all this wilderness no Pow'r,
 No strangling Angel, Cherub, to destroy
 Self-consciousness? O idle wish!... And thou
 Poor thing! stretch'd here beside me, art thou still
 A man? Unfortunate! thy face moves me
 To pity; for thy vacant life is but
 An echo of dead Nature, reasonless;
 A constant doubt, a sigh — no longer pow'r
 Nor life; — a dying, but — an endless death!
 — There, on the earth, a hollow mirror casts
 Its rays upon the ashes of the dead,
 And thou dost rise, thou gallery of forms
 And images call'd men! — and passest by.
 Stoop, if thou canst, into th' abyss... alas!

The Future is a dim, deceitful cloud;
 The Present is a gath'ring mist... O man,
 Poor man! canst thou still recognise thy earth?"

Then did He turn His gaze to earth, and cried:
 „Hail to thee, Earth! thou pale, and wither'd bride
 Of heav'n! I too have walk'd, with kingly step,
 O'er thy fair vernal fields; and from thy hills
 I've look'd, rejoicing, to th' eternal light
 Above! A Father waited me! To Him
 I call'd e'en in the hour of death! Thy sons
 Perchance, with child-like faith to the fond dream
 Still cling, that God does live! Perchance e'en now
 They greet thy rising sun, and rev'rent kneel
 Amid the glorious scene, while tears of joy
 Bedew their eyes; and raise their hearts and hands
 To heav'n, while holy fire attunes their tongues
 To sing: „Thou knowest us, eternal God!
 Thou knowest too our poverty, our wounds,
 And toil; but — when we die — Thou wilt receive
 Us with a fatherly embrace; Thou wilt
 Heal all our wounds, and make us rich!"

..... Poor souls!

Deluded, wretched ones! death comes, and they
 No comfort find! — Poor men! O why do ye,
 Weary of wand'ring, lay yourselves in earth
 With hope still beaming on the haggard brows
 Which sickness has o'ercome; as if ye saw,
 In the dim future, the bright dawn of Pow'r,

Of Virtue, and of Truth? Ye wake: — alas!
 There is no morning — chaos reigns and — night
 Eternal; and no hand ye feel, ye see
 No better Fatherland, no Father! Quick
 Arise, if ye still live, poor mortal race,
 And pray to Him, or, from your hopes He's gone
 For ever!"

Like a lifeless corpse I sank
 On earth; but soon revived again; and when
 I dared to cast a second glance upon
 The dreadful scene, a mighty serpent, coil'd
 Round the wide Universe, I saw; — its name
 Eternity! Its folds it narrow'd, and
 All things crash'd for a moment; silence then
 Reign'd. A fearful tremor seized on me! — I gasp'd
 For air — in vain! The terrors of my soul
 I sought to pour in hopeless cries — my voice
 Had fled! — Sudden I waked — —

And on my face
 I fell, and wept long time. — I kiss'd the earth,
 And sobb'd for joy that I could trust in God
 Anew, and worship Him! And, when I rose,
 I saw the sun in glitt'ring glory sink
 To rest: he cast his last rays on the moon,
 Which caught the golden flood, and temp'ring it
 To brighter silver, rose through heav'n. And far
 Around, 'twixt earth and heav'n, all mortal things
 Lived and rejoiced in God's great sanctuary,

As if they heard, e'en now, the angels call :
„Come children, come, the Father calls, arise
And heav'nward fly!" And through the evening air
There came a sound, which touch'd the heart as with
A holy chord; 'twas the Good-Friday bell —
For Sabbath would be joyful Easter day!

ORIGINAL POEMS.

Dich nenn ich nicht. Zwar hör' ich dich von vielen
Gar oft genannt, und jeder heisst dich sein,
Ein jedes Auge glaubt auf dich zu zielen,
Fast jedem Auge wird dein Strahl zur Pein.

GOETHE.

GOOD HOPE.



There is a land, unknown to fame,
A land whose heroes have no name
In the grey records of past age.
Unchronicled in hist'ry's page,
Untamed by art, yet wild and free,
That land lies in the southern sea.
It laughs to heav'n which smiles on it,
There midway in wild waters set,
With suns serene, and balmier breeze
Than ever swept these northern seas;
Its beetling crags rise vast, and war
With oceans, meeting from afar,
To break their billows on its shore,
With fearful, never-ending roar.

Bold mariners, who sail'd of old
Through unknown seas in search of gold,
Saw those dark rocks, those giant forms,
And, fear-quell'd, named them 'Cape of Storms'.
O land of storms, I pine to hear
That music which made others fear;
I long to see thy storm-fiend scowl;

I long to hear the fierce winds howl ,
 Hot with fell fires , across thy plains.
 Thou glorious land ! where nature reigns
 Supreme in awful loveliness ,
 O shall thy exiled son not bless
 Those hills and dales of thine , where first
 He roam'd a careless child ; where burst
 Thy tropic splendour on his eye ;
 Where days were spent , whose mem'ries lie
 Deep 'neath all after thought and care ,
 Yet rise more bouyant than the air ,
 And float o'er all his days ? O home
 Of beauty rare , where I did roam
 In childhood's golden days , my pray'r
 For thee soars through this northern air.
 Land of 'Good Hope' ! thy future lies
 Bright 'fore my vision as thy skies !
 O Africa ! long lost in night ,
 Upon the horizon gleams the light
 Of breaking dawn . . . thy star of fame
 Shall rise , and brightly gleam , thy name
 Shall blaze on hist'ry's later page :
 Thy birth-time is the last great age.
 Thy name has been , slave of the world ;
 But , when thy banner is unfurl'd ,
 Triumphant Liberty shall wave
 That standard o'er foul slav'ry's grave ,
 And earth — decaying earth — shall see
 Her freest , fairest child in thee !

AMAKEYA. 1)



Far in the Kaffir's glorious land ,
Beside a burning heap
Of ruins , sits an aged man ,
Who bitterly doth weep.

Through his clasp'd hands the tears fall fast ,
And wet the earth , where stood
His humble home , in ashes laid ,
Red with his kindred's blood.

And curses , struggling with his grief ,
Die on his quiv'ring lips ;
And tight he grasps the assegai ,
Which still with life blood drips.

Then , starting to his feet , he cast
An impious look on high :
„God of the whites ,” he cries , „who dwell'st
Beyond yon azure sky ,

1) See appendix.

„Thy children are a cruel race
 Of murderers and thieves.
 Give back to me my warriors brave,
 Fall'n thick as autumn leaves

„Before the hot blast of their guns,
 Which, with its hailstorm, rode
 O'er all our ranks, and made us fall
 Like corn when it is mow'd.

„They say, Thou art a God of peace —
 Thy rebel children lie;
 They say, Thou art a righteous judge:
 For vengeance dread I cry!

„Avenge the wrongs we've sufferèd
 From those who call on Thee;
 If Thou art just, then root out those
 Who live by treachery!”

The godless savage paused a while —
 And, with a flashing eye,
 Look'd round o'er all that beauteous land,
 Far stretching 'neath the sky.

Where'er he turn'd his eyes, he saw
 War's desolating brand;
 The smoke of burning villages
 Arose on ev'ry hand.

The tow'ring mountains far away ,
 High heav'nward bore the blaze ;
 O'er all the fruitful vallies hung
 A thick and lurid haze.

„There are the mountains , where I track'd
 The lions to their dens ;
 Oft have I coursed the flying deer
 Across those burning glens.

„No more shall huntsman's shout be heard
 On Mancazana's hills ;
 No more shall huntsman slake his thirst
 In Mancazana's rills ;

„No more shall young men dance at eve ,
 Around the peaceful kraal ;
 No more shall maidens wait, to hear
 Their brave young lovers call.

„No more shall children sport around
 The reed huts of their sires ;
 Men, wives, and children — all are burn'd
 Under the white man's fires !”

The old man paused . . . a choking sob
 Burst from his heart of steel.
 Ah ! white men , do ye ever think ,
 The black man too can feel

Those large emotions of the heart,
 Which home and kindred wake,
 Which swell up in our panting breasts,
 As if our hearts would break?

While still he wept, a lovely maid
 Crept from a wood hard by;
 Poor Amakeya's skin was black,
 But Love beam'd from her eye

As brightly as it beameth forth
 In lordly homes of ease,
 In happier climes, where sound of war
 Ne'er scared off love-born Peace.

She stole close to the sobbing chief,
 And look'd up in his face,
 With all a woman's tenderness
 — Eve's universal grace.

„My father, O my father! list,
 Ah! weep not so I pray;
 But come with me, I'll comfort thee,
 And all thy grief allay.”

She took him gently by the hand,
 And led him from that 'soil,
 Mark'd with the blood of those he loved,
 And all war's horrid toil.

And, silently, he follow'd her
 Far up the mountain-brow;
 Far from the white man's glitt'ring tents,
 Down in the vale below.

At last they reach'd a tow'ring rock,
 Which cast its cooling shade,
 Far down the rugged mountain's steep,
 And there her pace she stay'd:

„Come father, sit, and rest thee now
 From the fierce heat of strife;
 I'll bring thee corn and milk, to stay
 The fainting spring of life.”

She hurried to a neighb'ring cave,
 And brought thence milk and corn,
 And, kneeling at his feet, she fed
 The warrior war-worn.

The father look'd down on his child,
 And smiled to see her care;
 Long time he spoke not, silently
 He stroked her shining hair.

„Sweet Amakeya! I am rich
 Since thou art left to me —
 The white man's queen not half so rich
 As I, when I have thee.

„To-morrow, child, we'll leave this land,
 Where thou wert born and bred;
 To-morrow, must we seek a home,
 Unknown to white man's tread.

„To-morrow's setting sun must find
 Us resting far from here;
 We can no more, at even-tide,
 Let fall the tribute tear

„Upon the mound, where rests the dust
 Of her who you me gave;
 Ah! when we're gone, the white man's plough
 Will tear your mother's grave!”

„My father, say not so,” she cried;
 „The white man may be moved;
 To-morrow let us go to him —
 My pow'r's not yet been proved.

„Perchance he'll listen to my tale,
 Perchance I'll move his heart,
 Perchance he may call back the word
 Which bade us hence depart.”

„My daughter, hope not thus; 'tis vain!
 The white man's stern command
 Cannot be changed; we must go hence,
 And leave our fatherland!

„My arms are gone! I must obey;
 No safety more is here;
 Too long we've fought! the strife is vain
 Where victory's so dear!”

„My father, talk no more of war;
 I know the white man's pow'r;
 Love moves all hearts, let love then be
 Our refuge in this hour.

„In this dark hour of deep despair,
 Of sorrow, and distress,
 Love yet may conquer, when the hands
 Of war hang weaponless.

„To-morrow — when the sun is up,
 When day has dawn'd again,
 When night has lull'd the passions wild
 Which war could not restrain —

„We'll get us to the white chief's tent;
 My tears will move his heart;
 O say not nay! one trial more,
 And then we can depart.”

The father gave his slow consent
 Unto her earnest pray'r;
 When woman prays, a savage e'en
 Must yield to words so fair.

When scarce the morrow's sun had ris'n ,
 The chieftain and his child
 Went down unto the white mens' tents ;
 He sad , she hopeful , smiled.

They pass'd through crowds of gaping men ,
 Who glared upon their foe
 With sullen brow , or scornful eye ,
 And pitied not his woe.

They came before the white chief's tent ;
 He met them at the door ,
 And gazed in wonder at the maid ,
 Such graceful form she bore.

„O white man !” spake the Kaffir chief ,
 „We know that thou art brave ,
 And , brave men have not hearts of steel ,
 But save when they can save.

„We come to crave one boon from thee :
 Reverse thy stern command ;
 O bid us not depart from here ;
 This is our Fatherland !

„We love it , as the white man loves
 His home beyond the sea :
 Thou would'st not let a stranger take
 That dear-loved land from thee.

„We'll live in peace , and do thy will ;
 We'll call thy queen our queen ;
 O let us die , where we were born ,
 And let this waving green ,

„Which waves above our father's dust ,
 Once wave above our head ,
 When white mens' herds shall crop the grass
 Where Kaffir cattle fed.”

The white man's brow grew stern , he spake :
 „No mercy shall be giv'n
 To black men , who can break their oaths ,
 And fear no God in heav'n.

„Ten years ago you ask'd for peace ;
 The white man gave you peace ;
 He gave back lands he took from you ;
 From bonds he gave release.

„How have you kept your faith with him ?
 Where now the oaths you swore ?
 Dost think the white man , now , will deal
 As kindly as before ?

„Nay ! you , and yours , have steel'd his heart ,
 And driven pity thence ;
 Nay , savage foe ! your wiles I know ;
 Depart ! and get you hence.

„Upon the borders of the sea,
 Your thieving band may roam,
 And find some other, pleasant land —
 This is no more your home.”

The savage chieftain heaved a sigh...
 Then, turning to his child,
 He laid his hand upon her head,
 And said, in accents mild:

„Poor Amakeya! dost thou hear?
 In vain, in vain we crave;
 We have no home! come, let us go
 And seek some unknown grave!”

But, proudly stepp'd the maiden forth,
 And conscious of her charms,
 She folded o'er her swelling breast,
 Her beauteous ebon arms.

And, in sad accents, soft, and clear,
 And sobbing while she spake,
 She pray'd so earnestly, then wept
 As if her heart would break:

„O white man! pity those grey hairs,
 Which grace my father's head;
 He'll fight no more, let him die here;
 Ah! soon he must be dead!

„O grant my pray'r, and gratefully
 I'll yield myself to thee ;
 I'll go with thee where thou dost go —
 E'en o'er the fearful sea.

„I'll be thy slave, and toil away ;
 And never long to come
 Unto this lovely land again —
 This land which is my home.

„But, willingly, I'll give up all !
 And leave my father's side,
 And leave my tribe, and leave my land,
 And — all thy will abide.

„Let him but live, to hunt the deer
 On Mancazana's hills ;
 Let him but live to quench his thirst
 In Mancazana's rills.”

Amazed, the father heard such speech :
 „My daughter speak not so —
 What! dost thou think thy father then
 Would ever let thee go,

„And suffer slavery and shame,
 That he might dwell in peace?
 Thou'rt mad! my child; — come, come we'll go
 This idle praying cease.”

He fell upon her neck, and wept,
 And press'd her to his heart:
 „My peerless Amakeya! come —
 We'll never, never part.”

The white man's haughty look relax'd,
 A tear roll'd down his face,
 And, wond'ringly, he gazed upon
 That form of matchless grace.

And then — with mien as if he spoke
 To dame of high degree —
 He bow'd before that savage girl,
 And answer'd soothingly:

„Thou noble creature! God has made
 Thee beautiful and fair;
 And given thee a soul as pure
 As e'er breathed Christian pray'r.

„But go... I dare not hear thee speak,
 I dare not hear thee pray;
 It grieves my heart, my noble maid,
 But — I must answer nay:

„The stern command, I gave, does come
 From higher pow'r than mine;
 But, go in peace, thy words have smoothed
 Thy father's lot and thine.”

Then mournfully the maiden look'd
 Upon her aged sire,
 Still weeping on her breast, as if
 In tears he would expire.

„Come, father! far away we'll go!
 I'll ever comfort thee;
 We'll leave our home, and seek our graves
 Far by the great blue sea!”

They left the white man's glitt'ring tents,
 And climb'd the mountain brow;
 The father fill'd with fierce despair,
 The maiden hopeless now.

.
 Few weeks have pass'd . . . the Kaffir girl
 Has left her native-land,
 And travell'd far, o'er hill and dale,
 And now sits by the strand.

She gazes on that mighty sea
 She ne'er had seen before;
 Half-pleas'd, half-awed, she hears the waves
 Hoarse-moaning on the shore.

She loves to see the stately waves
 Come rolling to the land,
 And dash their foam-crests on the rocks,
 And murmur o'er the sand.

She speaks no word, she moves no limb,
 But sits as in a trance,
 And ever looks out to the sea
 With that same wond'ring glance.

.
 Long years have pass'd . . . the Kaffir girl
 Still loves to come at eve,
 And sit upon some beetling crag,
 And with the sad sea grieve.

Poor Amakeya! years shall pass,
 And white men still shall come
 Across that sea, and still press on,
 And take thy new-found home!

But, while one black man shall be found
 Where thousands now do rove,
 Still shall the touching tale be told
 Of Amakeya's love.



THE STRICKEN SOLDIER. 1)



Calm was that morn, that Sabbath morn,
No sign of storm was there;
The sun shone bright, with God's dear light,
Down through the hallow'd air.

The crowds upwent, with hearts intent
To hear the holy word;
The preacher came, came to proclaim
Jesus his heav'nly Lord.

Through the hush'd air the sound of pray'r
Breathed out in solemn tone;
Then sacred lays, the people's praise,
Swell'd upwards to God's throne.

1) Upon a Sabbath, in the autumn of the year 1855, a fearful thunderstorm burst over the village of Opheusden in Gelderland. The Rev. A. van Herwaarden was preaching to his congregation in the village-church, when a vivid flash of lightning entered the church, struck the preacher dead, and passed under the pulpit, without committing farther damage.

Then ceased all sound, within the bound
 Of that meek village-shrine.
 The preacher rose, few words he chose,
 Chose from the Book divine.

With beaming face, and simple grace,
 The village-pastor spake
 Pure words of love — such words as move,
 And surest echoes wake.

The sun serene shone on that scene,
 That scene of sanctity;
 And angels bright, gazed on that sight
 Of rural piety.

But — hush, hush! hark! the heav'ns grow dark!
 A voice comes from the sky!
 The church-tow'rs shake, the people quake —
 God comes in majesty!

From the black cloud, which, like a shroud,
 Hung o'er the trembling pile,
 The lightning beam'd, and fearful gleam'd;
 The preacher paused awhile. —

Again a flash! and with a crash
 The God-sent lightning sped
 The thunder peal'd, the preacher reel'd,
 And bow'd his stricken head.

With fear amazed, the people gazed,
And, awe-struck, held their breath;
Vanish'd the glare, they saw him there:
His eyes were seal'd in death!

Wrapp'd in its shroud, that chariot-cloud,
With flaming fire-bolts riv'n,
On thund'ring wheels, with echoing peals,
Bore up his soul to heav'n!

O wretched sheep! at one fell sweep
Without a shepherd left!
His blacken'd clay there ghastly lay,
Of life and soul bereft.

Mourn for the dead! the stricken dead!
Who bore his banner high;
And, sword in hand, at God's command
Was borne up to the sky.

AUTUMN LEAVES.



Meine Lebenszeit verstreicht,
Stündlich eil ich zu dem Grabe.

GELLERT.

In autumn, when a gentle breeze
Sighs through the weary, dying trees,
I love to walk some silent lane,
And watch the thick and golden rain
Which showers on me from above,
And thins the sadly moaning grove.
— And often then my spirit grieves,
As I tread o'er the crisped leaves,
Which carpet all the yellow ground,
And rustle with a mournful sound,
Whene'er I harshly push my foot,
And stumble o'er some hidden root.

Oft, walking thus in reverie,
Kind nature seems to speak to me
In accents, sad as sad can be:
„O child of Earth! the spring is gone!

And, summer's glory too is done ;
 Now autumn takes what fruit I have ,
 And strips me for my yearly grave .
 Soon winter's snow shall chill thy feet ,
 As thou walk'st o'er my winding sheet .
 O child of Earth ! have vernal show'rs
 Nourish'd for thee no summer bow'rs ,
 'Neath which to sit, and meditate
 O'er all the sweet and sad of Fate ?
 Of Fate ! O nay ! of Providence ?
 Which form'd and guideth ev'ry sense
 And attribute of man. — O think ,
 Spring is the sowing time ; — each chink ,
 Of Youth's short time, can bear a seed
 For some great, good, and noble deed .
 — O child of earth ! use well thy spring ,
 And summer shall rich increase bring ,
 Ere harvest-time can strip thy crown
 Of life — grown like a tree. — Ere flown
 Are days of spring, may aught be done
 To ripen in thy summer sun !
 — O child of earth ! use so thy spring ,
 That, when thy fun'ral knell shall ring ,
 And Death, great reaper, bares his knife ,
 To sever thy frail stem of life ,
 Fruit, and not leaves alone, may fall ,
 To scent, and cover up the pall ,
 Which men shall spread o'er thee , and bear
 Thee to thy winter's tomb ! — O there

May many speak thus o'er thy grave :
 'Here rest the leaves , the fruit we have ;
 Soon the last trumpet's note shall ring ,
 And wake these to undying spring !''

And oft, thus wand'ring through the wood ,
 In melancholy , dreaming mood ,
 I've seen a troop of children gay ,
 There in the autumn sunshine play ,
 And romp among the golden leaves :
 Ah me ! such sight me oft-times grieves ;
 Their merry laughter rings so clear ,
 And echoes through the woodland near ; —
 But ah ! e'en ere the spring has come ,
 Death may have enter'd some bright home ,
 And stolen thence a tender flow'r ,
 Now sporting in that golden show'r
 Which autumn rains . . . and spring's first breeze
 May whisper through the church-yard trees ,
 And fan the ruddy cheeks of boys
 Who have forgotten former joys ,
 And walk there o'er the tear-fed ground ;
 And , silent all , point to the mound
 Where rests the little friend who play'd ,
 With them , in autumn's golden shade . . .



And oft , thus walking through some grove ,
 I've seen two beings knit in love ,
 There wand'ring in a lovely lane ,

And on them fell the golden rain
 Of dying leaves! Ah! — oft 'tis so —
 Some angry, fitful blast may blow,
 And sever those who loved so well!
 Pale winter then shall sound Love's knell
 Within the loveless, frozen heart,
 Which dreamt not love could thence depart.

Yea, oft, thus wand'ring on alone,
 When sunset's golden mist was thrown
 Around the yellow, dying trees —
 The hour when the wanderer sees
 That earth, and air, and water melt
 In the sun's last embrace — I've felt
 As if 'twere good to die, if death
 Were beautiful as all beneath
 That setting sun, which died away
 In greater beauty than the day
 Could spread to view. — Such death is lent
 To those whose lives have been well spent.

O child of earth! use so thy spring,
 That — when thy fun'ral knell shall ring,
 And Death, great reaper, bares his knife
 To sever thy frail stem of life —
 Fruit, and not leaves alone, may fall
 To scent, and cover up the pall
 Which men shall spread o'er thee, and bear
 Thee to thy winter's tomb! — O there

May many speak thus o'er thy grave :
Here rest the leaves, the fruit we have ;
Soon the last trumpets note shall ring ,
And wake these to undying spring.



THE DOM-CHURCH OF UTRECHT.



O glorious pile! that risest up so great,
So lone, so awe-inspiring; seeming still
To grow as I do look on thee! — Ah why
Dost thou thus chain my spirit to thy walls,
As with a spell omnipotent, and draw
Mine eyes, tearful, up to thy pinnacles,
And thence towards heav'n, till, silently, I pray'd
To the great Deity whose shrine thou art?
— Through circling hours, by day by night, I've gazed
With a sad joy on thee; I've seen at morn
The young sun greeting thee, ere yet his rays
Gladden'd the dewy earth, and offering first
His smile to thy great, hoary tow'r, whilst yet
Black night was brooding in thy cloister'd halls.
At bright noonday his blazing beams, cast back
In many colours from thy plains of glass,
Have dazzled my fix'd gaze. — At eve I've watch'd
Thy shadow creeping on, and darkening
The city's distant streets, whilst parting rays

Of light still glimmer'd on thy spires, and veil'd
Thy carvèd splendours in a mist of gold.

— And when the sun went down, high in mid-air,
The vane, which crowns thy mighty tow'r, still flung
Soft light abroad, and seem'd to hail the star
Venus, firstborn of night, as sister orb.

— I've gazed entranced, till envious night came down
And quench'd that star; — and in thick gloom enwrap'd
The giant tow'r, whose base, still visible,
Propp'd up the viewless masonry, which lost
All substance, shape, in the dark vault above:
And then, awe-struck, I've heard low wailing sounds,
Which came from bells high in the air, unseen
Clapping their iron tongues; and then great throbs
Of sound burst on the vocal air, and toll'd
The solemn, midnight hour of mystery.

— The moon I've watch'd, as silver lines she traced
Along thy buttresses; as, like a ghost,
She stole among thy ruin'd walls; and stars
Hanging have seen, like fairy lamps, high up
Under the traceries of thy rich dome.

— O'er tombstones of a thousand years, which pave
Thy echoing aisles, I've walk'd — and thought
With woeful sorrow of the many men
Who came, with tears to lay their friends and kin
Under the stones whereon I stood, and then
Themselves were laid there too! — Pensive I've walk'd
O'er hecatombs of bones, all crumbling there
Beneath th' eternal walls, which chronicle

The littleness of those who rear'd them! — Yea
 The pious crowds, thronging thy doors, I've seen
 Go up to pray where once their fathers pray'd —
 Ah! soon they too must sleep beneath thy stones!
 I've heard the deep-toned organ pealing forth
 Waves upon waves of sound, bearing aloft
 Man's soul in hymns of praise, and wafting it
 Up to God's throne. —

All this I've seen, I've heard;
 And ever still — great, hoary, dying pile!
 Art thou to me a dread solemnity —
 A mystery — a voiceless spirit from
 The world of Good — which fascinates, and breathes
 O'er me a magic spell! Thoughts, holy, calm
 And beautiful, rush on my soul the while
 I gaze on thee! — The rushing stream can find
 No vent in words, but, brimming o'er,
 Runs from mine eyes in intermingling tears
 Of sorrowing and joy.....

MUSIC.

(TO MISS M. B.)



Die Musica ist eine Gabe und Geschenk
Gottes, nicht ein Menschen-Geschenk.

LUTHER.

In Paradise — when life began,
Stretch'd 'neath some luscious-fruited tree,
Whose boughs a beauteous roof did span
O'er his prime couch, our parent-man
Heard glorious melody.

Music first learn'd his waking pow'rs
From winds; which spirit-like did roam,
And, wooing sweets from Eden's flow'rs,
Sigh'd, perfume-laden, through the bow'rs
Which form'd his pristine home.

And from the leafy woods there rung
 Strange voices — which he loved when heard,
 Yet knew not whence they came; his tongue
 Moved, and his parted lips forth-flung
 A soul-breathed sigh — a word!

And — starting at the sound — he fled...
 Then stopp'd... for like an echo came
 The same sound — softer far — and, led
 By new desire, he onward sped....
 Saw Eve — and breathed her name.

She answer'd; — and he stood spell-bound!
 Heard the sweet tone, and felt a pow'r
 Within, which shaped the pleasing sound
 To something understood — then found,
 Speech as his noblest dow'r.

And from that hour was music known;
 Of arts, most pleasing one, since taught
 By Nature's self. — As Time has flown,
 Man — changing man — has ne'er outgrown
 The spell which Eve's voice wrought.

All earth is musical; — the roll
 Of heav'n's grand harmony in flame
 Is writ at night! — When man's rapt soul
 Roams through the stars, from pole to pole,
 He hears them shout God's name!

For, not in discord are they flung
 Through universal space; each one
 Turns to the centre whence it sprung;
 And systems all, in order hung,
 Roll round Jehovah's throne!

There's music in the thunder's roar;
 A voice in ocean's moan — when waves
 Rise o'er the doomed ship, out-pour
 Its wreck upon the startled shore,
 And spot the sand with graves!

There's gentler music in the gale,
 Which, when the south-wind blows,
 Spreads o'er the earth a vernal veil,
 And greens afresh each hill and dale,
 Long wrapp'd in winter's snow.

It whispers through the budding trees;
 The leaves burst flutt'ring forth, obey
 The measure of the sighing breeze:
 The sunshine feels it on the seas,
 And breaks in sparkling play.

And Art has mimic'd nature well!
 Who has not felt a magic wand
 Waved o'er him with all-potent spell,
 When music, with soul-stirring swell,
 Roll'd from some skilful hand?

Ah ! Lady , thine's a subtle art !
 Which , with its kingly sceptre , sways
 Each list'ning ear , and throbbing heart ;
 Bids man act many a varied part ,
 And , pow'rless , he obeys.

When o'er the notes thy fingers go ,
 All passions seem to wait thy call ;
 Love , wrath , and pity , joy or woe ,
 Rise , sink — yet how , we scarcely know ;
 Thy touch controls them all.

O musical then be thy life !
 Strange wish , thou'lt say , but — lady fair ,
 Earth is a battle-field , where strife
 And discord in all hearts are rife :
 O gentle maid — beware.

Hearts are like lyres , whose tender chords ,
 Well-touch'd , give sweetest harmony ;
 Which flows in thoughts , in deeds , in words ;
 But — there are strings which cut like swords ,
 If touch'd unskillfully.

O be thy soul a lyre divine !
 Well-tuned to man , and God above !
 The key-note of Christ's law be thine —
 Thy 'Psalm of Life' — 'tis but a line :
 'God , and thy neighbour — love.'

DAY DREAMS.



Day-dreams! yea, such there are I ween;
Who has not felt their pow'r? They've been
Our friends since childhood. When the mind
First learn'd to fashion thought, they lined
The chambers of that wondrous frame
Call'd Self, with forms of light; a name
They gave to aspirations and desires
Which thrill'd our youthful hearts: — the fires
They waked and nourish'd, may have waned,
When Reason search'd our souls; but pain'd
Our hearts shall feel for evermore,
When we dream o'er the dreams of yore.
Fair maiden, have such waking dreams
Shed o'er thy youth their rainbow-beams?
Has Fancy — sporting with thy mind —
Ne'er made thy colder Reason blind,
And led thee wand'ring on through ways
Untrodden yet, and told thee, days
Of blissful happiness shall crown
The sorrows which, may-hap, had thrown
Dark gloom o'er present toil? Has Hope

Ne'er led thee on, and made thee grope
 For pleasures which the future veils
 From Reason's eye? When grief assails
 Thee — when the heaving, burden'd breast
 Throbs with the woe which will not rest,
 May-hap — just then — a waking dream
 Flits, like a transient radiant gleam,
 Athwart thy darken'd soul, and cheers
 Thy longing eyes — suffused with tears.
 And are such day-dreams e'er fulfill'd?
 Fair maid! perchance thy heart has thrill'd
 To Love's fond touch; — perchance thy brain
 Has conjured up that form again
 Which thou hadst seen in days of yore;
 Perchance thy lone heart, sick and sore,
 In day-dreams wander'd on to days
 When Love — with hundred winning ways —
 Would banish past regrets, and pour
 Its secrets out to one who bore
 True love for thee; when loving hearts,
 Melting in one, would draw the darts
 Which separation fix'd in each;
 When silent eyes and lips would preach,
 And hear from silent lips and eyes,
 More love than fondest words and sighs
 Could tell in hours of loneliness.
 Search your own heart, and you'll confess
 Such day-dreams visit us in youth;
 Fair maid! say, are they e'er made truth?

T H E P O E T.

—• 133 •—

The poet walks entranced o'er earth,
And, dreaming, touches Nature's strings,
And calls grand harmonies to birth:
Men listen, wond'ring as he sings.
He goeth oft to wild retreats,
Where Nature broods in solitude;
There, in the Muses' haunted seats,
Enrapt he stands — as if he view'd
Strange visions on the face of heav'n:
His eye rolls o'er the boundless blue,
And then — as if his sight had giv'n
Wings to his soul — he soareth through
Th' empyrean vault, and upward flies
To scan deep mysteries — unseen
By common souls — whose earth-bound eyes
Are blinded with the dazzling sheen
Of glorious light, tow'rds which he soars.
Or, stretch'd upon the lap of earth,
When Spring breathes o'er the myriad pores
Which pierce the soil, and giveth birth

To Nature's buried loveliness,
To flow'rs, and leaves, and all things fair;
When the bright Sun looks down to bless
His fruitful bride; — when throbbing air,
Warm with the sunshine, dances bright
O'er hill and dale, o'er land and wave;
When birds, long dumb through winter's night,
Returning, hail the dawn, which gave
Life to the earth, to them new voice —
Then too, the poet's soul renews
Her slumb'ring might; all things rejoice;
And flow'rs of thought bud as he views.

H O P E.



Hope, in the morning, rear'd a pile,
Which, ere the evening — fell
And, in its ruin, buried all
The joy which there would dwell.

Hope, in the spring-time, water'd flow'rs,
Which perish'd in the bud,
And died, ere yet the summer-sun
Pour'd forth its quick'ning flood.

Hope, in the summer, smiled on flow'rs;
Which shed their perfumed leaves,
And bore no fruit to soothe the heart,
Which for their fading grieves.

Hope, in the autumn, gather'd fruit
Most beautiful and fair,
But ah! 'twas poison to the soul,
Or rottenness lurk'd there!

Hope, in the winter, long'd for spring —
A spring which never came!
But winter-winds moan drearily,
And sigh the long lost name!

Hope, in the evening, spied a land,
A far-off, sunny shore;
She long'd to reach that land, and — die!
In heav'n — Hope lives no more.



THE RUSTY KEY.



The village church-yard gate
Is never red with rust;
Its hinges turn right well,
And never gather dust.

Beside the village-church
An ancient house there stands,
But, — if you touch its gate,
Rust, dirt, cling to your hands.

The church-yard walks are clean;
The grass, o'er many a mound,
Ne'er waxes tall; — too oft
'Tis trampled to the ground.

And many a curving path
Sweeps round that ancient hall;
But grass grows on the walks,
And waxes very tall.

The village children play
 Among their fathers' graves ;
 Their merry laughter rings ,
 Where the dark cypress waves !

No gentle children play
 Beside that old hall-door !
 It stands wide open still ;
 None enter as of yore.

Each holy sabbath-day ,
 The village church-yard swarms ,
 With groups from ev'ry door ,
 And all the neighb'ring farms.

Each holy sabbath-day ,
 The hall-door stands ajar ,
 But , none come to the gate ,
 And draw the rusty bar.

The village-church is fill'd ,
 Each holy sabbath-day ,
 With crowds of cottagers ,
 Who come to praise and pray.

One pew is never fill'd —
 One nobler pew alone ;
 The bibles still lie there ,
 Right dusty they have grown !

Beneath the church-floor is
A large, and sculptured tomb,
With gilded coffins fill'd —
Which glisten in the gloom!

Above the tomb-door hangs
A great, old, rusty key;
I saw, and took it down
In dreaming reverie

I pass'd the church-yard gate,
Still dreaming as before,
Unlock'd the rusty gate
And — lock'd the old hall-door.

WHERE ARE THEY?

—→ 496 ←—

Where is she, the tender-hearted?
Mother dear! in vain we call!
Death did throw his fun'ral pall
O'er her, and she heav'nward darted
Long ago. . . . and left us here,
Weeping, weeping, o'er her bier
Many a sad, but hopeful tear!
Ah! how fearfully we started,
When the coffin, from the hall,
With us all,
Old and small,
On its mournful way departed
To the church-yard old!
Where the earth so cold,
Heavily
Fell on thee,
Mother, mother dear!

Where are they, whose footsteps patter'd,
Joyous, in the days of yore,

O'er the old paternal floor?
Where are they, who laugh'd and chatter'd,
Dancing down Life's new-found way,
Youthful, beautiful, and gay?
Where are they, O, where are they?
Resting in the grave! or scatter'd
Ne'er to meet, ah nevermore!
By that door,
Whence before
They all issued — to be batter'd
Like poor barks at sea,
Till eternity
Oped its womb,
And, in gloom,
Made them fade away!



O MAY I MEET ONCE MORE MY FRIENDS.



When o'er the lone, and stormy deep,
Before the gale, the bark doth sweep;
When tempests rage, and billows roll,
And terror strikes the stoutest soul —
Which sees, in ev'ry surging wave,
A fearful, unlamented grave —
This pray'r the sailor heav'nward sends:
„O may I meet, once more, my friends!”

When the fierce battle-cry resounds,
And Death, exultant, upward bounds
O'er all the ensanguined plain; when cries
And shrieks, of dying ones, arise,
And pierce the smoky, stifling air —
The soldier breathes the fervent pray'r,
Which with the din of battle blends:
„O may I meet, once more, my friends!”

When wand'ring in a foreign land —
 Though wealth and plenty load his hand,
 Though pleasures soothe, and ease awhile,
 Though Paradise doth round him smile,
 The exile — where he e'er may roam —
 Still sighs, oft as he thinks of home;
 And, with his sighs, this pray'r he blends:
 „O may I meet, once more, my friends!”

When Death has snatch'd some friend away —
 When in the grave he lays the clay
 Of those he held most dear below,
 The Christian sheds his tears of woe
 Upon the sod then — looks on high —
 Hope sees bright realms beyond the sky!
 And, to those realms, the pray'r ascends:
 „O may I meet, once more, my friends!”



APPENDIX.



p. 65.

AMAKEYA.

This ballad is founded upon the following incident; which happened at the close of one of the Kaffir wars:

„Macomo, with all his people were removed to the neighbourhood of Algoa Bay..... He used every means to remain on his old location. His appeal was pathetic enough, but we have profited somewhat by our experience in the word of a Kaffir. „Here,” said he, stretching his hand over the beautiful territory, „my father, a great Chief, dwelt; these pastures were crowded with cattle, here I have lived to grow old; here my children have been born; let me die in peace where I have so long lived.” These entreaties, however, could not be listened to for one moment; and, as a last trial, his daughter, Amakeya, the beauty of Kaffirland, made her way to the tent of Colonel Campbell, 91st Regiment, who, totally unprepared for her appearance, was yet more astonished at the sacrifice she offered, if her father’s sentence of banishment might be rescinded.

I have elsewhere mentioned Amakeya as the belle of the camp at Fort Hare, and no doubt she had been

sufficiently reminded of her charms to make her sensible of the value of them. She made her strange offer in all the consciousness and pride of beauty; and, with her finely-moulded arms folded before her, she spoke without hesitation, for she was guided by motives worthy a lofty cause—motives, how desecrated! how degraded! Poor Amakeya!

„If her father might remain on his own lands,” she said, „she would be the sacrifice and guarantee for his future good faith towards the white man. She would leave her own people, and follow Colonel Campbell; his home should be hers; she would forsake all, and dwell with him. This was her last word, her final decision, and she would abide by it.”

It may here be observed, that the young girls in Kaffirland are brought up with strict notions of female propriety; to forfeit their reputation, is to entail on themselves severe punishment, and on their families perpetual disgrace.

Amakeya's motives were not unappreciated by her hearer, but the proposal was, of course, rejected, with every consideration for her position, and the circumstances by which she had been actuated; and she departed with her father on his journey. We may fancy Amakeya taking a last look at the green places wherein her childhood had been passed, and finally sitting down among a strange people, in sight of the „great waters.” A new and wondrous spectacle to that mountain-girl must have been that mighty and pathless sea.” (Mrs. H. Ward. *The Cape and the Kaffirs.*)

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